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**The Buddhist Transformation of Silla Kingship: Buddha as a King and King as a Buddha\***

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The spread of Buddhism beyond the borders of India represents one of the most fascinating chapters of human civilisation, for wherever Buddhism dug its roots it redefined the entire repertoire of human experiences. There is a broad spectrum of innovative researches available in the English language on the changes that Buddhism effected in the cosmology of China and Japan. Hu Shih was one of the pioneer scholars to investigate the Buddhist transformation of China, but constrained as his inquiry was by the political agenda articulated eloquently during the May Fourth era he denounced Buddhism as a bane of China’s evils and advocated a speedy exorcising of his country from the Indian cultural influence.1 Later Eric Zurcher,2 Arthur Wright3 and Kenneth Ch’en4 made a careful study of the process of Sinicisation of Chinese Buddhism, and offered a comprehensive perspective on the interplay between Buddhism and various facets of Chinese life. In the Japanese context as well several scholars including M. W. De Visser,5 J. M. Kamstra,6 and Joseph Kitagawa7 focussed on some aspects of the social and political role of Buddhism.

 However, no serious and substantial attempt has been made in the English- speaking world to examine the social and political dimensions of Buddhism in the early history of Korea. A short article by S. Keel (Keel Hee-Sung),8 English translations of two relevant papers of Ki-baik Lee9 and a very informed essay by Robert E. Buswell10 which forms the introductory chapter of his Complete Works of Chinul shed some light on the theme, but they are chiefly important

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as reminders of the lacuna in our scholarship of the history of early Korean Buddhism.

This paper seeks to understand the initial phase of transformation that Korea underwent when it came into contact with Buddhism, but its scope is limited as it focuses on Silla kingship in the era prior to the peninsular conquest in 667. Central concerns of the paper are: what constituted the historical context of the intersection of religious practices and political strategies; second, in what forms the rhetoric and ritual of Buddhist kingship were articulated; and finally, what political purposes they served. There are two basic considerations behind my choice of Silla. First, as Silla erased its two rivals on the peninsula, Koguryo and Paekche, it was broadly the spirit of Silla Buddhism which was transmitted to later generations and became instrumental in shaping the future course of development of Korean Buddhism. Silla, therefore, consti-tutes the firm foundation on which the edifice of Korean Buddhism stood, and is crucial to a holistic understanding of Korean Buddhism. Secondly, materials on Silla are more abundant than those on Koguryo and Paekche, enabling us to go beyond a sketchy and speculative treatment of the topic. Before we deal with the Buddhist transformations, it is essential, however, to describe social and political challenges that the Silla monarchy faced in the early sixth century, and to refer as well to inadequacies of the indigenous spirit-cult and the related religious beliefs of the times in responding to them. It was in fact the political developments of the times and the corresponding inadequacy of the native religious faith which compelled the Silla monarchy to patronise and promote Buddhism.

A feature of the political structure of Silla was the “Hwabaek,”11 the Council of Nobles, which wielded immense political power, and arbitrated important political issues of the times on the principle of unanimity. The title ‘‘wang” was not a monopoly of the ruler, but was used by all the members of the council. In the Yong’il Naengsuri inscription believed to be dated 503 A. D. members of the Hwabaek are referred as wang (king). It says, “The seven kings jointly discussed it.”12 The system was reminiscent of the Sakya and Liccavi, the tribal republics of ancient India which existed at the time of the Buddha. These republics were ruled by powerful families who commonly bore the title of rajan (kings). In a political system which is but a confederation of pluralistic clan-centered units policy decisions can be mandatory and can have a uniform appeal only if they are based on consensus. This political structure meant that the Silla king was not an absolute ruler of a centralised monarchy, but just primus inter pares, one whose authority was under constant check by the powerful aristocracy.13 But political and social developments of the times [page 17] were undermining the relevance of some of these primitive institutional arrangements. As early as 433 A. D. when Silla’s simmering conflict with Koguryo threatened to explode into military skirmishes and the attendant loss of territory at its border, it played an adroit game and concluded an alliance with Paekche. Reorganisation of yuk pu (six clan communities) into administrative districts was a first major step in the direction of a centralised monarchical structure. The gradually increasing belligerence of Koguryo and fragile ties with Paekche made the existence of Silla more precarious. Silla had to grope for ways to strengthen its institutions. In 503 a standard way of writing the name of Silla in Chinese characters was adopted. The characters chosen Sin (new) and ra (net), taken from Silla’s self-confident motto: Virtuous deeds daily reNEWed/NET gathered in four directions.14 Again at the turn of the century the native title *maripkan*, meaning chieftain,15 was discarded in favor of the Chinese word wang, meaning king, a significant change indeed, representing Silla’s wish to embrace continental ideas of the strong monarchical state. Silla wanted to “modernise” its institutions to face domestic as well as external challenges.

As regards religiously articulated rituals of the royalty, they were centered on ancestor-worship. Originally sacrifices were offered to the shrine of Hyokkose, the supposed founding king of Silla believed to have descended from Heaven. In the beginning of the sixth century the Shinkung (Divine Palace) was constructed at Naul, a place where Hyokkose was supposed to have descended from heaven. Sacrifices and ancestor-worship had no doubt their own functions in the early Silla society, but they lacked universal appeal, and their limitations must have become apparent when advanced continental ideas and institutions were imported, and territories of Paekche and Koguryo were brought under the Silla sway. As Hyokose was not directly related to the ancestral lines of the people of the other two Kingdoms on the peninsula, they may not have been susceptible to the political overtones of tinkling sacrifices offered to the founder-ruler of Silla. This was a period in which traditional institutions were breaking down. Use or iron technology, launching of irrigation projects and plowing of fields by oxen led to an intensive agriculture which in turn brought about massive social and economic changes in Silla. Surplus production gave rise to urban centres and growth in the network of trade.16

But in the process a section of people could well have been dislocated from their traditional social anchorages and the contemporary religious ideology which gave cohesion and coherence to life in the “Pu “-centered society. In other words, disintegration of the traditional clan-based political organization [page 18] and emergence of a new monolithic and bureaucratic structure of the state necessitated the adoption of an ideology with a universal orientation and values. Koguryo Buddhism had already penetrated into Silla during the reign of Nulchi Maripkan (417-458 A.D.),17 and the refurbished form of Buddhism emphasising magic, miracles and worldly prosperity18 which prevailed in Koguryo must have appeared very attractive to the Silla monarchy. The Buddhism which was disseminated into Silla via Koguryo was not Han Buddhism, but “Silk Road Buddhism” as Lewis Lancaster calls it,19 and which made its way into the northern kingdoms of pre-Sui dynasty China. Non-Han rulers of the North patronised such legendary monks as Fo T’u t’eng and Tao An, whose miraculous powers have been described in detail in the Kao-seng chuan (Biographies of Eminent Monks). They were said to possess powers of rain-making and healing seemingly incurable diseases, and they were consulted even on important state matters because of their knowledge of secular arts and sciences . The non-Han rulers invoked the ideals of Cakravarti, the Buddhist concept of universal ruler, subordinated Buddhism to the interest of the nation, gave great authority to the belief in the Maitreya’s descent on the earth for the peace and prosperity of mankind and embroidered Buddhism into their indigenous pattern of beliefs such as ancestor-worship by employing Buddhist rituals for sacralisation of their ancestors. It is apparent that such a system of belief could be woven into the texture of the extant faith; at the same time it could be used to reinforce the aggressive monarchy.

In the fifth century a major adaptation was made by the Northern Wei in the institutional premise of Buddhism which appears to have enhanced its usefulness for the Silla kingship. Rulers were accorded the sacred status or Buddha. Wei-shu records that the influential monk Fa Kuo used to say, “Emperor T’ai-tsu is enlightened and likes the Buddha dharma. He is the Tathagata of today. Monks must and should pay him obeisance.” Since monk Fa Kuo equated the ruler of his times with the Buddha, he argued that “he was not paying homage to the Emperor, he was merely worshipping the Buddha.”20 The same historical text also records that in A.D. 454 the Wei emperor Kao-tsu issued an imperial edict to cast Buddhist statues in the likeness of the five present and past emperors commencing from T’ai-tsu Tao Wu-ti.21 Silla’s own tradition of kingship was compatible with such a “caesaro-papal”22 tradition of Buddhist kingship in North China. Rulers of Silla once assumed the role of “shaman kings,” as is demonstrated both by the primitive title for Silla king ch’ach’aung, meaning shaman, and the antler-shaped Silla crown, resembling the headgear of Siberian shamans. Moreover, rulers of Silla presided over both the sacred and profane domains through history. This was not the case in the [page 19]

Han tradition where an emperor, as Arthur Wright has rightly put it, was a Mahadanapati,23 a generous benefactor and not an overlord of sangha. In the south monks did not bow to emperors and Sangha wielded ‘extraterritoriar’ authority which culminated during the reign of Emperor Liang Wu-ti. The emperor gave himself three times to the sangha as a hostage and was ransomed again at a great financial loss to the state and equally great gain to the Sangha. Thus the Buddhism that developed under Silla was so closely allied to the monarchy that it is popularly known as nation-protecting Buddhism (Hoguk Pulgyo). Buddhism informed and penetrated the polity of Silla and inspired a national consensus for peace at home and victory beyond the border. The fact that protection of the nation was the most significant function of Silla Buddhism can be amply attested by the contemporary epigraphic sources as well. A votive inscription on a Buddhist icon of the Silla period dated 673 is dedicated to the ruling king, great ministers and deceased parents and ancestors of the seven generations of its sponsors.24 Other important evidence which can be cited to substantiate the nation-protecting character of Silla Buddhism are writings of the 9th century scholar Ch’oe Ch’iwon. In the Record of the Manjusri Stupa at Haein Monastery he wrote, “Protection of the State general-ly forms the core of the Buddhist path of the vow-wheel, whose other function is to save the souls of those who have died resentfully and violently.”25 At an other place (Chijung taesa pi), he wrote in an ornate style, “An official was martyred, monarchs took monastic vows, our monks travelled East, foreign monks visited our land, enemies were annihilated and the peninsular conquest accomplished.”26 By describing, as it were in sequence Yi Ch’adon’s martyrdom to promote the cause of Buddhism in Silla, King Popnung and King Chinhung’s becoming monks in their old age, Silla’s integration in the wider cultural realm of contemporary Buddhism and its success in the ongoing war of peninsular conquest, Ch’oe Ch’iwon sought to attribute the rising political fortune of Silla to the strength of Buddhism. Though the nation-protecting Buddhism found its expression in several forms, its most clear manifestation was the character of Silla kingship. And as an invocation of the religio-political notion of cakravarti was the first substantial attempt to employ Buddhist values, we need to look briefly at the meaning of the concept of cakravarti and the process of its evolution. [page 20]

THE CONCEPT OF CAKRAVARTI

The political philosophy of early Buddhism27 is encapsuled in the concept of Mahasammata (The Great Contract—implying the one chosen by the people), an idea derived perhaps from Buddha’s nostalgia for tribal republicanism. The republican view of kingship figures in the Pali canon Digha Nikaya and the Tibetan work Dulva. It depicts gradual degeneration of mankind from the primeval stage of perfect purity and the attendant need for the reorganization of society based on the collective consent of the people, a view having close resemblance with that of the Chinese philosopher Motzu.28 However, with the rapid rise of centralised monarchy in the Gangetic valley of north India Buddhism compromised its original ideal and formulated the concept of cakravarti (Pali: Cakkavatti). Cakravarti is the ideal of normative Kingship, Dhammikko dhammaraja, a king, who is divine in essence and who upholds dharma. He possesses seven gems, including a wheel of divine attributes and to his moral strength the whole universe submits. He is generously endowed with the ten rajadharmas (Kingly Virtues) of liberality, good conduct, non-attachment, straightforwardness, mildness, austerity, non-anger, non-injury, patience and forbearance. He protects his subjects, and provides for those who are weak and destitute. Cakravarti is primarily a later Vedic idea, and in the Brahmanic tradition it refers to a monarch whose rule stretches from the Himalayas to the ocean. Buddhism seems to have coloured, the Brahmanic concept with the norms of dharma. A Cakravartin is in reality a secular counterpart of Buddha who is a spiritual cosmocrat. However, as Frank Reynolds has rightly argued, the mystic motifs in the career of Buddha relate so unambiguously and directly to the career of a cakravarti that the line between Buddha and cakravarti becomes blurred.29 If we take for instance major events of Buddha’s life, we find them inseparably intertwined with the cakravarti elements. When Buddha was born the royal soothsayer prophesied that the child would choose one of the two paths—those of an enlightened one or a cakravarti king. When Buddha gave his first sermon at Sarnath, the act was termed Turning of the Cakra (Wheel) of Dharma.” Then we have on the evidence of the Mahaparinibbana sutta that when Buddha was at his death bed, he said he had chosen the place for his Nirvana, because it was the capital of his state in his seven previous lives as a cakravarti king. In the same sutra Buddha’s chief disciple Ananda tells Mallas of Kusinagara, the place where Buddha died that as a Buddha he deserved to be accorded the same elaborate funerary honours as a cakravarti. Furthermore, the Buddhist texts state that the Maitreya descends to earth and preaches under a Nagapuspa tree when a cakravarti king rules. [page 21]

Frank Reynolds underscores the close association that the Buddhist world forged between the Maitreya and a cakravarti king and argues that ‘the association is later developed in such a way that the two figures are often merged into one in which the Buddha elements and the cakkavatti elements are inseparable.”30

The concept of cakravarti underwent several revisions in later centuries, first when Asoka realised the early imperial ideals and his conquest touched the limit of the land in the Indian sub-continent. The characteristics of a cakravarti in many Pali canons are paralleled so closely to the life and career of Asoka that systematization of the early narrative tradition seems to be a post-Asokan enterprise, as both A. L. Basham31 and Romila Thapar32 have pointed out. The fact that the name of Mahasudassana which appears in the Mahasudassana Sutta, a canon explaining the virtues of a cakravartin, has etymological affinity with Asoka’s appelation Priyadarshi lends further credence to our speculation. Both the words Mahasudassana and Priyadarsi mean ‘fine in appearance.’ As Asoka’s initiatives led to a wide popularity of Buddhism within India and beyond its borders, his empire touched the limits of the land in India and though the content of dhamma proclaimed by him was not identical with dhamma of Buddhist soteriology, he gave his policies and royal proclamations the rubric of dhamma, he was elevated as a concrete embodiment of cakravarti ideal in the history of Buddhism. Such legends as his mobilisation of heavenly spirits to build 84,000 stupas all over the Jambud-wipa became so popular that almost all the Buddhist lands claimed to possess relics of some of the “Asokan stupas,” and initiated their own stupa-building projects. Conversely, the Buddhist world borrowed Asoka’s ideals and ideas to give the Vedic notion of cakravarti a systematic structure. The Brahmanic notion of cakravarti was tempered with the concept of dharma. Four categories of cakravarti were formulated, apparently to accommodate within the Buddhist hermeneutic military aspirations of monarchs, for Iron-wheel, the lowest category of cakravarti was entitled to the glory without forsaking brute force.

KING CHINHONG AS A CAKRAVARTI

King Chinhung33 was the first Silla king to invoke the concept of cakravarti. He demonstrated his allegiance to the concept by naming his sons Tongnyun (Bronze Wheel) and Saryun/ Kumryun (Iron Wheel/Gold Wheel ), deriving inspiration from the Buddhist political ideology. King Chinhung is also saia to have made Hwangnyong temple and later installed “Asokan staues in it. While [page 22] several works have appeared on the political significance of the temple, historians have overlooked the two layers of meaning that the enterprise carried and dual interpretations that it laid itself open to. The temple was a representation of Buddha, and at the same time it had an unambiguous allusion to the builder of the temple King Chinhung himself. According to several art historians, notably Padma Kaimal34 and Susan Huntington,35 there are several means to determine the fact that images had simultaneous allusion to kings and gods. The image may not be a naturalistic portrait of the ruler, as we find in the case of cave temples of China conceived and executed by the Northern Wei rulers as well as by the “Gold-Wheel Bodhisattva” Empress Wu Tse-t’ien, or in the southeast Asian context the Devaraja (literally godking) temples built by Khmer rulers. But one may decode and determine its reference to the ruling monarch in the allied legends, texts and the related epigraphic sources. All the historical texts, Samguk sagi, Samguk yusa and Haedong Kosungjon note that the building was originally intended to be a palace, but as a yellow dragon was seen at the site it was converted into a temple. Fusion of the two aspects, intended palace and the realised temple, points to the cultural context of Silla which subsumed profane (palace) into sacred (temple). The double layer of interpretation is sustained even in the word—Hwangnyong. In its meaning of yellow dragon it points to the primitive belief of the Silla people in dragon-worship, and at the same time to royalty, as both yellow and dragon are symbols of kingship. The other meaning of the word Imperial Dragon makes the reference rather overt The Triad (16-feet Buddha statue flanked by two Bodhisattvas) that was. installed in the Yellow Dragon temple was, according to legend, made of a shipload of iron and gold sent by King Asoka.36 The ship drifted to various kingdoms, but no ruler succeeded in moulding the metal into Buddha images. It was King Chinhung of Silla who finally accomplished the divine project conceived by King Asoka. Analogy inherent in the legend between the divine and archetypal Buddhist emperor Asoka and King Chinhung is apparen. Hwangnyong temple, therefore, can be reckoned as a beginning of the cult of Buddhologically sacralised and deified kingship in Korean history. Political and propagandist activities, particularly the Inwanghoe (Chinese: Jenwanghui―Assembly for the Recitation of Benevolent King Sutra) that were sponsored in the temple further confirm our belief in the two layers of meaning that the temple had, and the dual functions of secular and spiritual that it combined. The apocryphal sutra Inwang Kyong (Chinese; Jenwang Ching―Benevolent King Sutra) which was circulated as a text supposedly “Translated by Kumarajiva” was reckoned to be efficacious in protection of the nation against calamities. Rituals based on its authority were sponsored in all the East Asian states for sacralisation of power [page 23] and political legitimation. The fourth chaper of the sutra, “Hogukp’um” (Chapter on Protection of the nation), was particularly useful in subjugating Buddhism to the interest of the state. In this chapter Buddha says to great kings:

“Listen attentively! Now I shall explain the Dharma of Protecting the country. You great kings, when your countries are threatened with disorder, ruin, robbery, arson, bandits and the destruction of state, you ought to receive and keep and recite this prajna paramita. You ought to decorate temples, to install one hundred images of Buddha, one hundred images of Bodhisattva, one hundred lion-seats and invite one hundred dharma masters to explain this sutra.

Before the hundred roaring lion thrones you should light one hundred lamps and burn hundred incenses and scatter various flowers. You should offer food with munificence and distribute widely various items of need such as beds, medicine, houses and seats. And you should have teaching and reading on this sutra twice a day.

If kings, great ministers, monks, nuns and lay devotees listen to it, receive it and read it and adhere to the law, calamities will disappear.

O Great Kings, in all the lands of your kingdoms, there are a hundred ghosts and spirits. Each has its innumerable followers. If those ghosts and spirits happily hear the sutra, they will protect your lands.

If chaos is imminent, the ghosts and spirits get disturbed firsthand. And as they get disturbed, people fall into disorder. At the time bandits rise up in arms to steal the country and the common people lose their lives”

Extant records do not give any indication that Assemblies for the Recitation of the Sutra known as Jenwanghui were ever sponsored by the non-Han rulers. The first assembly was organised during the reign of Emperor Wu of Ch’en in the Imperial palace in 559, the third year of the Yung-ting era.37 During the same dynasty Emperor Hou Chu also organised Jenwang assembly and invited Chih-yi to attend.38 In the third year of the Chengkuan era in the reign of T’ai-tsung of T’ang dynasty, an edict was issued to order the monks to hold an assembly and recite the text of Jenwang Ching at Chang’an on the twenty seventh day of every month and pray for the well being of the nation.39 Soon thereafter Jenwang assemblies with hundred seats were held at Tsesheng and Hsiming monasteries of Ch’ang’an.

There are two important studies on the Benevolent Sutra assembly in Silla, one by Keinin Ninomiya40 and the other by Rhi Ki-yong.41 Ninomiya’s article deals with the ritual associated with the sutra in Silla as well as Koryo periods. Rhi’s paper deals with various aspects of the Sutra and ceremonies in China, Korea and Japan. But strangely enough, Rhi’s article does not make any mention of the first assembly in Silla held in 551 A.D., twelfth year of the [pag24] reign of King Chinhung. Tamura Encho has also dealt with Jenwang assem- blies in his work on early Buddhism in Japan. He argues that the record of Samguk sagi that Silla conducted its ceremony in the twelfth year of King Chinhung’s reign is “either an intentional distortion or error, because as China held its first assembly in 559, it is impossible to think that any Jenwang assembly had been previously held in Silia”.42 It does not seem appropriate to discredit Korean records only because Chinese records do not provide reference of their antecedents. Liang Wu-ti (502-549) dismissed the text because of its apocryphal character and it is therefore hardly surprising that no Jenwang assembly was held during his reign. The empire he bequeathed was weak and his successor was not so passionately devoted to Buddhism and therefore not a favorite of monks. Even though an assembly was organised during the nine years’ rule of the last emperor of Liang, it is likely that their records either did not survive or were not recorded by historians because of their antipathy. Soon after the new Ch’en dynasty was founded in 557, a Jenwang assembly was held in 559.

When a famous monk of Koguryo Hyeryang escaped to Silla with Koch’ilpu in the 11th year of King Chinhung’s reign, he was appointed chief abbot of the monastery and asked to recite the Inwang Kyong (Benevolent King Sutra).43 Assembly for the Recitation of the Benevolent King Sutra was organised in the twelfth year of his reign (551) against an important political backdrop. In 548 Silla had sent strong military assistance to Paekche in its battle with the joint forces of Koguryo and the Ye tribes, and though it succeeded in repelling the enemy, it suffered heavy casualties. In 551, the year Inwanghoe was organised for the first time in Silla, King Chinhung turned 18 and took the reins of power in his own hand. He had ascended the throne at the age of seven and his aunt had ruled on his behalf as regent for 11 years. That year he directed his army to attack both the Koguryo and Paekche forces in their moments of utter exaustion and war-weariness and annex the outlying areas. In this battle Silla seized the Koguryo fort of Tosal as well as the Paekche township of Kumsi which Koguryo had occupied.44 Rituals based on recitation of the virtues of the king and divine ability of the sutra to ensure peace and prosperity for the nation might have boosted the morale of his forces and given spiritual comfort to the anxious and anguished population in days of uncertainty. I am reminded in this context of the wise words of Hsun Tzu. He said, “Man without ritual will not live; an undertaking without ritual will not be completed; and a nation without ritual will not be tranquil.”45

Through the above discussion it becomes clear that King Chinhung’s career was a precise parallel of the cakravarti ideal, and it is also obvious that [page 25] his religious projects contained subtle allusions of his deified staus. The concept of cakravarti with Asoka as its paradigm was certainly useful to him as a mode of legitimation at a critical juncture of history. It provided an ideological rationale for waging war against neighbouring kingdoms and in conformity with the practices of shamanistic lineage, it reaffirmed the sacrality of Silla kingship and continued the tradition of unity between sacred and profane.

The successor of King Chinhung, King Chinji ruled very briefly,46 and not many records about him survive. However, the Samguk yusa tells us that it was during his reign that the famous institution of Hwarang47 which was founded during the reign of King Chinhung came to be associated with the belief in Maitreya. A monk of Hungnyunsa named Chinja worshipped the image of Maitreya and prayed devoutly that if Maitreya was reborn as one of the Hwarang youth, he would serve him. And lo and behold, Maitreya descended on the earth under the name of Miri (a word with remarkable phonetic continuity with Miruk, the Korean word for Maitreya). He became the leader of the Hwarang group.48 The legend is a significant reminder of the fact that the Silla kings aspired to be invested with the attributes of a cakravarti ruler, and by implication, of the Buddha; and at the same time they also wished Buddha to be reborn in their exclusivist Chingol (True Bone) group from whose ranks Hwarang members were mostly drawn.

KING CHINP’YONG’S SACRALISATION OF ROYAL LINEAGE

King Chinp’yong (570-632) vigorously revived the tradition of King Chinhung and used Buddhist rhetoric with great sophistication to articulate his political concern and strengthen his power. He named himself Suddhodana and called his wife Maya (Buddha’s parents, Suddhodana and Mayadevi) and the king’s two brothers too were named after the two brothers of Suddodhana, Suklodana and Dronodana, emphasizing the message that the kingdom was a Buddhist realm. The political import of the message becomes more pronounced when it is examined in conjunction with a legend of Samguk yusa. The legend says:

“About 100 li to the east of Chungnyong there is a mountain that juts impossibly high into the sky. In the ninth year of King Chinp’yong, cyclical year Kapsin (587), there was a great boulder that unexpectedly fell from heaven onto the peak of the mountain. It was a cube one chang (10 feet ) square, and images of the Tathagatas were carved on its four sides, all of which were protected by red gauze. Hearing of this, the king ordered a trip to pay respects (to [page 26] the boulder). He then had a monastery founded next to the boulder and named it Taesung sa (The Great Vehicle Monastery). He invited a Bhikshu who was a reciter of the Lotus Sutra to live in the temple, worship the boulder and burn incense ceaselessly. The mountain was called Sabul san ( Four Buddhas Moun-tain).”49

Later yet another legend that Silla was the abode of the past seven Buddhas gained popularity. The legend of Buddha’s descent to Silla has an unambiguous meaning and message that Silla was the Buddhist realm par excellence. And if the legend of Buddha’s descent to Silla accords the kingdom the attribute of a Buddhist realm, the fact that King Chinp’yong’s whole family was named after Buddha’s clan has the implication of sacralization of lineage. The situation is not unique to Silla, for we find legends about the Sakya clan in various Buddhist lands. According to Mahavansa, a Sinhalese chronicle, a daughter of Pandu, the only surviving member of the Sakya clan after it was destroyed by the king of Kosala, was set adrift on a boat. After reaching the kingdom of Sinhala she married a Sinhalese prince. In the 10th century when the island of Sri Lanka experienced intense political tumult stemming from threats of foreign invasion and internal factional strife, many royal inscriptions proclaimed that the contemporary Sinhalese rulers were progeny of the Sakya clan.50

The situation in the late 6th and early 7th century Silla when King Chinp’yong ruled was not much different. The state was also torn externally by attacks from the neighbouring kingdoms of Koguryo and Paekche and internally by simmering tension between royalty and aristocracy which always threatened to explode.

We can gain an insight into the precarious circumstances of King Chin- p’yong’s reign, if we look at the life and teachings of Wonkwang, a renowned monk who had spent several years in Chinese monasteries. One such event was the king’s request to him to write a letter to the Sui emperor and seek military help to pacify Koguryo. The monk replied:

“To annihilate others in order to preserve oneself militates against the way of a monk. But since I live on your majesty’s territory and survive on your grains, how dare I disobey your commands.”51

The Five Secular Commandments which he laid down as a guiding ideology of Hwarang, the assembly of aristocratic youths, also reflect the mood of the age. The commandments he enunciated were 1) Serve the king with loyalty, 2) Serve your parents with filial piety, 3) Be faithful to friends, 4) Do not retreat in battles, and 5) Do not kill indiscriminately.52 Its emphasis on loyalty [page 27] to the throne, the need to display valour in battles as well as self-restraint point to an atmosphere of uncertainty and unrest.

The myths of Buddha’s descent buttressed the right of king Chinp’yong over the throne. In consonance with enhanced confidence, he took a number of measures to expand the bureaucratic structure and strengthen the foundation of centralised monarchy laid down by his predecessors. He established several new ministries and offices in the initial years of his reign, such as Director General of Naval Affairs in 583, Directorate of Cavalry in 584, Department of Ceremonies in 586 and in 589 Superintendent of Finances and Director-General of the Department of Military Affairs.53

Employment of Buddhist rhetoric and changes in the structuring of gov-ernmental apparatus were accompanied by another major development―the bifurcation of the blood lineage of Silla. Silla aristocracy was based on the Kolp’um (literally bone-rank) system, and employment in political office or enjoyment of social privilege was strictly determined by one’s status in the system. Only the true-bones were eligible as candidates for the Silla throne or the top five ranks in the seven teen-grade pyramid of administration. But it appears that after the understanding of Buddhism deepened in Silla during the reign of King Chinp’yong, royalty, proud of its so-called Sakyalineal descent formed a distinct group called songol (Sacred bone). Records on the origin of Songgol in the two earliest historical texts of Korea, Samguk sagi and Samguk yusa are scant and mutually conflicting. According to Samguk sagi, the first to twenty seventh rulers belonged to the sacred-bone group and the rest to the true-bone group.54 Samguk yusa, on the other hand holds that the rulers starting from King Pophung, the 23rd ruler of Silla who officially accepted Buddhism down to the twenty seventh ruler Queen Sondok belonged to Songol or sacred-bone group.55 As is obvious, both the texts have common end-point, but hold divergent views on the starting point. Nonetheless, there is a rather faint clue to untangle the knot. The texts explain that Queen Sondok was chosen as a ruler, because there was no surviving male member at the time in the sacred-bone lineage group,56 a fact which fails to stand up to close scrutiny.

Yongch’un, the first cousin of King Chinp’yong, was alive at the time Queen Sondok assumed power. He had the same blood lineage as King Chinp’yong and Queen Sondok. One may be tempted to believe that Yong- ch’un was excluded from the sacred-bone group, because this exclusivist blood lineage was formed during the reign of King Chinp’yong and then was retrospectively extended to his direct ancestors, Crown Prince Tongnyun who had died young and King Chinhung, his grandfather As Yongch’un was the son of King Chinp’yong’s uncle, he was reckoned as a collateral member of [page 28] the clan and thus ineligible to the status of a sacred-bone. It seems that the Songol group was not abolished, because records of the Chinese dynastic record Hsin T’angshu makes an allusion to the binary construction of bone- based Silla aristocracy.57 Because of certain practical complications derived from increasingly narrow lineage, Songol might have ceased to be an effective criterion of accession to the throne.

As the war of peninsular conquest had intensified during the reign of King Chinp’yong, he too sponsored an Inwang assembly presumably for victory beyond the border and peace at home. This state ritual was officiated by Priest Wonkwang. According to Samguk sagi:

In the 7th month, in the autumn of the 35th year, Wang Sniyi, an envoy from Sui visited Hwangnyong temple where hundred seats were prepared, and Wonkwang and other Buddhist priests were invited to attend and recite the Sutra.

Wonkwang lived in China during the Ch’en and Sui periods and had per-sonally experienced how the rulers exploited the possibilities that the political ideology of Buddhism held for them in their campaign of unification as well as for further reinforcing their imperial positions which according to Confucian political thought was contingent on the “Mandate of Heaven”58 On his return home he became instrumental in institutionalising the ‘nation-protect- ing, character of Silla Buddhism and establishing a symbiotic relationship between sacred and profane.

During the reign of Queen Sondok (A.D. 632-646), successor of King Chinp’yong and the twenty-seventh monarch of Silla, Buddhist myth was invoked once again. Her name itself is suggestive of a strong Buddhist influence. It is derived from the Buddhist scripture Tabangtungmusanggyong in which there is an allusion to a Brahmin named Sondok. It is predicted that one hundred and fifty years after the death of Buddha he will be born as Asoka, a cakravarti ruler.59 During the reign of Queen Sondok when the rival kingdoms on the peninsula perceived her as a weak ruler apparently because of her gender, and planned to intensify their offensives against Silla, Monk Chajang conveyed to the kingdom a pious proclamation and prophesy allegedly made by Bodhisattva Manjushri. According to Manjushri she was a queen of the Ksatriya caste and destined to be a Buddha.60 She was elevated to the status of a cakravarti (inherent in the term Ksatriya), and at the same time she was deified as a future Buddha. The unified cakravarti-Buddha symbolism continued from King Chinhung down to Queen Sondok, although the forms in which they were manifested were different. The practice to invoke Buddhist legends as a [page 29] means of sacralization of power ceased when after the destruction of Koguryo and Paeckche the political structure of Silla was moulded on Chinese pattern and Chinese-style titles as T’aejo were posthumously used in honour of the deceased monarchs.

CONCLUSION

Korea was introduced to the concept of Buddhist kingship-the ideal of cakravartin-early in its history during the reign of King Chinhung. King Chinhung demonstrated his allegiance to the concept of cakravarti by naming his sons Tongnyun (Bronze Wheel) and Saryun/Kumryun (Iron Wheel/Gold Wheel). He is said to have installed “Asokan” statues in the Hwangnyong temple, the center of Buddhism in Silla and sponsored several Buddhist ceremonies for the peace and prosperity of his kingdom. Various legends and rituals undoubtedly reaffirmed his sacrality in conformity with the native shamanistic tradition of unity between religious and political domains. His successor King Chinji held power only for four years, but it was during his reign that a correlation was forged between Maitreya and Future Buddha. King Chinp’yong, however, employed Buddhist rhetoric and rituals with extraordinary ingenuity. He linked himself with the clan of Buddha and sought to sacralize the royal blood of Silla. It is likely that Songol, sacred bone group as distinct from Chingol, true bone group was inspired by his affiliation with the sacred clan of Buddha and was formed during his rule. Queen Sondok’s name as well as her arrogation of the prerogative of ksatriya represent a continuity in the employment of Buddhist rhetoric for serving political aims. After the crisis of the unification wars had passed, the use of Buddhist legends and ideals to sacralise the Silla kingship actually gave place to the attempt to remodel the central authority on the Chinese pattern.

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NOTES

1. Hu Shih, Chinese Renaissance. New York: Paragon Book Reprint Corp. pp. 84-89. Chengli Kuoku yu ta kui (Setting Our National Past Straight and Beating the Devil) Hu Shih wenchun, Series 3, Vol. 2, pp. 210-211.

2. Eric Zurcher, The Buddhist Conquest of China, Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1972.

3. Arthur F. Wright, Buddhism in Chinese History. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1959. Studies in Chinese Buddhism. New Haven and London: Yale Uni-versity Press, 1990.

4. Kenneth Ch’en, Buddhism in China. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964. The Buddhist Transformation of China. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973.

5. M.W. De Visser, Ancient Buddhism in Japan. 2 vols. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1935.

6. J.M. Kamstra, Encounter of Syncretism: The Initial Growth of Japanese Buddhism. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1967.

7. Joseph Kitagawa, Religion in Japanese History. New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1966. On Understanding Japanese Buddhism. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987.

8. S. Keel, “Buddhism and Political Power in Korean History.” Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies. Vol. 1 International Association of Buddhist Studies, Madison, Wisconsin, 1978.

9. Ki-baik Lee, Won’kwang and His Thought. In Korean National Commission for Unesco, Seoul ed., Korean Thought, Seoul: The Si-sa-yong-o-sa Publishers Inc.,1983. “Early Silla Buddhism and Power of Aristocracy,” In Lewis R. Lan-caster and C.S.Yu ed., Introduction of Buddhism to Korea: New Cultural Patterns, Berkeley: Asian Humanities Press, 1989

10. Works of translation and research by Robert E Buswell, Jr. have added significant dimensions to the field of Korean Buddhism, but they mainly focus on philosophical issues and textual research. Defining the role of Korean Buddhism in the context of Korea’s historical realities is still a virgin territory in the Western world. There is, of course, an exception, a rather short Russian-language work ‘Panniaia istoriia buddizma v Koree’ (Early History of Buddhism in Korea) by Sergei V. Volkov, Moscow, 1985 which describes major trends in Korean Buddhism from 4-9th centuries A.D. (My information is based on its brief English abstract).

11. Yi Pyong-do, Kotae Namdang go (On Namdang of the Ancient Period) In Han’guk kotaesa yon’gu, Seoul: Pakyongsa 1975. “On the Primitive Assembly and Namdang (South Hall) in Ancient Korea,” Seoul: Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities, 13，December 1960. Pak Nam-su, Silla hwabaek hoeui ui kinung kwa songyok (Functions and Character of the Hwabaek Assembly of Silla In Susun Pak, Yong-sok kyosu hwagap kinyom han’guk sahak nonch’ong, [page 31] vol. 1, Seoul: T’amgu tang 1992. Yi ki-baek (Ki-baik Lee), Taetung go (On Taetfing), Silla chongch’i sahoesa yon’gu, Seoul: Ilchogak, 1973, pp. 78-82.

12. The inscription which was unearthed on 12 April 1989 in a village called Naengsuri of Yongil district, North Kyongsang province has contributed immensely towards broadening our knowledge of Silla polity. Previous scholarship recognised only kalmun wang as worthy of the prerogative of “wang,” but in the light of new data we feel obliged to modify our view, and accept the strength of the Hwabaek assembly. Chu Po-don has masterfully argued that the stele confirms our conjecture of weak monarchical power in the early sixth century Silla. It did not enjoy an authority to independently arbitrate important matters of his state. Yi Hui-gwan has, however, suggested that in the light of the ever-strengthening power of Silla royalty at the turn of the sixth century it would be erroneous to interpret “ch’ilwang tung kong non (七王等共論)” as “seven kings jointly discussed it. He contends that the phrase means seven functionaries—one kalmunwang and six officials holding the position of tung (same as sangtae tung or taetung), but I am not quite convinced. As far as my understanding goes, the Chinese character Tung has been used to denote plural sense. If the author of the stele had wished to suggest different functionaries the grammatically correct form of Classical Chinese would have been; wangtung ch’ilin gong non (王等七人共論). Chu Bo-don, Yong’il Naengsunpi e taehan kich’ocnok komt’o (A preliminary Study of Yongil Naengsuripi), Silla Munhwa, Vol.6, Kyongju: Tong-guk University, pp. 23-30, 1989. Yi Hui-gwan, Yongil Naengsuripi e poinun Chidoro kalmunwang e taehan myokkaji munje (A Few Issues Related with Kalmunwang as Shown in the Yongil Naengsuri Inscription). Han’guk hakbo, Vol. 60, 1990.

13. Position of the Silla King at the time bears close resemblence with the Japanese rulers of the 6th and early seventh centuries. They are sometimes described as emperors which I reckon is an anachronistic term, at best a retrospective designation, because the ruler of Japan at the time was more or less like a Silla king, subject to various restrictions on monarchical authority powerful clans.

14. Samguk sagi, Silla pongi 3, 4th year of Sojiwang.

15. In the light of the information furnished by Dr Ken Gardiner that Maripkan was a Koguryo-derived title, I guess that in discarding it Silla may also have been asserting its complete independence vis-a-vis Koguryo.

16. Relying on the vast corpus of archaeological data Chon Dok-jae has delineated a complete picture of economic and political changes that emerged in the 4-6th centuries Silla. Chon Dok-jae, 4-6 segi nongopsaengsannyok ui paltal kwa sahoe pyondong (A Study of the Growth of Productivity in 4-6th centuries and Social Changes) Yoksa wa hyonsil, Seoul Vol. 4，1990. Silla Chugunje ui songnip paegyong yon’gu (A Study of the Background of the Establishment of territorial Organisation in Silla), H’an’guksa ron, Vol 21 Seoul 1990.

17. It is based on the record of Kyerim Chapjon written by Kim Tae-mun that monk [page 32] Mukhoja (meaning a dark barbarian) stayed secretly at the house of Morye dur-ing the reign of King Nulchi, a fact which was later incorporated in all the three major texts dealing with the Three Kingdoms Period, Samguk sagi, Samguk yusa and Haedong kosungjon.

18. King Koguryang’s instruction to the people “to believe in Buddha and be rewarded with good fortune and missionary activities of monk T’anshih (Kore-an: T’amshi) in Koguryo (Liaotung) who was renowned for his magical abilities are some of its illustrations.

19. Personal EMail communication to the author in his post dated 29 March 1995.

20. Tsukamoto Zenryu, “Wei Shou on Buddhism and Taoism” translated by Leon Hurvitz in Yunkang, the Buddhist Cave Temples of the 5th Century A. D. ed. Mizuno Seiichi and Nagahiro Toshio, Kyoto, 1956. vol. 16 supp. p. 53.

21. Tsukamoto Zenryu op. cit. p. 71.

22. The term, probably deriving its initial inspiration from the Roman imperial legacy in Byzantine was used by Herbert Franke in his discussion of the politico- religious role of Mongolian rulers of Yuan dynasty China. See his small monograph “From Tribal Chieftain to Universal Emperor and God: The Legitimation of the Yuan Dynasty,” Munchen: Verlag der Baerischen Akademie der wis-senscharften, 1978. For a comparative approach towards the relationship between state and religion in the Buddhist and Christian traditions see Randall Collins, “Historical Perspectives on Religion and Regime: Some Sociological Comparisons of Buddhism and Christianity,” In Jeffrey K. Hadden and Anson Shupe, ed., Prophetic Religions and Politics: Religion and the Political Order. New York: Paragon House, 1986.

23. Arthur F. Wright, Buddhism in Chinese History, op. cit. p. 51.

24. The statue (national Treasure 106) now in the collection of the Ch’ongju Museum was cast by fifty Paekche immigrants to Silla. For the text of the inscription see Samguk sitae ui pulgyo chogak (Buddhist Sculpture of the Three Kingdoms Period) published by the National Museum of Korea, Seoul p. 165.

25. Peter H. Lee, ed., Sourcebook of Korean Civilisation, New York: Columbia University Press, 1993 p. 129.

26. Kim Yong-t’ae, Samguk Silla sitae kumsokmun kojung (An Investigative research of the Inscriptions of Three Kingdoms and Silla Periods), Seoul: Min- joksa, 1992 pp. 200-201.

27. I have discussed the political philosophy of Buddhism in detail in my M. A. dissertation which I submitted at the department of Korean history, Seoul National University in 1994. For exhaustive references to Sanskrit and Pali sources which formed the basis of my conceptual construct of Cakravari, readers are advised to refer to the dissertation. “Silla chunggogi ui Chollyunsongwang Inyom: Indo Asokawangkwa Silla Chinhungwang ui Chongch’i inyom ui pigyo”(Manifestation of the Concept of cakravarti in Early Silla: A Comparative Study of the Political Philosophy of Indian King Asoka and Silla King Chinhung), To be [page 33] published shortly in Han’guksa ron (Papers in Korean History), Seoul National University.

28. Mo Tzu (Moze)’s view diverges from the Buddhist view in only one minor respect. The king who brings order to the degenerating socity was, according to him, chosen by “heaven.” Yi-Pao Mei, The Ethical and Politicai Works of Motse, London: Arthur Probsthain, 1929 pp. 55-58.

29. Frank Reynolds, “The Two Wheels of Dhamma: A Study of Early Buddhism,” In Gananath Obeyesakere, Frank Reynolds and Bardwell Smith ed., The Two Wheels of Dhamma: Essays on the Theravada Tradition in India and Ceylon, Chambersburg, Pa.: American Academy of Religion, 1972.

30. Frank Reynolds, The Two Wheels of Dhamma, op. cit. Reynolds raised this point in the introductory chapter of his PhD thesis (1971) as well. See his Buddhism and Sacral Kingship: A Study in the History of Thai Religion, Chicago: University of Chicago Microfilm..

31. A.L. Basham, The Wonder That Was India, New York: Hawthorn, 1963, p. 83.

32. Romila Thapar, Asoka and the Decline of Mauryas, Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 8.

33. Though I tried to look at King Chinhung in this paper from a different perspective, some of my points may sound a bit familiar to those who have read my article “Life and Times of Silla King Chinhung: Asoka as a Role Model” which was published in the Korean Culture, Los Angeles, Spring 1996.

34. Padma Kaimal, “Playful Ambiguity and Political Authority in the Large relief at Mamallapuram,” Ars Orientalis 24 (1994).

35. Susan Huntington, a respected art historian of India suggested a dual allegory in her discussion of the art of Pala dynasty in her book Leaves from the Bodhi Tree: The Art of Pala India (8th-12th Centuries) and its International Legacy, Dayton and Seattle: Dayton Art Institute and University of Washington Press, 1990. Later she sought to give a theoretical framework for studying dual meanings in the Hindu art in her insightful article, “Kings as Gods, Gods as Kings: Tempo-rality and Eternity in the Art of India,” Ars Orientalis 24 (1994).

36. The first reference of yellow dragon appears in the famous Kwanggaet’o stele in which Chumong is described to have ascended to heaven, riding a yellow dragon. Samguk sagi also alludes to yellow dragon, in fact Yellow Dragon Country (Hwangnyong guk). It says that the King of Hwang-nyong guk heard of the bravery of Prince Haemyong, and in the twenty-seventh year, in the first month of spring (February, A.D. 8) sent an envoy with a gift of a strong bow, but the prince drew the bow in front of the envoy, and snapped it, remarking, “it is not that I am strong, but the bow itself is weak’.” According to Dr Ken Gardiner’s annotation, the term Hwang-nyong-guk, (Chinese: Huang-lung-kuo), was used in Southern China in the early fifth century to refer to the Feng family state of Northern Yen. The unofficial name of Northern Yen was probably derived from the state’s capital, Lung-ch’eng, built by Mu-jung Huang of Former Yen in 341; [page 34] nearby was the spot where the same ruler had a vision of black and white (but not yellow) dragons.(K.H.J. Gardiner, Annals of Koguryo, Unpublished mauscript). The closest parallel of the legend, however, appears in the Kao-seng Chuan’s biography of Monk Chuan. It says that Chuan first made a sixteen feet Buddha statue in the Yellow Dragon Country. Kao seng Chuan, Taisho 309c Shihseng Xuan.

37. Hsu Kao-seng chuan, vol. 7, Shi Paoch’iong Taisho, 50, p. 479.

38. Fo-tsu t’ungchi, Emperor Tai-tsung.

39. Fo-tsu t’ungchi, Emperor Tai-tsung. Jan Yun-Hua, A Chronicle of Buddhism in China, Shantiniketan: Visva-Bharati, p. 25. Bian cheng lun, vol. 4, Taisho 52, p. 512.

40. Keinin Ninomiya, “Chosen ni okeru Ninno-e no kaisetsu” (Establishment of ren- wang Assemblies in Korea) Chosen gakuho, Vol 14, Nara 1959.

41. Rhi Ki-Yong (Yi Ki-yong) says that the first Jenwang assembly was held in Silla in 613 at Hwangyong temple. See his In wang panya kyong kwa hoguk pul- gyo: ku ponjil kwa yoksachok chongae (Benevolent King Prajnaparamita Sutra and Nation-protecting Buddhism: The Doctrinal Basis and Historical Evolution), Seoul: Tongyanghak, vol. 5, 1975.

42. Tamura Encho, “Early Buddhism in Japan,” Studies in History No. 3, Fukuoka: Kyushu University, The Faculty of Literature, 1971, p. 79.

43. Samguk sagi, yoljon (Biographies) Ch. 44.

44. Samguk sagi, Silla pongi, 11th year of Chinhungwang.

45. John Knoblock, Xun Zi: A Translation and Study of the Complete Works, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988, p. 153.

46. According to Samguk yusa he was dethroned by “Kug’in (literally people of the state) which seems to be a euphemism for the Assembly of nobles.

47. The institution of Hwarang has been romanticised in post-Colonial Korea. Since its members played an important role in the peninsular unification in the 7th century, the Hwarang spirit was proclaimed by the military regimes of Seoul as relevant for people in South Korea who had to accomplish the task of defeating the Communist north and unifying the peninsula once again. And the fact that Silla was a southern kingdom legitimated their claim of being true inheritors of the tradition of Hwarang.

48. Samguk yusa, ch. 3 Miruk sonhwa.

49. Samguk yusa, vol. 1, Tohwanyo (peach-blossom lady).

50. R.A.L.H. Gunavardhana, “The Kinsmen of the Buddha: Myth as a Political Charter in the Ancient and Early Medieval Kingdoms of Sri Lanka,” Sri Lanka Journal of the Humanities, Vol. 2, No. 2, Dec. 1976.

51. Samguk sagi, Silla pongi, Chinp’yongwang 30th year.

52. Samguk sagi, yoljon, No. 5 Kuisan.

53. These dates are from Samguk sagi. (Silla pongi) sections on Chinp’yongwang. There are two important studies on the political milieu of King Chinp’yong: Pak [page 35] Haehyon,” Silla Chinp’yongwangtae ui chongch’iseryok ui ch’uyi: Wangkwon kanghwa wa kwallyonhayo (Transition of Political Power during the Reign of King Chinp’yong; Concerning the Strengthening of Monarchical Authority) Kwangju: Chonnam sahak vol. 2. Yi Chong-suk, Silla Chinp’yongwangtae ui chongch Ichok songgyok: Sowi chonje wangkwonui songnip kwa kwallyonhayo (Character of the Politics During the Reign of King Chinp’yong; Concerning the Establishment of So-called Absolute Monarchy), Seoul: Han’guksa yongu, vol. 52.

54. Samguk sagi, Silla Pongi 12, Kyongsunwang 9th year.

55. Samguk yusa, 1 Wan gnyok.

56. Samguk yusa, 1 Wan gnyok.

57. Hsin T’angshu, Vol. 220, liechuan 145, Tongyi, Hsinluo.

58. The famous statement of Sui Wen-ti (quoted in the Buddhist text Li-tai san-pao chi, ch. 12, Taisho XLIX, 107c) in which he seeks to redefine the original ideals of Buddhism is its best illustration; “We employ the army of a Cakravartin king and extend the meaning of the Ultimately Compassionate One. (Buddha). Our ever victorious marches are practices of the ten Buddhist virtues. Therefore, our armouries have become like various incenses and flowers, and the expanse of our fields have become same as the Pure Land” (I looked at Arthur Wright’s translation of the passage in his “Buddhism in Chinese History,” op. cit. p. 67, but felt it necessary to attempt my own translation in order to be closer to the meaning of the original passage. The original text seems to recognise the fact that the acts of war are not in conformity with the original teachings of Buddhism, and therefore it is more appropriate to translate 伸至仁之意 as ‘‘extending the meaning of the Ultimately Compassionate One” rather than “spreading the ideals of the Ultimately Enlightened One” as Arthur Wright has done. For a discussion of Sui Wen-ti’s patronage of Buddhism see Arthur F. Wright’s Sui Dynasty, New York: Knopf, 1978 pp. 65-66, 126-138. Also see Yamazaki Hiroshi, “Zui to Bukkyo no kenkyu” (A Study of the Sui and Tang Buddhism) which discussses the ‘‘Bodhisattva kingship” of Sui Wen-ti and his successor Sui Yang-ti. p. 158.

59. Choi Pyong-hon has raised this point in many of his papers, most recently in “Han’guk pulgyo ui suyong kwa chongae: Samguk sagi silla pongi ui pulgyok-wangye charyo ui komt’o” (Accomodation of Buddhism in Korea and its Development: An Examination of the materials of Silla Pongi section of Samguk sagi), A paper presented at the Conference on Samguk sagi held at the University of Hawaii, February 1996, p. 9.

60. Samguk yusa, vol. 4, Hwangnyongsa kuch’ungt’ap.