

Navayāna Buddhism : The Dawning of a New Tradition

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I . The Historical Meaning of *Navayāna* Buddhism

1. The Trend of Thought before *Mahāyāna* Buddhism

If we draw a map of the world according to religious boundaries, Korea belongs to the cultural area of *Mahāyāna* Buddhism. Europe is generally considered a Catholic region while the United States is largely Protestant Christian, and Middle Eastern and African countries are predominantly Islamic. In Asia, Buddhist Culture is overwhelming. In the South-east Asian countries such as Sri Lanka, Thailand, Myanmar and Vietnam, the tradition of *Theravāda* Buddhism is strong, while in North-East Asian countries such as Korea, China, and Japan we find a great living *Mahāyāna* Buddhist tradition.

Actually, there is quite a big difference between the two traditions both culturally and doctrinally. Historically, *Mahāyāna* Buddhism, in contrast to the *Theravāda* Tradition, is largely still a mystery. For instance, we don't

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know much about the founding religious body or the process by which the *Mahāyāna* Tradition developed. The beginnings are still a riddle to us. However, Buddhist scholars agree about three points. Firstly, that Southern India was the starting point at the time of the Andhra monarchy which immediately preceded the Christian Era. Secondly, that the *Mahāyāna* Movement was not led by any one special figure but would have reflected the groups of the established Buddhist Orders of that time. And thirdly, that married Buddhists were probably the core members and that the emerging beliefs and systems would have developed around the stupa area.¹

If so, what is the focus of *Mahāyāna*? The first point we need to consider in the concept of '*yāna*'. In the early period of Buddhism this '*yāna*' concept did not exist. It first appears in the *Lotus Sūtra* (sk.saddharama-puṇḍarīka-sūtra) where the idea of Buddha's teaching as a 'means' (*upāya*) began to develop. The concept of 'returning three vehicles' to 'one vehicle' is strongly suggested as the basis for a deviation from the then prevailing Buddhist Schools. Schools such as *Mahāsāṅghika* & *Theravāda* emphasized the religious importance of *Pravrajyā*, but the concept of *yāna* could not then have existed in terms of selecting which way to pursue *Pravrajyā*. By establishing this concept of *yāna*, *Mahāyāna* Buddhism suggests that *Hīnayāna*, *Mahāyāna* & *Ekayāna* are all the same. However, *Mahāyāna* claims that to pursue one's own enlightenment or extinction is a Hīnayānist attitude and only *Mahāyāna* provides the ideal way of practice, that is, not for self but for others. Whereas *Ekayāna* is the dialectical understanding of *Mahāyāna*. In other words, *Mahāyāna* is not in opposition to *Hīnayāna*, rather it is a development of the teaching and a further stage beyond *Hīnayāna*. Though *Mahāyāna* Buddhism largely arose in opposition to the dominant Buddhist Schools of the time, it is not clear whether the *Sarvāstivādins* or the *Sautrāntikas* were its target.

The questions which were raised by the Mahāyānists encompass the following five areas.

A. Distortion of Buddhist theory: those Buddhists who thought that the theoretical foundation of 'non-self' was weak, claimed that Dharmas

¹ The established theory is that the rise of Mahāyānist Buddhism could be dated to the 3c. B.C, or at least to the 2c B.C. (Hirakawa, <Study on the early Mahāyānist Buddhism>, p.172.

existed, but the 'self' did not exist. That is, while the Buddha's declaration of non-self is true, the truth itself should not be denied. *Mahāyāna* Buddhism supported *śūnyatā* as strong evidence against this thesis.

B. Deficiency of practical application: the dominant Buddhist schools of the day amassed evidence of metaphysical accomplishments and developed a systematization of Buddhist theory. However, this work was criticized for its lack of reference to everyday life, and was monopolized by a few intellectuals. In response to the need for a practical application the Māhāyanists set up the Bodhisattva as a self-enlightened, practical man.²

C. Conquest of *Ekayāna* faith: the people's longing for the historical body eventually gave rise to Buddha monotheism. Until this time, disciples had sought only to attain Arahatsip. When the universal understanding of Buddha disappeared, the Buddhist schools were reduced to a system of absolute faith. In contrast, *Mahāyāna* Buddhists profess faith in many buddhas, understanding the limitless buddhas as being incarnations of one own mind. This understanding provides the basis for a faith that all beings can attain eternal happiness through the mind of all buddhas.

D. Limits of *Pravrajyā* centralism: home-leavers(*Pravrajyās*) sought to attain final extinction, but the goal of married Buddhists was to be born in Buddhist heaven. Thus, they generally believed that they could be born in heaven through the merit gained by almsgiving and devotion to the Buddhist Order. Thus there was a two-level structure existing between home-leavers and laymen, not unlike the relationship between master and servant. *Mahāyāna* Buddhism grasped this notion as a basic cause for the degeneration of the principles of equality which had been preached by the Buddha. Thus the doctrine in the Heart Sūtra, "form is nothing other than emptiness; emptiness is nothing other than form" appeared as an answer to this dilemma.

E. Repulsion against the view of formal precepts. The Buddhist schools had developed around the five precepts. Thus, the means by which

² Seeing in terms of Sanskrit grammar, the word 'Bodhisattva' could be interpreted in several aspects. a. Essence, Nature; Sattva corresponds to the Pali 'Satta', and means the 'essence'.(Skt. Dict. Pbg & Skt. Dict. M.W.B) b. A Living Existence; T. W. Rhys Davids and W. Stede translated it as "a being destined to attain fullest Enlightenment." c. Mind, Spirit, Sense.(Pali Dict. S.V) d. Embryo. e. Strength, Vigour, Power, Courage. (Tib. Dict. Das 883b) f. Hero, Warrior. (E. R. E. Hastings)

one could be judged as a good or bad disciple was based on whether one observed strictly the formal precepts. However *Mahāyāna* emphasizes intention of mind and our sincere affirmation and practice are more important than concern with minor infractions and formalization of precepts. The Mahāyānist response to this view of formal precepts is the Three Moral Precepts, particularly 'moral precepts as embracing wholesome dharmas' and 'moral precepts as benefiting all sentient beings' which can be understood as a more positive participation in social affairs and an embodiment of justice.

The challenge of *Mahāyāna* spread throughout the whole of the Indian subcontinent. In the third Century AD. Nāgārjuna developed a whole philosophical foundation for Mahāyānist thought. The ideals of *śūnyatā* and *prajñā* had become central concepts of *Mahāyāna* Buddhism. After the 3rd Century A.D. this was the prevailing thought throughout India.

2. The Mahāyānist Body as an entity

It is now well-substantiated in many respects, that a Mahāyānist body did in fact exist. *Mahāyāna* and *Hināyāna* temples co-existed around the Sanchi stupa in the second century BC. Also, Faxian, Xua'n Zhūang and Hye-cho record in their travel sketches at that time how *Mahāyāna* and *Hināyāna* peacefully co-existed.³ Nevertheless, there are some pertinent questions to be asked about what has been referred to as the Mahāyānist Body. The main Buddhist Schools of the time had their own scriptures, managerial organization, disciplines and economic bases. If so, what were the religious characteristics of the Mahāyānist Body? We think that a clue can be found in the area of the stūpas. This religious body's organization seems to have been centered around the stūpas, but existing independently from the major Buddhist Schools both economically and doctrinally.

3 The evidence that the Mahāyānist Buddhist Body was not separated from the school Buddhism completely at that time follows. a. In the above travel sketches, the authors record the fact that *Mahāyāna* and *Hināyāna* co-existed together. b. The idea that *Mahāyāna* a tradition of worship of buddhist stūpas and the other types of theory. For example, there is the idea of *śūnyatā* and *vijnāptimatra*. c. To prove the differentiation between *Mahāyāna* and *Hināyāna*, I think that theoretical support is needed. The doctrine of karma and *pratiṭyasamutpāda* is the very link connecting the two. (Kaneoka, <Mahāyānist Buddhism>, pyungronsa, p.62)

The point that we should pay attention to is the reference to Bodhisattva masses appearing very frequently in *Mahāyāna* Scriptures. The original Sanskrit word for these assemblies is *Bodhisattvaṅgana*, which differentiated it from the traditional concept of Sangha. (Byung-Jo, Jung: 1988, 38-39). After Buddhas' death, the economic base of Buddhist schools relied upon the patronage of royal families and other wealthy supporters. The life of *Pravrajyā*, that is, observing the mendicancy principle, was not essentially compatible with an economic life. Then around the Second Century BC stūpas sprung up like mushrooms. This work was started by the Great King Aśoka who built at least 2000 stūpas throughout India. Naturally these sites became the visiting places for Buddhist pilgrims and thus, they attracted significant funds from almsgiving. But even before the major Buddhist Schools attracted patronage from wealthy donors the stupa areas may have already established an independent system. Mahāyānist pioneers spread their ideology by way of pilgrimage, and it is thought that these pilgrims came to regard the *stūpas* as their base. And how was the life of a *Bodhisattvaṅgana* maintained? It is noteworthy that they were not in the position of first being given alms by Buddhist believers. The word *bhikṣu* originally means 'those who beg for food', while at the same time it includes the meaning of 'a person who deserves alms'. The word '*upasaka*' means 'laymen' which means 'those who serve'. Therefore an *upasaka* is one who provides the four necessities to the *bhikṣu* which are clothing, food, shelter and medicine. Hence the relationship between the giving *upasaka* and the receiving *bhikṣu* was established naturally. However, there is no reference to 'one who receives alms' in the vocabulary of a Bodhisattva. Rather, he or she is 'one who gives alms to others'. So the dual structure of giver and receiver does not exist for a *Bodhisattvaṅgana*. In the "*Daśa-bhūmika-vibhāṣā*" (book 16), the stūpa is defined as the place where homeless *bhikṣu* stay, while the Aranya is a quiet, small temple convenient for practice. More concretely, it is understood that Aranya is the place of training for Mahāyānist *Dhyāna* Dharmas, and the Stūpa is the place where many different kinds of *Mahāyāna* rituals are performed, for example: Ten Things', or is a place to study Buddhist theory. In the "*Daśa-bhūmika-vrbhasu*" (book 12) there are sixty points listed which homeless

Bodhisattvas should attend to when they practice *Samādhi*.

Among them are the following which give us an insight into the Mahāyānist Body.

- ① to cure the sick
- ② not to covet interests
- ③ not to stay at the *punya* of *dhūtas*
- ④ to raise respect for *upādhyāya* and *āchārya*
- ⑤ to whomever hears the dharma and recites the scripture, let them have the understanding of a parent, a master and a great monk.
- ⑥ not to desire to be *dāna-pati* or a master.⁴

The first point suggests that one of the functions of the stupa temples was to care for the sick. The second and third points show that *Bodhisattvagana* also followed ascetic practices such as *Dhūta* and other usual practices observed by homeless disciples. Point four suggests that there were some strong and respected leaders who guided this Buddhist body. Five and six suggest that these *Bodhisattvagana* had some followers or groups which protected them.

From the above we start to get a picture of the Mahāyānist Body: We know that Mahāyānists lived in the stupa and Araṇya temples. They begged for food at regular intervals and their clothing also was *Kashaya*. Among them were religious leaders such as *upādhyāya* and *āchārya* and the *Bodhisattvagana* still observed the 250 precepts of *Hināyāna*. At the stupa temple they mainly took care of their health and read the sutras, while at the Araṇya temples they made offering to Buddha or Bodhisattvas or practiced meditation such as *Surangana samādhi* and *pratyatpanna samādhi*. Around the time when "*Dhesa-Bhumika-vibhasa*" was written, the life of a homeless *Bodhisattvaga* was probably not so different from the *Shravakayana Sangha*. This was the limitation of the *Mahāyāna* Body. That is to say, the doctrines were different, but the forms were the same.

4 T. 26, no. 1521. *Daśa-bhūmika-vibhāṣā*, book 16, p.112. Besides these citations, there are other articles. ⑦ to offer meals and respect for great virtuous monks ⑧ to respect holy masses ⑨ to recite the Heart Sūtra ⑩ to teach other people and let them read the *Heart Sūtra* etc., These 10 articles are called 'Ten Things'.

3. Ideological Reflection on *Mahāyāna* Buddhism

The Mahāyānist movement was a reinterpretation of Buddhist thought and the motive power which resulted in a great development in Buddhism. It succeeded in rerouting the philosophical power of earlier Buddhism into a religious joyfulness, injecting the cultured philosophy of that time with a new practical will. Thus some Western scholars praise the Bodhisattva Nāgārjuna, who was a champion of *Mahāyāna* Buddhism in much the same way as the disciple Paul was in Christian history. There was about a ninety year interval between the time of Jesus and that of Paul. Moreover, Jesus, who was a prophet considered himself to be a son of God, whereas Paul was just a successor to his teachings. But when we assess the ideological achievement of the two we arrive at an interesting conclusion. We can surmise that Jesus was not able to accomplish what he wished to. As we understand it, his plan to build the divine country failed. History tells us that he was greatly suppressed by people and eventually nailed to the cross at a young age. But Paul transmitted the messages of Christianity throughout Europe, which was at that time ruled by Rome, as well as constructing churches under all kinds of adversity. Thus, it was this very same Saint Paul who laid the foundation for the Christianity of today. I doubt the propriety of the word, however Paul deserves to be appreciated as a great figure, even greater than Jesus in the history of Christianity. We can understand *Mahāyāna* Buddhism in a similar way⁵ By overcoming the limitations of early Buddhist thought and practice, and implanting a comprehensive view of the world for people, Buddhism developed far beyond the boundaries of a national religion in India to that of world-wide proportions.(Charls Weihsun & Sandra A Wawryfko eds.:1994). However, Buddhism has a few serious weaknesses which remain a burden for Buddhist thought today as it tries to adjust itself to the environment of the 21st Century.

5 Nāgārjuna, who had completed the theoretical aspects of Mahāyānist Buddhism, was a native of the Southern part of India. While primitive Buddhism had started from the foot of River Ganzis and was transmitted into the Southern part of the country, Mahāyānist Buddhism had taken the reverse course. I think that this would be related to the political dynamics of period, in that while North India was unstable politically before and after the Christian era, South India was relatively calm after the establishment of the Andra Dynasty.

The focus of criticism against *Mahāyāna* Buddhism is its lack of faith in the Buddha. Early Buddhists increasingly adopted a position of absolute faith in the Buddha, but the Mahāyānists diluted this faith. Because the Mahāyānists professed to believe in the many Buddhas they reasoned that Buddha, as the *Dharmakaya*, could be expressed in diverse persons. For example, *Amitabha* as the head of *Sukhavati*, *Bhaisajyaraaja* as the Eastern world, *Maitreya* as the Future Buddha, *Vairochana* as the Padma world etc. Thus the various Buddhas were given form.

Though this diversification succeeded in universalizing Buddhist thought, its ambiguity is liable to have resulted in confusion for the communities. Most Buddhists have probably doubted the faith tradition of these many Buddhas once or twice. For those who have believed in the Buddha's Dharma for a long time, it is inevitable that they also will be confused. What is the meaning of the seven Buddhas of the past, and how should *Sakyamuni* be interpreted in relation to them? If there is only one Buddha why is it necessary to have other Bodhisattvas? *Mahāyāna* Buddhism does not directly refer to this problem. It just explains the meaning of the Bodhisattva ambiguously, in terms of the symbolism of the *Dharmakaya*. As Buddhism spread to China and later, as the Chan(sōn) Order began to grow, this tendency deepened. In the <Blue Cliff Record> it is continually reiterated that one should despise the Buddha. In reply to the question "what is Buddha?" the Patriarchs say it is "a dung stick" or "three pounds of flax" and "the thing which should be beaten to death and given to a dog" and so on. If we separate this part out and look at it logically, it seems that Chan(sōn) Buddhism is trying to discredit the Buddha. Of course, there is a different way to interpret this speech which is why we must caution against conceptualized Buddhism or the idolizing of statues of the Buddha. Even so, it is too excessive. The Mahāyānists even assert that the *Tathagatha* sōn is inferior to Patriarch sōn, and only the latter is the way to true enlightenment. At this point Buddha already disappears. Only the Patriarch religion remains.

Even though the Chan Order is Chinese, there is no doubt that it is the essence of *Mahāyāna* Buddhism. This leap of logic eventually became a basic reason for confusion about the Buddha of *Mahāyāna* Buddhism. In

Korean Buddhism, all kinds of gods wearing a Buddhist mask appear on the stage. For example, *ch'il-sōng-sin* (seven star god), *San-sin*(mountain god) *si-wang*(ten kings), Dragon, Tiger, elephant etc, all become objects of worship. Strictly speaking, *Ch'il-sōng* and *San-sin* were not objects of Buddhist worship. These gods came from the earlier folk faith, Shamanism or Taoism. It is positive in the sense that Buddhism was able to absorb some earlier beliefs and achieve a harmonious development, but on the other hand it is negative in that it destroyed the pure faith of Buddhism.

In the same context, *Mahāyāna* Buddhism theoretically rationalized the complex and diverse forms of traditional faiths instead of concentrating on the pure faith. If enlightenment is the goal of *Mahāyāna* Buddhism, then the way to arrive at it should be uniform. But praying, meditation practice, *bodhisattva* action, faith in the pure Land etc, all were mixed together and consequently it is difficult to grasp the meaning. It is like a Chinese character which expresses both the affirmativeness of diverse meanings as well as the negativeness of vagueness.

It is also useful for us to remember that all the countries, having professed themselves to be *Mahāyāna* Buddhist, for instance China, Japan, Korea, were thoroughly *Hināyāna* in their way of running *Sangha*. Is it not so that practices such as shaving the head, wearing uniform robes, remaining celibate and not eating meat, came directly from the *Hināyāna Sangha*? It is evident that Mahāyānists have strictly followed much of the discipline and form of *Hināyāna* Buddhism and in this regard it is time they examined themselves in respect of these practices.

II. A Fresh Direction for Buddhism to Reflect the New Millenium

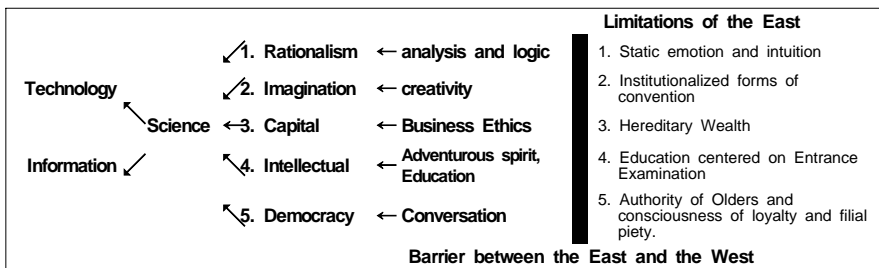
1. Reduction of Religious Sphere

There is no denying that today's world is predominantly an information society. Seen in the context of cultural history, it is now drawn into a whirl pool of reform. The recent change is rapid and intense. Ten years ago we did not know the name of an instrument called 'beeper'. The concept of cellular phone was also unfamiliar to us. The rapid development

of information and communication has unified this world into a village. Moreover, internet has rendered the borderlines between countries meaningless and the changeable world of cyber has also made it impossible for us to see our future. It has taken thousands of years for mankind to progress through the stages of hunting and later, farming. The process of industrialization required another two hundred years. But the recent information society has radically changed one lifestyle in just twenty years. So what is source of this enormous power of change?

From where does the power of the USA to govern the world originate? We suggest it is from the revolution of information technology based on scientific technology. The East generally falls behind the West in the areas of science and technology, and lacks a certain intellectual spirit of adventure. While the institutions and thinking of the East are of a static nature, the West, especially USA, is built on a solid rational foundation. Western reason and logic are now overwhelming the intuition-centered East.

The following chart helps to illustrate this point further.



After the Cold War ended, USA the superpower, established a New World Order. We don't know when the solo-play of the USA will end. When considering the dominant cultural trends in the world, historically the power seems to have moved from Rome originally to Europe, USA and the Pacific Rim nations, but it is hard to predict at this point where and how it will make its next mark. Such an unbalanced situation has produced some negative effects, especially in the area of religion. One of the hottest issues in this century is whether religion will continue to

survive as a dominant value for mankind.

The religious population began to reduce from the beginning of the 20th Century. Scientific development at that time challenged Christianity, and the diminishing Christian congregations in turn set off alarm bells for other established religions such as Buddhism, Islam and Hinduism. As a result of Darwin's Doctrine of Evolution, the West has been wrapped up in an atmosphere of positivism. This has meant that only that which was fact-centered and result-centered was regarded as reliable, while the symbolism and mysticism of religion was generally refuted. Thus, the glory which religion had enjoyed for many centuries through the ancient and medieval periods, was now the glory of science and technology. A religious view no longer had persuasive power in the world, having lost its traditional authority. The sphere of religious authority has been increasingly narrowed, until today it is only the moral purity of religion which is estimated as valuable, due to rapid social change. Arnold Toynbee characterizes future religion as "a secularization of religion' and an indifference to religion by the general populace." Unfortunately his prediction is already proving to be true. Most religions decried this modernization, but at the same time fall into endless secularization and commercialization. Instead of religious logic, managerial logic prevails. Due to this tendency, people's indifference to religion is growing. Thus people are at best fascinated with religious mysteries. I think that religion must now develop its own domain through its own self-reflection process. Here we can also recognize a need to reconsider current Buddhist trends.

2. Necessity for *Navayāna* Buddhism

Buddhism can always be interpreted in new ways and rightly so. A new Buddhism does not mean that a completely new ideological system should be created, or that the established form should be radically changed. If we apply Buddhist Truth to our lives and sincerely practice and study its applicability, this in itself is a new form of Buddhism. In this regard, the emergence of *Navayāna* Buddhism is necessary. There are a number of reasons why the social influence of religion has degenerated.

First, we can trace the origin of this to a diminishing respect for religious leaders. Religious ministers in ancient society were treated as the ruling class, ideologically and socially.

In Korean history the social and political position of *wang-sa* or *kuk-sa* was not only symbolic. At the time of the Korean Dynasty, the monk in charge of the *sanghas* surpassed authority of the state. Furthermore, in the time when general citizens were not guaranteed an education, Buddhist leaders were the elite, educated class. In both the East and the West this was the case, for Christianity as much as for Buddhism.

Around the transitional time, as the world was approaching the modern era, the authority of such religious leaders began to rapidly collapse. This was especially the case for the intellectual authority of religion as it was replaced by the university and research institute.⁶

Secondly we should consider the rapid growth of lay believers. They have the professional knowledge and the core powers which contribute to the development of society currently. Members of the lay community have already established their own independent power in a practical as well as intellectual scene. Also, many personal groups and romantic societies have emerged on the sense. These new phenomena would not have been imagined in an agricultural society. Religion no longer has an influence on extensive social organization as it did previously.

The social leap of the general populace, including Buddhists, has undermined the traditional position of monastics, so that religion no longer has a value position which is persuasive to the people. They are no longer influenced by the orthodox ideology. Today's issues are quite different from the past. For example, many new problems have appeared such as the possibility of genetic manipulation, the emergence of animal cloning, the moral problem of euthanasia, the characterization of brain death, the morality of cyber-sex, the logical response against environmental disruption, the problems of pollution and industrial wastes, water preservation, juvenile delinquency and so on. Even if our minds were enlightened in some sense, still, the menace of war posed by North Korea would not disappear right

⁶ Byung-Jo, Chung, <Culture and Buddhism of the 21st Century>, especially see the third paragraph of the first chapter, 'the challenge of future'.

now. This does not mean that Buddhist values should be disregarded. It requires us to give careful consideration to these many problems in light of a Buddhist perspective. Thus, a suitable title for these studies' areas may be 'Applied Buddhism'. It is time to develop more diverse areas of study and new disciplines such as Buddhist politics, Buddhist economics, Buddhist sociology, Buddhist psychology, Buddhist literature and Buddhist aesthetics. For this to be possible it would require a qualitative reorganization of the *Sangha*. Unfortunately I think it would be very difficult for the *Sangha* in Korea today to adjust themselves to these enormous changes. Thus, lack of such flexibility many point to a need for the advent of *Navayāna* Buddhism in the near future. It may be that this new type of Buddhism would overcome the limitation of *Mahāyāna* Buddhism and further appear as an alternative to effectively confront the rapid social changes of this time.(Ken Jones: 1989, 157).

We observe the possibility of *Navayāna* Buddhism. Recently the Buddhist Society for Ecology has been organised in the USA. This is a kind of environmental preservation society consisting of fellows of Michigan State University. The Society regularly operates as an environmental monitoring corps as well as publishing a quarterly journal "Buddhism and the Environment". Members are mostly scientists and professional managers who believe in Buddhism and their doctrines can be summarized as follows.

The Earth is a kind of organism and life system. Thus, fresh air and sunlight are needed. However, two significant sources of oxygen which supply the earth come from the Himalaya Mountains and the Amazon Rain Forest region, both of which have been exploited for profit. As to the destruction of the ozone layer, glaciers are melting at an alarming rate due to the strong ultra-violet rays penetrating to the earth directly without filters. The main cause of global warming is the glacial water melting into the surface currents of the oceans.

When we consider this current environmental crisis how can we find a way to protect the earth from destruction?

Perhaps there is a way by proclamation of Buddhist precepts. The first precept is "not to kill". If we ourselves observe this moral rule and

maintain and awareness of it all times in our minds this may help to influence humans toward an environmental friendly approach which in turn, may be a way to prevent destruction. The US Society holds quarterly workshops where they pledge themselves to practice self restraint, adopting a vegetarian diet and developing concentration. The Japanese Pure Land Order adopts similar practices. Every temple of the great *Jodo-shin-shu* Buddhist School in Japan has a vocational training center. The center teaches people, especially prisoners, trade skills such as plastering, carpentry and tailor cutting.

In Korea various social activity groups are emerging such as the Buddhist Environmental Society, Buddhist welfare facilities for handicapped people and the Buddhist Nursing Society which includes a hospice. The motive power for these movements originates with lay Buddhists. I personally think that these emerging groups are a result of the various kinds of Buddhist cultural universities which have been established since the 1980s, and have educated general Buddhist believers. At the beginning these universities were established in order to teach basic Buddhist etiquette to the laity. Popularization of Buddhism is a natural result of this education. The traditional prayer meeting on the first and fifteenth day of each month is gradually changing into a new style assembly. In many temples they are already performing rituals using the Korean language, Hangul, instead of Chinese, which has been the tradition until now. Use of the common language of the people supports an acceleration of new styles and tendencies. The signs might be interpreted as symptoms of *Navayāna* Buddhism.

If we consider the present atmosphere in light of the time immediately preceding the dawning of *Mahāyāna*, we can see the prevailing distrust in the established Buddhist bodies and observe that lay groups are already playing a leading role. No doubt we will see a more established form in the near future. But at present it is difficult to forecast whether Buddhism will survive the current challenge it faces as a relevant world religion for the future. I think the information society of the 21st century beckons *Navayāna* Buddhism, and the longing for the true Dharma in the mind of Buddhists would ensure a necessary proliferation of this movement

throughout the world. (Kamada, 1976; 292-93).

III. Korean Buddhism: Where to from here?

1. Buddhism : Diminishing in the East and expanding in the West.

Western interest in Buddhism was academic in the beginning. The study of Indian philosophy and science was already established in the latter half of the 16th century, at that time under government patronage as a science. Oriental studies was also an established discipline. But it was mid-19th century that Buddhist Studies took root in the West. *Introduction to the History of Indian Buddhism* and *Translation and comments on the Saddharmapundarika-sutra* by Eugene Burnouf were the first texts to inform modern Buddhist studies. Later, the Pali Text Society, which was founded by Rhys David(1843-1892), became the base for Buddhist Studies. For example, the translations of *Vajraschedika Prajnaparadika Sutra* and *The Three Pure Land Sutras* were valuable texts for introducing Buddhism to Western People. From the first generation of Western Buddhist scholars such as, Max Müller and Oldenberg, to the second generation of Edward Conze and Etienne Lamotte, the horizon of Western Buddhist studies has expanded to include translation of many different sutras and also studies on Buddhist history. Nowadays the centre of research has relocated to North America where scholars such as Kallupahana of Hawaii University, Robert Buswell of UCLA, E. Faure of Stanford University show great promise.

As mentioned previously, Western Buddhist studies began mainly as a scholastic interest, however the present day situation is quite different. The second generation scholars of Buddhist studies were mostly Christian theologians. La Vallee Poussin and Sylvan Levee were originally theologians, but later took up the study of Buddhism from personal interest and intellectual curiosity. The current generation of Buddhist scholars in USA are however, from the Vietnam War generation. This generation is free from traditional imperialism and authoritarianism and the belief in Christian superiority. Most of these scholars have taken Buddhist precepts or have undergone personal experiences in Buddhist temples which correspond to the area of their own specialization. Buswell is an example,

he practiced the strict life of a monk for some years before returning home. As D.S. Ruegg observed, these scholars are from the generation which does not consider Buddhism in an institutionalized sense as 'the way of living'. This generation is rationalist, yet at the same time they enjoy personal rights and freedom while having an empathy and friendship with Buddhism. (Min-Yong Lee, 1998; 15)

It is no exaggeration to say that Europe and America have been caught in a fever of Buddhism. Zen Centers have sprung up everywhere in the USA including Boston, New York and Los Angeles, and meditation centers have also boomed in Canada and Europe. It was the emigrant contribution which sparked off the interest in Buddhism. In the beginning they formed a small society group due to homesickness but later they became more visible as interest in Buddhist studies grew in the West. It was actually the Dalai Lama who had the greatest impact on Western Buddhism in recent years. Through his ambassadorship he fostered a strong feeling of sympathy for the minority Tibetan race. This was reinforced by his own dramatic life which was full of ups and downs. When he was 19 years old he sought political asylum in India. His charismatic style and great sincerity charms his audiences all over the world and he has played a major role in boosting interest in Buddhism in the West especially after receiving the Nobel Peace Prize. Others who have singularly made major contributions to Western Buddhism are Thich Nhat Hahn from Vietnam, Walpola Rahula of Sri Lanka and Zen Master Seung Sahn of Korea.

The Buddhist boom in the West is however, not without its problems. To begin with, it seems to reflect strong nationalistic aspects with the intent of propagating a specific Buddhist tradition. For example, sometimes it seems that Tibetan Buddhism represents the whole Buddhist world, this may not be a desirable phenomena for the development of Buddhism in general as it does not speak for the universal truth of Buddhism but focuses on a specific situation related to a particular country. To approach Buddhist ideology from only a theoretical perspective also has its limitations. This tends to mystify Buddhism and cast a negative view particularly when considering the cosmology of *Naraka* or Hell Realms.

Nevertheless the rising interest in Buddhism in the West is generally moving in a positive direction and shows promise for a bright future.

In some traditional Buddhist countries, stagnation is rapidly setting in. In countries such as Thailand, Vietnam and Sri Lanka, Buddhism is weighed down by 'convention and tradition'. And in the case of Japan, excessive commercialization and schooling is another problem. As is the lament of the Japanese people themselves, Japanese Buddhism has been degraded to serve the funeral industry, and temple grounds are no longer place of practice but are places of interest for tourists.

Buddhism has almost disappeared in India and this century has seen a major decline in other traditional Buddhist countries which is a problem for Buddhism as a whole. It seems that one of the reasons for this decline is that they did not try to apply Buddhist teaching and principles to everyday life in a positive sense and responded in a negative way to the foreign trends of thought. China of course, has a recent history of rejection of religion as a result of the cultural revolution, and will need a great deal of time to restore the past glory. As a result, interest tends to incline towards Korean Buddhism as the ground of a great practice tradition and Bodhisattva spirit which is very much alive and now awakening in the world.

2. Expectations Anchoring on Korea Buddhism

The prospect of Korean Buddhism as a cradle for *Navayāna* Buddhism may not be an exaggerated dream. This is so for two reasons. Firstly, the tradition of the Korean Sangha is still very much centered on practice. Of course, when we consider the *Cho-gye* Order, which is the biggest representative Buddhist body in Korea, there is some limitation in that it is a Son Order. But other kinds of Buddhist orders, such as *Chŏn-tae*, *T'ae-go* and *Chin-'gak*, are using other styles of practice, for example, Pure Land, new rituals which have been developed by the individual Orders and prayer meetings. Most Korean monks and nuns practice meditation, read the sutras and pray every day which is their vocation. Korean Buddhism is a very beautiful tradition which is unexcelled anywhere else in the world at

this time. Although discord between *Chogye* Order monks at the end of the 20th century caused some harm to all Buddhists in Korea, it cannot be generalized as a dominant feature of Korean Buddhism.

Most monastics are practicing quietly and diligently, endeavoring to free themselves from the yoke of *Samsara*, and thus in this way, are contributing to the purification of society generally. The direction of this kind of practice may be in harmony with *Navayāna* Buddhism.

Secondly, lay Buddhist movements are very active in Korea. What was once considered the 'skirt and prayer' Buddhism in Korea, has been rapidly developing a strong intellectual and practice base which is applicable to every day life. This may well be a reaction to foreign Buddhist cultural trends but nevertheless Korean Buddhists who recognize the potential of their own tradition are gradually waking up. Breaking away from the previous focus on prayer they are concentrating their energies on practicing Bodhisattva actions.⁷ I suggest that it is a major task of Korean Buddhism to harmonize the role divisions between the monastic community and the laity. Relations between the two should be peaceful rather than antagonistic.

Another area for reform is that of the educational environments which presently center only on Son Buddhism. There is an expression in Korean Buddhism which is "*Hoe-tong* Buddhism" meaning harmoniousness. It could be a favorable influence to overcome sectarianism, however there is a risk that it may fall into featureless eclecticism. To date, Korean Buddhism has only focused on its successful Son practice. However, this practice should be reconsidered as it reflects exclusively the Southern School of Sŏn. It is a fact that Sŏn has been well recognized for its revolutionary focus on enlightenment, but if we are excessively attached to our own enlightenment and fail to socialize this, then we may call forth an enormous counter-result. For example it could promote a hostile atmosphere which confuses the action of '*nishprapanca*' with the action of violating precepts and praises only 'Sudden Enlightenment' rather than

7 E. Fromm, trans., Jin-Hong Jung, *To Have or To Be*, Seoul: jipmundang, pp. 95-137. The mode of existence has its own independence, freedom, and critical reason. The basic characteristics of it is not the active one as the meaning of external activity, or busyness, but the active one as the meaning of internal activity, or productive operation of human potentialities.

gradual, steady endeavors. Thus, we need to study the sutras as well as practice Son. In this way we create an attitude of respect for Buddhist doctrine. With this approach the pursuit of enlightenment would no longer be exclusive to the monastic community but would be returned to the society. Korean Buddhism would thus become a touchstone for the testing of this possibility, By sharing the new knowledge of *Navayāna* Buddhism this movement could be accelerated. In this regard, Korean Buddhism could be an important hope for Buddhism in the world.

3. The Task of *Navayāna* Buddhism

Preparation must be undertaken to establish formal conditions to support this new Buddhism. *Navayāna* Buddhism must accomplish a number of tasks.

- ① develop an organization model
- ② establish *Kyo-p'an*(classification of Buddha's teachings), that is, the various divisions of teaching and doctrine and publication of Buddhist Scriptures
- ③ designate which should include moral precepts
- ④ develop an economic foundation for *Sangha*, to mention a few

These preparations would establish an independent foundation which would ensure the differentiation from existing bodies and thus the need for a trial and error approach to development could largely be avoided. The above four conditions would need to be developed within the context of *Navayāna* Buddhist ideology. It is anticipated that a starting point for this new Buddhism would be a non-hierarchical differentiation between the monastic community and the laity. Islam is the only one of the four major world religions which does not have a concept of clergy. It is timely for this change in Buddhism due to rapidly changing social structures in the world. The most important thing is to represent Buddhist Truth rather than emphasize the *Pravrajara* form.

The next question is related to *Kyo-p'an*. *Mahāyāna* Buddhists

endeavored to support their doctrines and beliefs by re-editing the Scriptures. Thus, the work of *Kyo-sang-p'an-sōk* was produced in China. This is a division of Buddha's teachings. *Kyo-p'an* theory is active in the circle of *Mahāyāna* Buddhist culture, and is generally understood as orthodox Buddhaology. If so, should the Navayanists also compile their own scriptural base? Here we meet some problems. To begin with, such a form of Buddhism would deviate widely from original fundamental Buddhism. Thus, a more rational way may be to reconstruct existing scriptures. That is, to arrange the importance of certain Buddhist doctrines to reflect the current values shared by humankind. But this work needs careful consideration. If approached in a wrong way, it would become a superficial collection of 'golden- sayings'. Thus, when we refer to justice, we need to consider what exactly we mean by this, such as justice and injustice, conditions of justice, personal justice and social justice, and the response to injustice. In order to synthesize, we must also be well informed in all fields of the modern sciences and have a profound understanding of the scriptures. There is no disagreeing that its form should be in Korean language(*Han-gul*). Personally I think that it would be better for the scriptures of *Navayāna* Buddhism to be one volume consisting of around 480 pages and its detailed contents should be summarized as 108 items.(Byung-Jo Chung, 1997; 398 below).

And in the case of the problem of moral precepts, I think that all Dharma meetings should be in *Hangul*. But the Dharma should be divided into two parts, that which is for reading and that which is for interpretation. Because it does not matter whether disciples leave home or remain householders, there should be considerable flexibility in the style of hair and clothing. Also I suggest we need to reconstruct the ten main precepts and the forty-eight light precepts in the *Brahmajāla Sūtra*. And a further embellishment of the five precepts is also needed. As the five precepts use prohibitive expressions, it may cause people to experience rejection, and there is also a problem with the tenth precept, 'not to drink intoxicants' as it really is not effective. I think we should regard the last five articles of the *Brahmajāla Sūtra* as the five precepts of *Navayāna* Buddhism.

- ① not talking about others deeds
- ② not praising oneself and not denigrating others
- ③ give spiritual or material help willingly
- ④ not acting with aggression
- ⑤ not slandering the three Precious Ones

These include the *Mahāyāna* ethics of the Three Moral Precepts, as well as the traditional forms of the Namas Triratna's five precepts. I think that these forms embrace an ideal for popular Buddhism while at the same time reflecting *Navayāna* Buddhist ideals.(Byung-Jo, Chung, 1997; 426-27).

Finally, the economic base should be wholly self-independent. This would require the establishment of a business or other schemes which have earning potential. I suggest one of the reasons for the declining number of Buddhists is partly due to the lack of financial independence. Perhaps the new Buddhism needs to adopt "productive Buddhism" as its slogan. At the time when the Son Order was prevalent the traditional view of labour was discarded but today the practical form of begging for necessities which was allowed in many Buddhist countries in the past has now become impractical. The changing trends in society could transform the essence of this practice. This could be achieved by establishing a *Sangha* in the future society which is based on the principle of self-sufficiency. Because all economic activities have depended on donations from lay Buddhists in the past, this may have been a handicap to accomplishing popularization of Buddhism.

Having considered the previous possibilities for a Buddhist renaissance, now we are all in anticipation of the coming of *Navayāna* Buddhism. The *Mahāyāna* and *Hināyāna* bodies can now prepare to meet a new wave of *Navayāna* Buddhism. This is a kind of historical necessity. Seen in the context of Buddhist thought, the flowering place is highly probable to be the Korean Peninsula. This burdens us with both a pride and a responsibility. Thus, Korean Buddhists who are conscious of the direction of Buddhism in the future, should look to a more global development. It would be the major turning point for Korean Buddhism to facilitate the transition of the bright wisdom of Grandfather Buddha to a future Buddhism in Korea.

Glossary of Chinese Terms

hoi-tong	會通
kyo-pan	教判
kyo-sang-pan-suk	教相判釋
Cho-gye	曹系
Chŏn-tae	天台
Chin-'gak	真覺
T'ae-go	太古
Hye-cho	慧超
Wang-sa	王師
Kuk-sa	國師
Ch'il-sŏng-sin	七星神
San-sin	山神
Si-wang	十王
Sŏn	禪
Seung-sahn	崇山

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