

Summary

Dissertation Title: *Various Aspects of Maitreya Figures: Korea and Japan*

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Based on the figurative aspects of statues, I argue the reason that Maitreya continued to be depicted in statues in Japan even after those of him in a half-cross-legged meditative posture (which were popular in early periods) disappeared can be found in Maitreya's characteristics. Contemplative sitting depictions, which first appeared in Gandhāra, existed in the small space between the sacred and the secular. While there is no Maitreya statues as contemplative sitting depictions in China, from the around the time of the Northern Qi Dynasty, Maitreya probably began to be depicted in statues as a bodhisattva. This was then transmitted to Korea, where it ripened. In Japan, contemplative sitting depictions of Maitreya were being transmitted from the beginning

Both stylistically and in terms of belief content, the Crown Maitreya, which is generally the most popular and well-known Maitreya depiction in Japan, has strong Silla elements, like those seen in the half-Cross-Legged Meditative Posture Maitreya (Korean National Treasure #83) and elsewhere. The Korean National Treasure #83 has an exceptional realistic depiction of Maitreya's body, showing a style that is from the latter half of the Three Kingdoms period. It arose in the context of the belief of the Old Silla period (a time known for its relationship to Hwarang), and similarities can be found in how the Jeweled Crown Maitreya came to be linked to Prince Shōtoku belief. The Crown Maitreya also relates to the characteristics of the Hata Clan, which arrived from Korea and created Kōryū-ji. I argue that the reason that the Crown Maitreya remains popular today is due to the essential characteristics of its beauty.

Furthermore, I considered in detail the style and form of the Half-Cross-Legged Meditative Posture Maitreya (Korean National Treasure #78) showing that it contains many Baekje elements.

The idealized and highly decorated Korean National Treasure #78 and the realistic Korean National Treasure #83 that features a life-like body show the different personalities of Maitreya Bodhisattva statues. Respectively, they depict Maitreya Bodhisattva in Tuṣita Heaven, and the Maitreya Bodhisattva who has descended to this world and is contemplating under the Dragon Tree. Besides these, there are other statues that exist which contain Baekje elements, such as the Kouga no Omi future statue, the Kanshou-in statue in Nagano, and so on. During the Asuka and Hakuho periods, various half-cross-legged meditative posture statues were transmitted to Japan and also created here.

Statue depictions of Maitreya as a tathāgata (which is his descended form) can be seen from around the same era at Taima-dera, Shakkō-ji, Kasagi-dera, and so on. However, in the ancient period, the prayers directed towards them were probably the same as the wishes directed towards other Buddhist statues in general.

With faith in Amida Tathāgata spreading after entering the Nara period, Maitreya statues that took the special contemplative sitting form markedly decrease, and in the Heian period they disappear entirely. It can be thought that, with the introduction of esoteric Buddhism, magical powers came to be sought in Buddhist statues. This can be assumed based on, for example, the fact that the characteristics of sandalwood statue-style engravings that include magical elements (such as the eleven-faced Avalokiteśvara at Hokke-ji) can also be seen in Murou-ji's Maitreya Bodhisattva statue.

During this time in Korea large stone Buddhist statues were frequently made. Early examples found at Sinseon-sa in Gyeongju and Mireuk-sa in Iksan. However it was during the Goryeo period that a very large amount was made. In this dissertation, I considered the great stone bodhisattva statue at Gwanchook-sa, and argued that it shows typical characteristics of Goryeo stone Buddhist statues, and also that it has many characteristics found in Maitreya depictions. However, with ordinary people coming to have faith in Maitreya amidst the flow of history, Maitreya became adored as the "Maitreya" that grants one's worldly wishes.

In Japan during the Hokuho period, the rock wall Maitreya statue at Kasagi- was already being worshipped. During the Kamakura period, wishing to the Maitreya Tathāgata who will descend into this world that one will be reborn in the Tuṣita Heaven began at Ōno-dera (a temple with which the Gotoba Emperor was involved), and lead common people to create statues as well.

On the other hand, there are legends surrounding certain large stone Buddhist statues in Korea that say that they arose out of the ground. In Japan, it is said that certain Buddhist statues appeared out of wood or stone that was being carved. Out of these types of statues, I considered the stone Buddhist statues in Sekiyama, Niigata Prefecture, many of which are called "Maitreya." The stone Buddhist statues of Sekiyama are characterized by a lack of a pedestal; the figures sit on the ground. While exactly whom these statues depict is not clear, there are many that are called "Maitreya." There are rooted in the area as objects of worship to which people pray for worldly benefits. Similar stone Buddhist statues also exist in other areas, and they are all believed in as "Maitreya," just like the large Buddhist statues in Korea, regardless of who they actually depict. The worldly

elements of Maitreya came to be believed in by common people, and statues that were not of Maitreya came to be worshipped as Maitreya.

-Maitreya, for whom it is decided that he will become a tathāgata, was a familiar respected figure that could be relied upon. The Maitreya Bodhisattva statues in a contemplative sitting position are located in the narrow space between the sacred and the secular, and disappeared having been pushed away by figures that expressed more magical powers. However, from then onwards faith in Maitreya continued to exist, and statues of this familiar figure as both a thatāgata and bodhisattva continued to be created based on people' s hopes and wishes.