

2021 · Spring *vol. 83*

LOTUS LANTERN

KOREAN BUDDHISM FOR INTERNATIONAL READERS

Dharma Talk

Flowers Bloom and Life Goes On

Special

Ferociously Going Forward to Honor the Buddha's Enlightenment

Buddhist Culture

Sanmun (Mountain Gate), the Way of Practice; the Way of Process

Jogye Order News

The *Buddhist Scripture*, the New Tripitaka of the 21st Century
Ethiopian Ambassador to Seoul Paid a Visit to the Jogye Order
May 'the Yangon Spring' Come to Myanmar



The Quarterly Magazine of

 Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism

LOTUS LANTERN · 2021, Spring *vol. 83*



COVER

Springtime in Songgwang-sa Temple, tinted in verdure

Photo by Juhyeon Kim

LOTUS LANTERN

KOREAN BUDDHISM FOR INTERNATIONAL READERS

© www.koreanbuddhism.net

Ⓜ www.buddhism.or.kr



LOTUS LANTERN

2021. Spring *vol. 83*

—
President & Publisher
Most Ven. Wonhaeng

—
Editor
Ven. Seong Gong

—
Contributing Editor
Jogye Order International Affairs Team

—
Publisher
Doban Media Co. Ltd

—
Interpreter
Hong Hee Yon

Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism
55 Ujeongguk-ro, Jongno-gu, Seoul, Korea
E-mail: jokb@buddhism.or.kr

Free subscription available for
Buddhist organizations.
Please send organization name and mailing
address to: jokb@buddhism.or.kr

CONTENTS

Dharma Talk **02**

Flowers Bloom and Life Goes On

Special **10**

Ferociously Going Forward to Honor the
Buddha's Enlightenment

Buddhist Culture **16**

Sanmun (Mountain Gates), the Way of Practice;
the Way of Process

Jogye Order News **22**

The *Buddhist Scripture*, the New Tripitaka of the
21st Century

Ethiopian Ambassador to Seoul Paid a Visit to the
Jogye Order

May 'the Yangon Spring' Come to Myanmar

Overseas News **28**

East Regional Jogye Order of North America

Manwol-sa Temple in Beijing

Bohyunsa in Dallas, USA

Jaeun-sa Temple in Uzbekistan

Junghyesa in USA

Muyeom and Zen Center in LA, USA

Dalmasa in LA, USA

Wonjuksa in New Jersey, USA

Bud Zen Center in New York, USA

Peace March to End Hate Crimes in New York



One Pillar Gate at Songgwang-sa Temple



●
Dharma Talk

Message from
Korean Buddhism to the world

Flowers Bloom and Life Goes On

I went to take a walk after lunch. The rain a few days ago made the forest greenery grow rich in color, and the meandering mountain trail redolent with the scent of pine trees. It was only a few days ago that the trees began to sprout shoots, and now they are dotted with budding flowers. The wild cherry trees that blossomed a while ago now rain pale pink petals down on the hills. Spring comes, no matter what is happening in the human world, and nature humbly follows the cycles of the moon and the sun, making sure trees grow and flowers bloom. What a perfect day for a spring outing! However...





The world is no longer what it used to be. Spring has come at last, but we can no longer openly celebrate it. Somehow, the deadly coronavirus leaped from animals to humans and sparked a worldwide pandemic. The whole world has been in emergency mode, exhausted to battle this disease. The virus has humanity's back up against the wall. Nothing in our life is the same anymore, and each day is dreaded, bringing a new low we never experienced before. But there is no turning back the clock, no going back in time. It reminds us that life is indeed suffering, and no one is free from the torment inherent in the embodied existence of the human realm on this earth.

Is life full of agony that inevitably catches up with us no matter how hard we try to run away from it? Is enduring it the only option available to humanity? No, it is not the only option, that there is hope, that there is a way to be liberated from afflictions and achieve lasting happiness, the Buddha said. He taught us the law of causality. Everything is conditioned, nothing arises without causes and conditions. The consequences we suffer now have been a long time coming. It is no use getting angry or complaining about what is happening now. The pandemic has arisen from the accumulation of causes and conditions

the human race has created and contributed to while it pursued economic growth and efficiency in blatant disregard of the needs of nature and other living beings sharing the planet earth. The glorious human civilization flourished only at the expense of nature, and now we are paying the price in the form of global climate change, depletion of natural resources, and class polarization. If we insist on the current lifestyle that has already been proven untenable, yet another natural disaster will strike us again. Now is the time for humanity to come to its senses, to realize the debt of life we owe to Mother Earth and inhabitants on it.

We have been acting like an ignoble tyrant, recklessly plundering the priceless treasure trove of nature that we were entrusted with. The COVID-19 is perhaps a wake-up call, a Bodhisattva in disguise that has manifested to teach us the reality of Indra's net, the web of the interconnectedness of all things that are endlessly interdependent, the unity of all beings. It has come to warn humanity that it is now time for us to learn how to coexist in harmony, how to let go of our selfish desires that we no longer can afford. It is time to realize helping others is indeed helping oneself, as we are all one family, all in the same boat at the end of the day.



Red plum blossoms at Hwaum-sa Temple





Camellia blossoms on *budo top* (*Budo top* is a stupa in honor of a great master that has passed away)

The current situation brings to mind a prophecy of the Cree Indians, “When the last tree is cut down, the last fish eaten and the last stream poisoned, you will realize that you cannot eat money.” Chief Seattle said in his now-famous speech addressed to the white settlers who came to take the ancestral land of the native people, “We are all brothers after all... We are part of the earth and it is part of us. The perfumed flowers are our sisters. The bear, the deer, the great eagle, these are our brothers. The rocky crests, the dew in the meadow, the body heat of the pony, and man all belong to the same family.” The Cree Indians destroyed no forest, let loose no pollutants that tainted nature, and in return, Mother Earth gifted them with the abundance of nourishment and safe shelters. They lived a simple yet happy life and passed beyond the veil spiritually in peace and fulfilled. We can no longer imitate a way of life from a bygone time, but

it is time to do some soul searching to find out what a truly happy life means.

The COVID-19 has ushered in the so-called ‘untack,’ or the new contact-free era. Lately, I have tried video conferencing for the first time. Unfamiliar as I was with this new mode of communication, I made a few mistakes, and it didn’t quite live up to the vividness of meeting a ‘real’ person, but it was not so bad. Our life will be like this in the new post-pandemic era, a series of new experiences unfamiliar yet not so bad if we try. We are used to going forward, looking only ahead, but it is time to look back and see the error of our ways. Our gaze used to be directed only outward, but now we must look inward. The pandemic made us realize how precious are the simple pleasures we enjoyed in our everyday life, which we used to take for granted.

When I entered the ‘gateless’ retreat, where a meditator’s scope of movement is limited to a small room for the whole duration of the retreat, I could cover the room in four steps from wall to wall. In those days, I longed more than anything else to be able to walk in a straight line for 100 steps. Who could have imagined something as simple as going straight for 100 steps could become one’s dearest wish? I would have never learned to appreciate the freedom to walk uninterrupted as something to be cherished if I had not been confined to a tiny space. The lesson I learned from the gateless retreat is still one of the things that help me stay grounded when I find myself struggling in life.

Over a year has passed since the outbreak of COVID-19, and the last year showed us why this crisis visited upon us in the first place, and what we should do to overcome the pandemic. So the question is, what will we do from now on? Should we let ourselves be overwhelmed and in despair by the pandemic or let the suffering be our teacher? We may not be able to change



reality entirely, yet we certainly can change how we see the world. And we can certainly learn not to repeat past mistakes. There is a reason that the Right View is the first practice of the Noble Eightfold Path taught by the Buddha. We have no hope of finding a solution unless we face the situation head-on and see things as they truly are with clear eyes. Coronavirus vaccination has started on a global scale and scientists around the world are working around the clock to develop drugs to treat COVID-19. It seems that the days are numbered until the battle against the pandemic is won and we have our lives back. But if the human race fails to learn its lesson, nature will strike again.

Spring has come again. The valley is covered with nameless wildflowers and the forest is filled with birdsongs. Fluffy white clouds float in the sky. The perfume of apricot blossoms in the early spring is sweeter because of the harsh winter they endured. Likewise, the spring at the end of the coronavirus tunnel will be more glorious because the virus has given Mother Earth a much-needed rest.

Flowers will bloom and life will go on.

By Ven. Dongeun / Abbot, Cheoneun-sa Temple



Special

Reporting on the Key events of the Jogye Order
in this quarter.

Ferociously Going Forward to Honor the Buddha's Enlightenment

The twelfth month in the lunar calendar is meaningful to Korean Buddhists in that not only is it the last month of the year but also the halfway point of the 3-month winter retreat, which starts on the full moon day of the tenth lunar month. But what makes it truly special is the 8th day of the month, the anniversary of Sakyamuni Buddha's attaining enlightenment. To honor his unwavering resolve to seek the ultimate Truth and eventual attainment of it, laypeople as well as monastics dedicate the first week of this month to intensive spiritual practice.



Buddha's Enlightenment Day and the Year-end Hunting Festival

In China, the last month of the lunar calendar is called the Year-end Hunting Festival, which originated from the ancient nomadic custom of making animal sacrifice, the ritual killing and offering of an animal to the divine to mark the passing of the year.

Chinese celebrated the anniversary of the Buddha's attainment of enlightenment as early as the 6th century, while little is known about Korea's tradition of the day in the same period. According to *Jingchu Suishiji* or *Record of Jingchu*, an annotated record of China's major festivals in the 6th century, "Villagers build the effigy of Vajra-warrior and beat drums to drive away smallpox demons on the eighth day of the last month of the lunar calendar. They also ritualistically bathe to cleanse themselves of the past sins." The book notes that that day also served as the major Buddhist holiday, marking Sakyamuni Buddha's reaching nirvana, which was commemorated by making ritual offerings to the ancestors, combining the secular festival with the Buddhist religious rite. Chinese Year-end Hunting Festival is also similar to *narye*, the exorcism rite of the Goryeo period to ward off evil spirits as it was performed by masked officiants and accompanied by drum rolls.

Originally there had been no set date for the year-end ancestral rites, but eventually, it was fixed to be performed on the 8th, for in Chinese numerology, the number eight (八) is considered auspicious. '8' is associated with wealth, as in Chinese it is pronounced 'ba' and sounds similar to fa (發), meaning "well-off" or "getting rich in a short time". Thus '8' is said to invite great wealth.

Li Fu, a Tang Dynasty poet wrote a poem about the special food for Buddha's Enlightenment Day, "This special porridge, cooked with seven precious spices and five kinds of fragrant cereal, came from India. Offered on the 8th day of the twelfth month to the Buddha's altar, this porridge will bring the blessings of the Buddha to us." This tradition is related to Indian milk-maid Sujata, who earned incalculable merits by offering milk-rice pudding to Siddhartha Gautama, emaciated from the six years of intense asceticism. The Enlightenment Day porridge was a special way for the Buddhists in the Tang Dynasty to pay homage to the Buddha's ferocious seeking of Dharma and his enlightenment.

The Chinese temples had a tradition of making the year-end festival porridge, cooked with a variety of grains and fruits, and distributed it among the populace, so it was sometimes called "Buddha porridge" and believed that eating it would bring people luck and keep them healthy. It may sound similar to the red bean porridge partaken on the winter solstice, but this porridge for the year-end festival was different in that it was entirely rooted in the Buddhist tradition. *Dongjing meng Hua lu* or *The Eastern Capital: A Dream of Splendor*, a memoir written in the Song Dynasty in China also recorded, "On the 8th day of the last month of the lunar calendar, Buddhist monks perform ablution by pouring water on the images of the Buddha, walk the street chanting sutras and visit households to propagate Dharma."

The anniversary of the Buddha's enlightenment has become one of the major holidays that marks the passing of the year, paving the way for the Buddha's teaching to be integrated into Chinese people's cultural life.



Seven days of intensive practice: never lie down, never sleep

“Despite the continuous warning sound of the *jukbi*, or bamboo clappers, my eyelids keep closing as my head tilts forward. ... A day passed and two monks dropped out for physical reasons. Two days passed and three gave up. The third day came. It was the last crisis as well as the most difficult period of *yongmaeng jeongjin*, or intensive practice. ... It is the Buddha’s Enlightenment Day, December 8th, according to the lunar calendar. We finished *yongmaeng jeongjin* early in the morning. ... The monks who successfully completed it became more energized and made more effort in their practice.”





In his Diary of A Korean Seon Monk, Ven. Jiheo described how Seon Buddhist monks in the 1970s endured the *yongmaeng jeongjin*, seven days of intensive meditation practice ending on the day of the Buddha's Enlightenment Day. According to his unvarnished account of this intensive practice week, the first day was hardest to bear, and most of the monks who succeeded without sleep or lying down for three days usually made it to the end. Imagine how blissful these monks would have felt, hiking the snowy mountain trail and gazing at the morning star in the dawn of the Buddha's Enlightenment day after the week of grueling training.

The day of a monk during a 3-month retreat is divided into four parts, dawn, morning, afternoon, and evening, each of which is tightly structured to allow at least eight to ten hours of sitting meditation a day. Interspersed throughout the retreat are the special training weeks, and the *yongmaeng jeongjin*, meaning "ferocious spiritual endeavor" is by far the most hardcore of them. During this week, commencing on the halfway point of the winter retreat and ending on the morning of the Buddha's Enlightenment Day, monks sit in deep meditation day and night for seven days with no sleep, not even lying down.

How do the monks brave this time of extreme hardship, during which "the sleep demon attacked me in every pore of my body. My hwadu slipped away like a sly fox. My tongue tasted as bitter as gall, and my stomach ached terribly. My mind became numb..."? The practice of *yongmaeng jeongjin* is unique to Seon Buddhism, designed to emulate the 6 years of uncompromising asceticism and honor the unrelenting battle with one's own inner self that Siddhartha Gautama engaged in.

According to Buyeong Park, a senior editorial writer of the Buddhist Daily, the *yongmaeng jeongjin* is one of the traditions that Korean Seon Buddhism is most proud of, but some Seon retreat centers ban the practice as it is too demanding and potentially damaging to the morale of the congregation, especially those who do not join or drop out before the week is over. But this time-honored custom is observed in many Seon centers throughout the nation to this date to mark the Buddha's Enlightenment Day.



Venerable Won's *yongmaeng jeongjin* story

On the 1st day of the last month of the lunar year, which falls a week before the Buddha's Enlightenment Day, over a hundred monastics gathered in Geumdang Seon Center at Donghwa-sa Temple in Daegu and engaged in *yongmaeng jeongjin* practiced in the 1960s. Buddhist nuns from the nunneries in the vicinity, such as Naewon-am, Yangjin-am, and Budo-am Hermitages also joined the monks for the week. Ven. Won was one of the nuns who came down from Yangjin-am, and she was inspired to see great masters in the assembly and heartened to sit among the bright-eyed fellow monks and nuns, ebulliently setting their sights on spiritual liberation.

The main Dharma hall of Donghwa-sa Temple was enormous, yet to house all hundred of them, monks and nuns had to be lined in double rows, with senior monastics directly facing the wall around the hall while the juniors are placed in the middle, a sitting arrangement similar to the one used for *balwu gongyang*, the communal monastic meal ceremony. The sound of bamboo clappers hitting the shoulders of the monks dozing off was the only external sensory stimuli that drew the monastics out of the quicksand-like sleepiness. Everyone gritted their teeth to push through the second and the third day when the temptation of oblivion in sleep was the strongest.

The lack of sleep upset the stomach so much that only the barest of sustenance was served, just enough to tide the participants over. Some monks entirely skipped dinners, fasting over 18 hours a day with no sleep at all. Thin gruel, sometimes mixed with ground pinenuts or sesame was offered at midnight. There was no space to properly set a table, so each took turns to go to the communal kitchen with their *balwus*, or wooden monastic bowl to eat their meals there.

The week of a heroic attempt at liberation ended when the sun rose at the crack of dawn on the Buddha's Enlightenment Day, but no one hastily flopped down to sleep. With their mind sharp and clear from the sleepless week of fierce practice, monks and nuns would set out to hike to the peak of a nearby mountain where a rock-face Buddha statue was enshrined. Back then, Seon monks who finished a winter retreat season were welcome at any temples, which provided them with room and board free of charge and funded their travels with no questions asked.

The Buddha's Enlightenment Day tradition for the laity

The lay community starts their celebration from the eve of the Buddha's Enlightenment Day by practicing meditation and chanting. *Seokmun euibeom*, or the *Manual for Buddhist Rituals*, published in the 1930s and considered a valuable source of information on the early modern Buddhist culture and rituals, has a detailed account of the overnight practice that laypeople did to mark this important Buddhist holiday, which consists of three stages.

The first stage started in the evening of the day before by chanting the evensong, the Buddhist *gatha* praising the Buddha's wisdom, followed by the recitation of repentance verses and mantras and the ceremony of taking refuge in the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha. Then the laity was led to an overnight practice until dawn the next day. The specifics of the practice were left to the discretion of each temple.

When the Buddha's Enlightenment day dawned, the laypeople reaffirmed their vow to attain enlightenment and made aspirations to follow the Buddha's and Bodhisattvas' footsteps by chanting the *gatha* of morning prayers and aspiration verse professing the undying devotion to the Buddhist path, followed by taking refuge and reciting *gathas* describing Sakyamuni

Buddha's ardent practice and his attaining of liberation. This stage of the practice was concluded by reciting Amitabha Buddha's name.

In the third stage, the congregation stood up and took a walk together, similar to the mountain hike that the ordained monks and nuns go to conclude their *yongmaeng jeongjin* week. Their walk followed the patterns of *Sipbaramildo* (the *Ten Paramita Chart*) and *Beopgyedo* (*Dharma Realm Chart*). The former uses the motifs of circles, half-moon, clouds, and vajras to symbolize the ten paramita practices to reach nirvana, while the latter is a chart in which Master Uisang summarized the entirety of the *Avatamsaka Sutra* in 210 Chinese characters and mapped them out in a maze-like form. As the lay Buddhists traced the shape of these charts with their footsteps, they vowed to continue their practice until they attain *prajna*, the ultimate Buddhist wisdom.

The last month of the lunar year is dedicated to reflect on the passing year and renew the resolve to keep following the Buddhist path in the new year. As the laypeople gather to honor the Buddha's enlightenment trace the patterns laid out in the *Dharma Realm Chart*, they start in the center with the Chinese character 法, meaning "the Dharma" until they reach the letter 佛, meaning "the Buddha", signifying their journey of purifying their karma and earning merits to eventually achieve enlightenment. When they finish their journey, they realize that they end up where they started out in the first place, with 法 and 佛 side by side, teaching them that the Buddhist path only brings us to the root of our existence, our most essential nature, the buddha-nature that is always innate in us.

By Mirae Gu, the head of the Buddhist Folklore Reserch Institute



***Sanmun* (Mountain Gates), the Way of Practice; the Way of Process**



One Pillar Gate viewed from Four Gaurdian Gate at Haein-sa Temple

◆ The Religion of the Nature-Friendly Mind

The reason that Buddhist temples are in the mountains is not just for tranquility or quietness. The specific endeavor involved in hiking mountains can be easily regarded as ‘an act toward the practice.’ Furthermore, building temples in the mountains is advantageous in the perspective of Buddhism that gives an immense importance to the study of the mind. Not only are mountains ideal for creating

an appropriate space for the cultivation and practice, but also utilizing their topological characteristics is beneficial in empowering the religious understanding.

In particular, setting up a gate at the entry of each point on the way to temples in the mountains naturally separates the one long process into more manageable stages. These mountain gates or *sammums* are instrumental when elevating the spiritual aspect of the religion.

◆ *Mt. Sumeru* –the Center of the World

The modern day Buddhist cosmology that Buddhism explicitly or inexplicitly employs when explaining its doctrines in the logical aspect is not so much different from the general beliefs of the universe by the people of India at the time of Shakyamuni Buddha. Afterwards, as the Buddhist sutras were sequentially created and the spatial elements expressed in the scriptures were added, the cosmic view became more and more detailed.

As a result, there can be minor differences in interpretations from one sutra to another or of the understanding of one scripture. Nonetheless, when describing the world by Buddhism, Mt. Sumeru largely covers the middle of the land that is surrounded by the ocean, and as its elevation rises, it is recognized that the world hierarchy increases and the Buddha land sits on top. Henceforth, people who view the world from a Buddhist cosmic perspective may regard the actual Mt. Himalayas as Mt. Sumeru.

Such a cosmic view was naturally accepted in all the other countries that Buddhism was disseminated. Then, for the countries, like Korea, having more mountainous terrain might have been more receptive to such a notion.

◆ Differences between Eastern and Western Architecture

If we are to classify the architectural cultures in the world that we enjoy, then one is building a house by laying stones and bricks, and the other is constructing it by fitting together wood and timber. It is difficult to clearly categorize everything, but the former is the stone construction culture of Europe and the latter is the wood construction culture of Asia. The major East-Asian countries - China, Japan, and Korea - belong to the wood construction culture.

When it comes to the wood construction culture, it is not difficult to acquire various sizes of trees. However, the speed of growing trees is limited, so there are a lot of problems gathering various important building materials, like big support beams. Consequently, when constructing a structure, there is a strong tendency to clearly define its purpose. On the contrary, in the stone construction culture, a huge structure is built at first and then it is divided into several rooms for uses.

Thus, people who study the western architecture are taught the importance of the façade, the front of a building; whereas those who learn the eastern architecture are trained to pay attention to the overall layout of structures, considering their relationships.



The façade of the Versailles Palace



Aerial photo of Gyeongbokgung Palace

In this respect, the temple architecture of Korea belongs to the layout-centered culture. In order to arrange the different structures for their purposes and importance in a consistent manner, there need to be a few principles that would accommodate the cultivation and edification of practitioners. First of all, there is the symmetry principle of left and right. In other words, a sense of sameness. Enshrining an important object of worship, like a Buddhist statue, and performing a distinguished formal ceremony would appear much more realistic; particularly, when these take place in a more solemn, grand, and opulent space. Thus, a space should have a center and to put its focus there, its right and left side should be symmetrically. Such a layout is the characteristic found in all early temples and palaces.



Aerial photo of Mireuksa Temple site

Next, there is the sense of elevation. By dividing sections considering the flow of the layout, it is important to give a sense

of spatial engagement when getting closer to significant points more and more. To accomplish this centrality, although the principle of symmetry balancing left and right is important, it is extremely critical to compose the space to give the impression that one is getting closer to the center moving inward. Through this design, one can experience a sense of elevation spatially. This experience about space can be possible through doors or gates as one travels inward and heads toward the center. Even if one moves the same distance, a sense of space feels quite different if one passes through doors or gates on the way.

Subsequently, in case of prominent architectural buildings, rather than having a visitor just walk into an open path, doors or gates are installed between spaces, and once one passes these passages, it gives the illusion that the distance one has travelled is actually much longer than it really is.

Lastly, there is the realization of the principle of *Mundangje* (門堂制). As we have explored earlier, in East-Asia, one must pass through doors or gates in order to access an important area. It is the ancient tradition of *Mundangje*, which constitutes designing structures that the entry to the main building is through walls and gates surrounding it. Even now, shrines or small structures are the products of *Mundangje*.



Gom or Bear Shrine in Gongju

Based on this principle of *Mundangje*, the layout is important when constructing temples and palaces; there are corridors or walls in the main areas, and there is a gate in front of the structures.

◆ **The Way to Enlightenment, the System of *Sangmun* (Mountain Gate)**

In the religious architecture that fundamentally emphasizes symbolism, cosmology based on doctrines is naturally conveyed to the public through the process of equivalence between reality and idealism. The East-Asian architecture derived from *Mundangje* assimilated Mt. Sumeru of the cosmological view to real mountains and placed *Sanmuns* or mountain gates into the corresponding topography.

This well-established system of *Sanmun* or mountain gates is not merely repeated, but to give a sense of elevation, these gates are purposely constructed according to the topography so that the entry points that intensify the religious mystique and sacredness have been set. This is really the system of *Sanmun* or mountain gates of the Buddhist architecture that developed in South Korea particularly among the three nations of the East-Asia countries.



The system of *Sanmun* in the map of Songgwangsa Temple

Although these mountain gates were installed in mountainous terrain, rather than on the level ground, this realistic choice of avoiding excessive construction was recognized as the architecture that respected nature. Passing through the

periods of Goryeo (918-1392) and Joseon (1392-1897) Dynasty, only small temples managed to survive around big cities. Big monasteries all went into mountains so that the system of *Sanmuns* was adopted, which was more suitable for the large rugged topography. Moreover, the Gate of the Four Heavenly Guardians visibly sprang up in the system of *Sanmun* in the period of late Goryeo. After the first Japanese Invasion (1592-1598) in the Joseon Dynasty, the system of *Sanmun* was generally implemented and it was considered as the more dramatic entry.

Additionally, by the Joseon period (1392-1897), Buddhism was considered as people's religion and wanted to appeal to its visual and physical experience, rather than its literal texts. Thus, it can be said that the system of *Sanmun* was highly perfected.

If one is visiting Korea or a resident, we highly recommend going see a temple in the mountains if given a chance. When visiting the temple, go through the first gate of *Iljumun* or One Pillar Gate to other gates, and consider their significance - philosophical, cultural, and architectural aspects of Buddhism. Experiencing the spatial connotation aligned with nature and tradition is a wonderful experience itself and getting a taste of Korean culture.

By ByungHwa Hong, Architectural Historian Researcher



Cheonwang-mun, Woljeong-sa Temple © Bulkwang-Media Co.



天王門



The Buddhist Scripture, the New Tripitaka of the 21st Century



Most Ven. Wonhaeng dedicating the *Buddhist Scripture* to the Buddha

The Buddhist scripture, compiled and published by the Jogye Order to transmit the Buddha's teaching in modern language, was unveiled in a dedication ceremony performed in the main Dharma Hall at Jogye-sa Temple at 4 pm on February 24.

It has been 50 years since a comprehensive Buddhist holy text was published for the general public when Dongguk Sutra Translation Institute printed its edition of the *Buddhist Scripture* in 1972.

Ven. Jihong, the head of the Propagation Bureau and the standing chairman of the Jogye Order *Buddhist Scripture* Publication Committee wrote in his foreword to the *Buddhist Scripture*, "The Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism launched the committee in April 2019 and started compiling the *Buddhist scripture*. Many renowned scholars, experts, and monastics devoted themselves to the project, determined to create a new Tripitaka Koreana that will serve the beings living in the 21st century. It was challenging work, with small and large bumps along the road, but thanks to the unwavering drive and perseverance of everyone involved, we now dedicate the fruit of our labor, the *Buddhist Scripture* to the Buddha."

Ven. Jihong continues in his foreword, "Buddhist sutras are still the best tool we have for Dharma dissemination. Even amid various high-tech media and other means of telecommunication, sutras outshine them all as the most reliable pillar and refuge of Dharma. Only on the solid foundation of Buddhist sutras grow sound trees which in turn will bear many sweet fruits of faith."

Most Ven. Wonhaeng, the president of the Jogye Order also celebrated the occasion by saying, "The hard work of the Jogye Order *Buddhist Scripture* Publication Committee finally resulted in the publication of the *Buddhist Scripture* that we unveil today. The best resources of the Jogye Order were diverted to create this new edition, with His Excellency Patriarch Jinje himself and other most renowned venerables rendering their wisdom to the project. For the past 2 years,

about 30 experts in their respective fields got together over 30 times in small and large meetings and conferences to produce and present this holy text, the *Buddhist Scripture* to the Buddhist community, and the Three Jewels.”

All quarantine measures required to prevent the spreading of the COVID-19 were strictly observed during the dedication ceremony, such as wearing facial masks and social distancing.

What is the *Buddhist Scripture*?

When a loving couple went to the Buddha and asked how they could be together again in the next life, what was the Buddha’s answer?

The Buddha replied, “Householders, if wife and husband want to see each other in both this life and the next, they should be equals in faith, ethical conduct, generosity, and wisdom. Then they will see one another not only in this present life but also in future lives.”

- The *Samajivina sutta*

The Buddha’s extensive teaching and profound wisdom have been recorded in myriad texts, sprawled across the vast body of the Tripitaka. In the *Buddhist Scripture*, his holy instructions are clearly indexed, neatly organized, and made easily accessible to the modern generation.

The *Buddhist Scripture* is unique in that it covers the whole spectrum of the wide-ranging tenets of Buddhism, as seen in the chapters on early Buddhism, Mahayana Buddhism, and the

collected words of Seon masters among others. The Jogye Order *Buddhist Scripture* Publication Committee used over 300 sutras as source material to compile the *Buddhist Scripture*.

Buddhist theology is often conceived as perplexing and unfathomable, but the Jogye Order managed to create a guidebook with which the modern Buddhists can navigate the seemingly impenetrable tangle of theories and enjoy the Buddha’s teaching as if they are reading stories or works of literature.



Front cover of the *Buddhist Scripture*

Ethiopian Ambassador to Seoul Paid a Visit to the Jogye Order



President of the Jogye Order meeting with Ethiopian Ambassador

Shiferaw Shigutie Wolassa, ambassador of Ethiopia to Korea met with Most Ven. Wonhaeng, the president of the Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism. The meeting took place in the audience room on the 4th floor of the Korea Buddhist History and Culture Memorial Hall on February 3, 2021. He is the first ambassador from African nations ever to pay a visit to the Jogye Order's headquarters.

During the meeting, Most Ven. Wonhaeng said to the ambassador, "I would like to thank the brave soldiers from Ethiopia who sacrificed their lives to fight on our side during the Korean War. The Buddhist community will do our best to honor their sacrifice."

Ambassador Shiferaw replied, "I have learned in Korea that Buddhism is a religion of harmony and solidarity, which are the

virtues we Ethiopians must master to live in peace since there are 85 different ethnicities in my country. In that sense, I would appreciate it very much if Most Ven. Wonhaeng will accept to be a "tabebegna amarakhi," meaning a wise elder in Amharic and teach our people how to live in harmony."

Ambassador Shiferaw emphasized, "We Ethiopians have long considered Korea a brother country, evident in the fact that the emperor sent his own guards to be deployed in Korea as part of the UN forces during the Korean War. I hope this allegiance forged in blood will grow into a variety of cultural and economic exchanges and cooperation projects." The ambassador also invited Most Ven. Wonhaeng to pay a visit to his country, asking the president of the Jogye Order to pray for peace and harmony for his fellow Ethiopians.



Jogye Order venerables releasing the official statement in support of the pro-democratic movement in Myanmar

May 'the Yangon Spring' Come to Myanmar

The monastics of the Jogye Order released official statements and arranged a full prostration ceremony in ardent support for the people of Myanmar, condemning Myanmar's military junta's violent oppression and praying for world peace.

Myanmar, the land of stupas, is in grave distress. The protests against the coup d'état by the Myanmar military are spreading across the nation, and the Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism declared its support in their fight for democracy, emphasizing, "We openly express our support of the pro-democratic movement by the people of Myanmar. We would like to offer our prayers that the people of Myanmar can reclaim their own country so that it can once again be filled with peace and compassion." In the official statement released at the press conference on March 16 held in front of the main Buddha

Hall of Jogye-sa Temple, the Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism publicly announced that it will offer ardent prayers for the democratization of Myanmar.

In its statement, the Jogye Order proclaimed, "The modern history of Myanmar has been tainted by the oppressive military rule as the world witnesses the struggles of their citizens against such powers. Keeping the 1,700-year-lineage of Korean Buddhist history and tradition, the Jogye Order would like to explicitly express our support of the democratization of Myanmar."

The Jogye Order also urged all Buddhists to raise their voices and participate in prayers for a peaceful resolution of the Myanmar crisis, saying "Myanmar is the treasured country of a thousand Buddha statues and a thousand stupas. Myanmar is a place of spiritual cultivation where people from all over the world go to search for peace of mind. Thus, the Jogye Order



Jogye Order monks and the students from Myanmar lighting lanterns to pray for the Yangun Spring.



Jogye Order venerable comforting the students from Myanmar

ardently hopes that the small plea by the Myanmar Buddhist monks shall fan out throughout the world.” It also appealed to the international community for direct interventions for a peaceful resolution to the Myanmar crisis.

After the press conference, Venerable Geumgok, Director of Administration of the Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism, and Ms. Hay Man Hnin, representing the Myanmar Youth Community in South Korea, dedicated special lotus lanterns bearing the phrases saying, “Peace and compassion to Myanmar” and “Democratization of Myanmar” amid the fervent chanting of prayers by the Jogye Order monastics.

On March 12, monks from the Social and Labor Affairs Committee of the Joye Order (Chairperson: Ven. Jimong) performed full prostration in front of the Embassy of the Union of Myanmar in South Korea all the way to the building where the office of the U.N. Commission on Human Rights is located in support of the democratization of Myanmar.

The Social and Labor Affairs Committee chose the full prostration, a form of protest that is most fitting for Buddhist monks to show support for and solidarity with Myanmar freedom fighters and their civil movement.

A total of eight people, including Myanmar expatriates in South Korea and Korean student activities, participated in the full prostration, wearing the vest with the phrase in Myanmar language “We are prostrating in prayer to restore democratic rule in Myanmar.” printed on it.

They started prostrating to the sound of Ven. Jimong’s bamboo clapper. The participants’ faces were grimly set as they lowered their bodies to the ground hundreds of times, over and over again. Soon, their faces got blackened by the dirt, their monastic robes soiled, but they resolutely moved forward one prostration at a time united in their aspiration for ‘the Yangon Spring.’ Their steps didn’t falter despite the air being filled with heavy drizzle and fine dust.

The members of the Myanmar Youth Association and the association of Korean civic groups formed in support of Myanmar’s democratization picketed alongside the street, and the prostration by the monks received wide media coverage and generated much interest in those who witnessed the event. In the press conference held prior to the prostration procession, Ven. Jimong strongly condemned the coup, urging the military



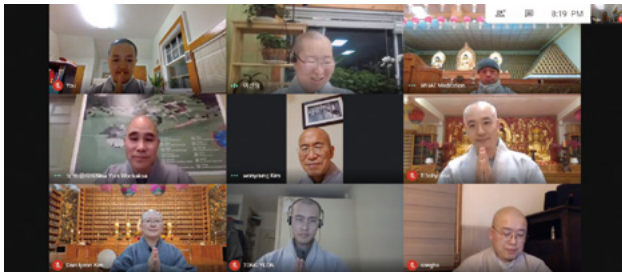
The Jogye Order's Social and Labor Affairs Committee prostrating in the aspiration to bring peace to Myanmar

to cease the assaults on unarmed civilians immediately, saying, “The very first of the five Buddhist precepts is do not kill, so the violation of this sacred decree should be allowed under no circumstances. It is even more appalling to think such atrocities are committed when the whole country is dotted with the Buddha statues and Buddhist stupas.”

The Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism also started raising funds to help the Myanmar people’s struggle to reinstate the democratic government, and on March 24, Venerable Geumgok, Director of Administration, and other executives of the Jogye Order donated five million Korean won to Dreaminus, the Buddhist international relief organization. The fund-raising for the democratization of Myanmar will continue throughout the Buddhist temples in Korea.

The official statement by the Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism was followed by the statements by the Jogye Order Central Council, the Association of Korean Buddhist Orders, and the National Bhiksuni Association, united in offering prayers for the return of ‘the Yangon Spring.’

• East Regional Jogye Order of North America



On-line general meeting of the East regional Jogye Order of North America



Buddhist Essay Contest hosted by the US East Coast chapter of the Jogye Order

East regional Jogye Order of North America (Head of the chapter: Ven. Jigwang) of the Overseas Special Headquarters of the Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism held an on-line general meeting on January 22, 2021, to pass the budget for the 1st half of the fiscal year 2021, report the progress of the projects

from the previous year and announce personnel changes. The meeting was attended by Ven. Jigwang, the head of the branch and other executives, Ven. Wonyeong, the advisor for the US Eastern Branch, Ven. Seonghyang, the abbot of Wonjuksa Temple, Ven. Jinryang from Bohyunsa Temple and Ven. Suin, the abbot of Jundungsa.

One of the major projects carried out by the US Eastern Branch this year was facilitating the on-line video Dharma assemblies. The COVID-19 caused many temples to move their activities to virtual space, and the subsidy of US\$500 has been provided by the US Eastern Branch to five member temples so far, which will be expanded to ten temples within this year.

The US Eastern Branch is also hosting a Buddhist Essay Contest. Everyone is welcome to submit an essay starting from March 1, 2021, on the topics of the Buddha's life and his teachings of the Dharma such as the dependent origination. The deadline for the essay submission is May 31. For more details, please write to: jogyeorder@gmail.com

• Manwol-sa Temple in Beijing



Sharing the New Year's holiday fare with the Korean students stranded in Beijing due to COVID-19

Manwol-sa Temple (Abbot: Ven. Wongeol) celebrated the Chinese New Year with the Korean students living in Beijing, who were unable to return home to Korea and stranded in China's capital city because of the COVID-19. The temple prepared traditional Korean holiday fare such as rice cake, *japchae* (noodles stir-fried with meat and vegetables), mungbean pancakes, and fruits and delivered them to the students. Most Korean students in Beijing were stuck on campus for nearly two months since December last year due to travel restrictions imposed on university students as part of the quarantine measures and they were greatly cheered by the food given by the temple's congregation.

• Bohyunsa in Dallas, USA



Dharma assembly to commemorate the Buddha's Enlightenment Day

Bohyunsa Temple in Dallas (Abbot: Ven. Jiam) hosted "The Eve and the Dawn of the New Year" event from December 31~January 1, 2021. The congregation gathered to pay respect to the Buddha and practiced penance at the main Buddha hall to earn merits. Due to the COVID-19 situation, the attendance was restricted to ten people, and instead of the customary 1,080 bows offered as penance, only 108 bows were performed. The ceremony was commenced by reciting the vows, followed by 108 tollings of the Brahma bell, and the New Year's service.

Bhyunsa also commemorated the Buddha's Enlightenment Day by holding a Dharma assembly on the 17th of January and overnight intensive practice on the 20th. All the quarantine measures were complied with, limiting the number of people participating in the events.

On February 12, the Korean Americans in the Dallas area got together to celebrate the Lunar New Year, some of them driving long distances braving the bitterly cold weather. The temple officiated a joint ancestral ritual, shared the holiday fare, and exchanged New Year's greetings and bows.

On March 21, Dallas Bohyunsa officiated the ceremony of receiving Buddhist precepts (taking refuge in three jewels, five lay Buddhist precepts, ten Seon Buddhist precepts) in memory of the Buddha's Renunciation Day. It was the 8th ceremony of such kind since Ven. Jiam became the current abbot of Bohyunsa. Twelve new Buddhists, including four lay people who finished the paramita school where the basic Buddhist education is given, received precepts and the ceremonial burning of their arm.

• Jaeun-sa Temple in Uzbekistan



Gate of Jaeun-sa Temple, which may be demolished to make way for railroads

Jaeun-sa Temple in Uzbekistan (Abbot: Ven. Joju) celebrated New Year's day on February 12, 2021, to usher in the Year of the White Ox. A ban has been imposed on the public assembly due to the COVID-19 situation, but the Dharma Assembly for the New Year was made possible because the government now allows assemblies of religious nature since February,

The government plans to expropriate the land on which Jaeun-sa Temple is located to construct railways, but the temple has not found a new site to relocate. A similar plan was

proposed but put off once in the past because of the public opposition, and Jaeun-sa is now looking at various options for relocation.

• Junghyesa in USA



The shooting of "US Junghyesa Buddhist TV" for the YouTube channel

Junghyesa Temple (Abbot: Ven. Seokta) in the US has been hosting a Dharma Assembly every Sunday morning without fail since Ven. Seokta was appointed as its new abbot, as well as the Dharma school for adults, the Korean language school for children, and choir practices on Sunday afternoons.

Traditionally, Junghyesa celebrates the Buddha's Birthday and the Buddha's Enlightenment Day on a grand scale with young adults from the congregation coming together to stage a play, and there is a choir and music performances at the main Dharma hall. However, because of the quarantine measures in place to prevent the spread of coronavirus, all large-scale events were canceled this year except for certain special Buddhist holidays such as the Buddha's Birthday, All Souls' Day, and Thanksgiving Day, which were attended only by a small number of people who stayed outdoors in the backyard. Junghyesa also started to broadcast its Sunday Dharma assemblies on its YouTube channel, "US Junghyesa Buddhist TV" at 11 am every Sunday since April last year.

• Muyeom and Zen Center in LA, USA



49-day funeral rite for Ven. Geoheo

On February 17, 2021, the 49-day funeral rites for Ven. Geoheo was dedicated at Muyeom and Zen Center (Abbot: Ven. Haeon) in LA, California. Ven. Geoheo, a monk famous for his practice based on early Buddhism, propagated Buddhism mostly in the LA area. He entered the *parinirvana* at Chua Phap Van, a Thai Buddhist temple located in Pomona, California. He tested positive for COVID-19 in January, but the funeral was postponed until February due to the surge in the number of people infected in the area.

Ven. Geoheo was well known for introducing early Buddhist practices and doctrine to Korea, where Mahayana Buddhism is dominant. He was particularly inspired by vipassana meditation taught by the Buddha himself and played an important role in disseminating it among the Korean Buddhists. He also wrote several books well received by Korean scholars and meditators alike, including *Path to Enlightenment*, *Dhammapada Vol. 1 and 2*, *Early Buddhist Prayers*, and *Practice on How to Focus the Mind*.

• Dalmasa in LA, USA



The message of courage and compassion to the homeless delivered with face masks

It has been over a year now that the people's lives were disrupted by the COVID-19. A member of the Dalmasa's congregation, who lost both his wife and son to coronavirus, donated 10,000 KN95 face masks to LA Dalmasa (Abbot: Ven. Geumseon). On February 21, the abbot and temple-goers visited homeless centers and distributed the donated face masks, praying for the people living on the streets to survive the epidemic and stay healthy.

• Wonjuksa in New Jersey, USA

On February 14, Wonjuksa in New Jersey (Abbot: Ven. Seonghyang) completed the Thousand-day Avalokitesvara Prayer, which was dedicated to the successful propagation of Buddhism and the prosperity of the temple community. The Thousand-day Avalokitesvara Prayer started on November 16, 2017, amid congratulations from the Buddhist communities both in Korea and the US and continued for over three years until February this year. The dedication ceremony was attended by over 90 people including Ven. Dongju, one of the titleholders of the Great Buddhist Ritual Master, Ven. Seongoh,

the abbot of Hongwon-sa Temple, and Ven. Hwigwang, the senior spiritual teacher of Bulkwang Zen Center in New York.



Completion and dedication of 1,000-day Avalokitesvara Prayer

Ven. Seonghyang, the abbot of Wonjuksa thanked the four-fold assembly for the support it rendered to make the Thousand-day Avalokitesvara Prayer possible, and the students from the Korean culture and language school staged a celebratory performance, highlighting the importance of propagating Buddhism to the younger generation.

Another Thousand-day Avalokitesvara Prayer will be kicked off on November 14 of this year to pray for the future of Buddhism and the temple community in the US.



• Bud Zen Center in New York, USA



The offering of lotus lanterns dedicated to the end of the COVID-19

Bud Zen Center in New York (Abbot: Ven. Daeryun) built a tree made of lotus lanterns to pray for the end of the COVID-19. On the Lunar New Year's Day, the congregation prayed to the Buddha for his blessings and joined in a walking meditation ceremony on the temple ground to wish for health and well-being in the coming year.

• Peace March to End Hate Crimes in New York (Buddhist Council of New York)

Hate crimes involving Asian-American victims are soaring in the United States, and now concerns are mounting about the racially targeted violence across the world. The Korean-American Buddhist community, including Wongak-sa Temple in New York, joined the local religious leaders who took to the streets to protest against the attacks targeting Asians, especially after the killing of four Korean Americans in Atlanta. On April 11, the New York Buddhist Council, whose members include Wongak-sa, Jeongmyeong-sa and Jogye-sa Temples, organized a rally in downtown Manhattan, New York with 20

other local Islam and Christian leaders to renounce racially motivated hate crimes.

Ven. Jigwang, the head of the East regional Jogye Order of North America, the chapter of the Special Overseas District, reminded the gathering of the fact that one of the victims of the Atlanta shooting was a member of Wongak-sa's congregation and said he would do his best to end all hate crimes by helping people realize how all beings on this earth are interconnected, how we can exist only interdependently.



Protest against hate crimes targeting Asians held in Foley Square in front of the New York State Supreme Court Building



한국사찰음식문화체험관 Korean Temple Food Center

Korean Temple Food Center,

where you can learn the wisdom of Korean temple food

Challenge yourself in this half-day cooking class to make Korean temple food steeped with 1,700 years of tradition.

English cooking class held every Saturday at the Korean Temple Food Center

- **Title** Let's Learn Korean Temple Food
- **Time** 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. on Saturdays
- **Menu** Varied dishes with seasonal ingredients
- **Fee** 10,000 won
- **Language** English
- **Details** Reservations should be made at least two days prior to the event by e-mail. The schedule or activity is subject to change, and if any, it will be announced in advance. Groups of 10 persons or more can make a separate reservation and can choose their own menu via consultation.

What is Korean Temple Food?

[Exemplifying Gratitude for Life and Prayers for Peace]

"Temple food" is the food eaten daily at Buddhist temples. At Buddhist temples, everything is considered a part of Buddhist practice. From growing vegetables to preparing the food, monks and nuns are directly involved in the whole process. Monastic practitioners make it a point to always be grateful for the efforts of all those involved in the preparation of food. They take only the amount need for their physical sustenance, leaving no leftover food in their bowls.

This distinctive approach to food preparation has gradually evolved over many centuries, based on a foundation of Buddhist philosophy and practice.

Temple food is natural, healthy and also a part of Buddhist life. Even today, the 1,700-year-old tradition is dynamically alive at Korean Buddhist temples.

[Introducing the Korean Temple Food Center]

Operated by the Cultural Corps of Korean Buddhism, the Korean Temple Food Center provides a composite space for training in and experiencing Korean temple food, as well as exhibitions and rest areas. The Center operates from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. and is closed on Mondays. For more detailed information, please consult our website.

Address. (03061) 39, Yulgok-ro, Jongno-gu, Seoul, Republic of Korea

Tel. 02-733-4650

Fax. 02-733-4657



<http://edu.koreatemplefood.com/>

<http://www.koreatemplefood.com>

<http://www.facebook.com/jogyeorder.templefood>



LOTUS LANTERN

KOREAN BUDDHISM FOR INTERNATIONAL READERS