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The theologian may indulge the pleasing task of describing Religion as she descended from Heaven, arrayed in her native purity. A more melancholy task is imposed on the historian. He must discover the inevitable mixture of error and corruption which she contracted in a long residence upon earth, among a weak and degenerate race of beings.

— Edward Gibbon, The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, chap. 15

In 1019, one century after the founding of the Koryŏ dynasty (918–1392), a Buddhist layman living in a small district near present-day Taegu made a vow to construct a five-story stūpa. He died before his wish could be realized, but his brother, who was vice head of the district, decided to fulfill the vow. He mobilized monks and notables to raise funds and carry out the project, and finally, on the fourth day of the first month of 1031, the stūpa was dedicated at Chŏngdo-sa. Another official wrote a report, faithfully recording the history of the project as well as the names of all the people involved and their contributions. Together with some relics, a copy of the report was stored in a brass container inside the stūpa, where it was discovered in 1905.¹ The report’s version of the layman’s original vow is as follows:

In the tenth month of 1019, citizen Kwang-hyon of this district [Yangmok-kun] vowed to build a five-story stūpa, wishing that the country’s hegemony would be enduring and on a solid basis, that the ruler would infinitely

¹. See Hŏ Hŭng-sik, “1031-nyŏn Chŏngdo-sa t’apchi,” p. 64.
continue in leisure and old age, that the officials relying on this marvelous cause and this wholesome project would be unaffected by disaster and increase their fortunes and life spans, that everywhere people would together enjoy the joyful enterprise, that foreign armies would be annihilated by lightning, that the suzerain country would enjoy more peace, that the hundred grains would ripen in abundance, that the myriad people would live in peace and harmony, that old and young, men and women, of this district would live to old age, reap fortune and avoid calamity, preserve eternal tranquility and enjoyment, that the lost souls of the three realms and the four evil rebirths would support this stūpa construction and achieve their lost heaven.2

Kwang-hyŏn’s motivations for building this stūpa are not clear. Normally, such private acts of Buddhist piety served a specific goal. Inscriptions on Chinese votive paintings reveal that the donors usually prayed for the country’s peace and prosperity before stating their personal wish.3 In this case, however, even if Kwang-hyŏn originally had a private wish, such as rebirth in the Buddhist Pure Land, after his premature death the project acquired a very public character as funds were raised among dozens of local people. This may be the reason for the prayer for the good of everyone. But the project also had a dimension wider than the local community. Permission was requested from the central government to authorize the land donations to support the construction costs. Presumably the project itself was in some way resonant with the requirements of the Koryŏ state. Early in 1019 Kang Kam-ch’ăn (948–1031) had defeated a Khitan invasion force, ending decades of conflict, and soon thereafter moves were made toward a peaceful settlement, finalized in 1022. It is therefore possible that commemoration of this event was encouraged across the country: after a severe crisis, it is natural to express a wish for peace and pray for the avoidance of similar crises.

2. For a recension of this text, see Maema Kyōsaku, “Nyamoku sekitōgi no kaitoku.” Maema included useful annotations to the text, which is written in idu, and photographs of the original text. For corrections to some of his readings, see Hŏ Hŭng-sik, “1031-nyŏn Chŏngdo-sa t’apchi,” p. 68.

3. See, e.g., a votive painting from tenth-century Dunhuang, in Whitfield and Farrer, Caves of the Thousand Buddhas, pp. 51–52. There are also examples of Buddhist gifts solely for the benefit of ruler and state; for one such case from the Southern Song, see Halperin, “Buddhist Temples,” pp. 71–72.
If these are the motives behind the text quoted above, then it is a unique example of the mediating role of Buddhism between state and subjects and illustrates how Buddhism was used to express political wishes and engender compliance with broad policy goals. This study is an attempt to determine Buddhism’s place in the body politic of Koryŏ and thus answer the question whether Buddhism did indeed fulfill such a role. Koryŏ Buddhism is still described as “State-Protection Buddhism” (*hoguk Pulgyo*), that is, a religion whose prime purpose was to rally support (supernatural and popular) against foreign invasions. This interpretation has always seemed reductive to me, as a closer look at Kwang-hyŏn’s vow illustrates. The annihilation of “foreign armies . . . by lightning” is but one of many wishes expressed. The tone of the vow is much more conciliatory, expressing support for the ruling dynasty and praying for the well-being of Koryŏ’s suzerain state. Moreover, we cannot determine whether the text was a genuinely spontaneous vow or a mediated expression originating with the state. At the very least, however, it shows that Buddhism was a broad canvas on which people projected many religious and secular concerns and desires, among which “protection of the state” was but one aspect.

This points to the need for a better understanding of the role of Buddhism in the body politic and society of Koryŏ. Surprisingly, although it is widely acknowledged that Buddhism was the “state religion” (*kukkyo*) of Koryŏ, nobody has yet systematically attempted to ascertain to what extent and in what areas Buddhism functioned as such. Was Buddhism declared the only true religion? Was state support the main reason for Buddhism’s dominance in Koryŏ? How actively did the state seek to promote religious ideals? For what reason? What was the strength of Buddhism as an institution, the nature of its relation to the state? Although to anyone familiar with Korean history the answer to some of these questions may seem obvious, in truth we have a very blurred image of Koryŏ Buddhism. The use of *hoguk Pulgyo* as a blanket term has obscured many phenomena. It lumps together very different rituals and events, such as the *P’algwanhoe*

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4. For representative views on Buddhism as an official religion, see Hŏ Hŭng-sik, *Koryŏ Pulgyosa yŏn’gu*, p. 317; and Han Ki-mun, “Koryŏ T’aejo ūi Pulgyo chŏng-ch’ae,” p. 37.
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(Eight Prohibitions Festival) and the carving of the Koryŏ Tripiṭaka, and explains them as part of a deliberate ideology of national resistance. This study reconsiders this ideological dimension, first of all by evaluating it systematically from the perspective of state-religion relations. Since the Koryŏ dynasty left no record of its ideological program, if such a thing ever existed, we have to reconstruct its intentions from its actions and isolated statements. This is attempted in Part I. Because of the paucity of good sources, any conclusion regarding the ideological program of the Koryŏ must lack a firm foundation. Therefore I also look at the organizational dimension of state-religious relations, and in Parts II and III analyze the structure of the Buddhist institution and its ritual and economic role. This analysis is based on the assumption that we should be able to find a correlation between the ideology as an ideal construction and its concrete effects. To further strengthen these working assumptions, in this Introduction I first explain my methodological framework and then assess the current state of scholarship on state Buddhism; finally I present the approach taken in this work.

Methodological Considerations:
Religion and Political Order

How should we approach the relation between religion and politics? The literature on the subject is vast, deals mainly with Western religions, and presents numerous different categories to analyze the gamut of relations between politics and religion. Two recurrent themes emerge from these studies. First, the division between religion and politics is not absolute: it is impossible to draw a neat dividing line between the two spheres. Even if Church and State exist as two distinct entities, political and religious values are often interchangeable and never the exclusive domain of either side, even if the opposite is claimed. Second, the way people have understood and thus distinguished politics and religion has changed considerably over time. Even though typologies of different Church-State relationships can be drawn up, every case has to be explained in its context;

5. For a somewhat philosophical critique of the western dichotomy of politics and religion, see Panikkar, “Religion or Politics.”
moreover, it has to be taken into account that these typologies are essentially synchronic, that is, they are relative not only to space but also to time.⁶

For the purpose of this study, I define “politics” very broadly. Although the term is usually understood to refer to a dynamic process in which a group of people reach a consensus for the good of the larger group to which they belong according to a set of principles and conventions,⁷ this is too specific for the purposes of this book. Since we know virtually nothing of how policy was understood or practiced outside a small circle of aristocrats based in the capital, I here equate politics simply with the actions and intentions of the state. In the Koryŏ political system, political decisions were theoretically made on the basis of policy proposals advanced by state officials. These proposals were then debated by a small body of leading officials and presented to the king for final ratification and promulgation.⁸ Hence, the generic term “state” is used here to refer to this small group of top officials. However, it should be emphasized that even this broad definition is problematic, because more often than not we cannot identify the real actors behind policy decisions. Especially in the beginning of Koryŏ, a small group of trusted advisors/generals in the founding king’s circle were behind the formal state organs.

“Religion,” at least in this study, is more easily defined, since I will discuss only Buddhism. Still, a few caveats are necessary here too: Buddhism as a religious system embraces a variety of doctrines, practices, and institutions, only a small number of which are relevant for Koryŏ; given the paucity of sources and the consequent gaps in our knowledge, we therefore have to be careful not to read things from other Buddhist cultures into Koryŏ Buddhism.

Viewed superficially, relations between religious and political organizations appear quite straightforward, with a limited number of possible scenarios, as described, for instance, in the model drawn up by Randall Collins for his sociological comparison of Buddhism and

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Christianity. Collins suggests three basic structural forms for the relationship between religion and regime in history: (1) religion is identical with political structure and activity; (2) religion is independent of the state but used by the state as the major basis of political legitimation and sometimes even of organization; (3) the state is fully secular in legitimation and organization, and religion is free to confront politics however it wants. Like Chinese Buddhism, Koryŏ Buddhism would appear to fit into the first category, because there was no independent “church” and the political system exercised oversight of the country’s monastics. As we shall see, however, this is potentially misleading, since it suggests that Buddhism is subordinate to the state. To obtain a more comprehensive picture, rather than focusing on institutions alone, we should look more broadly at the role of religious and political values in society.

The seven distinct forms of Church-State interaction distinguished by Sabrina Petra Ramet, in the introduction to a volume of studies on religion and politics, allow for such a broader comparison of values. Although I do not use them as a concrete analytical tool per se, these are useful concepts to frame my discussion of Koryŏ Buddhism. The first two forms, legitimation and ideology, are the most important, and I deal with them in more detail below. The third form of interaction revolves around the question of adherence and collective loyalty. In some cases, the question of adherence to a particular religion is a question of state concern, for example, in order to define the state as protector of the orthodox faith against rival political forces labeled heterodox. In the case of Koryŏ, adherence is only an issue insofar as the total number of adherents (i.e., monks) is concerned. The fourth form of religio-political interaction is organizational. This can refer either to state efforts to interfere in the organization of

10. Ramet, “Sacred Values,” pp. 6–9. These are somewhat similar to the seven dimensions of religious experience distinguished by Ninian Smart (Dimensions of the Sacred, pp. 9–11), although Smart focuses on the religion itself rather than its interaction with the state. These dimensions, given a double name to elucidate them, are: the ritual or practical; the doctrinal or philosophical; the mythic or narrative; the experiential or emotional; the ethical or legal; the organizational or social; and the material or artistic. Although Smart’s categories deal with the religion an sich, they also take into account its interrelation with society and the state.
the church or to state reliance on church organization for administration. This aspect of relations constitutes a recurring theme in this book. Also relevant to this study is the fifth form, interaction in the legislative sphere. Again, this can go both ways; in some cases the state may dictate alterations in religious laws, but in other cases the church can exert pressure to make secular laws more religious. The last two forms of interaction apply equally to Koryŏ. Ramet’s sixth form is functional, or “the ability of either Church or State to affect the functioning of the other by gaining control of some of its resources or by setting an ineluctable agenda.” The seventh and last form is the most pervasive yet also the most elusive category: it is the mutual interaction in the field of values. Since both religious and political systems are also value systems, both often have competing interests in fostering certain values, regarding either the self or society, and the behavior associated with these values. Although political and religious authorities may have rival value systems, more often than not they share at least some values. Because of this and because values are often not made explicit, they form perhaps the most interesting angle for studying the tensions, struggles, and mutual reliance of state and religion.

As noted above, legitimation and the related concept of ideology are two of the core ideas for this narrative. According to Max Weber, every political authority depends on legitimation for its exercise of power. Even though coercion and military power may be important in obtaining power, the maintenance of power demands that the governed be convinced that it is right and proper to obey those who govern and to abide by their decisions. Weber singled out three categories of grounds for making a legitimacy claim: (1) rational grounds, which rest on a belief that patterns of normative rules are “legal” and that those in authority have the right to enforce these rules; (2) traditional grounds, that is, an established belief in the sanctity of immemorial traditions and the legitimacy of the status of those exercising authority under them; and (3) charismatic grounds, or devotion to the specific and exceptional sanctity, heroism, or

12. Sternberger, “Legitimacy,” p. 244. “Legitimacy” refers to the result; “legitimation” to the process and procedures leading to it.
exceptional character of an individual person, and of the normative patterns or order revealed or ordained by him.\textsuperscript{13} Although some have questioned whether the need for legitimation as defined by Weber is really pervasive and operates equally in all societies,\textsuperscript{14} it is still a good starting point to discuss the exercise of power and how it is justified. I return to this point in Chapter 2, which discusses the legitimation of Koryŏ.

In any given context, legitimation can be understood only in connection with extant ideologies. The manipulation of symbols, rituals, or beliefs to achieve the aura of legitimacy can usually be explained in terms of the dominant ideology of the society in which this takes place. In a narrow sense, “ideology” refers to an intellectual doctrine that explains certain beliefs and values as just and thereby validates a certain political order. Marxist theorists have therefore used the term in a pejorative sense, describing it as a “false consciousness” that persuades the oppressed to accept a representation of reality that keeps them in place.\textsuperscript{15} Recently the notion of ideology has broadened considerably; it is no longer confined to its function in the political sphere to impose norms and truth. It is now seen more as a system of representation, which reproduces the social order symbolically as a unity in which the individual subject has a place. In other words, it is any symbolic discourse that constructs the subject (or subjectivities).\textsuperscript{16}

The main ideologies discussed in this book are Buddhism and Confucianism. Both are systems that impose societal norms and construct subjects. Unfortunately, because of the available source material, it is not possible to look at the micro-politics of order and use documents to investigate how the subject was represented in Koryŏ.\textsuperscript{17} Instead, I focus on Buddhism as an institution and rely mainly on the traditional interpretation of ideology as a system that justifies

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\textsuperscript{14.} See, e.g., Collins, “Historical Perspectives,” p. 263. For a critical reassessment of Weber’s theories, see Bendix and Roth, \textit{Scholarship and Partisanship}.


\textsuperscript{16.} Thompson, \textit{Beliefs and Ideology}, pp. 11–29.

\textsuperscript{17.} On micro-politics, see Turner, \textit{Religion and Social Theory}, p. 183; his remarks occur in the context of his discussion of Michel Foucault’s \textit{Discipline and Punish}.
political and religious order. However, from the more recent discourse on ideology, I adopt the notion that ideology can be studied from its material effects and is not always intentional and articulated.18 Hence the two-pronged approach adopted in this study. Besides reconstructing the ideological use the Koryŏ dynasty made of Buddhism, I also assess the full extent of the religion’s significance through the institutions created to sustain it. This allows a comparison of the abstract, theoretical model with its concrete applications. This approach is indebted to Pierre Bourdieu’s theory of practice, which is based on two fundamental levels of human experience: the “phenomenological” level of beliefs and representations and the “objective” level at which these beliefs and representations appear as ideological products.19

Confucianism was undoubtedly the most likely legitimating ideology in premodern East Asia. As far as we can determine, discussions on the legitimacy of the Koryŏ ruling house would have been framed in terms of the Mandate of Heaven (ch’ŏnmyŏng, Ch. tianming). This doctrine originated in the Zhou dynasty (1122–256 BC) and became the central conception around which Confucian debates on the legitimacy of the ruler took shape. According to the most ancient formulations of this doctrine, Heaven (Ch. tian) selects someone of outstanding virtue and ability and confers a mandate on him to rule “all under Heaven” (Ch. tianxia).20 The Mandate could be transferred to the ruler’s descendants to form a lineage or dynasty, but in case of misrule Heaven could also rescind the Mandate. Although this theory remained essentially unaltered throughout the history of China, perceptions of how and why the Mandate was conferred and rescinded evolved over time. By the Han dynasty, it was thought that there was

18. Thompson, Beliefs and Ideology, passim.
20. Although Heaven later came to be understood as an impersonal force, it is important to note that there was also continuity with the Shang concept of a supreme lord (Ch. shangdi) who rules Heaven. This means that, to some, the Mandate was perhaps understood to be granted by this supreme being. See Ching, Mysticism and Kingship in China, p. 36. Further information on the Mandate of Heaven doctrine in this paragraph was derived from Chan, Legitimation in Imperial China, pp. 19–48; and Wechsler, Offerings of Jade and Silk, pp. 12–20.
a mutual interaction between Heaven and man, especially between Heaven and the ruler. Heaven communicated by sending auspicious or inauspicious omens. Anomalies, for example, natural disasters, were interpreted as warnings from Heaven that the ruler was in danger of losing his Mandate. The counselors and ministers who interpreted these warning signs then tried to convince the ruler to mend his ways in order to please Heaven and avert further calamities. Although various strategies could be employed to placate Heaven, the personal virtue of the ruler was usually regarded as the main source of Heaven’s displeasure, and therefore improving the ruler’s virtue was considered the main remedy.

In the Mandate of Heaven ideology, only the Chinese emperor could communicate with Heaven. This meant that other states theoretically had to receive the Mandate through the Chinese emperor. Koryŏ rulers accepted this symbolic conferral of power from the Chinese emperor, although in practice they themselves determined the establishment of the new dynasty and the succession of kings. The fact that all Koryŏ kings sought investiture from a Chinese empire shows that they subscribed to the Mandate ideology. Moreover, the Koryŏsa (History of Koryŏ) portrays Wang Kön (877–943), founder of the Koryŏ dynasty, as someone worthy of the Mandate, in the sense that he performed all the rhetorical acts of a dynastic founder in the Confucian mold. Yet, we should not conclude from this that Confucianism formed the main legitimating ideology. Early Koryŏ had no substantial Confucian bureaucratic class, the chief audience for this ideology, and there is no evidence that the Mandate theory was discussed at court. As we shall see, although Koryŏ seemed to conform outwardly to the Confucian worldview, domestically the Koreans pursued their own agenda. Also, the Mandate is a sufficiently broad concept that it can easily be used to confer the notion of legitimacy, however it is achieved. Kingship can be defined in many ways; among these, Confucian kingship is but one version.

21. To my knowledge, the only scholar who has dealt with the problem of legitimacy in Koryŏ is Michael Rogers; see especially “P'yŏnnyŏn T'ongnok” and “National Consciousness in Medieval Korea.” Rogers surmises that there was no highly developed discourse on dynastic legitimacy (Ch. zhengtong) in Koryŏ, but that its scholars and statesmen adapted it to their own purposes.
Until recently studies of Buddhism often overlooked the Buddhist notion of kingship since it did not seem to fit the “otherworldly” representation of the religion. The relation between Buddhism and secular power was, however, more substantial and durable than commonly acknowledged. From a very early stage, Buddhism developed a concept of society and politics that proved surprisingly influential. Early Buddhist texts describe a theory of statehood based on a social contract between ruler and ruled. Some sūtras seem to advocate a form of republican government, but, according to David Kalupahana, the Buddha realized that if the constituents for this type of government were not morally committed, a monarchical government could be more effective. Yet, Indian Buddhism always maintained an ambivalent position toward kings. On one hand, they were distrusted as cruel and unreliable, and monks were urged to avoid the king and his court. On the other hand, monks also realized the need for protection and patronage by a powerful ruler. This more pragmatic view prevailed, and although acknowledging the need for an effective kingship somewhat compromised the ideals of the early Saṅgha, this apparent concession to the secular powers was attenuated by the concept of a Buddhist king.

The ideal Buddhist king bases his rule on the dharma, or Buddhist teachings. This is figuratively expressed in the term cakravartin, which means “one who turns the wheel [of the dharma].” However, the dharma practiced by rulers is distinguished from the dharma practiced by monks; otherwise, the king’s practice and propagation of the dharma would render the difference between layman and monk obsolete. This “two-wheels-of-the-dharma” doctrine clearly distinguishes two separate spheres (or “wheels”) of authority, one secular and one monastic. The cakravartin is the leader of the temporal realm, the bodhisattva of the spiritual realm. Theoretically, the cakravartin is the secular equivalent of the Buddha: neither is superior or inferior to the other. Both are described as having the features

and characteristics of “supermen” (mahāpuruṣa), and both have accumulated a huge amount of merit in previous lives. In the words of Stanley Tambiah, “it is implied that a world conqueror (cakravartin) and a world renouncer (Buddha) are two sides of the same coin.”

By expanding the concept of dharma from a religious and ascetic ideal to a universal principle, Buddhism effectively became an important force in the politics of many Asian states. The seminal ideal of the Buddhist king who practiced this concept of dharma is King Aśoka (fl. third century BC). Although there is still some debate whether Aśoka’s use of the term dharma coincides with its Buddhist interpretation, the important thing is that in Buddhist historiography and mythology he became the archetypal Buddhist monarch. Naturally, the ways in which this model was implemented differed immensely depending on the society in which Buddhism found itself. Although the two wheels of dharma doctrine was supposed to guarantee that the Saṅgha existed as a separate authority within the state, this autonomy could not always be maintained. In China, for example, the rulers of the non-sinitic Northern Wei state (386–534) posed as incarnations of the Buddha, thereby combining the worldly role of cakravartin with the spiritual authority of the Buddha. Under the Southern Dynasties (386–589), the Saṅgha seems to have succeeded initially in maintaining its autonomy and in persuading rulers to adopt the cakravartin model. One of the most famous Chinese emperors to have adopted the mantle of Buddhist rulership is Liang Wudi (r. 502–49). His approach, however, was idiosyncratic. Rather than relying on established procedures, he created a ceremony that allowed him to assume the position of bodhisattva.

25. Tambiah, World Conqueror and World Renouncer, p. 43. Tambiah points out, however, that although both rely on the dharma, there is a distinction between the dharma of cosmic law and transcendence (nirvāna) and the dharma of righteousness as practiced by the ruler; the first is considered superior.

26. Tambiah (ibid., pp. 54, 57–63) argues that, by and large, Aśoka’s interpretation of the dharma conforms with Buddhist ideas. See also Reynolds, “Two Wheels of Dhamma,” p. 27. Others argue that the dharma that appears in Aśoka’s edicts is distinct from the Buddhist dharma. See Strong, The Legend of King Aśoka, pp. 13–15, for an overview of the main proponents for or against a Buddhist reading of Aśoka’s dharma.


ing of the Tang in 618, the Buddhist church lost the autonomy it had gained in the south, and Chinese emperors henceforth seem to have eschewed the *cakravartin* paradigm.

Scholars of legitimation in China have perhaps underestimated the legitimating power of Buddhism. Both Howard Wechsler and Chan Hok-lam in their discussions of legitimation in the Tang (618–907) and Jin (1115–1234) dynasties, respectively, give short shrift to Buddhism and focus almost exclusively on Confucian ideology.29 Yet the example of Empress Wu’s recourse to Buddhism to legitimize her interregnum (690–705) shows that it could form a powerful alternative, particularly for those not immersed in Confucian ways of thinking.30 Buddhism remained a strong legitimating force, even after the Huichang repression of 845–46.31 It resurfaced, for instance, in the Wu-Yue kingdom (907–78), whose rulers were fervent Buddhist patrons and emulated Aśoka by producing and distributing 84,000 small stūpas.32 Buddhism also played an important political role in so-called lesser, or non-Han, dynasties, especially the Liao (907–1125) and the Xi-Xia (1038–1227).33 But under the more illustrious Song dynasty (960–1279) as well, the emperors of the Northern Song (960–1127) were fervent patrons of the religion and used its potential for enhancing power.34 All in all, the rich and varied tradition of Buddhist political ideology in East Asia forms an important benchmark for understanding Koryŏ.

**Korean Buddhism: State Protectionism?**

One cannot say that the political role of Buddhism has been underestimated in the case of Korea; to the contrary, the notion that Korean Buddhism has always been an ideological support for the nation

29. Chan, in *Legitimation in Imperial China*, does not mention the legitimating potential of Buddhism; Wechsler, in *Offerings of Jade and Silk* (pp. 71–72), pays attention only to Buddhist auguries of the rise of the Tang.
33. On the role of Buddhism under the Xi-Xia, see Dunnell, *Great State of White and High*; for the Liao, see Nogami Shunjō, *Ryō Kin no Bukkyō*.
34. Huang Chi-chiang, “Imperial Rulership and Buddhism.”
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is something of a truism. Known as State-Protection Buddhism, it is usually portrayed as the hallmark of Korean Buddhism. Robert Buswell has summarized this view: “Three Kingdoms Buddhism seems to have been a thoroughgoing amalgamation of the foreign religion and indigenous local cults. Autochthonous snake and dragon cults, for example, merged with the Mahāyāna belief in dragons as protectors of the Dharma, forming the unique variety of hoguk Pulgyo (“State-Protection Buddhism”) that was thereafter to characterize Korean Buddhism.”35 Since the meaning of “State Protectionism” is taken for granted, most authors do not feel the need to articulate what they mean by it, even though their understanding of the term obviously differs. Since the assumptions inherent in this interpretive framework still influence the understanding of Korean Buddhism, I preface my discussion of the legitimating role of Buddhism with a short history of the development of State Protectionism as an academic theory.

The term hoguk (Ch. huguo) has long antecedents in sinitic Buddhism. Soon after the start of serious Buddhist translation activities in the second half of the second century AD, there emerged a body of scriptures, sometimes apocryphal, that purported to be able to protect the state. These scriptures achieved a measure of influence in all East Asian states, since the courts of China, Korea, and Japan frequently organized sūtra readings or rituals based on these scriptures. In this sense, the idea of State Protectionism is part of East Asian Buddhism, which to varying degrees played a role in the religious history of East Asia. The foremost of these scriptures are the Jin guangming jing (Sūtra of golden light) and the Renwang jing (Humane kings sūtra).36 The Sūtra of Golden Light is a translation from an Indian original and advocates a Buddhist definition of kingship in which the king relies on the dharma for governing his country. It also claims

36. The Chinese titles quoted here are the commonly used abbreviations, not the full original titles. Two main Chinese versions of the Jin guangming jing exist: one translated by Dharmakṣema between 414 and 421 (T. 663) and one translated by Yi-jing in 703 (T. 665). Another version made by Baogui in 597 (T. 664) is essentially derived from Dharmakṣema’s translation. As for the Renwang jing, there are two extant “translations” of this scripture, one attributed to Kumārajīva and dating to 410–12 (T. 245) and one produced by Amoghavajra in 765–66 (T. 246).
that reading, listening to, or generally following this scripture generates protective power. Dharma assemblies in which this sūtra was read were especially popular in Japan. Arguably more influential was the Humane Kings Sūtra, which sets forth a more sinicized interpretation of Buddhist kingship and gives a more detailed exposition of rituals to avert or prevent calamities. Although purporting to be a translation of an Indian sūtra, it was created in China in the decades following 450. Thanks to the extensive research into this sūtra’s ideological strategies by Charles Orzech, we are now better aware of the complexity of its message. Orzech has demonstrated that the text is anchored in the political climate of fifth-century northern China. Created in the wake of a near-fatal persecution of Buddhism carried out by the Northern Wei, the Humane Kings Sūtra seeks to argue both the autonomy of the Buddhist Saṅgha and the necessity of Buddhism for Chinese rulers. It is strongly imbued with end-of-dharma rhetoric. On one hand, it sees the arrogance of both monks and kings as the cause of the ending of the dharma, and the enforced state registration of monks and state regulation of the Saṅgha as symptoms of this decay. On the other hand, the sūtra states explicitly that it is to be entrusted to rulers; only if they recite and expound the scripture can serious calamities be averted. In practice, its apotropaic function in particular testifies to the sūtra’s importance. The Hundred Seat Assembly, a ritual prescribed by the sūtra to ward off calamities, became a popular instrument for rallying Buddhist monks behind the state’s interests. Its documentation in historical records provides a yardstick to trace the scripture’s popularity in East Asia.

In South Korea, the study of the state-protective ideology in Buddhism became widespread after the Korean War. The first article to study its role in Korean history, written by Kim Tong-hwa, appeared

37. For the textual history and translations of this sūtra, see Nobel, *Suvarnaprabhāsottanā Sūtra*; for its popularity in Japan, see May, “Chingo kokka.”
38. For a translation and discussion of the text’s ideology and historical provenance, see Orzech, *Politics and Transcendent Wisdom*.
39. Orzech, “Buddhist Image of (Im)perfect Rule.”
40. See May, “Chingo kokka”; and Kim Jongmyung, “Buddhist Rituals in Medieval Korea,” pp. 101–5. However, there appears to be no comprehensive research on the practice of the Humane Kings assembly in Chinese history.
in 1956. While recognizing this ideology as an integral part of Buddhism, Kim also stressed that Buddhism had helped to foster a national identity in Korea and idealized the role of Korean monks in the protection of the country. Kim may well have taken some cues from Japanese scholars: as early as 1935, Eda Toshio had published an article on State-Protection Buddhism in Korea. The subject had been popular for some time in Japan: following the Meiji restoration (1868), Buddhism fell from grace, as the new leaders promoted Shintō as Japan’s original religion. Japanese Buddhism had to re-invent itself as a nationalist tradition, and many Japanese Buddhists became strong advocates of the imperial way, even when this meant supporting military aggression. In this climate, it was natural that the study of the state-protective tradition would receive a boost.

Although Japanese scholarship has claimed that State Protectionism was one of the most salient features of Japanese Buddhism, this did not deter Koreans from doing the same for their tradition. Following Kim Tong-hwa’s early efforts, however, the emphasis gradually shifted from the study of state-protective scriptures and related practices to a broader understanding of State Protectionism. Earlier, in 1954, Yi Ki-baek had published a pioneering article on the important role of Buddhism in state-building in Silla. He emphasized the role of monks such as Chajang and Wŏngwang in strengthening kingship and building moral values, as well as the impact of the important Buddhist symbols of state power developed on their advice. Subsequent scholarship would further emphasize the influence of na-

41. Kim Tong-hwa, “Pulgyo ŭi hoguk sasang.”
42. Eda Toshio, “Chōsen Bukkyō to gokoku shisō.” Eda makes some disparaging remarks about Korean Buddhism in his conclusion, but otherwise the themes he selects clearly adumbrate what was to become popular in post-colonial Korean scholarship. An earlier article, which appeared in the 1920s, seems to have highlighted the resistance by Korean monks during the Hideyoshi invasions rather than State Protectionism per se (cited in Kim Chong-myŏng, Han’guk chungseŭi Pulgyo ŭirye, p. 280). Apparently, in the 1930s these ideas had already started to filter through to some Korean Buddhist scholars; see Pankaj, “Buddhism and State in Early Silla,” pp. 7–21.
44. See, e.g., Matsunaga Yūkei, “Gokoku shisō no kigen,” p. 69.
45. Yi Ki-baek, “Samguk sidae Pulgyo chŏllae.”
tive traditions on the development of a Korean form of State Protectionism. It is impossible in the scope of this introduction to give a complete overview of the literature on this subject, since it runs to the dozens of articles, but a summation of some main themes is relevant to the discussion of state Buddhism.

Generally, it became understood that the native Korean religion, usually referred to as Shamanism (musok), had influenced state-Buddhist relations. Yi Ki-yŏng, in an excellent article on the Humane Kings Sūtra as a text and as a source of practice, has shown that the sūtra’s central tenets were often distorted by those who tried to practice it. It was often ignored, he argues, that the sūtra emphasized the practice of prajñāpāramitā (perfection of wisdom) as the main source of merit. According to the sūtra, rather than the ritual itself, the practice of the inner cultivation of wisdom was the real source of protection. Yi Ki-yŏng concluded that in Korea shamanistic influence distorted the sūtra’s original purport and this led to practices different from those in China.

Another element of native belief systems that received attention from scholars was the dragon myth. The dragon has a long and complex history in Buddhist and Asian mythology, and belief in dragon spirits seems to have been prevalent in Korea before the introduction of Buddhism. In most cases, they were subdued by monks or converted to Buddhism before lending protection to the new religion and the state. A culmination and sublimation of these myths can be seen in the story of Silla King Munmu’s (r. 661–81) vow to be reborn as a dragon in the Eastern Sea to protect his country.

Other symbols and institutions came to be regarded as expressions of the state-protection ideology. Kim Yŏng-t’ae has drawn attention to the Three Treasures (sambo) as the attributes of State-Protection Buddhism. The Three Treasures are the nine-story pagoda at the

46. Yi Ki-yŏng, “Inwang panyagyŏng kwa hoguk Pulgyo,” p. 191. Professor Yi also proves that “the state” in “State Protectionism” refers not only to the country in a physical sense but also to other, internal or virtual states.

47. On the role of the dragon in Silla Buddhism, see Kim Yŏng-t’ae, “Silla Pulgyo e isssŏ ūi yongsin sinang.” For an excellent treatment of the relation between dragons and Buddhism, see Inoue Hideo, “Reception of Buddhism in Korea.” For an interpretation of the significance of dragon cults in Asian Buddhism, see Buswell, Formation of Ch’an Ideology, pp. 51–60.
Hwangnyong-sa, which was thought to have the power to subdue foreign invasions, a sixteen-foot statue of the Buddha, and a jade belt granted to the king by an Indian deity. Among the historical institutions associated with hoguk Pulgyo are the hwarang, the Silla elite youth organization, which was strongly associated with the worship of the future Buddha, Maitreya. Some scholars suggest that the hwarang were revered as reincarnations of Maitreya and were thought to embody the imminent advent of Maitreya’s paradise in Silla. Since Buddhist scriptures specify that Maitreya will appear when a cakrabhurava king is ruling, Yi Ki-baek has deduced from this that the Maitreya cult was intended to justify the existing social order by associating the king with a Buddhist ruler and the aristocracy (the hwarang were children of aristocrats) with the future Buddha.

The study of State-Protection Buddhism flourished in the 1970s, undoubtedly because of the political situation of the time. Under Park Chung Hee’s dictatorship, a nationalist interpretation of the past was encouraged. Moreover, the idea of protecting the state also tied in well with the militarist spirit of the time and the perceived threat from North Korea. And Park Chung Hee himself was a pious Buddhist, who supported the renovation of Buddhist temples but also had young monks drafted into the army, perhaps in the spirit of State-Protection Buddhism. All this encouraged scholars to turn their attention to Buddhism’s historical mission of protecting the nation. One effect of this burgeoning scholarship was that whereas previously most attention had been directed at Silla, now Koryŏ came within the purview of State Protectionism. In the introductory article to a series of articles on the subject, which appeared in Pulgyo hakpo (Buddhist journal), Hong Chŏng-sik argued that Buddhism acted as the spiritual basis of Koryŏ. He reasoned that in order to survive for 474 years in spite of suffering more invasions and upheavals than any other dynasty in Korean history, the Koryŏ state must have had a formidable spiritual resilience. Buddhism, Hong maintained, pro-

48. Kim Yong-t'ae, “Silla Pulgyo hoguk sasang.”
vided the faith that was needed to overcome the difficulties. Not a blind faith, but a carefully nurtured one, in which the state provided for and controlled the Buddhist community (external protection, oeho), while Buddhism ensured a firm moral foundation for the nation (national preservation, kukka chinho).\textsuperscript{51}

Thus the protection of the state came to be seen as a recurring and constant feature in the history of Korean Buddhism, if not its most salient feature. Although it is indisputable that Buddhist ideology was used for political ends, is this really so surprising, and does this set Korea apart from other countries where Buddhism was influential? The fact is that Buddhism never set out to be a strong institutional force on a par with the state; rather, it chose to ally itself with the monarchy and tried to mold the monarch as a protector and upholder of the religion. In this sense, Buddhism adopted a constructive role toward the authorities of nearly all countries where it became established.\textsuperscript{52} Thus the notion of State Protectionism is simply too broad a category to be useful as an analytic tool. It obfuscates other aspects of state-religious relations, such as the mutual need for legitimation or more subtle power struggles between state and Saṅgha. Also, it puts undue emphasis on the need for protection against foreign invasions: although Korea suffered many invasions in its history, there were also long periods of peace. More important, this interpretation describes only the desired effect of an ideology, not how that ideology functioned. We have to question how Buddhism operated as an ideological system, how it was implemented, and what its effects and limitations were. A third major problem with this term is that there is obviously a big difference between

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Hong Chŏng-sik, “Koryŏ Pulgyo sasang,” pp. 11–13.
\item This was especially pronounced in Silla. We know that Buddhism was officially patronized by the Silla rulers from King Chinhŭng (r. 540–76) on, but the motivation for this political decision is very complex. Political expediency played a role, but the official recognition of Buddhism was also the result of a historical momentum: in the eastward permeation of the religion, it had become very much part of Chinese culture during the fourth to sixth centuries. At the time when Silla entered its state-building phase, all the Chinese dynasties to which it looked for inspiration had embraced Buddhism and encouraged its spread to vassal states. As a result, Buddhism became a civilizing influence and was thus naturally omnipresent in all aspects of Silla society.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
Buddhism in sixth- and seventh-century Silla and tenth-century Koryŏ: there is no evidence of dragon myths or Maitreya worship in Koryŏ.53

Some Korean scholars have tried to achieve a more generic understanding of the place and function of Buddhism in politics and society by moving beyond the notion of State-Protection Buddhism. Hŏ Hŭng-sik in particular has carried out some pathbreaking research in this field. In an introductory chapter to a volume of studies on several aspects of the history of Korean Buddhist schools and institutions, he tries to assess the influence of Buddhism on everyday life. Although he is successful in describing how it dominated the worldview of Koryŏ people and regulated their daily life, he is somewhat less convincing in describing how it helped to actualize political power for the ruling elite. Hŏ almost completely ignores the rich legacy of stories and myths developed within the Buddhist tradition to accommodate and assist the temporal power and thereby fails to address its ideological role at the level of politics.54 Following up on Hŏ Hŭng-sik’s work, Han Ki-mun has attempted a systematic analysis of the Buddhist policies used by the dynasty’s founder, King T’aejo (Wang Kŏn; r. 918–43). Although he pays attention to the concerns for legitimation underlying these policies, he does not contextualize them.55 Both Hŏ’s and Han’s works have greatly enhanced our understanding of the Buddhist institution of Koryŏ, but they do not address the ideological background in which these institutions operated. My approach, then, is to try to understand the interaction between ideology and history, so as to draw up a comprehensive picture of the historical phenomenon that is Koryŏ Buddhism.

53. We should bear in mind that all these elements were culled from the Samguk yusa, a work designed to enhance the state’s self-identity when sovereignty threatened to pass into Mongol hands (Kim Jongmyung, “Chajang and ‘Buddhism as National Protector,’” pp. 36–39).
54. Hŏ Hŭng-sik, “Pulgyo wa yunghap toen sahoe kujo.” A partial and not wholly reliable translation of this article can be found in Lancaster et al., Buddhism in Koryŏ, pp. 1–33.
55. Han Ki-mun, “Koryŏ T’aejo üi Pulgyo chŏngch’aek.”
Sources

Unfortunately, every project is determined by the available sources. To a large degree, the questions I address and the scope of my research are results of the restrictions imposed by the available source materials. As is well known, there is an extreme paucity of documentary evidence. Primary sources—eyewitness accounts, transaction documents, or official communications—are almost completely lacking. The available sources broadly fit into three main categories: official historiography, literary collections, and epigraphy; each of these categories has specific limitations on the information on Buddhism it contains.

The *Koryŏsa* is the official history of the Koryŏ dynasty. It was not completed until 1451, almost 70 years after the founding of the succeeding Chosŏn dynasty. The compilation project had been fraught with difficulties, and earlier versions had been rejected, but under the auspices of King Sejong (r. 1418–50), the project was finally brought to fruition thanks to the editorial efforts of Chŏng In-ji and Kim Chong-sŏ. Their work was written according to the highest standards of the Chinese historiographic tradition, which means that there was little or no space for personal interpretation, the historian’s main task being the selection and careful editing of passages from the veritable records (*sillok*). On the downside, the practice of history was not considered value-free; rather, it served first of all a didactic purpose in that it passed judgment on the conduct of previous rulers and ministers. Furthermore, it was also used as a source of precedents to advise present rulers and as a means to show the legitimacy of the present dynasty by demonstrating how the previous dynasty had lost the Mandate of Heaven. All this was achieved by a careful selection and juxtaposition of material. Rather than tampering

56. On the compilation history and structure of the *Koryŏsa*, see Pyŏn T’aesŏp, *Koryŏsa ŭi yŏn’gu*; and idem, “Koryŏsa ŭi chonghapchŏk kŏmt’o.”

57. On the practice of history writing in China, see Gardner, *Chinese Traditional Historiography*; and Beasley and Pulleyblank, *Historians of China and Japan*. The veritable records (Ch. *shilu*) were in themselves not primary sources but edited versions of the diaries of events kept by specially appointed court diarists; see Twitchett, *Writing of Official History*. 
with material, the historian would in some cases insert a note to express his disgust with a situation, or worse, just omit things he did not approve of.58 Because of the contempt for Buddhism prevalent among the Neo-Confucian compilers of the Koryŏsa, a lot of invaluable material regarding Buddhism was undoubtedly left out. Out of respect for the previous dynasty’s rulers, entries in the annals section usually mention Buddhist affairs if they involved the king.59 However, these are usually brief statements to the effect that the king went to a certain temple or appointed a certain monk and do not allow us to reconstruct the why and how. In short, the Koryŏsa does not provide contexts that would make the events related to Buddhism intelligible.

Literary collections (munjip) contain a variety of material, ranging from poetry, fictional stories, and anecdotes to texts for epitaphs and important administrative documents. Unfortunately, documents are always quoted without background information. This means that facts such as dates, the people concerned, and other bureaucratic details are left out, presumably because the texts were selected only for their literary merits. Nevertheless, the literary collections offer unique insights into how Koryŏ institutions functioned. It is impossible to describe all but a few of the munjip that I have used here. I should mention first of all the Tongmun sŏn (Anthology of Korean literature), compiled by Sŏ Kŏ-jŏng in 1478. Although strictly speaking not a munjip, it contains the same range of texts, in this case by

58. For examples of historians’ comments, see KRS 1.11a–12b, where the genealogy of T’aejo Wang Kŏn is criticized for its mythological contents, and KRSC 9.50a–b, where the veneration of a Buddha relic by King Injong (r. 1122–46) is condemned. The Koryŏsa chŏryo (Essentials of the history of Koryŏ; KRSC) is ordered chronologically throughout and does not contain treatises or biographies. It was compiled in 1452 and generally mirrors the Koryŏsa, although there are minor discrepancies; see Han Yŏng-u, “Koryŏsa Koryŏsa chŏryo ú pigyo yŏng’gu.”

59. According to a prefatory note by the compilers of the Koryŏsa (KRS pŏmnye 1.1–b), regular events such as rituals were recorded only the first time they occurred, unless the king participated, in which case an entry was required. It is not certain what other criteria were used to select data on Buddhism. Stories presenting it in a negative light were definitely more likely to be included, but otherwise the selection may have been haphazard. Appointments of royal and state preceptors, for example, are often mentioned, but from epigraphic sources we know that many other appointments were left out.
eminent literati from the Late Silla up to the Early Chosŏn periods. It also contains many texts on Buddhism or by Buddhist monks.60 The *Taegak Kuksa munjip* (Collected works of State Preceptor Great Enlightenment) is a collection of various documents written by the monk Úich’ŏn (1055–1101), which offers unique insight into the more mundane activities and thoughts of a Koryŏ monk.61 The *Tongguk Yi sangguk chip* (Collected works of Yi Kyu-bo) finally is the collected oeuvre of Yi Kyu-bo (1168–1241), one of the most prolific writers of the Koryŏ period, who wrote many administrative texts related to Buddhism.62

The third and most important category of source material for this book is epigraphic material, which consists exclusively of burial inscriptions, either in the form of small epitaphs (*myojimyŏng*) or larger stelae (*pisŏk*).63 It is perhaps exceptional—certainly in the study of East Asian Buddhism—to rely so heavily on epigraphic material, but it is the only extensive corpus of contemporary source material. Since, however, this type of source material has generally been undervalued and underutilized, I thought it mer it ed a separate explanation in the Appendix. Besides an introduction to the specific features of this type of source, the Appendix also contains a synoptic list of all the stelae or epitaphs used for this study.

What all these sources have in common is that, insofar as they discuss Buddhism, they do so in its capacity as official religion. They describe state Buddhist rituals, the careers of eminent monks, or aspects of the bureaucratic administration of the religious body. In short, they describe what I would call “state Buddhism”: the religion not in all its diversity but only in its interaction with the state.64 There are virtually

60. Hŏ Hwang-sik, “Tongmun sŏn úi p’yŏnch’ŏn kwajŏng kwa Pulgyo saryo.”
63. On this genre, see Hansen, “Inscriptions.” When citing the title of an inscription, instead of giving the full title, which is often long-winded, I have chosen to give abbreviated titles, containing only the name of the temple and the posthumous title given to a monk. Together with the date of the epitaph, this is sufficient to locate the text of an inscription in compilations other than the ones I have used.
64. Note the difference from definitions of the term “state religion” in other contexts. Sato Chisui (“Character of Yûn-kang Buddhism,” pp. 39–40) singles out three criteria that mark Northern Wei Buddhism as a state religion: (1) state control of the religious community; (2) development of the religion’s content to serve the state;
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no documents that allow us to see the internal dynamics of the Buddhist world, how temple life was organized, how the religion was actually practiced or experienced among monks or laity. Only a few scattered documents give us glimpses of the issues that concerned individual temples or religious life in general at the level of ordinary people. Temple histories and writings by monks reveal something about religious movements and the economic life of large temples and warrant more study. But this can only be done once we come to grips with the all-pervasive system of state Buddhism in Koryŏ and understand how and why it functioned and what its limitations were.

Structure

This book consists of three parts. Part I describes the historical background of the founding of the Koryŏ dynasty and attempts to reconstruct its official relationship to Buddhism. Part II studies the state apparatus that dealt with and integrated Buddhist monks and monasteries. Part III looks at the ritual, social, and economic roles of Buddhism.

Part I has two chapters. The first chapter analyses the factors that led to the collapse of the Silla social and political order. Since Buddhism initially played an important part in justifying this order, the question arises of how the social and political changes affected it. The rise to prominence of several regional Sŏn schools in the ninth century is an important factor in the changing balance of power, but their relations with regional and central authorities and their political significance have to be considered carefully. In Chapter 2, the focus shifts to Wang Kŏn and his strategy of legitimation. The official historiography represents Wang Kŏn as an archetypal dynastic founder, but although this may basically conform to how Wang Kŏn sought to represent himself, undoubtedly this is a vision that panders to the concept of dynastic rise and fall of a Confucianized elite. The closest we can get to his original ideals is to critically analyze the Ten Injunctions attributed to him and compare them with contemporary

(3) use of the religion to control the people. This kind of scheme presupposes an all-powerful state that can mold the religion to its own needs, which is not the case for Koryŏ.
sources such as Buddhist epigraphy and official communications contained in literary collections.

Chapters 3 to 5 make up Part II and deal with the institutionalization of Buddhism by the Koryŏ authorities. Buddhist monks and monasteries were organized in certain ways according to the aspirations and needs of the state, although this required the consent and cooperation of the monastic community. Chapter 3 shows how the monks’ status was defined and restricted by the state. Entry into the monkhood was regulated, and once ordained, monks were further restricted by official regulations. However, the marked differences between the letter of the law and practice reveal the actual status of the Saṅgha. Chapter 4 describes the process that integrated Koryŏ monks into the state apparatus: the bureaucratic system that recruited and promoted monks to certain posts and functions. The disposition of the monks who passed the monastic examination and gained a ranking is also described here. After passing this examination, they either went on to work in the main state Buddhist organ, the Sŭngnoksa (Saṅgha Registry), whose function is also described in this chapter, or received appointments to temples. By analyzing the appointment system of abbots to temples in the capital and the provinces, I hope to assess the extent of state control over monasteries and the reasons behind this state-controlled appointment system. The highest attainable positions were those of royal and state preceptor, important posts for their symbolic meaning in Koryŏ state Buddhism, but with little or no actual power. Chapter 5 examines the meaning of these posts in the construction of temporal and religious power.

Part III looks at some of the practical effects and limitations of the system of state-controlled monks and monasteries. Chapter 6 examines the economic power of temples. Land was, of course, the main asset of temples, which were among the main landholders during the dynasty. The origins of their land, the conditions on their land entitlements, and the patterns of landholding were, however, highly complex. Hence, we need to question the degree of the temples’ control over land: the allocation of land rents did not give the monastery much power, whereas granting it the use of the land gave the monastery much more leeway in undertaking economic initiatives. Case
studies of land acquisition and use by certain temples reveal considerable variation in the status of monastic land.

Chapter 7 focuses on the use of Buddhist ritual in the legitimation of the dynasty. Other studies on legitimation in East Asian history have argued that rites and ceremonies such as imperial ancestor worship were among the main avenues to shore up authority, vis-à-vis both the bureaucracy and the populace. Together with other symbols of power, rituals provided the miranda, things to be admired, or the externalization of the political ideas that lay behind them, the credenda.65 Buddhist rituals were undoubtedly considered important by Koryŏ, yet it remains to be proved that they were the mainstay of the dynasty’s ritual program and that they played an important part in the legitimation of rulers.

Although the book spans the whole of the Koryŏ dynasty, the emphasis is on the first century, especially the reign of Wang Kŏn, since this is the period when the unique Koryŏ Buddhist system emerged. T’aejo’s project was inspired by precedents in Korea and abroad, as well as the exigencies of the contemporary political situation. Born both from necessity and design, it was to become a unique linchpin of his dynasty, effectively tying the religion’s fate with that of the dynasty and vice versa.

Together, these chapters serve to illustrate all relevant aspects of Buddhism in its guise as an official, state-supported religion during the Koryŏ period. Although running the risk of overemphasizing this official side at the expense of its more spontaneous devotional and other religious aspects, this approach serves to unravel how deeply the Koryŏ dynasty was enmeshed with Buddhism. As we will see, it is thus legitimate to speak of state Buddhism when referring to Koryŏ Buddhism, but it should be understood not as an exclusive and hegemonic system but as a complex of institutions with an ill-defined ideological content. Although this study does not eschew the oft-used epithet State Protectionism, it is used only for specific rituals, texts, and events, not to characterize the whole of Koryŏ Buddhism. In the final analysis, this work should serve to delineate the legitimating and organizational dimensions of Koryŏ Buddhism and to put these into the context of East Asian state-Buddhist relations

65. Wechsler, Offerings of Jade and Silk.
and state-religious relations in general. If these dimensions are better understood, it will also be easier to understand the context of Buddhist doctrine in Koryŏ, the focus of most research to date, and provide a basis for understanding the other dimensions of Koryŏ Buddhism, notably its social role and its practice and meaning in daily life.