

BUDDHISM AT THE CENTER: THE TEMPLES OF KAESŎNG AND THEIR SOCIO- POLITICAL ROLE*

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Buddhism during the Koryŏ period (918–1392) enjoyed the favor and patronage of the court, aristocrats and commoners alike. Its prominent position in Koryŏ society is reflected in the temples established in the capital, Kaesŏng. Although none of the Koryŏ era temple buildings remain, both the written record and some material remains suggest that Buddhist temples were a dominant feature of the capital landscape. Besides their religious function as places of worship, Kaesŏng temples were also extensions of dynastic authority and centers of economic, cultural, and social activities. Although ritual played an important role in legitimizing dynastic authority, temples were not the main stage for the chief rituals to call for protection of the state: these usually took place in the palace. Temples did play an important role however in the ancestor worship of the Koryŏ dynasty, serving as foci to keep the presence of the dynastic founder and recently deceased kings alive and connect them to Buddhism. Also, a number of the temples established by the dynastic founder, T'aejo, played a key role in the era's two main festivals (the Eight Prohibitions and Lantern Festival) and some other events, while also serving as headquarters of Buddhist sects. Kaesŏng temples were also occasionally used for political and military purposes, and assisted in charitable events.

Key words: Kaesŏng, Buddhism, temples, Koryŏ, politics

INTRODUCTION

By all accounts, the religious edifices of Buddhist temples dominated the streets of Kaesŏng on a scale that is hard to imagine today. One observer from the early Chosŏn period complained that in the Koryŏ capital, just as in the Silla capital before, temples were more numerous than people's houses and that for each palace and major residence there was a temple.¹ A later Chosŏn observer put a concrete figure to the number of temples, claiming that there were as many as 300 temples in Kaesŏng.² Even allowing for some hyperbole on the part of these Chosŏn officials, who may have wanted to cast Buddhism in a negative light by emphasizing the extravagance committed in its name, there were numerous important temples in Kaesŏng. The description of Koryŏ in the *Songsbi*, the official history of the Song dynasty, states that there were seventy temples in the Koryŏ capital.³ Today, from historical records, we can ascertain the names of about 130 temples in and around Kaesŏng,⁴ which is probably a more realistic figure—at least for the important ones, not counting the many small hermitages and shrines that undoubtedly existed.

We know that Buddhism was the dominant religion of the Koryŏ period, espoused from the king downward to the ordinary people, but we know very little about which types of Buddhist practice and faith were actually dominant. If we can determine the role temples played in the religious and social life of the Koryŏ people, we would be one step closer to understanding what Koryŏ Buddhism meant to people of the time. In this article, I will try to assess the place of temples in the religious and political life of Koryŏ, represented by its capital, Kaesŏng. How were temples integrated into the city's social fabric? What role did they play in its public and private life? Kaesŏng has not yet received the treatment it deserves as one of East Asia's great former capital cities. At its heyday its population numbered between 500,000 and 1 million, its city walls spanned 21 kilometers and it was not just the country's bureaucratic heart but also a center for commerce and culture. In recent years South Korean researchers have started to look at the history of Kaesŏng as the capital of the Koryŏ dynasty, but as they

* Research for this article was carried out during my post-doctoral fellowship at the Korea Institute, Harvard University, funded by the Korea Foundation. I am happy to thank both institutions for their generous assistance.

¹ Sŏng Hyŏn (1439–1504), *Yongjae ch'onghwa* 8, in *Taedong yasŭng* 1 (Seoul: Chŏsen kosho kankŏkai, 1909), p. 195; the same claim was made earlier by Kwŏn Kŭn (1352–1409), *Yŏnbok-sa t'ap chungch'ang kŏi*, TMS 78.

² Ch'a Ch'ŏn-nak (1556–1615), *Osan sŏllim ch'ogo*, *Taedong yasŭng* 5. (Seoul: Chŏsen kosho kankŏkai, 1909), p. 623.

³ *Gaoli*, *Songsbi* 487 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1962–75), p. 14,054.

⁴ Han Ki-mun, *Koryŏ sawŏn ūi kujo wa kinŭng* (Seoul: Minjoksa, 1998), pp. 470–9.

have no access to the city itself, their work is based only on documentary research. To bring the study of Kaesŏng to a higher level, this documentary evidence should be tested against what we can find on the ground; enough remains of the Koryŏ city to appreciate its spatial organization and the significance of its major structures. This will have to wait until geographic and archeological study of the city is allowed, but in the meantime it is still possible to try imagining what the records tell us: what impact did Buddhist temples have on capital life? Was their sheer number commensurate with their dominance of people's lives, or did they occupy less place, physically and mentally, than the numbers suggest?

All that remains of Kaesŏng's temples are a dozen or so constructions such as pagodas or flagpoles (see table one), but these are just the tips of the iceberg: unlike the contemporary Song capital Kaifeng,⁵ it seems that the foundation structures of many temples remain, thus enabling us at least to gauge their scale. If the size of the only temple site of which a survey was conducted and published, Hŭngwang-sa, is representative of Kaesŏng temples, then most of the city must have been occupied by temples: it was situated in a compound surrounded by a four-kilometer wall, and the structures that have been discovered indicate it was occupied by some substantial buildings.⁶ Since this temple was located a few miles south of the city walls, it was probably not representative of temples *intra muros*, but it is a good example of how archeology can (and should) be combined with the written record.⁷ In the end, detailed histories ought to be compiled of all the major Kaesŏng temples, but in this article I will try to give an introduction to some of the main temples in order to establish a framework. Some temples seem to stand out because of their specific roles, mainly the royal memorial temples, to which the bulk of this article will be devoted. I will start by sketching the political background of Buddhism in the capital and then move on to discuss the main functions of temples: as memorial temples, ritual spaces, sectarian headquarters, and political and social centers. Finally, I will try to draw some preliminary

⁵ Edwin O. Kracke Jr., "Sung K'ai-feng: Pragmatic Metropolis and Formalistic Capital," in *Crisis and Prosperity in Sung China*, ed. John Winthrop Haeger (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1975), pp. 56 ff. describes the meagre remains of the Sung capital.

⁶ Hwang Su-yŏng, "Koryŏ Hŭngwang-sa chi ũ chosa," in *Pulgyobak nonjip: Paek Sŏng-uk paksa songsu kinyŏm* (Seoul: Tongguk munhwasa, 1957), pp. 1109–33. The survey was only superficial: no excavations were carried out.

⁷ Another temple with evident remains such as foundations and a stele is Kwangt'ong Poje sŏnsa, west of the city. See the illustrations in *KBS yŏksa sŭp'esyŏl* vol. 4, *Pukhan ũ munhwa yusan* (Seoul: Hyohyŏng ch'ulp'an, 2002), p. 228. Allegedly some other temples in the vicinity of Kaesŏng such as Puril-sa and Yŏngt'ong-sa have been excavated by North Korean teams, but there are no known reports to corroborate this. See Pak Chong-jin, "Kaesŏng munhwajae mat pogi," in *Koryŏ ũ hwangdo Kaegyŏng*, ed. Han'guk yŏksa yŏn'guhoe (Seoul: Ch'angjak kwa pip'yŏngsa, 2002), pp. 264–5.

conclusions as to the role of the main capital temples and relate this to the data provided by physical remains.

BACKGROUND

When Kaesŏng became capital of the Koryŏ dynasty in 919, it is not certain what infrastructure was already in place. Formerly known as Song'ak, a Silla prefecture, it had become a stronghold of the Wang family, ancestors of T'aejo, towards the late ninth century. It is known that they sponsored Sŏn monks, one of whom, Sunji, was given a temple *circa* 875 on Ogwan-san, just north of the city.⁸ Song'ak became the capital of Kung-ye's Later Koguryŏ state in 898, until he moved the capital to Ch'ŏrwŏn in 905.⁹ Since Kung-ye saw himself as a reincarnation of Maitreya and held Buddhist processions, presumably he also built or maintained temples in Song'ak. After Wang Kŏn had eliminated Kung-ye and established his own dynasty, in the first month of 919 he established his capital south of Song'ak, and named it Kaeju; during the Koryŏ period it would usually be called Kaegyŏng or Hwangdo (imperial capital).¹⁰ In the third month of the same year, Wang Kŏn established ten temples in his new capital, thus setting a very important precedent. He also ordered existing temples to be restored, indicating that some temples may predate the Koryŏ period.¹¹ The temples he founded continued to play a very important role in the dynasty's life, and some of them I will discuss further. Thus it seems that from the beginning T'aejo had definite plans about Buddhism and its role in the religious and political life of the capital. He continued to build new temples throughout his reign, and is known to have established at least thirteen more temples in the capital (for a list of all temples established by T'aejo, see Table 2).¹²

It is difficult to establish what part private devotion on the part of the ruler played. The fact that he donated part of his palace to make it a temple,¹³ his

⁸ *Sŏn-sa Yoo hwasang pi* (937), NYKSM, vol. 1, p. 42.

⁹ *Kung-ye chŏn*, SGSG 50; KRS 1: 1b–2a.

¹⁰ The confusing array of names for the capital stems from the fact that it was a conglomerate of several districts and counties, the main ones being Songak in the north and Kaesŏng in the south. Kaeju or Kaegyŏng denotes the whole capital area, while Kaesŏng-pu was eventually used as the administrative unit governing the capital and its dependent districts and counties. Thus it eventually became the name of the capital too. See Pak Yong-un, *Koryŏ sidae Kaegyŏng yŏn'gu* (Seoul: Ilchisa, 1997); a summary of this book appeared as "Kaegyŏng in the Age of Koryŏ," *Seoul Journal of Korean Studies* 11 (1998): 79–106.

¹¹ KRS 1: 15a. For the names of the temples, see *wangnyŏk: Koryŏ T'aejo*, SGYS.

¹² Han, *Koryŏ sawŏn*, pp. 47–8.

¹³ This was Kwangmyŏng-sa, see TYS 4: 20b.

cordial relations with many Buddhist monks and the general promotion of Buddhism during his reign (and throughout the dynasty) suggest that he had at least a very strong sympathy towards the religion. However, he also sought to regulate Buddhism and was keenly aware of the dangers of giving too much power to temples. In his Injunctions for future kings, he reminded his successors that Silla fell because of its excessive patronage of temples.¹⁴ He warned especially against the construction of private temples, which he proscribed. This suggests that he wanted to keep Buddhism firmly within the domain of the state, presumably so that it would be a religious extension of royal power.

The rationale presented for limiting the number of temples, however, contrives to show that not personal royal interest, but the country's fate was at stake. The real reason, according to the Injunctions, is that random construction of temples would damage the earth veins, i.e. the channels of good energy that are crucial to geomantic theory. Therefore, temples could only be built in places selected by the monk Tosŏn, a famous geomantic specialist of the late Silla period. Some later Koryŏ and Chosŏn sources claim that T'aejo himself constructed temples across the peninsula, among which were 500 Sŏn temples.¹⁵ However, this is extremely implausible: what is probably meant is that T'aejo recognized these temples, and granted them a charter or plaque as evidence that they were officially licensed. Also, he rewarded many temples across the peninsula for their assistance or loyalty to his new dynasty. It seems that a number of these temples were singled out, and called *pibo sach'al* or temples of assistance and remedy. Originally, these may have comprised both temples that had supported T'aejo (sometimes by lending protection) and temples that were located in places where they could harness the positive earth force or suppress negative earth forces. In contrast to some Chinese and Japanese emperors, T'aejo did not have the wherewithal to construct official temples across the country, so the *pibo sach'al* system may have been a strategy to establish outposts of royal dominion across the country. The application of geomantic theory was probably designed to limit the number of temples and integrate them into the dynastic structure, but in the course of time it was invoked to justify the construction of new temples, allegedly to suppress areas of resurgent negative force.¹⁶

It is not certain to what degree this geomantic theory influenced the establishment of temples in the capital. Most of those who write on Kaesŏng's geomantic situation agree that it was not favorable, and that temples were built to

¹⁴ KRS 2: 15a.

¹⁵ Yi Kyu-bo (1168–1241), *Yongdamsa ch'ongnimboe pang*, TYSC 25: 14b, KMC 1.

¹⁶ Sem Vermeersch, "The Relation between Geomancy and Buddhism in Koryŏ: *pibo sasang* reconsidered," in *History, Language and Culture in Korea. Proceedings of the Association of Korean Studies in Europe (AKSE)*, Comp. Pak Youngsook and Jaehoon Yeon (London: Saffron Books, 2001), pp. 186–198.

remedy this situation.¹⁷ It is difficult to assume that such a negative geomantic aura adhered to the capital from its inception; yet the foundation legend mentions the fact that Song'ak-san, the capital's guardian mountain, needed to be planted with pine trees to fulfill the capital's destiny.¹⁸ From the beginning P'yŏngyang was given a considerable role as the secondary capital, and there are strong indications that T'aejo planned to move his capital there.¹⁹ Also, at least from the eleventh century onwards there circulated prophecies that Kaesŏng's term as the capital city was limited,²⁰ leading to the emergence of proposals to change the capital.²¹ Thus it comes as no surprise that some temples were established with the explicit purpose of remedying Kaesŏng's geomantic deficiencies: a late-Koryŏ account, for instance, states that Kaeguk-sa was founded to counter the frequent flooding in the capital, attributed to an excessive influence of the water element.²² Yet this is the only clear example of the geomantic function of a capital temple. Since Kaeguk-sa was also founded in 935 to commemorate the end of the wars of unification,²³ it is possible that its geomantic function was only a later tradition. To all appearances, T'aejo founded temples in the capital to add substance to his new dynasty, and used them for many functions at the heart of his dynastic project. Even though the capital temples may have had a geomantic role from the beginning, they were also the temples that were explicitly tied to the dynasty. Without any major land holdings, they depended primarily on the state for funding, and were thus in a very different position from provincial temples.²⁴

¹⁷ Yi Pyŏng-do, *Koryŏ sidae ūi yŏn'gu – t'ŭk'i toch'am sasang ūi p'alchŏn ūl chungsim ūro* (Seoul: Asea munhwasa, 1986 (*kaejŏngp'an*)), pp. 85–107; Ch'oe Wŏn-sŏk, "Namal Yŏch'o ūi pibosat'ap yŏn'gu," *Kusan nonjip* 2: 163–226 (1998).

¹⁸ In its present form this legend dates to the twelfth century, by which time there circulated numerous theories regarding the depletion of the capital. By and large it seeks to restore the stature of Kaesŏng as the capital city following the Myoch'ŏng revolt (1135). See Michael Rogers, "P'yŏmnyŏn T'ongnok: The Foundation Legend of the Koryŏ State," *Journal of Korean Studies* 4: 3–72 (1982–83). For more on the geomantic situation of Kaesŏng, see Kim Ki-dŏk, "Koryŏ sidae Kaegyŏng ūi p'ungsu chirijŏk koch'al," *Han'guk sasang sabak* 40: 63–119 (2001).

¹⁹ KRS 2: 2a

²⁰ In 1056 it was claimed that Tosŏn had written that 120 years after unification a pavilion had to be built in a certain place to ensure the dynasty's continuation. KRSC 4: 65b–66a.

²¹ The first concrete proposals to move the capital seem to have emerged in the late eleventh century, when Kim Wije suggested moving the capital to what is now Seoul. KRS 122: 1a–3b.

²² Yi Che-hyŏn (1287–1367) claims that Kaeguk-sa was built in 935 to address the negative water virtue of its location. *Chungsu Kaeguk yulsa ki*, TMS 69; TYS 5: 14b–16a.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ See the memorial written by Cho Chun in 1386: "Since the time of [T'aejo][it is customary] to grant grain stipends to the five great temples and the ten great temples to assist and remedy the state (*kukka piboso*) if they are in the capital, and arable land and forest land if they are in the countryside." KRS 78: 27a.

MEMORIAL HALLS

T'aejo forbade his successors to construct personal memorial temples (*wönch'al*), but ironically, one of the most influential of the capital temples, Pongün-sa, was constructed in his memory in 951.²⁵ Despite his admonition, T'aejo may have set the example for this himself, as in 930 he built Anhwa-sa for the memory of his cousin Wang Sin,²⁶ and in 940 reconstructed Sinhüng-sa for all the merit subjects, whose portraits were painted on the east and west walls.²⁷ Mirük-sa apparently had a similar function, as a shrine for the merit subjects was erected within its grounds.²⁸

After the founding of Pongün-sa, memorial shrines were established for all deceased kings, queens, and non-reigning fathers of kings in existing or specially constructed temples, which thus became their memorial shrines. More than fifty temples in and around Kaesöng functioned as such, but Pongün-sa, as the shrine for the dynastic founder, was the foremost among these.

Its location is unfortunately not certain. According to Ko Yu-söp's research, it was situated in the southwestern part of the city, near the national academy (*Kukchagam*).²⁹ Although its history is well documented, with over 300 references to it in the standard history of Koryö,³⁰ we have no idea of its scale or lay-out. We do know that a portrait of T'aejo was enshrined in a separate hall within the temple precinct, called *chinjön* (true-[likeness] hall).³¹ Pongün-sa was the main focal point for the veneration of the dynastic founder. Later kings visited the temple on T'aejo's death memorial days³² and on the days of the Lantern Festival

²⁵ KRS 2: 27a.

²⁶ KRS1: 27a–b. Wang Sin had been exchanged as hostage in a peace deal with Kyön Hwön, but after Kyön Hwön's hostage died of illness, he killed Wang Sin. KRS 1: 18b–19a. According to Hō Hūng-sik, it is possible that the ten temples Wang Kōn founded in 919 were actually intended for the memory of his parents and grandparents. *Koryō Pulgyosa yōn'gu* (Seoul: Ilchogak, 1986), pp. 74–5.

²⁷ KRS 2: 14a.

²⁸ KRS 25: 25b–26a.

²⁹ Ko Yu-söp, *Songdo üi ko yujök* (Seoul: Yörhwadang, 1977), pp. 76–9. He locates it in the upper part of Taep'yöng-cho 103–120 (presumably an administrative ward introduced during the colonial period).

³⁰ Hō, *Koryō Pulgyosa*, p. 69.

³¹ See Han Chae-yöm, *Koryō kodo ching*, quoted in Ko, *Songdo yujök*, p. 78. Probably based on *Koryōsa*, *Yejü* 23 (monograph vol. 23, rites).

³² He died on the twenty-ninth day of the fifth month of 943. KRS 2: 18a. [*pyöngo*-day; according to Hō, *Koryō Pulgyosa* p. 299, it was the twenty-seventh day] However, later kings visited mainly on the first and second days of the sixth month. See Kim Jongmyung, *Buddhist Rituals in Medieval Korea*, p. 165 n. 165. Mokchong first decreed in 998 that a memorial fast of five days for

at the second full moon.³³ Also, kings went there in times of distress to pray before T'aejo's image.³⁴ It was also the place where royal and state preceptors were appointed,³⁵ and as such symbolized the strong bond between the ruler and Buddhism. Another indicator of its importance: when the capital was moved to Kanghwa Island in 1232, this was one of the first temples to be re-opened in the temporary capital.³⁶

Although the Koryŏ dynasty also had a Confucian shrine where spirit tablets were kept (*t'aemyo*), a portrait hall (*kyŏngnyŏngjŏn*), and of course the royal tombs, there is little doubt that the portrait halls in temples were the main foci of royal ancestor worship.³⁷ The Koryŏ emphasis on portrait worship rather than the more traditional forms of Confucian ancestor worship is similar to the case of Song China. Patricia Ebrey concluded from her research on portrait worship in the Song (960–1276) that it offered everything that Confucian ancestor worship could not. "It [the Supreme Shrine] could not engage the emotions to the same extent; it could not provide symbolic representation of the entire dynasty in the same way; nor could it give as much of a role to women either as ancestresses or celebrants."³⁸ The importance of the Koryŏ royal portraits can be gleaned from their initial treatment under the succeeding Chosŏn dynasty. Chosŏn officials recommended continuing this practice, as it "allowed people to look up to and admire T'aejo as if he were a father and mother."³⁹ In 1392, Yi Sŏng-gye, the founder of the Chosŏn dynasty, moved a "cast statue" (*chusang*) of T'aejo (Wang Kŏn) to a district in between the old capital Kaesŏng and the new capital Seoul, Majŏn-kun.⁴⁰ There the statue, and perhaps those of other Koryŏ kings, continued to be worshiped.⁴¹ However, from the Chosŏn annals it is evident that

T'aejo was to be held, on one day of which incense was to be burned, presumably at Pongŭn-sa. KRS 3: 32a-b.

³³ King Chŏngjong first decreed in 1038 that on the eve of the Lantern Festival of the second month, kings were to burn incense in front of T'aejo's statue in Pongŭn-sa. KRS 6: 13b. The fifteenth of the second month is traditionally regarded as the date of Buddha's nirvana.

³⁴ As King Injong did in 1133 after prayers for his reign did not deliver any result. KRS 16: 29b.

³⁵ E.g. KRS 5: 25b; *Pusŏk-sa Wŏnyung Kuksa pi*, KSPM, vol. 3, p. 267.

³⁶ KRS 23: 28a. After the capital returned to Kaesŏng, in 1270 T'aejo's statue and coffin were returned. KRS 26: 34b. They were housed in a temporary building in Nip'an-dong, suggesting that Pongŭn-sa had been destroyed by the Mongols. KRS 26: 40b. The temple was reconstructed many times during the Koryŏ period. See Ko, *Songdo kujŏk* p. 78.

³⁷ The ancestor cult of the Koryŏ royal house is treated in detail by Hŏ Hŭng-sik, "Pulgyo wa yunghap toen wangsil ū chosang sungbae," in *Koryŏ Pulgyosa yŏn'gu*, pp. 47–102.

³⁸ Patricia Ebrey, "Portrait Sculptures in Imperial Ancestral Rites in Song China," *T'oung-Pao* 83–1/3 (1997), p. 90.

³⁹ *Sejong sillok* 4: 1 a-b.

⁴⁰ *T'aejo sillok* 1: 52a.

⁴¹ *Sejong sillok* 20: 29b. For further details on the shrine, see TYS 13: 16a-b.

there were many statues and paintings of T'aejo, and that the attitude of Chosŏn officials towards them gradually changed. In 1427 a request came to bury three portrait paintings of T'aejo as well as many portraits of the infantry and merit subjects.⁴² In 1428 King Sejong consented to a request to bury several paintings (*chin*) of T'aejo, from Ch'ŏnan-kun, Munŭi-hyŏn, and Kwangju, as well as a cast statue of T'aejo from Munŭi-hyŏn and other portraits of Koryŏ rulers near their respective tombs.⁴³ In 1433 eighteen more Koryŏ portraits were buried.⁴⁴ As we know that T'aejo also had a portrait hall in the western capital,⁴⁵ and one in Kaet'ae-sa near Nonsan,⁴⁶ it follows that his image was spread to temples across the country, not just Pongŭn-sa.

Fortunately, one of the statues buried by the Chosŏn authorities has recently come to light. During recent excavations in the DPRK near T'aejo's tomb, a bronze cast statue was recovered. It is in perfect condition, and shows the king seated and with hands spread out in front of his chest, as if to hold a tablet.⁴⁷ Both this pose and his crown are very similar to the painted portrait of Song Xuanzu, the progenitor of the Song dynasty.⁴⁸ This suggests that the statue was the main focus of worship, and not an attendant figure paying obeisance to the main statue of a Buddha. Although it is impossible to prove, the quality of the image suggests that it may have been the one placed in Pongŭn-sa, venerated by Koryŏ kings rather than local officials or the common people.

Pongŭn-sa was the main memorial temple and perhaps the only one of the shrines for Koryŏ kings that did not change, but there were many others, mostly located in the vicinity of Kaesŏng. Usually kings focused on their immediate ancestors and T'aejo, and changed the other temples according to their needs or because of political pressure or military turmoil. Which ancestors were venerated, how and where thus changed over time. For instance, in some cases the royal couple's portraits were enshrined in the same temple, but in other cases separate temples were dedicated to the king and queen. Thus the portrait of T'aejo's

⁴² *Sejong sillok* 37: 11b.

⁴³ *Sejong* 41: 6b.

⁴⁴ *Sejong sillok* 60: 41b. Other evidence suggests that by the early Chosŏn some portraits were already completely worn out. See Chang Chi-yŏng, "Kukka ūi sangjing, t'aemyo wa sajik," in *Koryŏ ūi hwangdo Kaegyŏng*, p. 82. And some were simply stolen: in 1357, Japanese raiders stole portraits of Ch'ungsŏn and Princess Han'guk from Hŭngch'ŏn-sa in Sŭngch'ŏn (near Kaesŏng) KRS 39: 18b.

⁴⁵ KRS 4: 25a. This was the Sach'ŏn wang-sa, as mentioned in the epitaph for Ch'oe Sa-wi (962–1041), Kim Yong-sŏn ed., *Koryŏ myojimyŏng chipsŏng* (Seoul: Hallim tachakkyo ch'ulp'an-bu, 1997), p. 26.

⁴⁶ KRS 40: 12b. Also, some other temples are listed in Han, *Koryŏ sawŏn*, p. 222.

⁴⁷ *Sekai bijutsu daizenshu, dai 10-kan: Kōkuri, Kudari, Shiragi, Kōrai* (Tokyo: Shōgakkan, 1997–2001), p. 405

⁴⁸ Reproduced in Ebrey, "Portrait Sculptures," p. 81.

principal queen, Queen Sinhye (née Yu), was enshrined in Puril-sa, outside the city.⁴⁹ The memorial temples, as the main foci of ancestor worship, were not related to the royal tombs; it is only in the late Koryŏ era, with the establishment of Kwangt'ong Poje sŏnsa for the memory of King Kongmin (1351–1374) and his spouse,⁵⁰ that memorial temples were established next to tombs, a custom which apparently continued into the Chosŏn dynasty.

It is of course impossible to discuss all the memorial temples: about twenty can be identified, but for most of them we have no further information.⁵¹ The exceptions to this general rule are Hyŏnhwa-sa and Hŭngwang-sa, the memorial temples for Kings Hyŏnjong (1009–1031) and Munjong (1046–1075) respectively. The former was constructed between 1018 and 1021 by King Hyŏnjong in memory of his parents. This is the only memorial temple for which we know something about the circumstances of its establishment, thanks to the stele erected there in 1021.⁵² Since Hyŏnjong was born from an illicit affair, he was keen to restore some proper glory to his parents. The temple served as the focal point of this attempted exoneration: a portrait hall was set up in the northwest corner of the temple precinct, but in this case the whole temple was dedicated to his parents, or rather the miraculous events produced by this extreme act of filial piety. Thus the whole temple can be seen as a testament to Hyŏnjong's filial piety. This sets it apart from memorial temples in general: in most cases, rulers did not build their own temples, but their successor designated an extant temple, so that in these cases the temples did not function solely to glorify the memory of a particular king. Still, even if most temples were not exclusive memorial temples, if a deceased emperor's portrait hall was built on its grounds, this would undoubtedly bring prestige and economic benefit. Although there are no examples of gifts to sustain the portrait halls and the memorial rites that took place in them, the gifts bestowed on Yongmun-sa (near Yech'ŏn, North Kyŏngsang province) when it was chosen to store a prince's placenta suggest the connection with the royal ancestral cult was certainly beneficial. This also brings up an interesting contrast between capital and provincial temples: while the royal memorial temples were located in or near the capital, for less important ritual practices concerning the dynasty provincial temples were used.⁵³

⁴⁹ KRS 2: 27a.

⁵⁰ Yi Saek (1328–1396), *Kwangt'ong Poje sŏnsa pimyŏng*, *Mog'un mun'go* 14: 1a–5b, KMC 3.

⁵¹ Ho Hŭng-sik ("Pulgyo wa yunghap toen wangsil," pp. 102–3) lists seventeen different memorial temples, but the number seems slightly higher, certainly if we take into account the memorial temples for Mongol emperors and princesses.

⁵² I have translated this inscription in an appendix to a manuscript, "Royal Ancestor Worship and Buddhist Politics: A New Look at the Origins of the First Koryŏ Tripitaka," to be offered for publication. This paragraph is based on the article.

⁵³ *Yongmun-sa chungsu pi*, KSCM 367.

While Hyŏnhwa-sa is chiefly known through its stele, Hŭngwang-sa features prominently in the *Koryŏsa* and, at least until recently, retained most of its ground plan and encircling walls as testimony to its erstwhile grandeur. Located southeast of the city, this temple was constructed in 1056 by King Munjong, in spite of the fierce objections of civil officials, who lamented the expenditure.⁵⁴ Especially the lavish gift of land and slaves met with official resistance, but the king got his way and when the temple was finished in 1067, its buildings occupied a space of 2,800 *kan*; the size of this unit varied, but the total surface would have occupied at least 10,000 m². To celebrate completion, a special Lantern Festival was held for five days and nights; the whole road from the palace to Hŭngwang-sa was lined with tents, and the lights were so intense that it was said the night seemed like day.⁵⁵ This was not the end of the construction work, however: in 1070, walls were built,⁵⁶ and in 1078 work on a golden stūpa was completed. According to the *Koryŏsa*, 427 *kŏn* of silver was used for the inside and 144 *kŏn* of gold for the outside.⁵⁷ After King Munjong died, a memorial shrine was established for him at this temple where his successor came on the king's memorial days.⁵⁸ The connection with King Munjong was further strengthened when his son Ŭich'ŏn, a fully ordained monk, used the temple to publish his supplement to the Buddhist canon.⁵⁹ It is not certain whether this ancestor worship was kept up in further generations, but what is certain is that Hŭngwang-sa, like Hyŏnhwa-sa, became one of the most prominent temples of Kaesŏng, and one of the most sought after abbacies for monks from the aristocratic families.⁶⁰ Almost certainly, some of this prestige also rubbed off on their royal founders.

TEMPLES AS RITUAL SPACES

Buddhist rituals played a very important role at the Koryŏ court, and probably throughout Koryŏ society. This is evident from entries in the *Koryŏsa*: the vast majority of entries concerning the king's activities deal with either his visits to

⁵⁴ See KRSC 4: 62a-b for the king's decision and opposition to the plan; see also KRS 8: 10a-b.

⁵⁵ KRS 8: 29b.

⁵⁶ KRS 8: 35a.

⁵⁷ KRS 9: 22b. Two years later, a stone pagoda was completed as well. KRS 9: 27b. The golden pagoda was apparently taken by King Ch'ungnyŏl's spouse, the Mongol princess Cheguk taejang. KRS 89: 3a-b.

⁵⁸ KRS 10: 6a.

⁵⁹ KRS 90: 14b.

⁶⁰ Han, *Koryŏ sawŏn*, pp. 61 ff.

temples or the organization of specific Buddhist rituals. The diversity of rituals attested is staggering: approximately 100 different types of rituals are recorded, many of which were performed frequently throughout the dynasty.⁶¹ These include scripture readings, rituals to solve specific calamities, to obtain healing or good rebirth, to avoid astronomical irregularities, and so on. However, most of these rituals seem to have taken place in palace halls, not in temples. Although there are about 2,000 entries for the kings' visits to temples, against 1,000 entries concerning rituals,⁶² there is very little overlap between these two categories. Mostly no reason is given for the visits to temples, but if it is stated, then it is mainly for ancestor memorial services. Only a small fraction of Buddhist rituals took place in temples. We can therefore provisionally conclude that ritual space was not the prerogative of temples, but was rather monopolized by the court. However, we should be cautious in reading too much into a statistical analysis of such data: since all records are focused on the court, naturally they leave out any events not related to the king. It is entirely possible that many popular rituals and festivals took place at temples, but there are no hard facts on this. Still, temples did play some part in the Buddhist state rituals, as the following cases illustrate.

The temple mentioned most frequently in the records (after Pongŭn-sa) is Pöbwan-sa, located just east of the royal palace (see map). It was listed first among the ten temples founded by T'aejo in 919, suggesting its prominence. It seems to have been connected with the *p'algwanhoe* (Assembly of the Eight Commandments), the Koryŏ festival which usually took place on the fifteenth day of the eleventh month, close to the winter solstice. Although the name originally refers to the eight Buddhist commandments taken by Buddhist lay people as a kind of purification on *posadha* days (when their behavior was scrutinized by gods), in Koryŏ it had evolved from a personal devotional ceremony to a public festival. The festival may be tentatively connected to a rite of penance before the sun reaches its turning point, but descriptions suggest that the celebratory aspect was more pronounced, and that various traditions from the Silla period were enacted.⁶³ In any case, it was customary for Koryŏ kings to go to Pöbwan-sa after the *p'algwanhoe*—which took place on the polo court in front of the palace—was finished.⁶⁴ This custom apparently took hold when in 981

⁶¹ Kim Jongmyung, "Buddhist Rituals in Medieval Korea (918–1392)," PhD dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1994, p. 56.

⁶² Yun I-hŭm ed., *Koryŏ sidae ūi chonggyo munhwa, kŭi yŏksajŏk sanghwang kwa pokhapsŏng* (Seoul: Sŏul taehakkyo ch'ulp'anbu, 2002), p. 6. He has counted 2,371 visits to Buddhist 'holy places,' the vast majority of which must be temples.

⁶³ See my dissertation, *The Power of Buddha: The Ideological and Institutional Role of Buddhism in the Koryŏ Dynasty (918–1392)*. SOAS, Univ. of London, 2001.

⁶⁴ See for example Kojong's reign: KRS 22: 29b, 35a. Also, the same king often went to this temple in the first month.

King Sōngjong wanted to flee the hustle and bustle of the festival and escaped to this nearby temple.⁶⁵ Why exactly kings went to this particular temple is unclear—all we know is that they prayed (burnt incense), presumably before the main Buddha image there.⁶⁶ Judging from the temple's name, which refers to the dharmarāja Śakyamuni, this should have been the historical Buddha Śakyamuni. However, the temple apparently belonged to the Hwaōm sect,⁶⁷ so it is also possible that they worshiped the cosmic Buddha Vairocana.⁶⁸ As the *p'algwānboe* may well have taken on a similar function as the Chinese emperor's prayer for the renewal of light at the winter solstice,⁶⁹ it is not impossible that Vairocana was here invoked in order to ensure the successful transition to a new season. Also, in accordance with T'aejo's injunction, the *p'algwānboe* was an occasion to offer to the spirits and the mountain and river gods, and there is indeed evidence that kings went to a spirits' cloister (*sinjungwōn*) in Pōbwang-sa, which was probably dedicated to these spirits.⁷⁰

If the *p'algwānboe* was arguably the most popular Koryō festival, the Lantern Festival (*yōndūngboe*) came a close second. Nominally to worship the Buddha, like the *p'algwānboe*, it also appears to have been of a syncretist nature. Although the lighting of lanterns was recognized as an Indian custom to venerate the Buddha, it took place not only on the Buddha's birthday (the eighth of the fourth month) but also and more frequently on the first full moon of the first and especially the second month. The full moon of the second month was associated with the Buddha's nirvana, but the festival was certainly not exclusively devoted to Buddhism: the main thrust seems to have been the king's prayer for blessings in the new year. As seen above, the temple associated with this festival was Pongūn-sa. However, it was only in 1038 that King Chōngjong set the precedent to go to Pongūn-sa; before 1038, kings went to Wangnyun-sa after the Lantern Festival.⁷¹ This temple was situated a little further east from the palace than Pōbwang-sa. Both Wangnyun-sa and Pongūn-sa seem to have emphasized the cult of the ruler; this much is clear from the title of the former (temple of the royal dominion) and from the veneration of the dynastic founder in the latter. In short, during the

⁶⁵ KRS 3: 1b.

⁶⁶ I could find only one reference to offering incense (KRS 3: 1b), but nothing on the image it was offered to. This could have been an ancestral statue as well as a Buddha image. Since there was no known memorial hall at this temple, I assume it was for a Buddha image.

⁶⁷ For evidence that it was a Hwaōm temple, see Hō, *Koryō Pulgyosa yōn'gu*, p. 301.

⁶⁸ According to Kwōn Kūn, when the temple's patriarch's hall was rebuilt in late Koryō, the central painting was one of Vairocana flanked by Mañjuśrī and Samantabhadra, as well as the Hwaōm patriarchs. *Pōbwang-sa chosadang ki*, TMS 80.

⁶⁹ As argued by Okumura Shūji, "Kōrai no Engu saitenrei to sekaikan," in *Chōsen shakai no shiteki tenkai to Higashi Ajia*, ed. Takeda Yukio (Tokyo: Yamakawa shuppankai, 1997), 354–384.

⁷⁰ KRS 12: 26b. For T'aejo's injunction, see KRS 2: 16a.

⁷¹ Han, *Koryō sawōn*, p. 37.

Lantern Festival the early Koryŏ kings visited Wangnyun-sa and the later kings Pongŭn-sa to pray before the ancestral portraits, thus emphasizing the strong causal bond between the dynasty and Buddhism. It is not certain why the shift from Wangnyun-sa to Pongŭn-sa occurred, but the most obvious reason that presents itself is that this put greater emphasis on the merit of the dynastic founder, to whom Pongŭn-sa was dedicated. After 1038, Wangnyun-sa continued to play an important role, continuing to act as an examination venue for doctrinal schools, but also as a venue for several rituals, including the 500 Arhat ritual.⁷² Despite its ‘royal’ status, there is also evidence that it played a role in the devotion of ordinary people. When the temple needed metal to make a statue, everybody “from the upper classes to the ordinary people” contributed. Even a widow from a poor family gave up her treasured mirror.⁷³

While Pŏbwang-sa and Wangnyun-sa belonged to the doctrinal schools (Hwaŏm and Yuga respectively), the majority of temples T’aejo founded belonged to the Sŏn schools. Whereas apart from the two main festivals no doctrinal temple seems to have specialized in a particular ritual, Sŏn temples did have an important state ritual of their own. Though it was called a ‘dharma discussion’ (*tamsŏn pŏpboe*), it was in fact a ritual that was thought to have the ability to repel northern invaders. According to Yi Kyu-bo,

Thanks to the instructions of Hyech’ŏl, our T’aejo worshiped the line of Sŏn patriarchs and opened 500 Sŏn temples to spread the way of the mind. After this the northern armies retreated and never again threatened the borders. This is the benefit of Sŏn for our age.⁷⁴

Sŏn dharma discussions were deemed to be especially efficacious—Yi refers to Sŏn’s ability to see human nature immediately and thus manifest wisdom rather than any magical power. So they were sometimes “convened in the capital in order to defend against the northern armies.”⁷⁵ Still according to Yi Kyu-bo, this assembly originally took place every three years in Poje-sa in the capital, but was

⁷² Ibid., p. 38. Hŏ (*Koryŏ Pulgyosa*, pp. 300-301) links the Arhat assemblies to the cult of the merit subjects: just as Arhats helped Buddha, merit subjects would rally to the king. The Arhat assembly was also frequently performed at Poje-sa. See for example KRS 21: 15b.

⁷³ Yi Kyu-bo, *Wangnyun-sa chang yuk kŏmsang yŏnghŏm susŏp-ki*, TYSC 25: 1a-6a, KMC 1. The construction of the Buddha figure (representing Vairocana) took place in the reign of King Sŏngjong (981–997).

⁷⁴ *Tae-an-sa tamsŏn pang*, TYSC 25: 10b, KMC 1.

⁷⁵ Ibid. A similar idea is expressed by Hyesim in his *Sŏnmun yŏmsong sŏ*: “Sŏn extends the dynasty, the Treatise on the Great Perfection of Wisdom keeps neighboring armies at bay.” HPC 5: 1a.

later also held in other temples and more frequently.⁷⁶ Still, Poje-sa, located in the southern part of the capital, was the most important venue for this ritual; Kwangmyōng-sa, located north of the palace, was another important venue for this ritual. Besides these capital rituals, it was also held in Sōn temples across the country.⁷⁷

As is well known, the Koryŏ court organized numerous other rituals that were aimed at bolstering the state against foreign invasions, the Benevolent Kings Assembly being the most important one. However, in contrast to the Sōn assemblies, these were usually held at the palace—even though occasionally they took place in temples, there is no discernable pattern, that is, most temples did not specialize in any particular ritual. Of course, rituals and sutra reading assemblies took place at these doctrinal temples; and they also played an important role for personal rituals, for example, in funerary rites, memorial rites for the dead,⁷⁸ or the celebration of the king's birthday.⁷⁹ But the point is that important state Buddhist rituals mostly took place in the palace; thus, ritual space was not confined to temples; moreover, as will become clear below, temples were also important for their political and social functions. Thus, from this brief overview of the religious role of temples, it is clear that religious space was not monopolized by Buddhist temples; moreover, their precincts were “invaded” by political agendas such as royal ancestor worship. This is of course a very simplistic dualistic perspective imposed on a society which probably had different categories to differentiate the ‘political’ and ‘religious’ realms, but at least it helps us to re-think the place of temples in the capital's fabric.

THE SECTARIAN ROLE OF TEMPLES

Traditionally, the Buddhist world of Korea since the late-ninth century has been understood to be divided into two blocks: on the one hand the Sōn order,

⁷⁶ *Sŏ Pot'ong-sa haeng tamsŏn pang*, TYSC 25: 13a-b, KMC 1; also *ibid.* 39: 4a for a text read at such an event. A *Tamsŏn pŏphoe* which took place in 1197 at Poje-sa is also mentioned in the stele of the monk Sŭnggyōng, see KSPM 5–5, p. 93.

⁷⁷ KRS 22: 24a. In 1223, King Kojong said that expenses for this ritual were to be paid directly from the palace treasury, not by the people.

⁷⁸ As Hŏ Hŭng-sik points out (*Koryŏ Pulgyosa*, p. 300), both the 500 Arhats assembly and the *Much'ŏk taehoe* (held at Mirŭk-sa, see KRS 25: 25a-2b, and at Sinhŭng-sa, KRS 2: 14a) were part of the memorial rites for merit subjects. The *Much'ŏk taehoe*, literally unlimited meeting, was originally a large gathering where everyone could donate to the *samgha* and receive remission of sins.

⁷⁹ In 1046, it was decided that the state would celebrate the king's birthday in the Oe Chesŏk wŏn, an esoteric Buddhist temple dedicated to Śakradevānām Indra, the lord of all heavens. KRS 7: 2b-3a.

represented by the Nine Mountain schools (*Kusan sŏnmun*), and on the other hand the doctrinal order, represented by the five schools (*ogyo*: the Nirvana (Yŏlban), Vinaya (Kyeyul), Dharma Nature (Pŏpsŏng), Dharma Aspect (Pŏpsang; this school is more commonly referred to as Yuga, yogacara) and Hwaŏm). This view, though still prevalent, has now been proven to be problematic.⁸⁰ Alternative divisions have been proposed, though it is perhaps impossible to ascertain the true sectarian landscape of Koryŏ Buddhism.⁸¹ Although recent research on the question of sectarianism in Chinese and Japanese Buddhism has shown that popular classifications cannot be taken at face value,⁸² it is incontrovertible that most temples in Kaesŏng were consistently associated with one tradition. Three are especially prominent: Hwaŏm, Yuga (yogacara) and Sŏn, later joined by Ch'ŏnt'ae. In some cases historic records indicate explicitly to which "sect" a temple belonged: thus the Hyŏnhwa-sa stele mentioned above states in its title that it was a Chaŭn (i.e., yogacara) temple. Moreover, the epitaphs of eminent Koryŏ monks usually reveal their sectarian affiliation, and show that monks were usually appointed to temples of the same affiliation.

The Koryŏ dynasty instituted a bureaucratic system to deal with the selection and appointment of monks to temples. Though staffed by monks, this Samgha Registry (*sŭngnok-sa*) could not appoint abbots autonomously, merely propose them for ratification by the regular organs of the bureaucracy. It is unfortunately not known where the *sŭngnok-sa* was located. In fact, the only clearly discernable role of temples in this bureaucratic process is their role as ordination platforms and venues for monks' examinations.

In 1036, King Chŏngjong decreed that

Every [household] which has four sons is allowed to have one son leave the household [to become a monk] on the ordination platforms of Yŏngt'ong, Sungbŏp, Powŏn, and Tonghwa temples, [where] he will be tested on the sūtras and Vinaya of the relevant school.⁸³

Yŏngt'ong-sa and Sungbŏp-sa were located in or near the capital; contrary to what the above decree suggests, they were not the only ordination platforms in the capital. From biographic stelae we know that Hŭngguk-sa and Kaeguk-sa, at

⁸⁰ Hŏ Hŭng-sik, "Kyojong ojongp'a sŏl ū pip'an," *Koryŏ Pulgyosa*, pp. 127–144.

⁸¹ According to one source, there were twelve sects (*chong*) in Koryŏ. Sŏng Hyŏn, *Yongjae ch'onghwa* 8, p. 195.

⁸² E.g. Robert Sharf (*Coming to Terms with Chinese Buddhism* (Univ. of Hawai'i Press, 2002), pp. 263–78) argues that there was no such thing as an esoteric Buddhist sect in Tang China.

⁸³ KRS 6: 8a. The first two temples were located in the capital, Powŏn-sa is in Ch'ungch'ŏng-do and Tonghwa-sa in Kyŏngsang-do.

least before the decree was issued, were also used as ordination platforms.⁸⁴ The fact that of these four temples, three (Yōngt'ong, Hūngguk, and Kaeguk-sa) still have some identifiable remains—in the form of stupas—is perhaps an indication of their importance. Alternatively, their importance for the religious community rather than the political authorities may be the real reason for the survival of these remains.⁸⁵

The clearest and best documented sectarian/bureaucratic profile of Kaesōng temples lay in their use as venues for the monastic examinations. Kwangmyōng-sa, mentioned above as it originated from a residence donated by T'aejo, was the venue for the examination of Sōn monks, while Wangnyun-sa was used to examine Kyo monks, of the Yuga school in particular. These examinations took the form of discussions on contentious topics such as the “two selves” or the “transmission of emptiness.” But they were not freewheeling discussions, as monks were carefully selected; many took preparatory examinations in local temples. Also, despite the different format, the monastic examination was heavily influenced by its Confucian counterpart, the civil service exam. Indeed, quite often the examiners were civil officials rather than monks. Although the Kyo exam once took place in Mirūk-sa and once in Pongūn-sa, Kwangmyōng-sa and Wangnyun-sa were the main venues. Since both temples were founded by T'aejo, and since the examination system was already implemented within the monk Kyunyō's lifetime (923–973), it is possible that the system was conceived already during T'aejo's reign.⁸⁶ Although organizing the exam was not the sole function of these two temples, it was nevertheless their most important one, which ensured their prominence throughout the Koryō.

OTHER ACTIVITIES AT TEMPLES

It is now abundantly clear that temples were an integral part of the ruling system. So far we have mainly discussed their symbolic role within the system, but there is compelling evidence that temples were often used for political purposes:

⁸⁴ Han, *Koryō savōn*, p. 364.

⁸⁵ Judging from the descriptions of Koryō temples in the *Chūngbo Tongguk yōji sūngnam* (1530), none of these temples were extant by the time this work was compiled. Fifteen extant (functioning) temples are listed in this gazetteer, and a further twenty of which only remains (*kojōk*) were extant. Kaeguk-sa is mentioned as an obsolete temple, but the others are listed neither among the extant ones nor among the remains, which is curious given the fact that the stupas of Yōngt'ong-sa and Hūngguk-sa remain to this day. TYS 4: 20a–28a, 5:11a–17a.

⁸⁶ This paragraph is based on Vermeersch, *The Power of Buddha*, pp. 213–228.

sometimes kings used them to promulgate edicts,⁸⁷ or sometimes temples were used to debate policy matters.⁸⁸ Also, temples sometimes functioned as temporary residences for kings, especially in emergencies or were used as inns when they traveled to the Yuan court in the latter half of the dynasty.⁸⁹ Finally, temples also appear frequently in accounts of military campaigns, when garrisons were stationed there.⁹⁰

But it would be dangerous to rely too heavily on official records and represent Kaesŏng temples merely as extensions of government power. Although the evidence is scarce, it is sufficiently strong to see that temples, even those in Kaesŏng, had considerable power on their own. Many temples had sizeable armies, which were sometimes rallied to defend against invading armies, but which also served the temples' own interests. This is evident from the many revolts initiated by temples against the military rulers of the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries.⁹¹ Also, temples were centers of economic activities. Although capital temples did not have any landholdings, in some cases they seem to have had subordinate temples (*malsa*) on which they could probably rely for grain rents.⁹² They also engaged in manufacturing and trade, which is apparent from official bans against this,⁹³ and managed "inexhaustible foundations" from which they collected rents.⁹⁴

Temples also fulfilled a social role—they played an important part in the funerary rites and the disposal of the dead: temples served as temporary repositories for corpses (*pinsŏ*), cremated bodies and of course were venues for

⁸⁷ See KRS 34: 11a; in 1313 an edict by the Yuan emperor was read at Minch'ŏn-sa (formerly a palace).

⁸⁸ For more detailed evidence, see Pak Chong-jin, "Koryŏ sigi Kaegyŏng ūi wich'i wa kinŭng," *Yŏksa wa hyŏnsil* 38: 78–80 (2000); Kang Ho-sŏn, "Kaegyŏng ūi chŏl," in *Koryŏ ūi hwangdo Kaegyŏng*, pp. 102–104.

⁸⁹ For example, King Kongmin used Hŭngwang-sa as a temporary palace (*haenggung*) when he fled the capital ahead of an invasion of Red Turban rebels. *Mog'ŭn mun'go* 14: 3b, KMC 3: 908. Sŏ Pot'ong-sa, on the Yesŏng River, was used for kings on their way to the Yuan court. KRS 34: 10b.

⁹⁰ Pak Yun-jin, "Koryŏ sidae ūi Kaegyŏng iltae sawŏn ūi kunsajŏk—chŏngch'ijŏk sŏngkyŏk," *Han'guksa hakpo* 3–4: 78–120 (1998).

⁹¹ Edward J. Shultz, *Generals and Scholars. Military Rule in Medieval Korea* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2000), pp. 137–8.

⁹² See for example Kwangmyŏng-sa (*ponsa*) and Kŏdon-sa (*malsa*). *Hwajang-sa Chŏnggak kuksa pi*, TYSC 35: 3a-b, KMC 1: p. 374. For more on this system, see Han Ki-mun, "Koryŏ sidae sawŏn ūi t'ongje wa p'yŏnje," in *Han'guk Pulgyo munhwa sasangsa: Kasan Yi Chi-gwan sŏnim Hwagap kinyŏm nonch'ong* (Seoul: Kasan Pulgyo munhwa yŏn'guwŏn, 1992), pp. 750–1.

⁹³ Yi Sang-sŏn, "Koryŏ sawŏn ūi sang haengwi ko," *Sŏngsin sabak* 9: 5–27 (1991).

⁹⁴ Han Ki-mun, "Koryŏ sidae sawŏnbo ūi sŏlch'i wa unyŏng," *Yŏksa kyoyuk nonjip* 13–14: 361–91 (1990).

memorial rites.⁹⁵ Temples also provided relief to people in need. The Chinese envoy Xu Jing, who left an account of his 1123 visit to Kaesŏng, remarked that in all the corridors [he did not specify whether these were the corridors of temples or public places] of the capital, every ten bays there was a small Buddhist shrine with a large jar of rice broth, from which anyone could scoop a ladle. These ‘soup kitchens’ were cared for by monastics.⁹⁶ The Pot’ong-sa temples, located on the Imjin and Yesŏng rivers, served those ferrying across, and on many occasions provided free food to people passing through.⁹⁷ Generally, temples in the vicinity of Kaesŏng were often located on important thoroughfares and crossroads, and acted as resting places and hostels for people passing through. Temples within the city too were often used to distribute food relief.⁹⁸ Finally, an important aspect of temples that has to be emphasized is their use as educational institutions. Confucian officials and scholars, including the “Confucius of Korea,” Ch’oe Ch’ung, had no qualms about using temples to lecture and instruct in Confucian writings.⁹⁹

CONCLUSION

Apart from the memorial temples, most of the important Kaesŏng temples discussed above were founded by T’aejo, which leads one to surmise that their specific roles may already have been mapped out by T’aejo. This is further confirmed by a reform proclamation issued by King Ŭijong in 1168, which says that “as of old, [there are] designated temples for dharma events and others to pray for saving grace.”¹⁰⁰ Can the archeological evidence further shore up this hypothesis? Only to a certain extent. Of the temples with extant remains (Table 1), only four were among those founded by T’aejo (Yŏngt’ong-sa, Hŭngguk-sa, Kaeguk-sa, and Mirŭk-sa). A further four were important memorial temples (Puril-sa, Hyŏnhwa-sa, Hŭngwang-sa, and Kwangt’ong Poje sŏnsa) founded later. The history of the remaining temples is much more difficult to reconstruct, as

⁹⁵ In 1133, the government forbade the practice of using temples indefinitely as repositories for bodies. KRSC 10: 8b. On other occasions, however, the government called on temples to gather the remains of bodies left on the streets. KRS 84: 19.

⁹⁶ Xu Jing, *Gaoli tujing* 23 (Seoul: Hongikchae, 1997), p. 225.

⁹⁷ Yi Chŏng ed., *Han’guk Pulgyo Sach’al sajŏn* (Seoul: Pulgyo sidaesa, 1996), pp. 251–2. I could not find the evidence for this in the sources.

⁹⁸ Kang, “Kaegyŏng ũi chŏl,” pp. 107–113. This was for example the case for Kwisan-sa, not discussed in this article. See *Ch’oe Kwan-o myoji myŏng*, in Kim Yong-sŏn ed., *Koryŏ myojimyŏng chipsŏng, kaejŏng p’an* (Ch’unch’ŏn: Hallim taehakkyo ch’ulp’anbu, 1997), p. 166.

⁹⁹ TYS 5: 11b.

¹⁰⁰ KRS 18: 36b.

they do not seem to have been prominent in early Koryŏ, apart from Kwibŏp-sa, a temple founded by King Kwangjong in 963. Oyong-sa is only known for the stele for Pŏpkyŏng Taesa Kyŏngyu, a monk loyal to T'aejo, but the temple seems to have been dedicated posthumously to this monk. Nothing is known about Kyŏngch'ŏn-sa other than that it was founded in 1113. Kwanŭm-sa and Hwajang-sa, though dating to the early or mid Koryŏ period, only achieved prominence in the late Koryŏ period: the former due to its association with the prominent central Asian monk Chigong, one of whose stūpas it contains, and the latter because it was sponsored by Yi Sŏnggye, the founder of the Chosŏn dynasty. It is undoubtedly due to this association that it is the only Koryŏ temple to have survived the Chosŏn period and to survive till this day. Wŏnt'ong-sa's history, finally, is also shady, but it was apparently rebuilt in the eighteenth century.¹⁰¹ From this overview it appears that the temples founded by T'aejo were less important than the historical record suggests. However, as Pak Chong-jin has shown, they were built from the center out: the earliest temples were built closest to the center, mainly in the palace compound, and this central location presumably made them more vulnerable to destruction and the removal of temples from cities ordered by the Chosŏn government.¹⁰²

One motive for establishing all these temples—two thirds of the main capital temples date to T'aejo's reign¹⁰³—was undoubtedly to attract eminent Buddhist monks from the Silla capital Kyŏngju, but this is a hypothesis. In contrast to Silla, however, T'aejo set up a bureaucratic structure to select monks to manage these temples. This may explain why temples, though fairly independent and powerful, also served to embody the Buddhist sanction of royal rule: the ancestor cult performed at shrines within these temples was the main expression of this. The bureaucratization of temple management may also explain the secular roles of these temples, which trained and provided monks to perform rituals at court, or welcomed the king and his entourage for the performance of ancestor rituals or even for government functions. Perhaps this close dependence on the Koryŏ state explains why none of the great Kaesŏng temples survived very long into the Chosŏn period. It is important to emphasize though, that all the great temples also catered to the spiritual, and sometimes material, needs of all the people of the capital, not just the court. This article has scratched just the surface of the varied nature of Buddhist temples in the political, social, and religious life of the Koryŏ capital, but given the fact that they intersected with virtually every aspect of capital life, it is clear that they are a central part in understanding the nature of Kaesŏng as a capital city, and indeed the Koryŏ period itself.

¹⁰¹ This information is based on Yi, *Sach'al sajŏn*.

¹⁰² Pak, "Kaegyŏng chŏl," p. 87.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 71.

GLOSSARY

Anhwa-sa	安和寺
Anhwa sŏnwŏn	安和禪院
Chaŭn	慈恩
Chigong	指空
<i>chin</i>	眞
<i>chinjŏn</i>	眞殿
Ch'oe Ch'ung	崔沖
Chŏngjong, King	定宗王
Ch'ŏnt'ae	天台
<i>chusang</i>	鑄像
Gaoli tujing	高麗圖經
<i>haenggung</i>	行宮
Hŭngguk-sa	興國寺
Hŭngwang-sa	興王寺
Hwajang-sa	華藏寺
Hwangdo	皇都
Hwaŏm	華嚴
Hych'ŏl	惠哲
Hyŏnhwa-sa	玄化寺
Hyŏnjong, King	顯宗王
<i>Inwang toryang</i>	仁王道場
Kaeguk-sa	開國寺
Kaegyŏng	開京
Kaeju	開州
Kaesŏng	開城
Kaet'ae-sa	開泰寺
<i>kan</i>	間
Kongmin, King	恭愍王
<i>Koryŏsa</i>	高麗史
<i>kukchagam</i>	國子監
<i>kŭn</i>	斤

Kung-ye	弓裔
<i>Kusan sŏnmun</i>	九山禪門
Kwangjong, King	光宗王
Kwangmyŏng-sa	廣明寺
Kwangt'ong poje sŏnsa	廣通普濟禪寺
Kwanŭm-sa	觀音寺
Kwibŏp-sa	歸法寺
Kyeyul	戒律
Kyo	教
Kyŏngch'ŏn-sa	敬天寺
<i>kyŏngnyŏngjŏn</i>	景靈殿
Kyunyŏ	均如
Majŏn-kun	麻田郡
Mirŭk-sa	彌勒寺
Munjong, King	文宗王
Ogwan-san	五冠山
<i>ogyo</i>	五教
Oyong-sa	五龍寺
<i>p'algwanhoe</i>	八關會
<i>pibo sach'al</i>	裨補寺刹
<i>pinso</i>	殯所
Pŏbwang-sa	法王寺
Pŏpkyŏng Taesa kyŏngyu	法鏡大師慶猷
Pŏpsang	法相
Pŏpsŏng	法性
Poje-sa	普濟寺
Pongŭn-sa	奉恩寺
Powŏn-sa	普願寺
Puril-sa	佛日寺
Sinhŭng-sa	新興寺
Sinhye, Queen	神惠王后
Sinjungwŏn	神衆院
Sŏ Pot'ong-sa	西普通寺
Sŏn	禪

Song'ak	松嶽
Song'ak-san	松嶽山
Sōngjong, King	成宗王
<i>Songsbi</i>	宋史
Sungbōp-sa	嵩法寺
<i>sūngnok-sa</i>	僧錄司
Sunji	順之
T'aejo	太祖
<i>t'aemyo</i>	太廟
<i>tamsōn pōpboe</i>	談禪法會
Tong Pot'ong-sa	東普通寺
Tonghwa-sa	桐華寺
Tosōn	道誦
Ŭich'ōn	義天
Wang Kōn	王建
Wang Sin	王信
Wangnyun-sa	王輪寺
<i>wōnch'al</i>	願刹
Wōnt'ong-sa	圓通寺
Xuanzu, Emp.	宣祖
Xu Jīng	徐兢
Yi Kyu-bo	李奎報
Yi Sōng-gye	李成桂
Yōlban	涅槃
<i>yōndūnghoe</i>	燃燈會
Yonghūng-sa	龍興寺
Yongmun-sa	龍門寺
Yōngt'ong-sa	靈通寺
Yu ssi	劉卣
Yuga	瑜伽

Abbreviations:

CKZ	Chōsen sōtokufu ed. <i>Chōsen koseki zūfu</i> . Seoul: Chōsen sōtokufu, 1915–1935.
HPC	<i>Han’guk Pulgyō chōnsō</i> (Seoul: Tongguk taehakkyo, 1990).
KHM	Kaesōng History Museum, Kaesōng
KMC	<i>Koryō Myōnghyōn chip</i> . Seoul: Sōnggyungwan Taehakkyo, 1986.
KRS	Chōng In-ji et al. <i>Koryōsa</i> . Seoul: Asea Munhwasa, 1990.
KRSC	Kim Chong-sō et al., <i>Koryōsa chōryo</i> (Seoul: Asea munhwasa, 1973).
KSCM	Hō Hūng-sik ed. <i>Han’guk kǔmsōke chōnmun</i> . Seoul: Asea Munhwasa, 1984.
KSPM	Yi Chi-gwan ed. and tr. <i>Kamju kyoyōke yōktae kosūng pimun</i> . Seoul: Kasan Mun’go, 1993-.
NMK	National Museum of Korea, Seoul
NYKSM	Han’guk Yōksa Yōn’guhoe ed. <i>Yōkchu Namal Yōch’o kǔmsōngmun</i> . Seoul: Hyeon, 1996.
SGSG	Kim Pu-sik. <i>Samguk sagi</i> . Seoul: Ŭryu Munhwasa, 1993.
SGYS	Iryōn. <i>Samguk yusa</i> . Seoul: Ŭryu Munhwasa, 1996.
TMS	Sō Kō-jōng et al. <i>Tongmun sōn</i> . Seoul: Minjok Munhwasa, 1994.
TYS	No Sa-sin, et al. <i>Sinjūng Tongguk yōji sūngnam</i> . Seoul: Sōgyōng munhwasa, 1994.
TYSC	Yi Kyu-bo, <i>Tongguk Yi Sang-guk chip</i> . KMC 1.

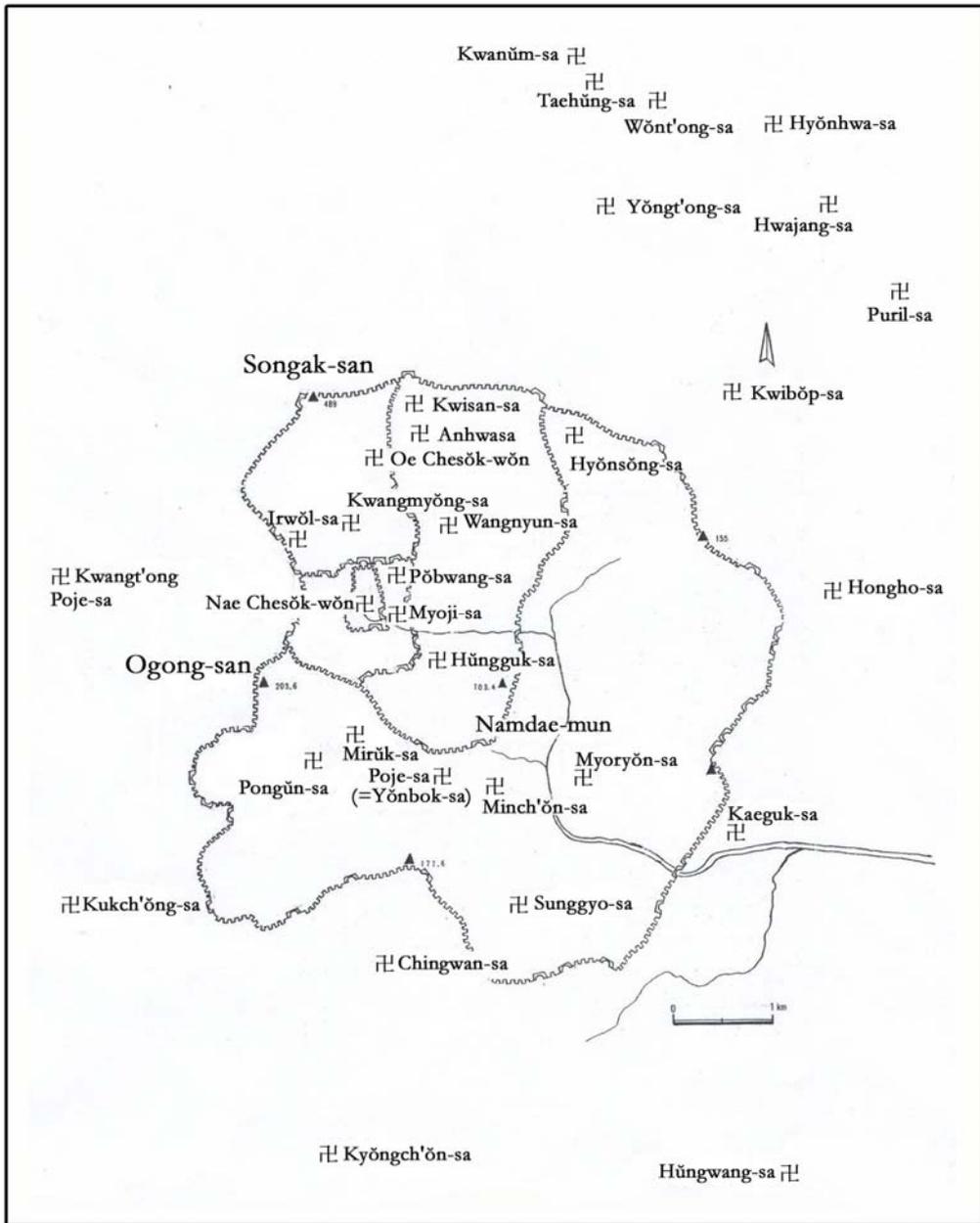
Table 1: Remains of Kaesŏng temples

Name of temple	Remains	- original location - present location
Puril-sa	5-story pagoda	- P'anmun-kun, Sŏnjok-ni (NE of city) - KHM
Yŏngt'ong-sa	5-story pagoda two 3-story pagoda's (east and west) Ŭich'ŏn's stele Flagpoles	- Yonghŭng-ni (NE of city)
Hyŏnhwa-sa	7-story pagoda temple stele flag poles stone lantern	- N. of city - first three items: KHM; last one: NMK
Hŭngguk-sa	2-story pagoda (1021 inscription)	- City center, E. of palace - KHM
Kaeguk-sa	multi-story pagoda stone lantern	- E. of city, outside Changp'aemun - first in NMK, second in KHM
Wŏnt'ong-sa	Stūpa	- ? - KHM
Mirŭk-sa	Stone Buddha	- City center - KHM
Hwajang-sa	Stūpa	- Yonghŭng-ni (NE of city)
Kwanŭm-sa	Chosŏn era temple buildings Marble statue of Kwanŭm	- Sansŏng-ni, Taehŭng sansŏng - Central history museum, Pyongyang
Hŭngwang-sa	Architectural remains	- Kaep'ung-kun (SE of city)
Kyŏngch'ŏn-sa	10-story pagoda	- P'ungdŏk, Puso-san (S of city) - NMK
Kwibŏp-sa	Open pagoda	- NE of city, outside T'anhyŏn gate - photograph in CKZ, vol. 6, nr. 2912
Oyong-sa	Stele of Pŏpkyŏng Taesa (Kyŏngyu), 944	- Yonghŭng-ni (NE of city)
Kwangt'ong Poje sŏnsa	Stele (inscription erased)	- Near Hyŏnnŭng (Hyŏnjong's tomb, west of city)

Table 2: Capital temples founded by T'aejo

	Temple	Founded	Source
1	Pöbwang-sa	919	SGYS, wangnyök, “Koryö T'aejo”
2	Chaun-sa	919	Ibid.
3	Wangnyun-sa	919	Ibid.
4	Naejesöng-wön	919	Ibid.
5	Sana-sa	919	Ibid.
6	Poje-sa	919	Ibid.
7	Sinhüng-sa	919	Ibid.
8	Munsu-sa	919	Ibid.
9	Yöngt'ong-sa ¹⁰⁴	919	Ibid.
10	Chijang-sa	919	Ibid.
11	Tachüng-sa	921	KRS 1: 16a.
12	Irwöl-sa	922	KRS 1: 16b
13	Kwangmyöng-sa	922	TYS 4: 20b
14	Oejesök-wön	924	KRS 1: 17b
15	Hüngguk-sa	924	SGYS, wangnyök, “Koryö T'aejo”
16	Myoji-sa	927	Ibid.
17	Kwisan-sa	929	Ibid.
18	Anhwa-sa	930	Ibid.; KRS 1: 27 a-b
19	Kwanghüng-sa	936	KRS 2: 12b
20	Hyönsöng-sa	936	Ibid.
21	Mirük-sa	936	Ibid.
22	Naech'önwang-sa	936	Ibid.
23	Kaeguk-sa	936	TMS 69, TYS 5: 14b-16a.

¹⁰⁴ In the *Samguk yusa*, it is given as “T'ongsa,” which is often glossed as Wönt'ong-sa. But as Han Ki-mun has shown, almost certainly Yöngt'ong-sa is meant. Han, *Koryö sawön*, p. 35, n. 44.



Map. Temples in and near Kaesŏng

Map adapted from *Pukhan ūi munhwa yujŏk IV* (Sŏul Tachakkyo Ch'ulp'anbu, 2000), p. 92. All locations are approximate; some outlying temples are shown slightly closer to the city than they actually are.