A Re-Examination of the Social Basis of Buddhism in Late Chosŏn Korea

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Introduction

According to the standard explanation, the advent of Neo-Confucianism in the Chosŏn period heralded a steady decline of Buddhism in almost all respects, institutionally, doctrinally, morally and socially. Deprived of elite support, Buddhism inexorably sank down, so the narrative goes, to the level of the superstitious shamanic cults of the lower echelons of society, particularly in the second half of the Chosŏn period. The evidence of this is still supposed to be with us in certain places, as in the little shrines devoted to Ch'ilsŏng 七星 (the Seven Stars of the Big Dipper, also widely worshipped by shamans) in modern temple complexes.[1] Stagnation, regression, and contraction are terms that have been used to describe the fate of Buddhism in this period.[2] This negative view of late Chosŏn Buddhism is undoubtedly one of the reasons for the relative

1. See, for example, Yi Ihwa, *Yŏksa sog-e Han'guk pulgyo* (Seoul: Yŏksa pip'yŏngsa, 2003), 330-332, and Kang Woo-bang, "Ritual and Art in the Eighteenth Century," in *Korean Arts of the Eighteenth Century: Simplicity and Splendor*, ed. Hongnam Kim (New York: Weatherhill, 1993), 97.

2. Yi Kiyŏng, *Han'guk ŭi pulgyo* (Seoul: Sejong taewang kinyŏm saŏphoe, 1974), 214.

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scholarly neglect it has suffered, particularly on the part of scholars who are primarily interested in the history of doctrine *per se* (although in this period in Korea, like in the whole of East Asia, practice was arguably more important than doctrine), rather than historians who want to understand the role of religion and doctrine in history.[3] The origin of this negative view deserves a separate enquiry, but there seems to be no doubt that the harsh view of late Chosŏn Buddhism may in part be traced back to the ideals of colonial modernity such as they were voiced by an early modernist reformer of Korean Buddhism such as Han Yongun (1879-1944).[4] To a certain extent, the neglect of Chosŏn Buddhism also may be explained as a colonial legacy. Japanese scholars of Buddhism, who undeniably have exerted some influence on the direction of Korean Buddhist studies, have tended to be interested in those phases of Korean Buddhism that were most relevant to the development of Japanese Buddhism: hence the attention lavished on figures such as Wŏnhyo 元曉 and Ŭisang 義相, who in Japan were regarded as patriarchs of the Kegon-school. Japanese scholars, moreover, were also inclined to take a negative view of Buddhism in their own country in the corresponding period, regarding the Edo period as an age of the degeneration of Buddhism.[5]

The standard narrative of the decline of Chosŏn Buddhism is flawed in several ways. The cult of Ch'ilsŏng, for instance, was not due to accommodation with native folk beliefs in the Chosŏn period, but had arrived in Korea from China (where it had Daoist roots) complete with related Buddhist scriptures, as an integral part of Buddhism.[6] Possibly it was grafted onto a native form of

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3. In the second volume of the well-known *Sourcebook of Korean Civilization*, which is devoted to late Chosŏn and the Modern Period (1860-1945), Buddhism is almost absent. For late Chosŏn it only figures in two fragments in the section "Popular Unrest." Then there is nothing until Han Yongun's "On Revitalizing Korean Buddhism," which was written in 1909. Similarly, the volume on Chosŏn and the modern period of *Han'guk purhaksa* by Ko Yŏngsŏp (Seoul: Yŏn'gisa, 2005) contains nothing about late Chosŏn except for a chapter on the early modern priest Kyŏnghŏ (1846-1912). In a general history like Han Yŏngu's *Tasi ch'annŭn uri yŏksa* (Seoul: Kyŏngsewŏn, 1999), late Chosŏn Buddhism does not figure at all, although some attention is devoted to Daoism.

4. Cf., for instance, Han Yongun's *Chosŏn pulgyo yusin non* in *Han Yongun chŏnjip* (Seoul: Shin'gu munhwasa, 1974), 2: 114-116.

5. The representative spokesman of this view is Tsuji Zennosuke with his *Edo bukkyō darakuron*. John Jorgensen suggests a relation with the "Protestant" approach Japanese Buddhist scholars took over from 19th-century European scholars, which gave primacy to textual and philological studies: Jorgensen, "Japanese Research on Korean Buddhism," *Review of Korean Studies* 9, no. 1 (March 2006): 11.

6. Henrik H. Sørensen, "The Worship of the Great Dipper in Korean Buddhism," in *Religions in Traditional Korea*, ed. Henrik H. Sørensen (Copenhagen, Seminar for Buddhist Studies, 1995), 71-105.

heaven worship, but in any case the form Ch'ilsŏng worship took in temples was not the result of the degeneration of Buddhism.[7] If we consider other evidence for a supposed decline of Buddhism in the Chosŏn period, temple records, inscriptions on Buddhist paintings, Buddhist publications and private writings show, moreover, that the connections between Buddhism and the elite were not severed so easily. Buddhism was quite radically eliminated from the public sphere, but in the realm of the private the situation was much more complex (as it was with the relation between Confucianism and popular religion).[8] Throughout the Chosŏn period, evidence of upper-class patronage of Buddhism is not difficult to detect. Additionally, in the eighteenth and nineteenth century, Buddhism found patrons among social groups who could not claim elite yangban status, but who were nonetheless highly literate and who played a growing role in Chosŏn culture. Even if Buddhist monks in certain cases had to stoop down for survival, to a considerable extent they attempted to survive by doing the exact opposite: by accommodating to the Confucian culture of the elite (which, it has to be added, increasingly became a national culture shared by very diverse layers of society). The early stages of this process can already be detected in the Buddhist apologetics of Kihwa 己和 (1376-1433) in early Chosŏn,[9] but it assumed new dimensions in late Chosŏn (here loosely defined as the period from 1600 to 1900).

One major point I want to make with regard to the discussion of the nature of late Chosŏn Buddhism is that we need to improve our understanding of the relationship between social and cultural developments in this period. As said, one often encounters statements to the effect that Buddhism lost elite patronage and, oppressed as it was, had no choice but to "go down in society" and become "popular" (which usually implies that it amalgamated with shamanism and thus turned "superstitious"). Terms that are often used in this context in writings in Korean are *min'gan* 民間 ("ordinary citizens/folk"), *minjung* 民衆 ("the masses") and *sŏmin* 庶民 ("common people"). From a sociological point of view, this is not sufficiently precise. The "people" or "masses" were not homogeneous. It is characteristic of late Chosŏn that more and more social strata adopted elements

7. A similar argument can be made for the inclusion of shrines for the mountain god in Buddhist temple complexes.

8. Boudewijn Walraven, "Popular Religion in a Confucianized Society," in *Culture and the State in Chosŏn Korea*, eds. Martina Deuchler and Jahyun Kim Haboush (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 1999), 160-198.

9. A. Charles Muller, "The Buddhist-Confucian Conflict in the Early Chosŏn and Kihwa's Synthetic Response: the Hyŏn chŏng non," http://www.hm.tyg.jp/~acmuller/budkor/aar-hcn.htm (accessed June 6, 2007).

of what originally had been elite culture and made use of writing, either in Chinese or in Korean, thus differentiating themselves from other social groups. This was closely related to processes of urbanization and commercialization that went on in this period. All this resulted, for instance, in a flourishing of book culture and print culture (not identical at that time!) including Buddhist publications,[10] for which the label "popular" has little meaning.

Although this article intends to add nuance to the standard view of the position of Buddhism in late Chosŏn society, it cannot be denied that the Buddhist community had to cope with an oppressive load of non-religious duties, including military service, and had many restrictions imposed on it by the government, which severely hampered its development, both materially and intellectually. Obviously, it will not do simply to turn the traditional narrative on its head, defective though it may be. The situation of Buddhism was fraught with contradictions. What is needed is a much more nuanced view of the position of Buddhism in Chosŏn society that accounts for both the positive as well as the negative aspects within a comprehensive framework that includes a more sophisticated acknowledgement of social differentiation, and goes beyond the simple dichotomy of the elite versus the people. Obviously this is not something that can be achieved within the scope of this brief article, which unavoidably bears the character of an exploratory reconnaissance rather than a definitive treatment of the various aspects mentioned. Each of these aspects deserves much more intensive scrutiny and, I should add, in recent years to a certain extent already has received such attention in Korean-language sources.[11] Late 19th-century Chosŏn Buddhism has been reinterpreted along quite similar lines by Eunsu Cho in an article in English and some of the arguments she puts forward concerning the previous period also point in the same direction as this paper.[12]

To put some flesh on the bones of my argument that the social basis on which Chosŏn Buddhism depended for its survival was perhaps broadened, but did not radically shift from the elite to the commoners (with its assumed consequence, the "shamanization" of Buddhism), I will trace patronage of Buddhism by the royal court, the yangban elite and educated commoners using a variety of sources, including paintings, prefaces and colophons of books, literary

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10. See, for instance, Yi Chino, *Han'guk pulgyo munhak ŭi yŏn'gu* (Seoul: Minjoksa, 1997) for a survey of the many collected works of Buddhist monks published in this period.

11. In recent years, some publications have been moving in the direction this paper advocates. One of these is Kim Sunsŏk, "Chosŏn hugi pulgyogye ŭi tonghyang," *Kuksagwan yŏn'gu* 99 (2002), 79-100.

12. Eunsu Cho "Re-Thinking Late 19th Century Chosŏn Buddhist Society," *Acta Koreana* 6, no. 2 (2003): 87-109.

works in Chinese and the vernacular, and historical records. In the process I will also devote some attention to the tendency to reconcile Buddhism and Confucianism.

Paintings and Books

As my point of departure I will take very concrete, material evidence in the form of Buddhist paintings and books. *Kamnot'aeng* 甘露幀, "sweet dew paintings" (also referred to as "Nectar Ritual paintings") are a uniquely Korean type of Buddhist painting that is particularly relevant to a discussion of the relationship between Buddhism and Confucianism.[13] The paintings were (and are) related to rituals for the well-being of the dead, which may be considered an expression of the Confucian virtue of filial piety. Structurally, they consist of three planes. In the top part, one sees the Buddhas and bodhisattvas whose assistance makes entrance to the Pure Land possible, with Amitābha, of course, taking pride of place. In the middle, an actual ritual held for the departed is depicted, with an altar table, monks who make music and dance, and believers who attend the ritual. One or two grotesquely painted hungry ghosts sit in front of the altar. The lower part is reserved for depictions of scenes from our world, with particular emphasis on the many ways in which mankind can die an untimely and violent death. Sometimes this part also contains scenes from hell. This lower part is visually the most interesting and in many cases the focus of discussion. For the purposes of this paper, however, it is the middle part that is of greatest interest.

Figures in the kind of garb that Confucian mourners would wear pay homage in front of the altar, confirming that the rituals related to the *kamnot'aeng* are primarily death rituals. But there are numerous other figures. Many *kamnot'aeng* very helpfully have captions that help us to identify these. These tell us that some of the figures are monarchs and queens, ministers and loyal and righteous generals and court ladies. In the *Kukch'ŏngsa* 國淸寺 *kamnot'aeng* of 1751 that is in the possession of the Musée Guimet in Paris, we also see a group of solemn gentlemen, seated in a respectful attitude, who are explicitly identified as Confucians by the label *yudo* 儒道.[14] There are two ways to interpret the appearance of these figures, and both, I think, are to a certain

13. Kang Woo-bang (Kang Ubang) & Kim Sŭnghŭi, *Kamnot'aeng* (Seoul: Yekyong, 1995). Hereafter referred to as *Kamnot'aeng*.

14. An anonymous reviewer, whose comments have been very helpful to me, has suggested that this picture, in which the central altar table is missing, depicts a cross-section of society, which

extent valid and relevant to the argument put forward here. The first interpretation is that the state of affairs depicted here is as Buddhists ideally would like to see it, not a reflection of reality, which in the Chosŏn period favoured Buddhism much less. The depiction of the ruling elite, then, was intended to *suggest* rather than to *reflect* harmony between the powerful and Buddhism, with the ultimate aim of promoting the social standing of Buddhism. To a certain extent this is true. Indeed, the paintings show nothing of the oppression Buddhism suffered at the hands of the ruling elite, or the sharp criticisms Confucian scholars might direct at it.[15] The paintings, in this interpretation, suggest a harmony that was not entirely genuine; an ideological ideal rather than reality. On the other hand, however, there is sufficient evidence to show that, in spite of some ups and downs, *on the private level* the royal court throughout the Chosŏn period continued to support Buddhism, and not only the women at court, although they played a major role in this respect. Examples of court ladies (*sanggung* 尙宮) who sponsored Buddhist paintings are, for instance, seen in the colophons of a *Yaksa hoesangdo* (Assembly of the Medicine Buddha) of 1792 in Hŭngguksa and a huge painting to be displayed outdoors (*kwaebul* 掛佛) in Chikchisa 直指寺 made in 1803.[16]

Prominent officials, too, might offer donations. In another Hŭngguksa painting, *Yŏngsan hoesangdo* 靈山會相圖 (Śakyamuni Assembly) of 1693, one of the donors is an official of senior third rank, who wishes for his mother and father's rebirth in the Pure Land.[17] This could be interpreted as inspired by the Confucian virtue of filial piety, but one of the sponsors of a *kamnot'aeng* in Namjangsa 南長寺 made in 1701, an official of the junior second rank, wished

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would naturally include Confucians, and cannot be taken as a demonstration of Confucian interest in Buddhist ritual. I think, to begin with, that by the time this painting was made the *kamnot'aeng* tradition had been so firmly established that the ritual connected to this pictorial genre may be considered to be implied even when it is not explicitly shown. The Confucians are positioned in the clearly demarcated middle section of the painting that, in *kamnot'aeng* that *do* show the altar, is filled with decorously depicted figures who pay attention to the ritual. Only the lower section of the painting shows the depictions of various, often riotous and violent, aspects of *samsāra*, the world we live in, that are characteristic of the genre. In the *Kukch'ŏngsa kamnot'aeng* (which originally was painted in the Kŏnbongsa) the gaze of the Confucians is directed toward the grotesque figure of the Hungry Ghost, who is identified in a caption as an avatar of a bodhisattva. Their attitude definitely suggests due respect for what goes on around the bodhisattva in disguise in the central section of the picture of which they, too, are part.

15. In one painting, to the contrary, Confucian scholars seem to be mildly ridiculed. It represents a group of figures lolling about on the ground, reading and writing. One of them is reading the *Mencius; Kamnot'aeng*, 72.

16. Hong Yunsik, *Han'guk pulhwa hwagijip* (Seoul: Karamsa yŏn'guso, 1995), 216, 229.

17. Ibid., 58.

for his own rebirth in the Pure Land.[18] Min Tuho 閔斗鎬, who at the time was a senior second rank official and who eventually would become a Chief State Councillor (senior first rank) in 1892, contributed to a *Samyŏrae hoesangdo* 三如來 會相圖 (Assembly of the Three Tathāgatas) and a *kamnot'aeng* for Pongŭnsa 奉恩寺, wishing for long life and promotion to first rank (which he eventually achieved).[19] When this kind of evidence is taken into consideration, it becomes clear that the *kamnot'aeng* were not entirely unrealistic when they included the ruling elite in their iconography.

Elite support for Buddhism is also apparent in the publication of books. The most famous example from late Chosŏn is King Chŏngjo 正祖, who in 1796 had an edition prepared of *Pumo ŭnjunggyŏng* 父母恩重經 (Sutra of the Great Debt Due to One's Parents) with illustrations that probably are by Kim Hongdo 金弘道.[20] Other instances are not difficult to find. In 1853, the Minister of State Kim Chwagŭn 金左根 (1797-1869), a brother of King Sunjo's 純祖 consort, together with his wife had a thousand copies of *Pulsŏl Amit'agyŏng yohae* 佛設阿彌陀經要解 (Sukhāvatīvyūha sutra, with commentary) printed at Samgaksan.[21] Like the quite exceptional sponsorship of Chŏngjo, this case is remarkable because of the high rank of the benefactor (who also contributed to the restoration of Tosŏnsa 道詵寺 in 1864[22]), but as an example of yangban involvement with the publication of Buddhist scriptures, it certainly is not unique.[23] In the middle of the nineteenth century, there was a concerted effort to print Buddhist scriptures in which, except for monks, several literati were involved.[24]

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18. Ibid., 62.

19. Ibid., 336-337.

20. For a detailed study of a particular instance of the publication of Buddhist works by the royal house, see Nam Hŭisuk, "Chosŏn hugi wangsil ŭi pulgyo sinang-gwa pulsŏl kanhaeng: *Pulsŏl changsu myŏlchoe hodongja taranigyŏng* ŭi kanhaeng-ŭl chungsim-ŭro," *Kuksagwan nonch'ong* 99 (2002): 47-78.

21. Courant, *Bibliographie Coréenne: tableau littéraire de la Corée* 3 vols. with supplement (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1894-1901) vol. 3, no. 2645. For Kim Chwagŭn's support for Buddhism, also see Yi Nŭnghwa, *Pulgyo t'ongsa* (Korean edition, trans., Yun Chaeyŏng, Seoul: Pagyŏngsa, 1980), 3: 76 (a reference to the year 1854).

22. "Sach'al munhwa yŏn'guwŏn," *Seoul ŭi chŏnt'ong sach'al* (Seoul: Sach'al munhwa yŏn'guwŏn ch'ulp'anbu, 1995), 138 (hereafter referenced as *Seoul ŭi chŏnt'ong sach'al*).

23. See, for example, Courant, *Bibliographie* vol. 3, no. 2682.

24. Kim Chongjin, "1850nyŏndae pulsŏ kanhaeng undong-gwa pulgyo *kasa*: Namho Yŏnggi-rŭl chungsim-ŭro," *Hanminjok munhwa yŏn'gu* 14 (2004): 109-140.

Royal Support

A nineteenth-century description of Seoul, *Tongguk yŏji pigo* 東國輿地備攷, lists some of the Buddhist temples that surrounded Seoul in considerable numbers, but reflects a fundamentally negative attitude towards Buddhism, stating that (according to law) no new temples should be established, although old temples might be restored. It also cites regulations to the effect that it was strictly forbidden to found temples in the immediate vicinity of royal tombs (1770) and that the *wŏndang* 願堂 (temples which functioned as prayer halls) of various government bureaus and offices in the royal palaces had been abolished (1776).[25] Such prohibitions are often quoted in histories of Korean Buddhism, but in fact their meaning was very limited. They did not at all reflect the reality on the ground, particularly where *wŏndang* for the benefit of deceased members of the royal house were concerned. One should not discount the possibility that the very reason such prohibitions were (re-)issued at this time was that in the late 18th century *wŏndang* were becoming so popular also outside court circles, among yangban families for instance, that the need was felt to keep this development under control.[26] However that may be, throughout the Chosŏn period, including the age when these decrees were issued, royal *wŏndang* were maintained, restored and created. This is also suggested by the author of *Religions of Old Korea*, Charles Allen Clark (who, we should remember, had personally witnessed the end of the Chosŏn period). He notes that:

> near practically every royal tomb there was a Buddhist temple erected . . . . In 1419, the practice of erecting monasteries near these tombs was forbidden, . . . but it is interesting to note that, even now, wherever you find a tomb, you are pretty sure to find a temple just over the hill . . . .[27]

Even kings who are on record as having taken measures that were detrimental to Buddhism assigned to Buddhist temples the task of promoting the salvation of deceased relatives who, as a monk expressed it, would be able to listen to the sermons from their graves.[28] King Hyŏnjong 顯宗, for instance, who

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25. *Tongguk yŏji pigo*, 71. Yi Nŭnghwa, *Pulgyo t'ongsa*, 3: 68.

26. Cf. Chŏng Pyŏngsam, "Chin'gyŏng sidae pulgyo ŭi chinhŭng-gwa pulgyo munhwa ŭi palchŏn," in Ch'oe Wansu et al., *Uri munhwa ŭi chŏnsŏnggi chin'gyŏng sidae* (Seoul: Tolpegae, 1998), 162.

27. Charles Allen Clark, *Religions of Old Korea* (reprint, Seoul: Christian Literature Society of Korea, 1961), 46.

severely curtailed Buddhism and had the last two remaining nunneries within the walls of Seoul removed, made Pongguksa 奉國寺 the *wŏndang* for two of his daughters.[29] King Yŏngjo 英祖 made Yŏnhwasa 蓮華寺 the "grave prayer temple" (*nŭngch'im wŏnch'al* 陵寢願刹) for his predecessor Kyŏngjong 景宗 and his consort.[30] Chin'gwansa 眞觀寺 was the *wŏndang* of his mother,[31] and Pongwŏnsa 奉元寺 of his grandchild.[32] Yongjusa 龍珠寺 was founded in 1790 by Chŏngjo, the very monarch who had issued the prohibition against *wŏndang* in 1776. When he built a tomb for his father, Sado Seja 思悼世子, the "Coffin King," Chŏngjo had this temple erected near the tomb in the vicinity of Suwŏn, with contributions collected in the whole country, for the benefit of the undoubtedly troubled soul of his father. A hymn by Chŏngjo himself leaves no doubt as to the purpose of this temple.[33] King T'aejong is known as one of the few monarchs who did not bestow any favors on Buddhism, but in the late Chosŏn period, a temple called Pulguksa (or Yaksajŏl) was located near his tomb in present Naegok-dong in Seoul. A legend relates that the temple was restored by King Kojong after T'aejong had repeatedly appeared in his dreams requesting consolation for his soul.[34]

In accordance with their function, in such temples usually an important place was reserved for Buddhas and bodhisattvas associated with the afterlife, like Amitābha, with his Pure Land, Avalokiteśvara, who was regarded as a manifestation of Amitābha, and Kśitigarbha (worshipped in this context because of his vow that he would save all sentient beings from Hell). Many of the temples I have mentioned also possess *kamnot'aeng* with inscriptions on the banners that hang above the altar table in the picture. In several cases the text on these banners is a wish for the long life of members of the royal family, testimony to the close relationship between the court and Buddhism.[35] In a

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28. *Seoul ŭi chŏnt'ong sach'al*, 261.

29. Yi Nŭnghwa, *Pulgyo t'ongsa*, 3:61.

30. Pak Pyŏngsŏn, "Chosŏn hugi wŏndang ŭi chŏngch'ijŏk kiban: kwanin mit wangsil pulgyo insig-ŭl chungsim-ŭro," *Minjok munhwa nonch'ong* 25 (2002): 130.

31. Sach'al munhwa yŏn'guwŏn, *Seoul ŭi chŏnt'ong sach'al*, 274.

32. All temples with *pong* 奉 (to respectfully serve) in the name, such as Pongsŏnsa, Pongguksa, Pongŭnsa and Pongguksa, had connections with the royal family; *Seoul ŭi chŏnt'ong sach'al*, 223-224. The presence of the character *kuk* 國 (country/king) has a similar implication. Thus Suguksa was the *wŏndang* for King Sukchong, and Hŭngguksa for King Sŏnjo's father.

33. Yongjusa, *Yongjusa* (Seoul: Sach'al munhwa yŏn'guwŏn ch'ulp'anbu, 1993), 233-235.

34. http://www.buddhasite.net/dharmadhatu/bang.php?table=off&query=view&l=314&p=5&go=67&PHPSESSID=7a6926bcb1118e66a9ad93c8d4aaa24a, (accessed June 6, 2007).

35. For example, in the 1893 Sweet Dew painting in the Ponŭnsa; *Kamnot'aeng*, 249.

kamnot'aeng of 1901, the banners are half concealed by the offerings piled up in front of them, but enough is visible to make out that they were for the Emperor and his Consort, the Crown Prince (the future King Sunjong 純宗) and his younger brother Yŏngch'inwang 英親王.[36] Paintings of different types, too, sometimes also have wishes for the long life of the king, queen and crown prince, like a *Yŏngsan hoesangdo* in Hŭngguksa 興國寺 of 1693.[37]

Surviving accounts for the expenses of prayers and rituals from the royal palace (*palgi* 仵記) reveal that the ladies of the court patronized many of the temples around the capital on occasions like birthdays of members of the royal family or the New Year. In fact, they did not limit their patronage to the temples nearby, but sent donations to famous temples all over the country.[38]

It should also be noted that not only the court itself contributed to temples with a connection to the royal family, but also more distantly related members of the royal family. Thus, Prince Nakch'ang 洛昌 restored Paengnyŏnsa 白蓮寺, the *wŏndang* of the 15th-century Princess Ŭisuk 懿淑, in 1774.[39] Moreover, connections with the royal house were a strong incentive for local magistrates and Confucian literati in general to treat a temple with due respect. Ŭnhaesa 銀海寺 in Yŏngch'ŏn 永川 in North Kyŏngsang Province provides a good example.[40] In 1847 the temple was destroyed by fire. The magistrate of Yŏngch'ŏn made a substantial donation for the rebuilding because the temple was a *wŏndang* for the *t'aesil* 胎室 (the place where a person's placenta was buried) of King Injo and treasured a document from King Yŏngjo with instructions to protect the temple. Officials from Taegu followed suit, while the court, too, contributed.

The conclusion that emerges from even a casual survey of the relations of the royal court with Buddhist establishments, and which is confirmed by more thorough scholarship,[41] is that during the entire period, the care for the souls of

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36. *Kamnot'aeng*, 289-290.

37. Hong Yunsik, *Hwagijip*, 58.

38. Kukhak chinhŭng yŏn'gu saŏp unyng wiwŏnhoe, comp., *Komunsŏ chipsŏng* vol. 13 (Sŏngnam: Han'guk chŏngsin munhwa yŏn'guwŏn, 1994). Cf. Boudewijn Walraven, "Religion and the City: Seoul in the Nineteenth Century," *Review of Korean Studies* 3, no. 1 (2000): 178-206.

39. This again was a reason for a descendent of Prince Nakch'ang, Yi Ikchŏng, then a junior first rank official, to compose a record of the restoration of the temple, only one example of many such documents written by yangban authors; *Seoul ŭi chŏnt'ong sach'al*, 238-239.

40. Chōsen sōtokufu, *Chōsen jisatsu shiryō* (reprint, Tōkyō: Kokusho kankōkai, 1971), 453-461, 465.

41. Pak Pyŏngsŏn, "Chosŏn hugi wŏndang ŭi chŏngch'ijŏk kiban: kwanin mit wangsil pulgyo insig-ŭl chungsim-ŭro," *Minjok munhwa nonch'ong* 25 (2002): 103-137, and "Chosŏn hugi pulgyo chŏngch'aek-kwa wŏndang (1): isŭng ŭi chonjae yangdang-ŭl chungsim-ŭro," *Minjok*

the dead expressed through the creation of such *wŏndang* was one of the strongest elements linking the court and Buddhist temples: whenever a royal tomb was built, a monastery in its vicinity was designated as *nŭngch'im wŏnch'al*. Pak Pyŏngsŏn has even argued that in late Chosŏn, when all kinds of corvée labor and other governmental impositions weighed heavily on the Buddhist community, the royal *wŏndang* constituted one of the most important factors that allowed Buddhism to survive. Altogether he lists five factors, of which this is the first. The four others are the existence of shrines (often called *Py'och'ungsa* 表忠祠, "Shrine in Praise of Loyalty") within Buddhist temple complexes where monks who had defended the state militarily were venerated, the support given to temples by central and local officials, the support by yangban to temples that cared for the well-being in the hereafter of their ancestors, and specific local functions that certain temples fulfilled within a particular region.[42] It should be noted that of the five factors Pak listed as ensuring the survival of Buddhism, at least four implied elite support. Of course this squarely contradicts the idea that in order to survive, Buddhism had to look for support among the masses, an idea that for the sake of simplicity I would like to call the *minjunghwa* 民衆化 hypothesis (which usually implies a *misinhwa* 迷信化 corollary: the notion that this went together with an increase in superstitious elements).[43]

The Rapprochement of Buddhism and Confucianism

In our brief survey of the Sweet Dew paintings, we have already seen how Buddhist ritual could be made to serve the Confucian purpose of displaying filial piety. Literary sources, too, point to the possibility of a rapprochement between Confucianism and Buddhism.[44] Buddhist *kasa* of the Chosŏn period may, with a few exceptions, be regarded as records of the message the clergy wanted to

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munhwa nonch'ong 18-19 (1998): 223-255.

42. Pak Pyŏngsŏn, "Chosŏn hugi wŏndang ŭi chŏngch'ijŏk kiban," 103-104. This theory does not account for the role of the *kye* 契 associations that were so important in providing an economic basis for the temples according to Yi Chaech'ang, *Han'guk pulgyo sawŏn kyŏngje yŏn'gu* (Seoul: Pulgyo sidaesa, 1993), but there need be no conflict between both theories inasmuch as *kye* formed by monks are concerned (as often was the case), because the crucial question is from what sources the monks derived their funds.

43. For other evidence of royal support, see Eunsu Cho, "Re-Thinking Late 19th Century Chosŏn Buddhist Society," 93-96.

44. This rapprochement had already started in China, where it resulted, for instance, in the creation of a sutra in praise of filial piety, but took on new dimensions in Chosŏn Korea.

transmit to lay believers. From the eighteenth century at the latest, they represent Confucian morality as completely in agreement with the moral standards of Buddhism.[45] The *kasa* "In'gwamun" 因果文 (On Karmic Retribution) is available in the Kyujanggak copy of a printed edition of *Yŏmbul pogwŏnmun* 念佛普勸文 (On the Propagation of the Invocation of the Buddha [Amitābha]), which was compiled by the monk Myŏngyŏn 明衍 and first published in 1704. "In'gwamun" reminds us of the fleeting nature of human life and suggests that the proper way to spend one's life is "taking care of one's parents with filial piety, reverently serving one's teachers and seniors, [acquiring] virtue and happiness [by displaying] loyalty [to the monarch] and faithfulness [to one's friends], by joining the invocations of the Buddha, and by giving offerings to the Buddha and giving donations" (leaf 31a). Conversely, scoffers at Buddhist devotion are represented as ridiculing filial piety as well (leaf 31b).

The same copy of *Yŏmbul pogwŏnmun* contains a *kasa* entitled "Hoesimga ko" (Manuscript of the Conversion Song; from leaf 40b onwards).[46] This song begins with a description of the dawn of history that is entirely couched in Confucian terms, with the sage rulers Yao and Shun, King Wen and King Wu, and the Duke of Zhou laying the foundations for civilized society, where the Three Bonds (三綱) and the Five Constants (五常) were respected. Unfortunately, the *kasa* continues, the days of Yao and Shun have passed, and the Latter Age (*malse* 末世) has come upon us, with its consequence being the abandoning of the Confucian virtues of loyalty, filial piety and faithfulness, resulting in social chaos and distress. To remedy this, people are encouraged "on the one hand to invoke the Buddha, on the other hand to display loyalty and filial piety" (leaf 42a). Further on, the *kasa* describes devoted children (*hyoja* 孝子) who earnestly beg their parents to avoid the torments of hell as "avatars of Avalokiteśvara" (leaf 45a).

Another *kasa* that can be firmly dated is "Chŏnsŏl in'gwagok" 奠設因果曲 (A Disquisition on Karmic Retribution), which was written by a lay believer who called himself Chihyŏng 智瑩 and who published this *kasa* in a woodblock edition in 1795. Here it is stated that the Confucian gentleman (*kunja* 君子) who displays loyalty and filial piety after death will go to Paradise (Amitābha's Pure

45. Some *kasa* with "Confucian content" are attributed to famous earlier priests, such as Hyujŏng Sŏsan taesa (1520-1604), but cannot be dated with certainty.

46. A similar source, Sinp'yŏn pogwŏnmun, also includes this *kasa*, but attributes it to Hyujŏng. There is no such attribution in *Yŏmbul pogwŏnmun*. The fact that the latter source was compiled earlier and by a priest from Hyujŏng's own lineage, who did not bestow this prestigious attribution on this *kasa*, must be regarded as strong evidence that actually Hyujŏng was not the author.

Land), while doers of evil who are lacking in loyalty and filial piety will suffer the torments related to the three lowest forms of reincarnation (as hungry ghosts, animals or beings in hell).[47] This is confirmed by "Pyŏlhoesimgok" 別回心曲 (Conversion Song: A Variation; of uncertain date, but definitely belonging to the Chosŏn period) where the judges of the Underworld who have to decide whether to consign the deceased to one of the hells or send them on to the Pure Land of Amitābha to an overwhelming extent use Confucian criteria of morality.[48]

These *kasa* represent the message Buddhist priests or ardent lay believers had for ordinary believers (whatever their class). Very similar arguments were also used in the apologetics of Buddhists addressed to Confucians. The priest Yŏndam Yuil 蓮潭有一 (1720-1799) defended Buddhism against all kinds of Confucian objections in a letter to a certain Han Nŭngju 韓綾州.[49] Yuil quite explicitly took the ecumenical view that a good Confucian could be admitted to Paradise even without practicing Buddhism. Good people who loyally served their king, cared for their parents with devotion and excelled in humanity and righteousness would be reborn in the Pure Land. "It is not just invoking the Buddha [that leads one to Paradise]." Similarly, those who showed a lack of loyalty or filial piety, deceitfulness, wickedness and rebelliousness would suffer in hell. "It is not just slandering the Buddha." In this letter, as well as in other writings, Yuil demonstrated a thorough knowledge of Confucianism.[50] Of course, like many learned priests, he had in his youth first studied the Confucian classics. For an educated person, this was almost inescapable. Even the primers used for the most basic education, such as *Tongmong sŏnsŭp* 童蒙先習 (First Lessons for the Young and Ignorant), embodied Confucian views and values.

Many, if not most, Buddhist monks truly believed in Confucian values and earnestly attempted to live up to them. There is abundant evidence that monks showed filial piety to their biological parents, in spite of the fact that they had assumed the new surname of Sŏk 釋, which was derived from the name of the historical Buddha (*Sŏk*kamoni in Korean pronunciation). The 1786 colophon of

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47. Im Kijung, *Pulgyo kasa wŏnjŏn yŏn'gu* (Seoul: Tongguk taehakkyo ch'ulp'anbu, 2000), 124.

48. Younghee Lee, "Gender Specificity in Late-Chosŏn Buddhist *Kasa*," *Sungkyun Journal of East Asian Studies* 6, no. 1 (2006): 61-88.

49. Tongguk taehakkyo Han'guk pulgyo chŏnsŏ p'yŏnch'an wiwŏnhoe, *Han'guk pulgyo chŏnsŏ* (Seoul: Tongguk taehakkyo ch'ulp'anbu, 1997), 10: 280-283.

50. Yi Chino, *Han'guk pulgyo munhak ŭi yŏn'gu* (Seoul: Minjoksa, 1997), 289-298. The *kasa* poet and Sŏn Master Ch'imgoeng (1616-1684) provides another example of a Buddhist monk with a deep knowledge of and positive attitude toward Confucianism; Younghee Lee, "Waiting for the Sun to Rise: Ch'imgoeng's Poetry and Late Chosŏn Buddhism," *Sungkyun Journal of East Asian Studies* 7, no. 1 (2007) 69-86.

a *kamnot'aeng* in T'ongdosa 通度寺, for instance, does not only contain a dedication by a monk to his deceased teacher, but also one by another priest for the well-being in the hereafter of his mother.[51] Similarly, the colophon of a Śākyamuni Assembly (*Yŏngsan hoesang* 靈山會上) painting made in 1803 for Kŭmnyongsa 金龍寺 mentions that the monk who was the main sponsor dedicated it to his deceased father and mother.[52] Apart from making donations to have Buddhist paintings made, merit might also accrue from contributions for the publication of Buddhist scriptures. This, too, was a costly affair and in some cases sponsors paid for the printing of a single leaf only, which then in the margin might bear the name of the sponsor and the purpose for which the donation was made. Among such donors there also were monks and nuns. In a copy of an *Amitābha sutra* (阿彌陀經) kept in Paris,[53] for instance, four nuns dedicate the merit of their pious deed to their parents.

As regards the Confucian virtue of loyalty (忠), the example of the soldier-monks during the Japanese and Manchu invasions is well-known. Their valor was amply acknowledged by the government, even long after the fact. Thus in the *imjin* year 1772, exactly 180 years after the first Japanese invasion, a memorial service was held at the behest of King Yŏngjo at the graves of 800 monk-soldiers who had perished fighting under the leadership of the monk Yŏnggyu 靈圭 (?-1592).[54] Much earlier, in 1743, Yŏngjo already had founded a shrine (P'yoch'ungsa) for Hyujŏng, Yujŏng 惟政 (Samyŏngdang 四溟堂) and the same Yŏnggyu.[55] Such shrines could be found all over the country.

The rapprochement of Buddhism and Confucianism made it possible even for staunch Confucians to take a positive view of Buddhist undertakings. Around 1870, a group of people probably consisting of city dwellers who shared certain religious ideals created the *Chŏngwŏnsa* 淨願社, the Pure Vow Association. This organization had a book printed entitled *Ch'ŏngju chip* 淸珠集 (Collection of Clear Pearls). The first preface of this is by a prominent Confucian yangban and government official Cho Sŏngha 趙成夏 (1845-1881; Cho was for instance Minister of the Board of Personnel), who states that the association was founded by the monk Ch'ijo 治兆, who with a number of monks and lay-believers had held a summer retreat for thirty years (e.g. from about 1840). Cho

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51. *Kamnot'aeng*, 425. For similar cases, see Kungnip pangmulgwan misulbu, *Yŏch'ŏn Hŭngguksa ŭi pulgyo misul* (Seoul: Han'guk kogo misul yŏn'guwŏn, 1993), 1:157, 161.

52. Hong Yunsik, *Hwagijip*, 1:224.

53. Collection INALCO: COR I 302.

54. Yi Nŭnghwa, *Pulgyo t'ongsa* III, 68.

55. Chodurok, 22 a. For *Chodurok* (A Record of Rituals), see Courant nr. 1156.

declares himself to be a Confucian, but notes that Buddhism and Confucianism, although different, are not so far apart as some might think. He even suggests that Śakyamuni might be called a Confucian vinaya master (*yumun yulsa* 儒門律師), because he exemplified proper conduct and dedication to the Way. There is also a second preface by very prominent monk of that period, Hŏju Tŏkchin 虛舟德眞 (1806-1888), who was very active in the propagation of Buddhism and performed prayers and services at the request of the Hŭngsŏn Taewŏn'gun 興宣大院君.[56] He speaks of the Confucian virtues of loyalty and filial piety as the basis of Buddhist practice.

Confucian Views of Buddhism

It will be clear that there were many different views of Buddhism among Confucian literati, ranging from outright rejection to sincere interest.[57] Even one and the same person might have quite divergent views of different aspects of Buddhism, some positive and some negative. It is quite impossible, therefore, to provide a comprehensive survey of Confucian attitudes to Buddhism in a paper like this. I will just briefly mention some aspects that bring out how Confucian attitudes toward Buddhism could go beyond a flat rejection.

Temples were frequently used by Confucians to study in quiet surroundings or even, as Hendrik Hamel noted, to divert themselves "with whores and other company."[58] Sympathy with Buddhist teachings was not required for the students of Confucianism who went to a temple to study (let alone those who went there to indulge in sensual pleasures), but it seems that at least in some cases this became an opportunity to acquire a deeper understanding of Buddhism or even resulted in a lasting tie with a particular temple. Song Inmyŏng 宋寅明 (1689-1746), a confidant of King Yŏngjo, had studied at Kaehwasa 開花寺 before he passed the examinations. When he became Prime Minister, he donated land to the temple. His great-great grandson Song Paegok 宋伯玉 wrote a record of the restoration of the temple in 1799 (to which the family contributed), and in 1827 another descendant, Song Sugok 宋叔玉, did something similar. Thus, for a century or more, the Song family showed special favor to Kaehwasa (nowadays

56. Yi Chŏng, *Han'guk pulgyo inmyŏng sajŏn* (Seoul: Pulgyo sidaesa, 1993), 69.

57. In the latter category belongs Ch'usa Kim Chŏnghŭi. Cf. Sŏn Chusŏn, "Ch'usa Kim Chŏnghŏi ŭi pulgyo ŭisik-kwa yesilgwan yŏn'gu," (Phd diss., Tongguk taehakkyo, 2001).

58. Vibeke Roeper & Boudewijn Walraven, eds., with the collaboration of Jean-Paul Buys, *Hamel's World: A Dutch-Korean Encounter in the Seventeenth Century* (Amsterdam: SUN, 2003), 143.

known as Yaksasa 藥師寺).[59]

Even members of the royal house might spend considerable time at temples in this manner. Kojong 高宗, who it should be noted belonged to a collateral branch of the royal family and was not from birth destined to be king, received much of his early education from a monk at Kaeunsa 開運寺 (or Yŏngdosa 永導寺, near Korea University). Not unexpectedly, on paintings in this temple, too, one finds inscriptions that mention the names of court ladies as donors.[60] Whether it is because of this early influence or not, King Kojong's attitude toward Buddhism was quite benevolent. When his son was healed, apparently thanks to prayers at Suguksa 守國寺 (originally the *wŏndang* for Sukchong and his first wife) he declared that "filial piety and [Buddhist] faith in origin are not two" (*hyoshim shinshim wŏn puri* 孝心信心元不二).[61] Such ideas were also fed by the concept that the three teachings of Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism were fundamentally one, which in the late nineteenth century was quite popular in Korea.

Cho Hŭiryong 趙熙龍 (1789-1866) is perhaps best known nowadays as a gifted painter, but he also left many writings and should be counted as a prominent figure in the intellectual circles of his time. Demonstrating an attitude towards Buddhism marked by unexpected twists, he is a particularly interesting figure as far as the relationship between Confucianism and Buddhism is concerned. In a collection of short biographies (*Hosan oegi* 壺山外記) he put together in 1844 he relates a story about Nongsan 聾山, a monk who had died in 1790. Nongsan, he says, was very strict in his obedience to the vinaya and for ten years did not step outside the gate of his temple, Kŭmsŏnsa 金僊寺. When King Sunjo was born in the year *kyŏngsul* 庚戌 (1790), there was a strange aura, like a five-colored rainbow, that came from the northwest and reached the room where the child had been delivered. People in the Bureau of Medicine were astonished and they sent someone to investigate from where the light came. The messenger went out of the North Gate of Seoul and found that the aura came from Kŭmsŏnsa. He entered the temple and noted that the light came from a crack in a window of the monks' quarters. He opened the door and looked in. An old monk sat there with his eyes closed and his legs crossed. The light streamed from his nostrils, with great brightness, rising up into the air. He called the monk but there was no reply. In a sitting posture, he had already entered nirvana. When this was reported to the king, Chŏngjo had a portrait of Nongsan

59. S*eoul ŭi chŏnt'ong sach'al,* 105-106.

60. Ibid., 292, 300.

61. Ibid., 262.

made and a memorial mass performed. To this story, Cho Hŭiryong adds a lengthy commentary in which he says among other things: "The Great Master Nongsan, by purifying himself, had found his original nature and all his worldly attachments were eliminated. But what he realized was loyalty and filial piety and whenever he prayed to Heaven and the Buddha it was for abundant offspring for the monarchy (*kukka* 國家)."[62]

Elsewhere, in *Sŏgu mangnyŏng nok* (Record of Years Passed in Oblivion with Friend Inkstone), Cho Hŭiryong first notes that Buddhism was on the increase: "Whenever the ancients spoke, they spoke of Yao and Shun. Whenever people speak today, they speak of the Buddha. They pray for long life and happiness while they are alive and for salvation after death. The remote mountains [i.e. mountain temples] are full of gold and silk [donated by believers]."[63] Cho asks why people show less respect to the Confucian classics than to the words of the Buddha, and his answer is that the Buddha inspired fear and awe by his teaching of reincarnation and karma. This, Cho says, is a form of skillful means (*upaya*). However, he concludes provocatively that it is not *upaya*, however, to transmit the Buddhist teachings, but to reach those who are left unmoved by the Confucian message. "[The Buddha] instituted this teaching in order to complete what the Sages had not completed. I say: Buddha, too, is 'a disciple of the Sages'."[64]

Cho Hŭiryong's ambiguity towards Buddhism also manifested itself in his reaction to danger. He recounts that he silently recited the *Kwanŭmgyŏng* 觀音經 (Avalokiteśvara Sutra, the part of the Lotus Sutra that promises the assistance of Avalokiteśvara to anyone who invokes the bodhisattva in moments of peril) as he felt threatened by the swelling waters of a flooding river that nearly reached his house. The flood was indeed averted. Yet Cho remained skeptical about cause and effect in this case and laughed about it.[65]

An important part of the attraction of Buddhism for Cho Hŭiryong seems to have lain in the style of the scriptures. In a passage that betrays the fact that in his study he had Buddhist sutras lying about, he says: "That the people of old were attracted by Buddhist scriptures was not just because of the principle of meditation, but because they rejoiced in the mysteriousness (*myo* 妙) of the style."[66] Elsewhere he states that sutras like the *Pŏphwagyŏng* (Lotus Sutra) and

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62. Cho Hŭiryong, *Cho Hŭiryong chŏnjip*, trans. and annot., Silsi haksa kojŏn munhak yŏn'guhoe (Seoul: Han'gil at'ŭ, 1998) 6:152-154.

63. *Sŏgu mangnyŏn nok*, in Cho Hŭiryong, 1: 73-74.

64. The phrase "a disciple of the Sages" echoes *Mencius*, Book III, 9.

65. *Sŏgu mangnyŏn nok*, 120-121.

Nŭngŏmgyŏng 楞嚴經 (Heroic March Sutra) are no more than footnotes to the Confucian classics, and are read because of their style, which is dazzling and mysterious like riddles. But in the end, an intelligent person will see through this. Cho Hŭiryong concludes that in the final analysis the Buddhist teachings are not different from those of Confucianism. "What is the difference between the Buddhist striving for the Perfections (pāramitās) and Confucian self-cultivation?"[67]

Cho Hŭiryong probably was of *chungin* 中人 extraction, and not a proper yangban. Figures with a similar class background played an increasing role in the cultural and religious life of late Chosŏn. In this connection it is interesting to speculate a little on the identity of the lay believer Chihyŏng, briefly mentioned earlier, who was the author of a number of Buddhist *kasa* published at the end of the 18th century and published a number of books of various kinds. We know from a copy of a collection of Buddhist tracts (*Ch'ŏnji p'aryang sinjugyŏng* 天地八陽神呪經) published in the same year as the *kasa*, at the same temple, that his original name was Hong T'aeun 洪泰運.[68] A certain Hong T'aeun is also the compiler of a *Thousand Character Text* (*Ch'ŏnjamun* 千字文) published in Seoul in 1804.[69] The same name appears in an *Ilsŏngnok* 日省錄 entry for the 22nd of the fourth lunar month of 1809 as that of a man of the relatively lowly junior sixth rank. If this is indeed the same person as Chihyŏng, this suggests that Chihyŏng was a person of rather modest background, possibly belonging to a secondary status group. Persons with such a social background were extremely active in the cultural domain around that time and may have constituted one of the forces that sustained Buddhism.[70] In publications from the late 19th century there is certainly some evidence to that effect.[71] Many persons of chungin or *sŏŏl* 庶孼 (sons of yangban fathers and non-yangban mothers) status were often highly cultivated and their support for Buddhism would in no way imply a degeneration of Buddhism into any form of "superstition."

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66. Ibid., 132.

67. Ibid., 53-54.

68. The book is part of the Kyujanggak collection: Karam library, nr. 294.336-B872p. Also see Chaoying Fang, *The Asami Library*, 228-229.

69. Kyujanggak, nr. 418.3-J936.

70. For a description of this milieu, see Chŏng Okcha, *Chosŏn hugi munhwa undongsa* (Seoul: Ilchogak, 1988) and *Chosŏn hugi chungin munhwa yŏn'gu* (Seoul: Ilchisa, 2003). Cf. Eunsu Cho, "Re-thinking Late 19th Century Chosŏn Buddhist Society," 96-97 for evidence that also points to the importance of the contributions of non-yangban.

71. This is an impression based on a survey of Buddhist publications in the collection of INALCO in Paris and some other collections, but the subject awaits more thorough study.

Conclusions

In an article in English on *kamnot'aeng*, Kang Woo-bang says: "The notion of Buddhism's steady decline during the late Chosŏn dynasty stems from a policy stance rather than actual fact."[72] It should be clear that I fully agree with this. However, I have tried to question Kang's judgment in an earlier but more extended version of his essay on *kamnot'aeng* that "Buddhism lost the ruling-class patronage that it had enjoyed for centuries and developed into a religion of the ruled, the outcasts, and the weaker members of society."[73] There were enough patrons of high status to make this claim at least partially invalid. It is probably true that Buddhism during this period reached a greater number of commoners, for instance through the medium of *kasa*, but there is no more reason to think of this as meaning that Buddhism degenerated than there is for interpreting the spread of Confucianism among the lower ranks of society that took place simultaneously as a sign of the degeneration of Confucianism. It should be noted that practices that easily can be regarded as popular because they did not require literacy or great intellectual capacities, such as *yŏmbul* 念佛, invoking or concentrating the mind on the Buddha Amitābha, were practiced among the elite (including the Taewŏn'gun) as well. More research is needed on the social background of Buddhist believers, but I think there needs be no doubt that the *educated classes* (of whatever social status) on which Buddhism could rely were growing.

Accordingly, Buddhism survived rather by adapting to the dominant ideology than by catering to those who remained untouched by civilization in that specific form. Confucians tended to accept Buddhism inasmuch as it contributed to the "Confucian order," proposing support for the reconstruction of temples, for instance, if they had a connection with the royal family, or if they had some association with monks who had fought for the fatherland. Buddhism, for its part, eagerly subscribed to the hegemonic Confucian ideology of the priority of the public good (*kong* 公) that was promoted by fostering the duties of filial piety and loyalty to the monarch. At the same time, it offered consolation in the realm of the private (*sa* 私), which was not necessarily in conflict with Confucianism, itself less suited to this purpose. Thus Buddhism, no less than Confucianism, came to promote a sense of (Confucian) nationhood. This may be illustrated

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72. *Kamnot'aeng*, 413.

73. See p. 97 of his "Ritual and Art in the Eighteenth Century," in Hongnam Kim, ed., *Korean Arts of the Eighteenth Century: Simplicity and Splendor*, 79-98.

through the wishes for the well-being of the royal family and the country in a *Yŏngsan hoesang* painting of 1693: "Long, long life for the Three Majesties [King, Queen and Crown Prince], that the country may be great and the people in peace, that the wheel of the Law may turn for ever."[74]

As far as Buddhist institutions were concerned, including temples and the community of monks and nuns, there is insufficient reason to claim that popularization (*minjunghwa*) was the main trend in late Chosŏn, or even a major trend. This does not mean that elements of Buddhism did not penetrate the lower social orders in this period. Evidence of Buddhism affecting other forms of religion and ritual in this period (or even earlier) is abundant in shamanic practices. My point is that this should be seen as the filtering down of cultural forms that originally were part of the culture of the elite or at least of the literate, not as the *misinhwa* of Buddhism. Confusion has arisen because of twentieth-century pleas from within the Buddhist community to get rid of "shamanistic," "superstitious" elements, of which Han Yongun provides an early example. These pleas owed more to a Western, modernistic discourse, grafted onto Confucian prejudices, than to truly Buddhist ideas and have obscured the true nature of late Chosŏn Buddhism.

74. Hong Yunsik, *Han'guk purhwa hwagijip*, 1: 58.