

## Article

# Korean Potalaka: Legends about Naksan Temple Examined through Mountain and Sea Worship †

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**Abstract:** Several sites in East Asia have been identified as Potalaka, originally thought to be located near the southern seas of India. The basis of this phenomenon is built upon the nature of Avalokiteśvara as a mediator between sentient beings and buddhas, the nature of Potalaka as a boundary between their worlds, and Buddhist philosophy. The belief in the abode of Avalokiteśvara bodhisattva on Earth incorporates various places into a Buddhist world transcending borders. This paper examines Korean beliefs about Potalaka and Avalokiteśvara through legends about Naksan Temple, with special emphasis on their relationship with mountain and sea worship. At the same time, the study attempts to connect the beliefs with the philosophical background of Hwaŏm tradition, which is in close relation with this ritual site. The aim of this approach is to point out the unique and universal, as well as the local and translocal elements in Korean narratives about Potalaka. In other words, the paper searches for patterns that are to be found in the wider Buddhist world and characteristics that are created by the specific religious environment of Korean culture.

**Keywords:** Potalaka; Kwanŏm cult; Naksan Temple; maritime religion; mountain worship



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## 1. Introduction

Potalaka, a sacred mountain known as Avalokiteśvara bodhisattva's worldly abode, appears in several Buddhist scriptures. Many sites in East Asia have been identified as this *bodhimaṇḍa*,<sup>1</sup> originally thought to be located near the southern seas of India. The belief in Avalokiteśvara's abode on Earth connects various places throughout East Asia and incorporates them into a Buddhist world transcending borders. A well-known site associated with Potalaka is the Potala Palace in Lhasa, while other *bodhimaṇḍas* found throughout East Asia include Mount Putuo (Putuo Shan 普陀山) in China, Naksan Temple (Naksan-sa 洛山寺) in Korea, and the religious complex constituted by Kumano Nachi Shrine (Kumano Nachi Taisha 熊野那智大社) and Fudarakusan Temple (Fudarakusan-ji 補陀洛山寺) in Japan.

As I will argue, the fact that a mythological place is connected to several geographical locations indicates that Potalaka can not only be regarded as an actual place, but also that it bears a symbolical meaning. The belief in the manifestation of divine places on Earth is closely related to the relationship between myth and reality, or sacred and profane, suggesting a holistic worldview that is based on the non-duality of these opposites. The basis of this phenomenon is built upon the nature of Avalokiteśvara as a mediator between sentient beings and buddhas, the nature of Potalaka as a boundary between their worlds, and Buddhist philosophy.

The present paper examines Naksan Temple, Avalokiteśvara's Korean *bodhimaṇḍa*, primarily focusing on the influence of local traditions, while attempting to connect it with

the philosophical background of Hwaom 화엄 (華嚴, Ch. Huayan) tradition, which is in close relation with this ritual site. The aim is to point out the unique and universal, as well as the local and translocal elements in the beliefs about Naksan-sa. In other words, I search for patterns that are to be found in the wider Buddhist context and characteristics that are created by the specific religious environment of the given culture. “Duality” and “interrelation” are two main keywords in the study. In terms of duality, we can speak of the natural environment of Potalaka (including the duality of mountain and sea), as well as its relation to the sacred and profane world. As far as interrelation is concerned, the relationship between different belief systems and different cultures is addressed.

In the first part of the paper, I give an overview of the concept of Potalaka based on these keywords. First, based upon Xuanzang’s 玄奘 (fl. 602–664) travel records, the *Da Tang xiyu ji* 大唐西域記 (“Records from the Regions West of the Great Tang”, 646), I explore the geographical location of the mountain, and then proceed to examine the relationship of Potalaka with conventional reality by using the *Gandavyūha Sūtra* (Ch. *Ru fajie pin* 入法界品). Since one of the main features of Potalaka faith is that it bears the characteristics of both mountain worship and maritime religion, it is worth considering the theory that traces back the origins of Avalokiteśvara to a local mountain or sea deity. In connection with this, I also touch on the symbolic interpretations of mountains and the sea in the Buddhist tradition, especially in the Huayan tradition, which is the most relevant for the present study.

In the next part of the paper, I move on to focus on Naksan Temple to show that the cult of the bodhisattva preserved the characteristics of nature worship even after it had spread to other regions in the world. Moreover, the image of the bodhisattva incorporated elements from local mountain and sea cults, which helped the domestication of its worship. One problem that arises is the lack of textual sources for investigating indigenous beliefs in the early times: Written records are passed down from a relatively late age, and even in these cases, the texts reflect the concerns and viewpoints of the literati class of that era. One text that can be used as a primary source is the *Samguk yusa* 三國遺事 (“Memorabilia of the Three Kingdoms”, ca. 1282–1289) compiled by Iryōn 일연, (一然, 1206–1289). Since this was transcribed at a relatively late time, its usage may bring questions. As we will see, the text reflects not only the Buddhist worldview, but also Chinese concepts and beliefs; thus, it is hard to determine to what extent any given religious phenomenon can be considered “indigenous”. Even if it is so, the *Samguk yusa* preserves many traditional narratives and folklore material, and thus is a precious source for examining the amalgamation of native and foreign ideas. In the paper I focus on the chapter entitled “Naksan idaesōng Kwanūm Chōngch’wi Choshin” 낙산이대성 관음 정취 조신 (洛山二大聖觀音正趣調信, “Avalokiteśvara and Ananyagāmin, the Two Saints of Naksan, and Choshin”) to examine legends about Naksan Temple, while attempting to approach the topic from a broader Hwaom context.

Due to space limitations, the present paper only examines the legends concerning Naksan Temple on the eastern coast. It would be meaningful in the future to extend the research to the other three temples on the southern and western coasts that are listed among the four great *bodhimaṇḍas* of Kwanūm in Korea.<sup>2</sup>

## 2. Potalaka in Light of the Scriptures

### 2.1. The Geographical Location and Topography of Potalaka

In order to understand the nature of Potalaka, it is important to examine the depiction of the mountain in Buddhist sūtras and texts, especially the geographical location of the mountain and its relationship with reality.

One source often cited with regard to the geographical location of Potalaka is the tenth chapter of the *Da Tang xiyu ji* 大唐西域記 (“Records from the Regions West of the Great Tang”, 646), the travel record of Xuanzang 玄奘 (fl. 602–664), which states that Potalaka is located east of Mount Malaya in the South-Indian country of Malakūta. According to the description in the text, at the top of the mountain there is a clearwater lake, from which a river flows into the “southern sea” (*nanhai* 南海, presumably the Indian Ocean) after

coursing around the mountain twenty times.<sup>3</sup> This detail establishes a connection between the mountain and the sea, which is an important characteristic of Potalaka beliefs around the world. Despite the mythical element of the presence of a bodhisattva, the geographical location is concretely indicated in the text. Although Xuanzang might not have visited the place personally, it is clear based on this record that in Xuanzang's time Potalaka was known among locals as an actual place in South India.

There is no consensus about where this mountain is actually located. There are theories that suggest that it lies somewhere in the region stretching from Papanasam to Mount Agastya in South India, whereas others identify it with Hyderabad in the state of Telangana (Hikosaka 1989).<sup>4</sup> One theory assumes that the mountain is none other than Adam's Peak (Sri Pada) in Sri Lanka (Bingenheimer 2016),<sup>5</sup> but as the *Da Tang xiyu ji* states that Sri Lanka can be reached by ship sailing out from a port near Potalaka,<sup>6</sup> this is unlikely. Hikosaka (1989) proposes that the name "Potalaka" refers to Mount Potigai at the foot of the Western Ghats.<sup>7</sup> The scholar thinks that the Tamil name of the mountain, Pothiyil, originally meant "the place of enlightenment" or "residence of the bodhisattva", and presumes that the name was translated by meaning as "Bodhiloka" in South India, which later changed to "Potalaka".

Wherever Potalaka may have been located, it was certainly not conceived merely as a geographical location. We can gain more information about this through Buddhist sūtras, specifically the *Gaṇḍavyūha-sūtra*.

## 2.2. Mountain on the Sea: Potalaka in the Flower Ornament Scripture

The oldest and most well-known text that mentions Potalaka is the *Gaṇḍavyūha Sūtra*,<sup>8</sup> the last chapter of the *Flower Ornament Scripture* (Skt. *Mahāvaiṣṭya Buddhāvataṃsaka Sūtra*; Ch. *Da fangguang fo huayan jing* 大方廣佛華嚴經), which originally circulated as an independent scripture. The main character of the sūtra is the young Sudhana, who sets out on a pilgrimage looking for enlightenment, during which he encounters 53 spiritual friends (*kalyāṇa-mitra*), the 28th being Avalokiteśvara himself.

The *Flower Ornament Scripture* in 80 fascicles<sup>9</sup> depicts the mountain as "a mountain on the sea" (*hai shang you shan* 海上有山),<sup>10</sup> which confirms the connection between Potalaka and the sea that was mentioned in Xuanzang's record as well. We find a rather detailed description about the rich natural surroundings of Potalaka: "trees are covered in flowers and fruits, springs and ponds are abundant".<sup>11</sup> Avalokiteśvara dwells in a rocky valley on the western slope of the mountain, which is adorned with "many springs, lush trees, and fragrant, tender lawn covering the ground".<sup>12</sup> The 60-fascicle version of the sūtra describes the mountain similarly, but the passage "there is a mountain on the sea" (*hai shang you shan* 海上有山), which suggests a connection between Potalaka and the sea, can only be found in the 80-fascicle version. The 40-fascicle version of the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* translated by Prajñā in 796 contains gāthās that are missing from the other translations and adds the information that Avalokiteśvara is living in a cave.<sup>13</sup> Although the depiction contains supernatural elements including the jeweled throne and the presence of the bodhisattvas, the detailed description about the rich natural surroundings evokes the image of a place in this world.

Manifesting himself in physical form and appearing in a form similar to sentient beings is part of the practice of Avalokiteśvara,<sup>14</sup> so we can say that his role is none other than establishing a connection between the realm of buddhas and the realm of sentient beings. Staying in this world and dwelling in an actual, earthly place is well suited to a being that plays this kind of mediating role. This is not an exclusive characteristic of Avalokiteśvara, since bodhisattvas are thought to be active in this world for the benefit of sentient beings while also having access to higher existential realms.<sup>15</sup> What makes Potalaka unique is that not only does it appear in several Buddhist sūtras, but Xuanzang's record also makes it possible, even if approximately, to determine its position. For this

reason, I think that among all the bodhisattva *bodhimaṇḍas*, Potalaka is the most likely to be originally an actual location in India.

In the *Gaṇḍavyūha Sūtra*, Avalokiteśvara is simply one of Sudhana's 53 spiritual friends without any distinct status, who appears in a relatively short chapter compared to the overall volume of the text. Unlike Maitreya, Mañjuśrī, or Samantabhadra, he is not depicted as a universally worshipped bodhisattva, but someone who only represents one specific practice on the bodhisattva path. Based on this, Märt Läänemets (2006) thinks that the *Gaṇḍavyūha Sūtra* represents an early stage of the Avalokiteśvara cult and points out that in the text Avalokiteśvara appears more like a local saint or mountain god, rather than a bodhisattva *mahāsattva*.<sup>16</sup> Other scholars, on the other hand, drew attention to the bodhisattva's origin as a local sea deity (Li and Jing 2019; Yamauchi 1998).<sup>17</sup> One scripture often cited to support this theory is the *Lotus Sūtra* (Skt. *Saddharma Puṇḍarīka-sūtra*, Ch. *Miaofa lianhua jing* 妙法蓮華經, 1st–2nd century), presumably the oldest text mentioning Avalokiteśvara. Although Potalaka does not appear in the text, it heavily influenced the bodhisattva's image, and contributed to the development that resulted in Avalokiteśvara taking on the role of a maritime deity providing protection from dangers encountered at sea.<sup>18</sup>

In the chapter entitled "The universal gate of Avalokiteśvara" (Avalokiteśvara-vikurvaṇa-nirdeśaḥ; Ch. Guangshiyin pusa pumen pin 觀世音菩薩普門品), seven calamities are listed from which Avalokiteśvara can protect believers. Many of these reflect the concern of merchants and sea traders, including being blown off course to the land of *rākṣasa* demons while searching for treasures, or being attacked by bandits in the mountains while carrying valuable goods.<sup>19</sup> The land of *rākṣasas* here refers to present-day Sri Lanka, which was an important destination for merchants in ancient India. As the depiction suggests, it was perceived as a place from where valuable goods and treasures could be obtained, but at the same time was full of potential dangers. In the earliest times, the Potalaka cult might have been in connection with the merchants trading with Sri Lanka, which can be confirmed by the records of the *Da Tang xiyu ji* as well. Not only does it state that one can reach the country of Siṃhala (Sri Lanka) going southeast over the sea for more than three thousand *li* from Potalaka, but it also quotes a legend in which Avalokiteśvara saved a group of merchants who had lost their way on the southern sea.<sup>20</sup> Historically, we know that merchants were the earliest converts and patrons of Buddhism, and trade played an important role in the proliferation of the religion. This was not only due to Buddhist communities relying on the donations of wealthy laity, including merchants, but also because the spread of Buddhism took place mainly via commercial routes. It is not unusual then that Buddhism offered practical benefits to them in exchange, including spiritual protection from dangers while traveling (Liu 1997; Neelis 2011; Osto 2004).<sup>21</sup>

Senoo (1987) also points out that the description of Potalaka is more this-worldly than that of the Western Pure Land of Amitābha, and the reason for the lack of mentioning Potalaka in the *Lotus Sūtra* might be that the cult of Avalokiteśvara can be traced back to that of a local sea deity in South India. She argues that although the deity was adopted to Buddhism due to its popularity and salvational role, the cultic site of a local sea god did not arouse as much interest among Buddhists in the beginning as the locations connected to the historical Buddha. This might be a reason for the fact that when Potalaka later appears in esoteric scriptures, it needs legitimation by the visiting Buddha Śākyamuni.<sup>22</sup>

The pioneer of Guanyin research, Chün-fang Yü (2011), points out that based on the sutras, we can find at least three distinct cults centered around Avalokiteśvara: One tradition approached him as a compassionate savior without any spatial affiliation (*Lotus Sūtra*), another tradition interpreted him as the most important acolyte of Amitābha (Pure Land sūtras), and one tradition worshipped him as an entity dwelling on Mount Potalaka (*Flower Ornament Scripture* and esoteric sūtras).<sup>23</sup> In this respect, it is also possible that the concept of Avalokiteśvara living on Potalaka constituted a separate tradition that was in close connection with the Southern Indian origins of the *Gaṇḍavyūha Sūtra*.

### 2.3. Potalaka as the Borderland between the Sacred and the Profane

The plot of the *Gaṇḍavyūha Sūtra* takes place in two main locations: South India and Northeast India. Setting off on his journey from Dhanyākara—supposedly the ancient city of Dhānyakaṭaka or Dharaṇīkoṭa<sup>24</sup>—Sudhana wanders the southern regions before visiting several places in Magadha, where major events of the historical Buddha's life had taken place (Osto 2004). Entering the tower of Maitreya at the end of the sūtra, he experiences the real nature of the universe, where every phenomenon interpenetrates the other, and even the tiniest entity contains infinity. Although a transformation in the nature of reality takes place at this point, according to the message of the sūtra, differentiation between conventional and ultimate reality disappears at this moment. Thus, we can say that only perception has changed, not the geographical location. Maitreya eventually sends Sudhana back to Mañjuśrī, his first spiritual friend, thus making him return to the starting point. Mañjuśrī appears this time as the embodiment of the originally possessed wisdom, every being's original potential for enlightenment. At last, Sudhana's last mentor, Samanthabhadra, reveals that the only goal of attaining wisdom and enlightenment is to put them into practice for the benefit of all sentient beings. The search for enlightenment is thus represented in the scripture as a circular path returning to its starting point: That is the level of conventional reality. Thus, Sudhana wanders in his own realm while visiting his spiritual masters, among whom there are not only bodhisattvas and divinities, but also ordinary lay people. He experiences the true nature of existence, but since it is the realm of non-duality, he never completely leaves this world. Thus, the scene where the soteriological drama of the *Gaṇḍavyūha Sūtra* takes place should be considered a realm where sacred and profane meet.

Even so, the relationship of Avalokiteśvara with the mundane world seems to be closer than that of the other buddhas and bodhisattvas in the sūtra. Douglas Edward Osto (2004) determines the significance of the chapters of the *Gaṇḍavyūha Sūtra* based on the position and weight (its proportion to the whole) of the sections about each *kalyāṇa-mitra*. The most important mentors appear at the beginning and at the end of the scripture, whereas an ascending hierarchy can be observed among the others.<sup>25</sup> There are five bodhisattvas among the 53 *kalyāṇa-mitras*: Besides the three most important mentors—Mañjuśrī, Maitreya, and Samanthabhadra—only Avalokiteśvara and Ananyagāmin are listed. Following Osto's thoughts, the positions of Mañjuśrī, Maitreya, and Samanthabhadra at the beginning and at the end show their important status among the other spiritual friends. On the other hand, Avalokiteśvara and Ananyagāmin are the 28th and the 29th *kalyāṇa-mitras*, and their chapters are relatively short and positioned in the middle of the sequence. Sudhana meets lay people before them and deities after them. In my opinion, this position suggests that Avalokiteśvara's dwelling place is located between the mundane and divine realms, and thus that his relationship with this world is closer than that of the other bodhisattvas.

Unlike in the case of Sukhāvati, we cannot find any detailed philosophical interpretation about Potalaka in the early Mahāyāna scriptures, which might be explained by its origin as an actual place on Earth. At the same time, the fact that it was identified with many places around the world also implies a symbolic meaning. This might not be unrelated to the philosophical concept of equating saṃsāra with nirvāna, which can be found in many Mahāyāna scriptures, including the *Flower Ornament Scripture*. According to the sūtra, the foundation and source of all phenomena in the universe is the same Buddha nature (Ch. foxing 佛性), so all the beings are interconnected and influence each other in infinite ways. Consequently, ultimate reality (the realm of buddhas) and conventional reality (saṃsāra) are not mutually exclusive, but interpenetrate each other, just like every other phenomenon in the world. In this respect, bodhisattvas share the same place and live together with human beings, so communication is possible with them.

In the last chapter, the *Gaṇḍavyūha Sūtra*, this world and the spiritual world merges in a journey both concrete and symbolic, which can be seen as a metaphor for the endeavor of all practitioners, lay or monastic. It depicts the world as a place where every experience and person we encounter eventually serves an ultimate goal: enlightenment. Arriving

at a geographical place in this world can be parallel to reaching a spiritual state of mind, supposing that it accompanies a transformation of mind. However, since the foundation of all the three worlds—including the inanimate world (Skt. *bhājana-loka*, Ch. *qishejian* 器世間)<sup>26</sup> of mountains—is the same pure mind, the same experience can be obtained anytime and anywhere. Pilgrimage as an actual movement in space helps to leave behind everyday life, and the consciousness and austerity it requires itself can promote mental transformation, even if the aim of the pilgrimage is to ask for mundane benefits from a deity. In this respect, a concrete manifestation of Potalaka can serve as a tool by providing a mundane goal that can lead to higher spiritual achievements. Thus, although we cannot find any philosophical interpretation of Potalaka in the *Gaṇḍavyūha Sūtra*, the symbolic nature of Sudhana's journey does not preclude the possibility of it. The proto-tantric nature of the *Gaṇḍavyūha* has already been pointed out by Osto (2009),<sup>27</sup> and the symbolic interpretation of Potalaka appears explicitly in the esoteric sūtras. Although the depiction of flora remains an important part of the description, everything in the scene is made of jewels and filled with compassion. In the *Amoghapaśakalparāja-sūtra* (Ch. *Bukong shenbian zhenyanjing* 不空罽索神變真言經; “Sūtra of the Mantra of the Unfailing Rope Snare of the Buddha Vairocana's Great Baptism”), reaching or seeing Potalaka is presented as a goal to be attained not by a concrete journey, but by religious practice.<sup>28</sup>

Even if the explicit symbolic interpretation of Potalaka appears in later times, we can observe the symbolism of mountain and sea from the earliest times in Buddhism. Mountains gain importance as the site of sermons (like in the case of the Vulture Peak), dwelling places of bodhisattvas, or as the *axis mundi* (as in the case of Mount Sumeru). The three functions merge in the case of Potalaka, which is not only the worldly abode of Avalokiteśvara, but also serves as the site of sermons in the esoteric sūtras, while not being devoid of soteriological meanings either. The sea was also an important symbol in Buddhism from the earliest times. In the Pāli Canon the sea symbolizes saṃsāra, the ocean of suffering, whereas the Buddhist teaching is compared to a boat that must be left behind once one crossed over to the other shore. The symbolism became more complex in Mahāyāna literature, but due to limitations of space, I can only overview this theme in the *Flower Ornament Scripture* and Huayan Buddhism based on it, since this particular scripture and school is closely related to Potalaka beliefs in Korea.

The ocean is a frequent symbol in the *Flower Ornament Scripture*, where it is used in a plethora of compounds either in a positive or a negative context. A few examples would be “ocean of buddhas”, “ocean of omniscience”, “ocean of saṃsāra”, “ocean of yearning”, “ocean of vows”, and “ocean of merit”. In general, the term “ocean” refers to clusters or groups of phenomena, while often being used to express infinity and immeasurability. The name of the *samādhi* in which the *Flower Ornament Scripture* was preached (and the *dharmadhātu* is experienced) is “Ocean Seal samādhi” (Skt. *sāgara-mudrā-samādhi*; Ch. *haiyin sanmei* 海印三昧), which refers to a calm state of mind that can reflect all things as they are, just like a great ocean devoid of waves. Another example worth mentioning is the Lotus Treasure Realm (Padmagarbha-lokadhātu; Ch. Lianhuazang shijie 蓮花藏世界), the purified buddha-land of Vairocana, who appears as the embodiment of transcendental buddhahood in the scripture. This realm is described as a giant lotus flower in a fragrant ocean, which is sustained by wind circles with Mount Sumeru at their center (Wong 2008).<sup>29</sup> The Lotus Treasure Realm incorporates all world-systems, and each and every atom of it contains the whole universe. This image can call to mind the scene where Sudhana meets his third spiritual friend, the monk Sāgaramegha (“Ocean Cloud”), who attained his spiritual level by contemplating on the ocean for twelve years in the country Sāgaramukha (“Ocean Gate”), until he realized that nothing is greater, deeper, and more diverse than the ocean. Then a giant lotus adorned with all kinds of jewels emerged from the ocean with a buddha on the top of it, who bestowed to him the teaching of the “universal eye” (*samantanetra*).<sup>30</sup> Thus, taken to the utmost level, the ocean can express the all-encompassing nature of the *dharmadhātu*. It is important to note that according to the legend, the *Flower Ornament Scripture* itself was obtained by Nāgārjuna (fl. 150 CE) from the Nāga Palace thought to

be lying at the bottom of the ocean (Hamar 2007).<sup>31</sup> Embodying the Janus-faced nature of water, the nāgas were depicted in the form of cobras or as half serpent, half human beings, and were believed to possess a magical jewel in Hindu mythology. Nāgas were adopted by Buddhism as Dharma-protecting deities, and there are many legends about the Buddha or a monk taming and converting them, as well as about Buddha-relics or sūtras kept by or acquired from them. In other words, the wish-fulfilling jewel that the nāgas possessed became a symbol of the treasures of Buddhism, including relics, sūtras, the Dharma, or even *bodhicitta*. Since the nāgas also symbolized unruly mental contents, the concept of Buddhist treasures kept in the Nāga Palace can be interpreted as the potentiality of the mind to produce either ignorance or enlightenment. The motif of the dragon—the East Asian counterparts of nāgas—was especially significant in the hagiographies and legends of the Korean and Japanese versions of Huayan, that is Hwaōm and Kegon (Faure 2007).<sup>32</sup>

Due to its central teaching about mutual interpenetration, Huayan Buddhism is characterized by treating the natural world as something that possesses intrinsic value by providing a space for reaching higher realms and enlightenment. Before moving on to the Korean case of Potalaka beliefs, it is worth mentioning the symbolic interpretation of Potalaka in the Huayan tradition. Chengguan 澄觀 (738–839), the fourth patriarch of Huayan, interprets the topography of Potalaka in the following way in his *Da fangguang fo huayan jing shu* 大方廣佛華嚴經疏 (*Commentary to the Avatamsaka Sūtra*):

[The sūtra says] “there is a mountain on the sea” because the [bodhisattva of] great compassion compliantly enters into the ocean of death and rebirth [saṃsāra], while dwelling on the mountain of nirvāṇa.<sup>33</sup>

Based on the long tradition of Buddhism, this interpretation combines the image of the sea as the milieu of suffering and the mountain as the space for rising above it. I think by this it manages to grasp the nature of Potalaka and the two-way dynamism of descending and ascending, which serves as a clue for understanding the practice of Avalokiteśvara.

The concept of Potalaka was based on the aforementioned textual, philosophical, and symbolic traditions when it was transmitted to East Asia, where it continued to evolve under the influence of local beliefs and traditions. The cult of Avalokiteśvara that probably emerged as a local sea and/or mountain deity retained the characteristics of nature worship even after it was transmitted to other regions by incorporating elements from indigenous sea and mountain worship, thus helping the localization of the beliefs.

### 3. Potalaka in Korea: The Naksan Temple

#### 3.1. The Founding Legend of Naksan Temple and the Traces of Indigenous Maritime Religion

It is not certain when the worship of Avalokiteśvara (Kr. Kwanūm 관음, 觀音 or Kwanseūm 관세음, 觀世音) began in Korea, but presumably it had already taken root in the Three Kingdoms period (57 BC–668 AD) by the end of the sixth century. According to a story recorded in the sixth-century *Guanshiyin yingyan ji* 觀世音應驗記 (“Records of the Miraculous Responses of Guanyin”), the Paekche monk Paljōng 발정 (發正) visited the dwelling place of Guanyin on Mount Jie 界山 in Yuezhou 越洲 (near the Chinese *bodhimāṇḍa*, Mount Putuo<sup>34</sup>) on his way back from China (around 529–534).<sup>35</sup> It is not unlikely that the cult of Avalokiteśvara was transmitted by Paljōng to the Korean Peninsula from China via sea routes connecting the two regions.

The most famous sacred site of Avalokiteśvara in Korea is Naksan Temple (Naksan-sa 낙산사, 洛山寺), built on Mount Obong 오봉산 (五峰山, “Five-Peaked Mountain”) on the seaside of Yangyang County, Kangwon Province. The founding of the temple is attributed to the Shilla monk Ūisang 의상 (義湘, 625–702), who traveled to the Tang Empire in 661 to study with the second patriarch of Huayan Buddhism, Zhiyan 智儼 (602–668), and returned to Shilla in 671. The founding legend of Naksan-sa can be found in Book 3 Part 4 of the *Samguk yusa* 삼국유사 (三國遺事, “Memorabilia of the Three Kingdoms”, ca. 1282–1289) compiled by Iryōn 일연 (一然, 1206–1289),<sup>36</sup> in the chapter called “T’apsang” 탑상 (塔像; “Pagodas and Images”) entitled “Naksan idaesōng Kwanūm Chōngch’wi Chosin” 낙산 이

대성 관음 정취 조신 (洛山二大聖觀音正趣調信; “Two Great Saints of Naksan, Kwanŭm, Chŏngch’wi, and Choshin”). The legend is as follows:

A long time ago when the monk Ŭisang returned from the Tang Empire for the first time, he heard that the true body of the bodhisattva of great compassion dwells in a cave on this seashore, so he called [this place] Naksan 洛山. Mount Potalaka [Pot’anakka-san 寶陀洛伽山] in the Western region—also called “Small White Flower”—is the abode of the true body of the white-robed bodhisattva, that’s why [Ŭisang] borrowed this name. After purifying himself for seven days, he floated his sitting cushion on the surface of the morning sea, then dragons, deva gods and other representatives of the eight kinds of Dharma-protecting beings lead him into the cave. As he paid homage, a crystal rosary was bestowed on him from the sky, which he received and was about to leave. The dragon of the East Sea also offered him a wish-fulfilling jewel, which he received, then left [the cave]. After fasting for another seven days, he got to see the true form [of the bodhisattva], who told him: “A pair of bamboos shoot from the ground on the top of this mountain you sit right now. It is advised for you to build a Buddhist shrine there”. Hearing this the master came out of the cave, and really found the bamboos shooting [from the ground]. He built a golden chamber, then made a statue and enshrined it there. The rounded face and beautiful appearance [of the statue] was as if it was made by heaven. After that, the bamboos sank into the ground again, so it was known that it was truly the abode of the true body [of the bodhisattva]. For this reason, [Ŭisang] named the temple “Naksan”, and enshrined the two treasures in the chamber before he left.<sup>37</sup>

Based on the name “Naksan” and the presence of the bodhisattva on the mountain, we can confirm that Naksan was understood as an Avalokiteśvara *bodhimaṇḍa*. Naksan Temple is located on a seaside cliff on the eastern coast of the Korean Peninsula, which at first sight may not be in accord with the record of the *Flower Ornament Scripture* stating that Potalaka is a “mountain on the sea”. However, the Chinese character *shang* (上) in the phrase (*hai shang you shan* 海上有山) may be translated as “above” instead of “on” in this case, and Naksan interpreted as a “mountain above the sea”. We can also confirm the relationship between Kwanŭm and caves. The building built above the cave where the spiritual encounter is believed to have taken place is the present Hongnyŏn-am 홍련암 (紅蓮庵, “Red Lotus Hermitage”).

According to the founding legend of Naksan Temple, before seeing the true form of Kwanŭm, master Ŭisang was led into the cave by Dharma-protecting beings like nāgas and devas and received a wish-fulfilling jewel from the dragon king of the East Sea. The origin of the eight kinds of Dharma-protecting beings can be traced back to the gāthā in the chapter called *Ru busiyi jietuo jingjie Puxian xingyuan pin* 入不思議解脫境界普賢行願品 (“Entering Into the State of Inconceivable Liberation and the Practices and Vows of Samantabhadra”) in the 40-fascicle version of the *Avatamsaka Sūtra*.<sup>38</sup>

On the other hand, we should pay attention to the motif of the Dragon King of the East Sea in the story.<sup>39</sup> The dragon is not only one of the Dharma-protecting beings in Buddhism; the sūtras also refer to the dragon king as a protector of those who recite the dhāraṇī of the Thousand-armed and Thousand-eyed Avalokiteśvara (Pak 2008).<sup>40</sup> The Chinese iconographic representation of Avalokiteśvara called Nanhai Guanyin 南海觀音 (“Guanyin of the Southern Sea”)—worshipped at the Chinese *bodhimaṇḍa*, Mount Putuo—is also often depicted riding on the back of a dragon or accompanied by the daughter of the Dragon King.

The dragon of the East Sea in the founding legend might be interpreted as an attempt to incorporate an indigenous sea deity that was locally worshipped before the domestication of Kwanŭm into the Buddhist religious system. This would be the continuation of the long-standing practice of Buddhism that always tried to adopt local gods in its pantheon. Tonghae shinmyo 동해신묘 (東海神廟, “Shrine of the God of the East Sea”, also Tonghae

shinsa 동해신사, 東海神祠) is located near Naksan-sa,<sup>41</sup> where the god of the East Sea is worshipped. Although the actual founding date of the shrine is unknown, based on a record in the “Ingnyŏng-hyŏn” 익령현 (翼嶺縣) chapter in the 58th fascicle of the *Koryŏsa* 고려사 (高麗史, “The History of Koryŏ”, 1392–1451), the existence of Tonghae shinmyo at Yangyang can be confirmed from the Koryŏ dynasty (918–1392).<sup>42</sup> Rites for the four seas had been conducted since the Shilla era, in which system the rites for the East Sea were held in present-day Pohang 포항 (浦項)<sup>43</sup> near the Shilla capital, Kyŏngju 경주 (慶州). Since Yangyang is located east of the Koryŏ capital Kaesŏng 개성 (開城), it makes sense that a shrine was later established for the deity of the East Sea in this area. Starting from the Chosŏn dynasty (1392–1897), state-sponsored rituals were also held in the second and eighth lunar month every year in the shrine, as well as in corresponding shrines on the western and southern coasts.

Unfortunately, we cannot confirm that the cult of an indigenous sea deity was present in the region in Ŭisang’s time, and if it was, what kind of deity was worshipped. Although the Dragon King of the East Sea appears frequently in the *Samguk yusa*, this deity shows strong Chinese influence. It is interesting to note that the shrine of the God of the East Sea with the same name was also near an Avalokiteśvara *bodhimaṇḍa* in China, since the Dragon King of the East Sea, in this case the god of the East China Sea, was a popular deity on the Zhoushan Archipelago since ancient times. The Sui dynasty (581–618) had already worshipped the East Sea God in Kuaiji 會稽 County (present-day Shaoxing 紹興 in Zhejiang Province; (Rong and Bi 2016),<sup>44</sup> and during the Song dynasty (960–1279) the shrine of the god of the East Sea was relocated from Laizhou 萊州 on the Shandong Peninsula to the border of Dinghai 定海 and Changguo 昌國 County in Mingzhou 明州 (present-day Ningbo) near Putuo Shan. This was related to the fact that the main sea route for diplomatic missions to Koryŏ had changed from the northern route via Shandong to the southern route via Mingzhou. An Tao’s 安燾 (1034–1108) petition also contributed to the relocation, and suggested building a shrine in Dinghai to the king after he had escaped several dangerous situations with the help of the deity on his diplomatic mission to and from Koryŏ in 1078 (Kim 2010).<sup>45</sup> It is notable that miracle stories about Nanhai Guanyin saving travelers on sea first appear in connection with diplomatic missions to Koryŏ starting from the 11th century (Yü 1992),<sup>46</sup> which shows that diplomatic and cultural relations with the Korean Peninsula were a major factor in Mount Putuo’s development as a cultic site for maritime safety. The dragon motif in the iconography of the Nanhai Guanyin might be connected to the presence of dragon faith in the Zhejiang region and can be understood as an amalgamation of Buddhist and local ideas about entities providing protection on the sea, a much-needed service in a time when diplomatic missions were frequent between Song and Koryŏ.

As a matter of fact, the connection between Mount Putuo and Naksan Temple has been a topic of academic debate for a long time (Hwang 2007; Cho 2011; Kim 1991).<sup>47</sup> However, the differences between the cult and practices, as well as the textual basis for them at the two places, suggest that although connection can be assumed between them, it was almost certainly not a simple transmission–localization process, but rather the formation of independent religious systems based on the shared idea of the bodhisattva of compassion residing on a mountain near the sea. The worship of the deity of the East Sea might be present near Naksan from older times as well, but Naksan-sa seems to be less connected to sea worship than Mount Putuo. Although the bodhisattva worshipped at Naksa Temple is known as Haesu Kwanŭm 해수관음 (海水觀音, “Sea Water Kwanŭm”), this name cannot be confirmed before 1683.<sup>48</sup> Naksan Temple on the east coast of Korea was not located on an important maritime route at the time of its foundation like Mount Putuo, and the role of Kwanŭm as a protector of sea travelers gained importance only after maritime trade came to flourish later in the Shilla dynasty (Byeon 2010).<sup>49</sup> Even in this respect, the western coast of the Peninsula was more important, since most of the exchange of trade and diplomatic missions took place through the East China Sea and the Yellow Sea.

Although it is not linked directly to Naksan-sa, it is worth mentioning that other legends about Ŭisang seem to be in close relation with the dragon. According to the legend

about the maiden Shanmiao turning into a dragon (Sŏnmyo hwaryong 선묘화룡, 善妙化龍),<sup>50</sup> the monk was protected by a dragon on his long maritime journey back from Tang to Shilla. Although the story can be originally found in a Chinese source—*Song gaoseng zhuan* 宋高僧傳 written by Zanning 贊寧 (919–1001)—it is well known not only in Korea, but also in Japan (Faure 2007).<sup>51</sup> Cho (2011), who studies the legend in the context of Shilla–Tang maritime relations, tries to link the legend with the iconographic representation of the Nanhai Guanyin often depicted together with a dragon.<sup>52</sup> Besides the shared dragon motif, he refers to the much-researched connection between Mount Putuo and Naksan, as well as the similarity of the name Shanmiao 善妙 to the name of princess Miaoshan 妙善, the protagonist of Avalokiteśvara’s most well-known fictive biography in China. According to tradition, it was Daoxuan 道宣 (596–667) who first heard the legend of Miaoshan from celestial beings. At the same time, it is hard to find evidence of its existence before the end of the 11th century, and it only spread to Zhejiang region after 1100.<sup>53</sup> Thus, it is hard to evidently prove the connection between Guanyin and Shanmiao. Even if it is so, the modern portrayal of Shanmiao on the altar of the Shanmiao Shrine (Sŏnmyo-gak 선묘각, 善妙閣) at Pusŏk Temple closely resembles the depictions of Guanyin riding on the back of a dragon, which shows that the bodhisattva’s image may have served as an inspiration not only for narratives, but also for iconographic representations. The scene where Ŭisang crosses the sea with the help of Shanmiao is often depicted as a dragon carrying the monk’s ship on its back. This can make one call to mind the image of the dragon boat of *prajñā* (*panya yongsŏn* 般若龍船) as well, by which sentient beings travel to the Pure Land of Amitābha under the guidance of Avalokiteśvara. The dragon boat of *prajñā* is sometimes called “the boat of compassion” (*taebisŏn* 대비선, 大悲船) and serves as a symbol of compassion.<sup>54</sup> Even if it is impossible to find a direct link between these narratives, a complex system of symbols surrounds Avalokiteśvara including the sea-dragon imagery, which was a significant element in East Asian maritime Buddhist culture.<sup>55</sup>

### 3.2. The Legend of Wonhyo at Naksan and the Traces of Indigenous Mountain Worship

Although we have seen some connections to sea worship, narratives about Naksan Temple seem to be more related to indigenous mountain worship in Korea. To shed light on this, I would like to examine a legend about Wonhyo 원효 (元曉, 617–686) that was recorded after the founding story of Naksan-sa in the “Naksan idaesŏng Kwanŭm Chŏngch’wi Choshin” chapter.

Later, following the footsteps [of Ŭisang], the monk Wonhyo came to pay his respects here. First, he arrived at the southern outskirts, where a woman dressed in white was harvesting rice in the paddy fields. The monk playfully asked for an ear of rice from her, and the woman answered jokingly that there was crop failure. As [the monk] walked along, he arrived under a bridge, where a woman was washing her menstrual clothes. When the monk asked for some water, the woman scooped up some dirty water and handed it over to him. The master poured out [the dirty water], then scooped some water from the spring instead to drink. At that time, an azure bird was sitting on the pine tree in the fields that called out [to the monk]: “You are rejecting the ghee,<sup>56</sup> monk!” It suddenly disappeared and was nowhere to be found. There was only half of a pair of shoes abandoned under the pine tree. After the master had arrived at the temple, he found the other half of the pair of shoes he saw before under the seat of the Kwanŭm statue. Only then did he realize that the saintly women he met were the true manifestations [of the bodhisattva]. Contemporary people named [the tree] the pine tree of Kwanŭm because of this. The master wanted to enter the cave to see the true form [of the bodhisattva], but a huge wind and waves arose, so he had to leave without entering the place.<sup>57</sup>

In this legend, the bodhisattva first appears as a woman reaping rice, then a woman washing menstrual cloth. These motifs can likely be attributed to the influence of indigenous Korean earth goddesses (*chimoshin* 地母神; Kim 1991; So 2008).<sup>58</sup>

There are several examples of female mountain deities in the *Samguk yusa*, who were called *sōngmo* 聖母 (“holy mother”) or *shinmo* 神母 (“divine mother”, Grayson 1996).<sup>59</sup> They often appear as mothers of state or dynasty founders and frequently act as objects of worship at local and state-level rites praying for fertility—that is, prosperity, the birth of offspring, or rain. Thus, the mountain goddesses in the *Samguk yusa* bear the characteristics of a mother goddess and an earth goddess. The significance of female mountain deities in Shilla society is indicated by the fact that in the *samsan-oak* 삼산오악 (三山五嶽, “three mountains and five ridges”) system<sup>60</sup> all of the gods of the “three mountains”<sup>61</sup> are female, and among the gods of the “five ridges” the deities of Mount Chiri (Chiri-san 지리산, 智異山) and Mount Sōndo (Sōndo-san 선도산, 仙桃山) are also female.

According to So (2008), the rice in the story of Kwanūm’s first appearances to Wonhyo symbolizes bounteous harvest, whereas the menstruation cloth symbolizes feminine fertility, both of which were overseen by indigenous Korean Earth goddesses. Like at other sacred mountains in Korea, mountain worship was supposedly present at Naksan (previously called Mount Obong) well before Potalaka beliefs arrived at the region. Although textual or material sources about this mountain deity are not passed down from this early age, we cannot preclude the possibility that the deity of the mountain was a goddess, in which case the deity of the native tradition might have been adopted into the cult of Kwanūm.<sup>62</sup>

As mentioned before, one feature of the mountain goddesses called *sōngmo* or *shinmo* is that they give birth to a prominent figure, or they can bring about agricultural fertility. One of the important roles of Avalokiteśvara is to grant sons to those who pray for them, and this function was emphasized from the earliest times of the Kwanūm cult in Korea.<sup>63</sup> The bodhisattva of Naksan-sa was attributed the same power, which is shown by the fact that none other than Yi Ch’un 이춘 (李椿, ?–1342), the grandfather of the founder of the Chosŏn dynasty, was born after his father prayed to Kwanūm at Naksan Temple. We can assume that during the amalgamation of Buddhism and the local belief system, the image of Kwanūm often represented as female was easy to merge with mountain goddesses responsible for fertility. As Daniel Sungbin Sou (2008) argues, one of the reasons the cult of Kwanūm took root relatively early on the Korean Peninsula was the fact that it resembled the existing mountain worship, and at the same time, the religious status of women in shamanic Shilla society was relatively high.<sup>64</sup>

It is also worth paying attention to the witty play on Chinese characters. Reversing the order of the characters for “menstruation” (*wolsu* 월수, 月水), the meaning changes to “water-moon” (*suwol* 수월, 水月), which refers to the moon reflected on water, as well as an iconographic form of Avalokiteśvara named Water-moon Guanyin (Bae 2020).<sup>65</sup> The moon reflected on water is a frequently used symbol in Buddhism expressing the empty and illusory nature of conventional reality, whereas the full moon represents the enlightened mind dispelling the darkness of ignorance (Pak 2008).<sup>66</sup> The term is also frequently used to express the way that buddhas and bodhisattvas appear in front of sentient beings,<sup>67</sup> which was often explained by the teaching of the buddhas’ three bodies (*trikāya*).<sup>68</sup> It is a particularly common symbol for the apparitions of Avalokiteśvara as well, as testified by the gazetteers of Mount Putuo (Bingenheimer 2016).<sup>69</sup> This might intend to make Wonhyo realize that the women he met are none other than the manifestations of Kwanūm. It is an interesting overtone in the story that the legend tries to turn apparent impurities (menstruation, profanity, earthly women) into purity (ghee, enlightenment, bodhisattva) similarly to reversing the Chinese characters. By this device, it expresses the substantial unity of all phenomena and the non-duality of opposites.

Next, I would like to examine the motif of the blue bird (*ch’ōngjo* 청조, 靑鳥). It is not a unique feature of Korean Buddhism that a bird serves as an attendant of Avalokiteśvara. The “Guanyin of the Southern Sea” is frequently depicted together with a parrot holding

a rosary in its beak, and the story of the bird was elaborated on in Chinese texts like the *Yingge baojuan* 鸚哥寶卷 (“The Precious Scroll of the Parrot”) or the *Yingge xing xiaoyi zhuan* 鸚哥行孝義傳 (“The Story of the Parrot’s Filial Deed”, 15th century; Yü 2011).<sup>70</sup> Parrots and *kalaviṅka* birds<sup>71</sup> are also thought to inhabit the Pure Land of Amitābha.

However, in the case of Naksan Temple, the bird appears in a different form: a blue bird, which is rarely mentioned in Buddhist sūtras. One of the texts mentioning it is the *Saddharmasmṛty-upasthāna sūtra*<sup>72</sup> translated by Prajñaruci into Chinese, in which it is described as a bird living on the continent of Jambudvīpa in the world of humans (Pak 2008).<sup>73</sup> However, it is more likely that the blue birds can be linked to the blue birds appearing as the envoys of Xiwangmu 西王母 (“Queen Mother of the West”) in Chinese mythology. According to the *Shanhai jing* 山海經 (“Classic of Mountains and Seas”), three blue birds deliver food to Xiwangmu, who is living on Mount Kunlun,<sup>74</sup> and in the Hanwu gushi 漢武故事 (“Stories of Emperor Wu of the Han dynasty”, 5th–6th century) a flock of blue birds arriving from the west foreshadows the arrival of Xiwangmu. As a matter of fact, the parrot in the iconographic representation of the Nanhai Guanyin is also often linked to the blue birds accompanying the Queen Mother of the West, whereas amalgamation with the Chinese goddess is presented as a possible explanation for the change in the bodhisattva’s gender in China (Yü 2011).<sup>75</sup>

As Kim (2007) has pointed out, the ancient Korean cult of the “holy/divine mother” (*shinmo/sōngmo*) can be a transformation of the cult of Xiwangmu. In his paper he examines the cult of the holy mother of Mount Sōndo (Sōndo-san *sōngmo* 선도산 성모, 仙桃山聖母), who found her dwelling place by following a black kite.<sup>76</sup> There are also other motifs in the myth of the goddess, which show the influence of Xiwangmu. The name of the mountain she lives means “Mountain of the Peaches of Immortality”, and these fruits are believed to grow on Mount Kunlun (Kunlun-shan 崑崙山), the dwelling place of Xiwangmu. Another Daoist feature is that she became an earth immortal (*dixian* 地仙) after her death. The goddess is also linked to fertility, since she is believed to have given birth to the founder of Shilla, Pak Hyōkkōse, as well as his spouse, Aryōng.<sup>77</sup> As we have seen, the bird plays the role of an acolyte or envoy in not only the legends about Daoist immortals, but also about Korean earth goddesses appearing as mountain deities.

We can also assume the influence of another female immortal on Kwanūm. According to the *Shenxian zhuan* 神仙傳 (“Biographies of Deities and Immortals”) written by Ge Hong 葛洪, the shrine of the goddess Dongling *shengmu* 東陵聖母 (“Holy Mother Dongling”) is always guarded by blue birds.

Dongling *shengmu* was born in Hailing in Guangling Prefecture and was married to a man from the Du clan. She served Liu Gang as her master and learnt the Dao from him. She was able to change shapes, transform or conceal herself from view and nowhere to be found. Du [his husband] did not believe in the Dao and often got angry with her. The holy mother either helped people by curing their illnesses or was away somewhere. Du got more and more furious, so he filed a complaint at the authorities stating that the holy mother associates with demons and does not attend to her domestic duties. The authorities captured and imprisoned the holy mother. After a while [Dongling *shengmu*] flew out of the window. The crowd could only watch her from afar as she soared high up into the clouds. She only left the pair of shoes she had been wearing under the window. After she had ascended to the sky, people built temples near and far to worship her, and prayers were efficacious in every matter presented to her. At the ritual site, there was always a blue bird. If someone lost an object and asked about its whereabouts, the blue bird instantly alit on the thief. [ . . . ]<sup>78</sup>

As we can see, female deities are in close relation with the blue bird in Daoism. We should also pay attention to the motif of the shoes left behind, the efficacy of prayers, and the ability of shapeshifting. These elements can all recall the image of Kwanūm, which implies that beliefs about the bodhisattva were influenced by several female immortals.

Based on the aforementioned information, we can conclude that in the legends of Naksan-sa Kwaneūm bears the nature of an earth goddess and a female immortal at the same time. Although Dongling may be a surname in the *Shenxian zhuan*, it translates to “eastern hill”, and the eastern direction is closely related to Kwanūm in Korea.

In order to understand this, we need to examine the symbolic meaning of the color blue (*ch'ōng* 청, 靑). This color can be linked to the blue dragon (*ch'ōngnyong* 청룡, 靑龍) that protects the East in the system of the four mythological creatures guarding the four cardinal directions. Based on this, Kwanūm of Naksan Temple is in close relation with the eastern direction, the color blue, and the dragon. Lee (2008) summarizes the symbolic meaning of the blue bird appearing in textual sources as an association system comprised of visible elements like sea, sky, tree, and flora, and of conceptual elements like the East, light (sunrise), birth, fertility, and expelling evil spirits.<sup>79</sup> As we have seen, among these the motifs of sea, the East, birth (rebirth), and fertility are the attributes of Kwanūm at Naksan Temple as well. The significance of the color blue can also be observed in another legend found in the *Samsuk yusa*.

According to the chapter entitled “Taesan oman chinshin” 대산 오만 진신 (臺山五萬眞身, “Five Thousand True Manifestations on Mount Odae”), the crown prince of Shilla, Boch'ōn 보천 (寶川) ran away to Mount Odae (Odae-san 오대산, 五臺山) with his younger brother to become a monk. Before his death he recorded the kind of Buddhist ceremonies that were to be held for the prosperity of the country. According to his instructions, a Buddhist chamber needed to be built on all five peaks of Mount Odae (Odae-san 오대산, 五臺山) for the buddha or bodhisattva that lived there. The pictures of the buddhas or bodhisattvas needed to be enshrined in the buildings, and they needed to be worshipped by reciting particular sūtras. According to the text, if they did so, the king would live a long life, the people would live in peace, all the civil and martial matters would be harmonious, and harvest would be abundant.<sup>80</sup> The color symbolism of the five directions is remarkable in the instructions: Every direction, buddha, or bodhisattva is linked to a specific color. In this system, Avalokiteśvara must be worshipped on the eastern peak that is associated with the color blue, and her image has to be enshrined in front of a blue background decorated with ten thousand images of the bodhisattva.<sup>81</sup>

Mount Odae is another important example of bodhisattva dwelling places in Korea. Since it was modeled on Mount Wutai in China, it was believed to be the abode of Mañjuśrī, the bodhisattva of wisdom.<sup>82</sup> The cult of Naksan and Odae-san mutually influenced each other, thus contributed to elevating the “land of the buddhas” (*pulgukt'o* 불국토, 佛國土) ideology to a higher level in Shilla and later Koryō society. As Richard D. McBride (2008) points out, the buddha-land propaganda was backed up not only with claims that Shilla had been the abode of the buddhas in previous ages of the Dharma, but also with Hwaōm (*Avatamsaka*) cosmology about the mutual interfusion of every phenomenon, including the realm of the buddhas and the realm of the sentient beings.<sup>83</sup> Hwaōm became the most influential school in Shilla from the eighth century, which, based on the all-encompassing worldview of the *Flower Ornament Scripture*, created a religious synthesis that incorporated all contemporary cultic traditions. Local gods native to Shilla could also be integrated in the system based on the cult of the Divine Assembly, the audience of the *Flower Ornament Scripture* when it was preached by the Buddha.<sup>84</sup> Thirty-four classes of divine beings are listed in the 60-fascicle version and forty classes of deities are listed in the 80-fascicle version of the *Flower Ornament Scripture*, among which dragon gods, earth gods, ocean gods, gods of the directions, and mountain gods are also included.<sup>85</sup> In this way, Hwaōm philosophy also provided an ideological basis for the adoption of indigenous deities into the Buddhist pantheon in Korea.

#### 4. Final Remarks

Although Potalaka is known as Avalokiteśvara bodhisattva's worldly abode, it was not simply understood as a geographical place, but at the same time was interpreted as a symbol of a timeless quest to get in touch with higher realms. Even so, due to its this-worldly

nature, one of the main features of Potalaka faith is that it bears the characteristics of both mountain worship and maritime religion. According to the common belief, Avalokiteśvara dwells on a mountain, but at the same time he has a connection with the sea as well, expressing the idea of entering conventional reality, yet transcending it. Geographically speaking, Korea is located on a peninsula surrounded by ocean from three sides; thus, the sea became the main stage of cultural exchanges between the peninsula and its East Asian neighbors. The sea may have been the channel through which faith in Avalokiteśvara entered Korea, where the traditions of Buddhism were further enriched by the beliefs about the native sea and mountain gods.

Avalokiteśvara's Korean *bodhimaṇḍa*, the Naksan Temple, was established by the monk Ŭisang; therefore, the founding legend of the temple shows the strong influence of the Hwaom school. The cult of Kwanum incorporated local beliefs about sea deities and mountain goddesses, as well as Chinese concepts of immortals, a process that was partly based on the cult of the Divine Assembly in the *Flower Ornament Scripture*. At the same time, it has a unique Korean aspect as well due to the influence of native mountain worship.

Although the present study focused on Naksan Temple's relationship with local sea and mountain worship, it might be useful to briefly mention that the *bodhimaṇḍa* has a philosophically sophisticated interpretation as well, which transcends locality. As we have seen, religious practice is emphasized in the founding legend of Naksan-sa as a premise for seeing the bodhisattva. Although it is heavily debated that the text was written by the monk (McBride 2019), we can get to know some of Ŭisang's ideas about Naksan through the *Paekhwā toryang palwonmun* 白花道場發願文 ("Vow Made at the White Flower Bodhimaṇḍa"), which is believed to have been composed by Ŭisang while practicing in the cave on Naksan.<sup>86</sup> In the central part of the text consisting of vows, the monk declares his will to become one with Avalokiteśvara, to convert and edify sentient beings, and to be reborn in the White Flower Bodhimaṇḍa, that is, Potalaka (Jeon 2007; Jung 2010).<sup>87</sup> From a philosophical perspective, buddhas and bodhisattvas are symbols of the enlightened mind, or express one aspect of a mind set on attaining buddhahood. In this respect, unity with Kwanum might express Ŭisang's wish to awaken compassion in his own mind, and thus embody the ideal symbolized by Avalokiteśvara in his very body. He wants to be reborn in the White Flower Bodhimaṇḍa of Avalokiteśvara instead of the Western Pure Land of Amitābha; thus, he seeks a kind of Pure Land in this *sahā* world. Potalaka in this case is not only the residence of a bodhisattva, but a realm anyone can enter by becoming a bodhisattva by means of spiritual practice. Although the site of practice is this world, the practice itself does not simply aim at worldly benefits, but transcendental goals achievable in this world. This concept is in accord with the philosophy of Hwaom based on the non-duality of the realm of sentient beings and buddhas. Although the *Paekhwā toryang palwonmun* uses the expression "rebirth" (*wangsaeng* 왕생, 往生), most scholars interpret it as a kind of rebirth in the present body (*hyōnshin wansaeng* 현신왕생, 現身往生), based on equating entering White Flower Bodhimaṇḍa with entering "the ocean of the original nature of the perfectly penetrating *samādhi*" (*wont'ong sammae sōnghae* 원통삼매성해, 圓通三昧性海; Kim 1991).<sup>88</sup> Ŭisang's understanding of the Bodhimaṇḍa thus reflects the teaching of the *Flower Ornament Scripture*.

The Korean domestication of Potalaka acts as an interesting example of Buddhist worldmaking. Although it was backed by Buddhist ideas like the non-duality of *samsāra* and *nirvāṇa* and the thought of mutual interrelatedness in Huayan Buddhism, indigenous lore played a similarly important role in the process. Identifying geographical places with Potalaka was not a superficial imposition of Buddhist names and concepts on local topography, but rather Korea, like every other region, creating its own specific world based on its traditions, thus creating a realm that is timeless and universal, but at the same time specific and local. Places associated with Potalaka were inter-religious, cross-cultural spaces where the Buddhist realm met with not only the natural, geographical space, but also the spiritual, mythical space of the region.

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## Notes

- 1 The Sanskrit term *bodhimaṇḍa* can be translated as “the throne of enlightenment” or “the platform of enlightenment”, and originally referred to the place where a buddha attained enlightenment. The Chinese equivalent, *daochang* 道場 (Jp. *dōjō*; Kr. *toryang*), is also used to indicate places where Buddhist practice takes place, or a particular buddha or bodhisattva is worshipped. Thus, Avalokiteśvara *bodhimaṇḍas* are places of worship for the bodhisattva of compassion (*karuṇā*).
- 2 Besides Hongnyōn-am at Naksan-sa, the other locations are the Kūmo-san Hyangil-am (Yōsu city, Cholla-namdo, Tolsan-ūp, Yullim-ri) and the Kūmsan Bori-am (Kyōngsan-namdo, Namhae-gun, Sangju-myōn, Sangju-ri) on the southern coast, and the Nakka-san Bomun-sa (Inchōn city, Kanghwa-gun, Samsan-myōn, Meūm-ri) on the western coast.
- 3 *Da Tang xiyu ji* T no. 2087, 51: 932a14–23. (T = *Taishō shinshū Daizōkyō* 大正新脩大藏經).
- 4 Hikosaka (“Nanin Podiya”, p. 375) refers to the theories of R. F. Johnston and Alexander Cunningham.
- 5 Bingenheimer (*Island of Guanyin*, p. 211) refers to Samuel Beal.
- 6 “There is a city on the seaside northeast of the mountain [Potalaka], which is located on the way to the country of Sīṃhala in the southern sea. I heard local people say that going southeast over the sea for more than three thousand *li* from here, one can reach the country of Sīṃhala”. 從此山東北海畔有城。是往南海僧伽羅國路。聞諸土俗曰，從此入海東南可三千餘里至僧伽羅國。 *Da Tang xiyu ji* T no. 2087, 51: 932a14–23.
- 7 Hikosaka, “Nanin Podiya”, pp. 373–75.
- 8 The *Flower Ornament Scripture* is thought to have been compiled from independent scriptures in the fourth to sixth century in Central Asia. Douglas Edward Osto (“The Gaṇḍavyūha Sūtra”, p. 60) dates the formative period of the *Gaṇḍavyūha Sūtra* script to roughly 200 to 300 CE.
- 9 Two complete Chinese translations of the *Flower Ornament Scripture* exist: the 60-fascicle version translated by Bhudhabhadra (pp. 359–429) during the Eastern Jin era (T no. 278, p. 10) and the 80-fascicle version translated by Śikṣānanda (pp. 652–710) during the Tang dynasty (T no. 279, p. 10). There is also a 40-fascicle version (T no. 293, p. 10) by Prajñā from around 796, which, despite being a partial translation, contains verses that are missing from the other two Chinese translations. Notable among them are the twenty-two verses of the Avalokiteśvara section and other verses from the *Gaṇḍavyūha Sūtra* that are not found in any of the existing Sanskrit versions.
- 10 *Da fangguang fo huayan jing*, T no. 279, 10: 366c6. The most accurate translation might be “a mountain in the middle of the ocean”, but as we will see later, the phrase can be interpreted in several ways.
- 11 華果樹林皆遍滿，泉流池沼悉具足。 *Da fangguang fo huayan jing*, T no. 279, 10: 366c7.
- 12 泉流縈映，樹林鬱鬱，香草柔軟，右旋布地。 *Dafangguang fo huayan jing*, T no. 279, 10: 366c18–19.
- 13 “Welcome to you who has tamed your body and mind, praise me while prostrating at my feet and circumambulate me from left to right. I always reside in this precious mountain and dwelling in the great compassion always free from any restraints. / This diamond cave where I live is adorned with many marvelously colored *maṇi* jewels, and I always sit on this jewelled lotus throne with a mind resolute (*ātapaḥ*) and unrestrained. / I am always surrounded by devas, nāgas, crowds of asuras, *kinnara* kings, *rākṣasas* and other attendants while preaching the gate of great compassion to them”. 善來調伏身心者，稽首讚我而右旋，我常居此寶山中，住大慈悲恒自在。我此所住金剛窟，莊嚴妙色眾摩尼，常以勇猛自在心，坐此寶石蓮華座。天龍及以脩羅眾，緊那羅王羅刹等，如是眷屬恒圍遶，我偽演說大悲門。 *Dafangguang fo huayan jing*, T no. 293, 10: 73c9.
- 14 See for example: *Da fangguang fo huayan jing* 68, “Rufajie pin” 39.9, T no. 279, 10: 367, a16–22.
- 15 Avalokiteśvara explicitly expresses this in the *Gaṇḍavyūha Sūtra*: “Abiding in the Gate of the Practice of Great Compassion, I eternally dwell at the same place as all the *tathāgatas*, and at the same time universally appear in front of all sentient beings”. 我住此大悲行門，常在一一切諸如來所，普現一切眾生之前。 *Da fangguang fo huayan jing* 68, ‘Rufajie pin’ 39.9, T no. 279, 10: 367a16.
- 16 In the *gāthās* of the 40-fascicle version of the *Avatamsaka-sūtra*, there are mythical creatures like devas (gods) or nāgas (snake-like water deities) in the assembly listening to the preaching of the bodhisattva, so a more mystical, sacred scene unfolds in this scripture. Nevertheless, Läänemets (“Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara”, pp. 303–6) regards these verses later insertions in the text, and a result of the bodhisattva’s transformation from local deity to a universally worshipped entity.
- 17 Li and Jing, “Lun gudai Yindu”, p. 62; Yamauchi, “Kōkai shugojin”, p. 346.
- 18 The *Flower Ornament Scripture* and the *Lotus Sūtra* are two cardinal scriptures about Avalokiteśvara, the first one representing a practice-oriented approach and the second one a devotional approach to the bodhisattva. The *Avatamsaka-sūtra* and the *Lotus Sūtra* are the basis of Huayan and Tiantai philosophy, respectively, and had significant influence on East Asian Potalaka beliefs.
- 19 *Miaofa lianhua jing*, T no. 262, 9: 56c5.

- 20 *Da Tang xiyu ji*, T no. 2087, 51: 917a2.
- 21 Including Trapusa and Bhallika, who offered food for the buddha after his enlightenment and became his first lay followers, or Anāthapiṇḍika, who donated the Jetavāna Monastery to the saṅgha (Liu, *Ancient India*, pp. 114–15; Neelis, *Early Buddhist*, pp. 12–39). It is also notable that Sudhana, the protagonist of the *Gaṇḍavyūha Sūtra*, is the son of a wealthy merchant-banker (*śreṣṭhin*). For more on this topic see Osto, “The Gaṇḍavyūha Sūtra”.
- 22 Senoo, “Questions Relating”, p. 539.
- 23 Yü, *The Chinese Transformation*, pp. 7–15, 31–91.
- 24 Osto (“The Gaṇḍavyūha Sūtra”, 60–61) suggests that the *Gaṇḍavyūha Sūtra* was compiled in this region.
- 25 Osto, “The Gaṇḍavyūha Sūtra”.
- 26 The natural world seen as a utensil for fulfilling desires by sentient beings, as opposed to the animate world (sentient beings, Skt. *sattva-loka*, Ch. *zhongsheng shejian* 衆生世間) and the world of enlightenment (buddhas and bodhisattvas, Skt. *saṃyaksambuddha-loka*, Ch. *zhizheng shejian* 智正覺世間).
- 27 Osto, “Proto-Tantric Elements”.
- 28 *Bukong shenbian zhenyanjing* T no. 1092, 20: 364a13–25; Li and Jing, “Lun gudai Yindu”, 66. The sūtra was translated by Bodhiruci in 707.
- 29 Wong, “The Mapping of”, pp. 72–73.
- 30 *Da fangguang fo huayan jing*, T no. 279, 10: 335a5–366b11.
- 31 Huayan commentaries often mention that two longer versions of the sūtra are still preserved at the Nāga Palace. The commentators refer to a lost Nāgārjuna biography as a source to support this claim (Hamar, “The History of”, pp. 151–52).
- 32 Faure, “Kegon and Dragons”, pp. 304–5.
- 33 言海上有山者,大悲隨順入生死海,而住涅槃山故. *Da fangguang fo huayan jing shu*, T no. 1735, 35: 939c26–27.
- 34 In the early twentieth century, Mount Putuo 普陀 got paired with a small nearby islet called Mount Luoia 洛迦; thus, together they form a bigger *bodhimaṇḍa*: Putuo-luoia 普陀洛迦, the full Chinese transliteration for Potalaka. Bingenheimer, *Island of Guanyin*, p. 103.
- 35 *Guanshiyin yingyan ji*, T no. 2068, 51: 72a29–c3.
- 36 A similar story is found in the 44th fascicle of *Shinjūng Tongguk yōji sūngnam* 신증동국여지승람 (新增東國輿地勝覽, “Revised and Augmented Gazetteer of Korea”, 1530) in the “Puru” 불우 (佛宇, “Buddhist Cultic Sites”) chapter “Naksa-sa” 낙산사 (洛山寺) subchapter, which preserved the records of the Sōn 선 (禪) monk, Ikchang 익장 (益莊, 13th century).
- 37 昔義湘法師始自唐來還,聞大悲真身住此海邊嶼內,故因名洛山。蓋西域寶陁洛伽山,此云小白華,乃白衣大士真身住處,故借此名之。齋戒七日,浮座具晨水上,龍天八部侍從,引入嶼內。參禮空中出水精念珠一貫給[獻]之,湘領受而退。東海龍亦獻如意寶珠一顆,師捧出。更齋七日,乃見真容,謂曰:『於座上山頂雙竹湧生,當其地作殿宜矣。』師聞之出嶼,果有竹從地湧出。乃作金堂,塑像而安之。圓容麗質儼若天生。其竹還沒,方知正是真身住也。因名其寺曰洛山。師以所受二珠,鎮安于聖殿而去。 *Samguk yusa*, 416–417; T no. 2039, 49: 996c3–14. Another translation can be found in McBride, *Hwaōm I*, 394–396 (McBride 2012).
- 38 *Da fangguang fo huayan jing*, T no. 293, 10: 733c9.
- 39 The dragon of the East Sea here refers to sea east of the Korean Peninsula, that is, to the Sea of Japan.
- 40 *Qianshou qianyan Guanshiyin pusa guangda yuanman wuai dabeixin tuoluoni jing* 千手千眼觀世音菩薩廣大圓滿無礙大悲心陀羅尼經, T no. 1060, p. 20; Pak, “Naksan legend”, p. 205.
- 41 Kangwon-do, Yangyang-gun, Yangyang-ūp, Chosan-ri 339-oe 1-p’il.
- 42 *Koryōsa* 58, “Ingnyōng-hyōn” (online, see Primary Sources)
- 43 Contemporary Adūng-byōn 아등변 (阿等邊) Kūnohyōng-byōn 근오형변 (斤烏兄邊). The four seas to which rites of the medium rank (*chungsa* 中祀) were conducted are listed in the *Samguk sagi* 삼국사기 (三國史記, “History of the Three Kingdoms”) “Chapchi” 잡지 (雜誌) 1. “Chesa” 제사 (祭祀) chapter. Information about the Koryō rites to seas can be found in the *Koryōsa* and about Chosōn rites in the *Sejong shillōk* 세종실록 (世宗實錄).
- 44 Rong and Bi, “A Study on the International” pp. 31–52.
- 45 Kim S., “Minkan shinang”, 199–228. The record of the petition can be found in the 19th fascicle of the *Baoqing siming zhi*, in the “Dinghai-xian zhi” 定海縣志 chapter 2, “Shenmiao” 神廟 subchapter.
- 46 As examples we can mention Wang Shunfeng’s 王舜封 mission in 1080 and Liu Da’s 劉達 and Wu Shi’s 吳棊 mission to Koryō in the Chongning 崇寧 era (1102–1106). The miracle stories about the missions are recorded in gazettiers about Mount Putuo (Yü, “P’u-t’o Shan”, 2016–2017).
- 47 The ongoing debate concerning the chronological order of foundation and the relationship between Mount Putuo and Naksan Temple is based on studies that suggest that Ūisang might not have been the real founder of Naksan Temple. It was proposed that the temple was indeed established by Pōmil 범일 (梵日, 810–894), the founder of the Sagul-san 사굴산 (闍崛山) Sōn school, who introduced the worship of the bodhisattva Ananyagāmin to Naksan. One indicator of this is that the founding of Mount Putuo and the enshrining of Ananyagāmin by Pōmil on Naksan overlap in time. Moreover, the supposed founder of the first

temple on Mount Putuo, Egaku 慧萼, visited Qi'an 齊安 (?–842), Pōmil's master in Mingzhou, so the key figures involved in these two enterprises might have known each other (Hwang, "Naksan sōlhwa wa Koryō", pp. 95–96; Cho, "Hyangsan Myosōn", pp. 177–205; Kim T., "Ŭisang ūi Kwaūm").

48 Its first appearance is on the stele called Naksan-sa Haesu Kwanūm Kongjung Sari pi 낙산사해수관음궁중사리비 (洛山寺海水觀音空中舍利碑).

49 Byeon, "Shilla ūi Kwanūm".

50 In this story, when Ŭisang arrived in China, he stayed in the house of a lay believer, whose daughter Shanmiao fell in love with him. Ŭisang kept his precepts and rejected the girl, who took a vow to help the monk until her dying day. Since Shanmiao did not have a chance to give the present she prepared to Ŭisang at his departure, she threw the box containing the gift after the ship, then jumped into the water, where she turned into a dragon to lead and protect the ship until it reached the land of Shilla. After arriving in Korea, Shanmiao turned into a huge rock floating in the air to scare away heretics who occupied the territory where Ŭisang wanted to build a temple. The temple built with the help of Shanmiao is called Pusōk-sa 부석사 (浮石寺, "Temple of the Floating Rock") in Yōngju 영주 (榮州), Kyōngsang-bukdo. *Song gaoseng zhuan* 4, "Shilla Tang Xinluoguo Yixiang zhuan" 唐新羅國義湘傳 ("The biography of Ŭisang, a Shilla monk in Tang"), T no. 2061, 50: 729a16–b15.

51 The story exerted a great influence on Myōe 明惠 (1173–1232), a Japanese Kegon monk, who not only discussed the legend in his writings, but also made Shanmiao (Jp. Zenmyō) a main object of worship in the nunnery Zenmyō-ji 善妙寺 at Hiraoka 平岡. For more on this topic see Faure, "Kegon and Dragons", pp. 302–6.

52 Cho, "Hyangsan Myosōn".

53 Li Ling ("A Disussion", pp. 42–49) on the other hand proposes that the legend of Miaoshan may have originated in the region near Xiangshan Temple (Xiangshan Si 香山寺) at the Longmen 龍門 caves in Luoyang 洛陽 around the seventh century, and was linked to Xiangshan in Henan Province only later. Although this theory gives room to more research in the topic, it does not change the fact that the legend may not have been known in the Zhejiang region at such an early age (Li 2018).

54 Encyclopedia of Korean Culture (online, see Online Sources), "Panya yōngsōn-do" 반야용선도 (般若龍船圖).

55 Bingenheimer, *Island of Guanyin*, pp. 132–33.

56 Ghee is a clarified butter regarded as the most delicate among the five kinds of dairy products in Indian culture. It is used as a symbol of sūtras, teachings, buddha-nature, or nirvāṇa in Buddhism to express exquisiteness, refinement, or unsurpassable nature. The legend tries to imply that seemingly impure, profane phenomena can also be the expressions of the buddha-nature, which is not realized by the protagonist. This detail is curious considering that, according to his hagiographies, Wonhyo was famous for breaking monastic rules, for example by begetting a son with the daughter of king Muyol 무열 (武烈). It can be assumed that the bird in this legend tries to point out that the monk have not yet managed to transcend dualistic thinking, despite his unbridled nature often being interpreted as a sign of this achievement.

57 後有元曉法師,繼踵而來,欲求瞻禮。初,至於南郊水田中,有一白衣女人刈稻,師戲請其禾,女以稻荒戲答之。又行至橋下,一女洗月水帛,師乞水,女酌其穢水獻之,師覆棄之,更酌天水而飲之。時,野中松上有一青鳥,呼曰休醜口(酬)和尚,忽隱不現,其松下有一隻脫鞋。師既到寺,觀音座下又有前所見脫鞋一隻,方知前所遇聖女乃真身也。故,時人謂之觀音松。師欲入聖岫,更觀真容,風浪大作,不得入而去。 *Samguk yusa*, 417–418; T no. 2039, 49: 996c14–23.

58 Kim T., "Uisangui Kwaūm", p. 20; So, "Shilla Munmu wangdae", p. 14.

59 The mountain goddesses mentioned in the *Samguk yusa* are as follows: 1. The holy mother of Mount Sōyōn (Sōyōn-san *shinmo* 西鳶山神母), also called the divine mother of Mount Sōndo (Sōndo-san *shinmo* 仙桃山神母). She is the mother of Pak Hyōkkōse 박혁거세 (朴赫居世), the founder of Shilla, and appears in Book 5, "Kamt'ong" 감통 (感通) 7, in the "Sōndo sōngmo suhūi pulsa" 선도 성모 수희 불사 (仙桃聖母隨喜佛事, "Holy Mother Seondo Finds Joy in Buddhist Rites") chapter. 2. Lady Unje (Unje puin 운제 부인, 雲帝夫人/雲梯夫人), the wife of the second ruler, King Namhae, the goddess of Mount Unje. She appears in Book 1, "Marvels" 1 (Kii 기이, 奇異 1), in the "Che-i daewang Namhaewang" 제이 대왕 남해왕 (第二大王南解王, "The Second Ruler, King Namhae") chapter. 3. Divine mother Ch'isul (Ch'isul *shinmo* 叱述神母), the concubine of Pak Chesang 박제상 (朴堤上). She appears in Book 1, "Marvels" 1, in the "Naemulwang Kim Chesang" 내물왕 김제상 (奈勿王金堤上, "King Naemul and Kim Chesang") chapter (Grayson, "Female Mountain", pp. 122–24).

60 In Shilla society, the system called *samsan-oak* served as a state-level example of the concept of mountains protecting a community (*chinsan* 진산, 鎭山). During the era of Unified Silla (668–935), state-level ceremonies addressing natural phenomena were classified into three categories—big (*taesa* 대사, 大祀), medium (*chungsa* 중사, 中祀), and small (*sosa* 소사, 小祀)—categories, according to which the most important three mountains (*samsan* 삼산, 三山) were worshipped by big, and the five secondary ridges (*oak* 오악, 五嶽) by medium rites.

61 Narim 나림 (奈林), Hyōllye 혈례 (穴禮), and Kolhwa 골화 (骨火). Narim is supposed to be the goddess of Nangsan 낭산 (狼山) in Kyōngju, Hyōllye is the goddess of Pusan 부산 (阜山) in Kōnchōn, and Kolhwa is the goddess of Keumgang-san 금강산 (金剛山) in the village of Tongchōn near Kyōngju.

62 So, "Shilla Munmu", pp. 45–86.

63 The oldest example for the cult of Kwanūm in Shilla is in the "Chajang chōngnyul" 자장정률 (慈藏定律, "Chajang Establishes the Rules of Discipline") chapter of *Samguk yusa*, according to which Chajang 慈藏 (590–658), the founder of the Mañjuśrī cult at

- Mount Odae, was born after his father made one thousand copies of the *Avalokiteśvara Sūtra* to pray for a son (Samguk yusa, T no. 2039, 49: 1005a14–17).
- 64 Sou, “The Gwaneūm”, pp. 70–71.
- 65 Bae, *Shilla Kwanūm*, p. 154.
- 66 Pak, “Naksan Legend”, p. 199.
- 67 See for example certain passages of the chapters entitled “Li shijian” 離世間 (“Leaving the World Behind”) and “Rulai chuxian” 如來出現 (“The manifestations of the Tathāgata”) in the *Flower Ornament Scripture (Da fangguang fo huayan jing*, T no. 279, 10: 316b24–27; T no. 279, 10: 267c26–29).
- 68 See for example Chengguan’s explanation in the *Da fangguang fo huayan jing suishu yanyi chao* 大方廣佛華嚴經隨疏演義鈔 (“(Subcommentary and Explanation of the Meaning of the Buddhāvataṃsakasūtra”, T no. 1736, 36: 4, c6–8).
- 69 Bingenheimer, *Island of Guanyin*, pp. 89–93.
- 70 Yü, *Kuan-yin*, pp. 442–47.
- 71 A human-headed, mythical bird in Buddhism that preaches the Dharma in the paradise of Amitābha buddha.
- 72 Ch. *Zhengfa nianchu jing* 正法念處經, T no. 721, p. 17. The Digital Dictionary of Buddhism (online, see Online Sources) defines the blue bird as *dhvāṅkṣa*, that is, a crow or oriole.
- 73 Pak, “Naksan Legend”, p. 205.
- 74 *Shanhai jing* 12.313
- 75 Yü, *Kuan-yin*, pp. 410–11.
- 76 Kim T. S., “Kodae Tongasia Sōwangmo”, pp. 381–417.
- 77 *Samguk yusa*, T no. 2039, 49: 1011c11–1012a15.
- 78 東陵聖母者,廣陵海陵人也,適杜氏。師事劉綱學道。能易形變化,隱顯無方。杜不信道,常怒之。聖母或行理疾救人,或有所之詣。杜患之愈甚,告官訟之,云聖母姦妖,不理家務。官收聖母付獄。頃之,已從獄窗中飛去。眾望見之,轉高入雲中。留所著履一綱在窗下。自此升天,遠近立廟祠之。民所奉事,禱祈立效。常有一青鳥在祭所。人有失物者,乞問所在,青鳥集盜物人之上。路不拾遺,歲月稍久,亦不復爾。至今海陵海中,不得為姦盜之事。大者風波沒溺、虎狼殺之,小者即病傷也。[... ] *Shenxian zhuan* 6, “Dongling Shengmu” (online, see Primary Sources).
- 79 Lee, “Kojōnmunhak e nat’anan” pp. 125–65.
- 80 *Samguk yusa*, T no. 2069, 49: 998b19–1000a09.
- 81 In the case of Mount Wutai, it was believed that the eastern peak was the abode of Akṣobhya buddha, the southern peak was that of Ratnasambhava, the western peak was that of Amitābha, the northern peak was that of Amoghasiddhi, and the middle peak was that of Vairocana. This arrangement follows the system of the five *dhyāni* buddhas in Vajrayāna Buddhism. On the other hand, in the case of Mount Odae, Avalokiteśvara was worshipped on the eastern peak and Ksitigarbha was worshipped on the southern peak. The northern peak was the dwelling place of Śākyamuni, which also differs from the Chinese arrangement. It is worth noting that in Korea, not buddhas, but bodhisattvas lived on the eastern and southern peaks, so only the placement of Vairocana and Amitābha was the same as on Wutaishan.
- 82 According to the “Taesan oman chinshin” chapter in the *Samguk yusa*, the Shilla monk Chajang 智藏 went to Tang in 636, where he met Mañjuśrī on Wutai Shan, who appeared as an old monk in front of him. Mañjuśrī told the monk that there was a “Wutai Shan” on the Korean Peninsula as well, where ten thousand Mañjuśrīs dwelled, so he encouraged the monk to find it once he returned to Shilla. Chajang followed the instructions, and named the mountain he found Mount Odae, using the Korean pronunciation of the Chinese characters for Mount Wutai (Samguk yusa, T no. 2039, 49: 998b19–999c10).
- 83 McBride, *Domesticating the Dharma*, 22, pp. 26–27.
- 84 McBride, *Domesticating the Dharma*, pp. 133–35.
- 85 A list can be found at McBride, *Domesticating the Dharma*, pp. 147–50.
- 86 A full English translation can be found at McBride, “Uisang’s Vow Texts” pp. 153–54.
- 87 Jeon, “Paekhwa Toryang”, pp. 109–55; Jung, “Paekhwa Toryang”, pp. 33–61.
- 88 Kim T., “Uisang ūi Kwaūm”, pp. 16–19. “The ocean of the original nature of the perfectly penetrating *samādhi*” is the all-encompassing, true nature of existence likened to an ocean.

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### Abbreviations

T = Taishō shinshū daizōkyō (See Online Sources, The SAT Daizōkyō Text Database)

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