



**AN ANALYTICAL STUDY ON PURE LAND CONCEPT  
IN MAHĀYĀNA BUDDHISM:  
A CASE STUDY OF JUNGTO SOCIETY IN KOREA**

**Miss Young Jin Park**

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of  
the Requirements for the Degree of  
Master of Arts  
(Buddhist Studies)

Graduate School

Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University

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The Graduate School of Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University has approved this thesis entitled "An Analytical Study on Pure Land Concept in Mahāyāna Buddhism: A Case Study of Jungto Society in Korea" as a part of education according to its curriculum of Master of Arts in Buddhist Studies.

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**Abstract**

This thesis has three objectives: 1) to study the concept of Pure Land in *Mahāyāna* Buddhism, 2) to study Buddhist activities of Jungto Society and 3) to analyze the Pure Land concept applied by Jungto Society and its impact on Jungto Society in Korea. This study focus mainly on the concept of Pure Land and its later day innovation in the how Buddhist teachings are taught by Jungto Society of the Korea.

The Pure Land concept applied by Jungto Society in the following issues - application of Pure Land concept by Jungto, application of Buddhist teachings that are taught by Jungto contributions and impact of the society.. The impact and change seen through its four main activities – JTS, Good Friend, Peace Foundation and Eco Buddha is not only local Buddhists but interfaith and global. Jungto Society advices returning to the fundamental teachings of the Buddha with Right Buddhism, Easy Buddhism and everyday Buddhism.

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Young Jin Park

July 7, 2018



## List of Abbreviations

The abbreviations used in this research are, primary and standard abbreviations, which are the most recurrently used in references in this thesis. They are:

P.T.S	: Pali Text Society
ed.	: Editiner/ Editted by
tr.	: Translator/ Translated by
ibid.	: ibiden/ in the same book
p. (pp.)	: page (s)
vol (s).	: volume (s)
etc.	: et cetera/ and others
B.C.	: Before Christ
A.D.	: Latin, anno domini
C.E.	: Common Era

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# Chapter I

## Introduction

### 1.1 Background and Significance of the Study

Pure Land is *jingtu* (淨土) in Chinese and Jungto in Korean. According to *Mahāyāna* tradition Pure Land Buddhism originated in India<sup>1</sup>. It is based on the following *sūtras* a) Longer *Sukhāvātī-Vyuha Sūtra*<sup>2</sup>, or the Teaching of Infinite Life b) *Amitabh Sūtra*<sup>3</sup> (shorter *Amitābha Sūtra*/ Smaller *Sukhāvātī-Vyuha Sūtra*, and c) *Amitāyur Dhyāna Sūtra*<sup>4</sup> (Meditation *Sūtra*) or the Meditation on the Buddha of Infinite life. The principle belief is of a *Sukhāvātī* and rebirth in it through *Amitābha*<sup>5</sup> name recitation, a later day innovation of *Buddhanussati*<sup>6</sup> with strong faith and confidence. However, most practitioners focused mainly on *Amitābha* name recitation literally wanting to have rebirth in the Pure Land forgetting the three-fold training in the *Sūtras*. The advice to avoid evil and do good with the Bodhisattva Path becomes

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<sup>1</sup> JC Cleary, **Pure Land Pure Mind**, (Taiwan: The Corporate Body of the Buddha Education Foundation, 1994), pp. xy–z.

<sup>2</sup> Shinran's jodo monrui jusho and yoshifumi ueda (tr.), **Passage on the pure land way**, (Kyoto: hongwanji international center), p. 133.

<sup>3</sup> Hua Master, **A general explanation of the Buddha speaks of amitabhasūtra**, (California: the sino-America Buddhist association, 1974), p. Vii.

<sup>4</sup> ThichThien Tam (tr.), **Pure –Land Zen Zen Pure – Land**, (Peang: The Penang Buddhist Association), p.225.

<sup>5</sup> Huijing & Householder Jingpu (tr.), **What kind of buddha is amitabha?**, (Xiamen: Chinese pure land Buddhist association, 2014), p. 4.

<sup>6</sup> "Anussati", Wisdomlibrary, Retrieved on 31 March 2017, <http://www.wisdom-lib.org/definition/anussati>.

This results in a blind faith away from its original teachings. The Larger *Sukhāvātī-Vyuha Sūtra* tells the story of *Amitābha Buddha*, 阿彌陀佛<sup>7</sup> in Chinese 무량수불 in Korean, and *Amida*<sup>8</sup> in Japanese. The *Sūtra* was translated into Chinese during the *Ts'ao-Wei* dynasty by *Tripitaka Master Samghavarman* from India.<sup>9</sup> *Wonhyo* (617-686) introduced Pure Land to Korea, where it is called Jungto. King *Dharmakara* ordained and vowed to be a Buddha in front of Buddha *Lokeshvararaja*. He vowed to create a Pure Land to benefit all sentient beings. After receiving *Dhamma* teaching from Buddha *Lokeshvararaja*, he practiced for inconceivable and innumerable *kalpas* through the practice of *Bodhisattva* Path.<sup>10</sup> His name, rejoice in faith, sincerely transfer the merit of virtuous practices to that land, vow to be born there, will attain rebirth in *Sukhāvātī* ... Those who have committed the five gravest offenses are excluded.<sup>11</sup>

The *sūtras* started the condition for rebirth as above, in addition to faith and vow. There is an emphasis for avoidance of evils plus cultivation of merits with activities to cultivate *paramitā*.

This Pure Land *sūtra*, like other *Mahāyāna sūtras* aim for the perfection of wisdom and compassion. Superior rebirths such as in the human realm and Buddha Lands are training grounds for perfection of wisdom and compassion. The *sūtra* strongly promotes confidence in *Amitābha Buddha* and to take rebirth in Pure Land yet it states.

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<sup>7</sup> 本愿称名, 净土宗门号, Retrieved on 16 May 2017, <http://www.jtzhome.com/>

<sup>8</sup> 阿弥陀仏, コトバンク, Retrieved on 16 May 2017, <https://kotobank.jp/word/%E9%98%BF%E5%BC%A5%E9%99%80%E4%BB%8F-27279>.

<sup>9</sup> Hisao Inagaki (tr.), **The Larger Sutta on Amitayus, Vol. 12**, (Jodo-shinshu Seiten, 1988), pp. 73-83.

<sup>10</sup> Gale Thomson, “**Bodhisattva path**”, Retrieved on 09 April, 2017. <http://www.encyclopedia.com/environment/encyclopediasalmanacscriptsandmaps/bodhisattvapath>.

<sup>11</sup> Hisao Inagaki (tr.), **The larger sutra on the Buddha of infinite life**, (Malaysia: Horai Association International, 2012), p.136.

The Smaller *Sukhāvātī Sūtra* summarizes the larger one. It is chanted today still in *Mahāyāna* temples together with the (*prajñāpāramita-hṛdayam sūtra* (Heart *sūtra*) which teaches five *khandha* and *sunyata* which is *paṭiccasamuppāda*.

The *Guan WuliangShouJing* or Meditation *sūtra* is not as popular and not really being practiced. In brief, when one is ready and has accumulated enough merits through superior morality and practicing the *pāramitā*, the *sūtra* promotes *Buddhanussati* (*Amitābha Buddha*) and *Amitābha* visualisation to build *samādhi* initially. Many Pure Land Masters of the past combined *Amitābha Buddha* Name Recitation with *Ānāpānasati* practice.

In Korea, the Jungto (Pure Land) Society under the leadership of *Pomnyun Sunim*<sup>12</sup> is said to be an attempt to bring back its original teachings through modern methods in a global perspective.<sup>13</sup> The Jungto Society dreams of Jungto (Pure Land), a world where individuals are happy, societies are peaceful, and nature is beautiful, With an emphasis on individual Buddhist practice, which transforms people's lives, the Jungto Society has been promoting various movements such as ecological awareness campaigns; the eradication of famine, disease, and illiteracy; advocacy of peace and human right; and the unification of the Korean peninsula. The *Amitābha Buddha* Name can be recited anywhere anytime either verbally or mentally depending on the venue and feasibility. However as a result, there is a misunderstanding, misinterpretation or overlooking of the whole *sūtra* teachings.

*Pomnyun sunim* advises returning to the fundamental teachings of the Buddha with “Right Buddhism”, “Easy Buddhism”, and “Everyday Buddhism”. To root out our suffering, we need to return to the basic teachings of the Buddha and recover the true faith of Buddhism. This research attempts to study if the Jungto Society can be a model of present day innovation without deviating from the intention of the Pure Land eradication of *dukkha* for oneself and mental purification.

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<sup>12</sup> Pomnyun Sunim, **Awakening**, (Korean version), (South Korea: Jungto Publishing, 2015), pp. 162-163.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 147-156.

## 1.2 Objectives of the Research

1.2.1 To study the concept of Pure Land in *Mahāyāna* Buddhism.

1.2.2 To study Buddhist activities of Jungto society in Korea.

1.2.3 To analyze the Pure Land concept in *Mahāyāna* Buddhism applied by Jungto Society and its impact to the society in Korea.

## 1.3 Research Question

1.3.1 What is the Pure Land concept in *Mahāyāna* Buddhism?

1.3.2 What are the activities of the Jungto Society activities in Korea?

1.3.3 How does the Jungto Society apply the Pure Land concept in *Mahāyāna* Buddhism and impact?

## 1.4 Scope of the Research

### 1.4.1 Scope of Data Sources

The study of the Jungto Society will be from the three main texts where the Pure Land teaching is believed to have based on with primary sources in *Mahāyāna* Canonical texts. After the above, the researcher seeks to analyze the teachings of the Jungto Society through in books, journals, researches, articles of activities performed. There are three sources of literature used Pali and Korean in this thesis by translating into English language.

### 1.4.2 Scope of Content

This study focus mainly on the concept of Pure Land and its later day innovation in the how Buddhist teachings are taught by Jungto Society of the Korea. The Pure Land foundational *sūtras*, background of Jungto Society, Buddhist activities and impact and contributions on Korean society will be examined.

## 1.5 Definition of Key Terms Used in the Thesis

**1.5.1 Analysis** means analysis on the Pure Land concept applied by Jungto Society in the following issues - application of Pure Land concept by Jungto,

application of Buddhist teachings that are taught by Jungto contributions and impact of the society.

**1.5.2 Pure Land Concept in *Mahāyāna*** the principle belief is of a *Sukhāvatī* and rebirth in it through *Amitābha* name recitation, a later day innovation of *Buddhanussati* with strong faith and confidence. However, most practitioners focused mainly on *Amitābha* name recitation literally wanting to have rebirth in the Pure Land forgetting the three-fold training in the *Sūtras*.

**1.5.3 Jungto society** refers to the Jungto Society was founded in 1988, by *Pomnyun Sunim* with the aim of building a community of Buddhist who practice, based on the teachings of the Buddha. By committing ourselves to the life of a *bodhisattva*, we vow to live as free individuals without suffering and contribute to making the world around us a better place beautiful.

**1.5.4 Buddhist Activities** refers to activities that Jungto Society run in order to disseminate the Dhamma to the society. There are four main activities:

- a) JTS. Join Together Society which is an international relief organization
- b) Good Friends. Good Friends promotes human rights, well-being of refugees and displaced people in Asia and beyond.
- c) Peace Foundation. It is neutral and is not influenced by any political party or dogma.
- d) Eco Buddha. Eco Buddha seek to live in harmony with the nature, campaigns for ecological awareness and promotes simple living i.e. eating less, consume less, and being more diligent based on Buddhist teaching to respect all living beings.
- e) Pure Land concept applied by Jungto Society means the founder of Jungto attempts to change perceptions and perspectives of the masses with the practical principle of *paṭīccasamuppāda*. Thus, Jungto with practical advice of key Buddhist principles seek to create a Pure Land right here and now.

## 1.6 Review of Related Literature Works

1.6.1 *Pomnyum Sunim*, “Engaged Buddhism”, South Korea: Jungto Publishing, 2006.<sup>14</sup>

This book mentioned about Jungto activities in terms of to make this world into Pure Land, we first need to moderate and control our own desires. Cultivate of Pure Land the one who practices, gives, and volunteers. The one who lives to realize this aspiration how should someone practice if he determined to build Pure Land.

1.6.2. Han-Sa Te'-Ch'ing, “Pure Land of the Patriarchs”, Taipei, The Corporate Body of the Buddha Educational Foundation, 1998.<sup>15</sup>

The Author of this book, trying to explained about the goal of all the Buddha's. Thus, he promoted the cultivation of both Zen and Pure Land, pointing to the non-duality of Emptiness and Existence. Those who practice Zen or Pure Land should understand this truth: “all Dhamma methods are equal and non-superior or inferior.” No one who really understands the deep meaning of the Dhamma can have the kind of obstinate prejudice that sees inferiority and superiority between the various Buddhist methods.

1.6.3 Cleary, JC, “Pure Land Pure Mind”, Taipei, The Corporate Body of the Buddha Educational Foundation, 2003.<sup>16</sup>

This book is detailed explanation of Buddhist teaching based on compassion, on faith in the compassionate Vows of *Amitābha Buddha* to welcome and guide all sentient beings to his Pure Land; when anguish disappears from our minds, the current world in which we live becomes a beautiful place as it is. When our

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<sup>14</sup> Pomnyum Sunim, **Engaged Buddhism**, (South Korea: Jungto Publishing, 2006), pp. 5-7.

<sup>15</sup> Han-Sa Te'-Ch'ing, **Pure Land of the Patriarchs**, (Taipei: The Corporate Body of the Buddha Educational Foundation, 1998), p. 2.

<sup>16</sup> JC Cleary, **Pure Land Pure Mind**, (Taiwan: The Corporate Body of the Buddha Education Foundation, 1994), p. iv.

minds are pure, the world is clean and pure. The moment we become enlightened, we realize that the world in which we live is actually Pure Land.

1.6.4 *Pomnyum Sunim*, “Awakening”, Seoul, Jungto Publishing, 2015.<sup>17</sup>

This book is detailed explanation of the pure Land. Pure Land can be divided into three large categories. The first is called other world Pure Land. The second category of Pure Land is the Future World Pure Land. The third is within Mind Pure Land, Pure Land does not exist in some other place or in the future. This is with in Mind Pure Land. No single one among other-World, Future – World, or Within Mind Pure Land can be said to be absolute because all three of the Pure Land exist in this world.

1.6.5 *Pomnyun Sunim*, “The Story of Amitayurdhyāna Sūtra”. Seoul: Jungto Publishing, 2002.<sup>18</sup>

The Buddha responded to the prayer of a woman who was suffering, related king *Bimbisara*, Queen *Vaidehi* and Son *Ajatashatru* to explain *lobha*, *dosa* and *moha*. It simplifies cause and effect to teach that one’s destiny was ultimately based on one’s own actions. If we cultivate our minds and are content with our current situations, this world within us, our mind is Pure Land, Pure Mind = Pure Land. Enlightenment doesn’t come from stupor like meditation itself. Sincere self –reflection is true meditation and true chanting. Only such deep self – reflection will open up the path to further practice for enlightenment and Buddhahood.

1.6.6 *Pomnyun Sunim*, “A Treatise for Young Buddhist Practitioners”, Seoul: Jungto Publishing, 2008.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Pomnyum Sunim, **Awakening**, (South Korea: Jungto Publishing, 2015), pp. 132-141.

<sup>18</sup> Pomnyum Sunim, **The Story of Amitayurdhyana Sutra**, (Korean version), (South Korea: Jungto Publishing, 2006), pp. 5-7.

<sup>19</sup> Pomnyum Sunim, **A Treatise for Young Buddhist Practitioners**, (Korean version), (South Korea: Jungto Publishing, 2008), pp. 19-21.

In this book, *Pomnyun sunim* advises to study and investigate *dukkha* thoroughly. Young Buddhists are told to watch their mind, investigate mental *dukkha*, he clarifies that Buddhism is not only about taking an interest and liking it. By examining *dukkha* and practicing Buddhism, enlightenment and Buddhahood is possible. The venerable says, “Not tomorrow, not later, be mindful and *sukha* at this very moment.

1.6.7. Hyeonbeop, “The Longer Sukhāvātī-VyuhaSūtra”. Seoul: Yeonggakssa Temple, 1995.<sup>20</sup>

The Infinite Life Sūtra is connected to the theory of karma, which described that one’s destiny is ultimately based on one’s own actions. According to the forty – eight vows by king *Dhammakara*, he preaches extensively on the good aspects of the Pure Land, explains how it is built, sets the conditions to be in it and how to practice. Although, unshaken faith or confidence is stated. The dangers of unmindful living and the need for three-fold training for mental purification are taught. From the above there is no specific texts or literature especially for the topic understudy, all literatures reviewed are related. *Jungto* Society is a new renewed to the development and innovation which refers to the Pure Land concept and its related *sūtras*.

#### 1.6.8. Concluding of review literatures

*Jungto* Society’s motto is ‘Open Mind, Good Friends, and Clean Earth.’ *Pomnyun Sunim* has been advocating a new paradigm of civilization movement in which everyone is happy through practice, creates a happy society through active participation in engaged Buddhism. *Pomnyun Sunim*’s easy, clear, and insightful advice based on Buddha’s teachings shows us how to be happy and free in our daily life.

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<sup>20</sup>Hyeonbeop, **The Longer Sūkhāvātī-Vyuha Sūtra**, (South Korea: Yeonggakaas Temple, 1995), p. 59.

## 1.7 Research Methodology

The current research is a documentary research about the Jungto Society in Korea. The research steps can be classified as follows:

1.7.1 Data collection from related *Mahāyāna* Canonical sources on the concept of Pure Land based on the Korean versions and English translations of the following *sūtras* a) Longer *Sukhāvatī-Vyuha Sūtra*, or the Teaching of Infinite Life b) *Amitabh Sūtra* (shorter *Amitābha Sūtra*/ Smaller *Sukhāvatī-Vyuha Sūtra*, and c) *Amitāyur Dhyāna Sūtra* (Meditation *Sūtra*) or the Meditation on the Buddha of Infinite life. The first two are currently in use and will be the main focus here.

After the above, important grand patriarchs' views, comments and practices, Jungto founder books, audio-visuals and the society websites plus contemporary scholars' research on the society are also gathered to be carefully studied.

1.7.2 Analyzing the collected data from hectoring to contemporary aspects based on the research questions asked.

1.7.3 Providing a conclusion with Buddhist interpretations.

1.7.4 Conclusion and suggestion.

## 1.8 Expected Benefits of the Research

1.8.1 Having a clear understand the concept of Pure Land in *Mahāyāna* Buddhism.

1.8.2 Gaining a knowledge Buddhist activities of Jungto society.

1.8.3 Understanding the Pure Land concept applied by Jungto Society in Korea.

## Chapter II

### The concept of Pure Land in *Mahāyāna* Buddhism

This Buddha is said to be *bodhisattva Dharmakara* who accumulated limitless merits over past lives and made 48 vows to liberate *saṃsāra* beings. A Pure Land is not a final destination, but a wholesome rebirth location which *nirvāṇa* is thought to be an easy step with conducive conditions and conditioning. The Pure Land practitioners vow for rebirth in *Sukhāvatī*, a perfect dwelling to practice until liberated, Buddhahood in the *Mahāyāna* ideal. It refers the principle belief here is of a *Sukhāvatī* and rebirth in it through *Amitābha* name recitation. *Sūtras* of Pure Land Buddhism preaches that Dhamma brings effects equally without distinction of saints or the imperial family. This is one of the reasons that became most popular among the populace.

#### 2.1 Meaning of Pure Land

Pure Lands are understood in many ways. They might be a state of mind cultivated through practice, or they might be thought of as real places. However, it is understood that within a Pure Land, the Dhamma is proclaimed everywhere, and enlightenment is easily realized. A Pure Land is not a final destination, but a wholesome rebirth location which *nirvāṇa* is thought to be an easy step with conducive conditions and conditioning. The Pure Land practitioners vow for rebirth in *Sukhāvatī*, a perfect dwelling to practice until liberated, Buddhahood in the *Mahāyāna* ideal. Since all conditions in Pure Land propel one towards enlightenment, anyone born there will attain *nirvāṇa* quickly and easily according to the teaching. The principle belief here is of a *Sukhāvatī* and rebirth in it through *Amitābha* name recitation

**2.1.1 Meaning in Sūtras:** The three principle Pure Land *sūtras* are the Longer *Sukhāvatī-Vyuha Sūtra* (Teaching of Infinite Life) and *Amitābha Sūtra*/ (Smaller *Sukhāvatī-Vyuha Sūtra*) and *Amitāyur Dhyāna Sūtra* (Meditation *Sūtra*)

These *sūtras* describe *Amitābha* and his Pure Land of Bliss, called *Sukhāvātī*.

There are these common features in the three main texts of Pure Land teaching— *Amitābha* Buddha, his created land, devoted faith in him, *Amitābha* name recitation (*Amitābha Buddhānussati*), cumulated merits/virtues and *Bodhisattva* ideal. The descriptions, stories told and even the main method can be different but the common features above can be found. Larger *Sukhāvātī-Vyuha Sūtra* or *Amitāyus Sūtra* and the Smaller *Sukhāvātī-Vyuha Sūtra* are more similar but the Meditation *Sūtra* (Ch. *Kuan wu-liang-shou ching*) emphasizes the method of contemplation, more of *samatha* based practice with the *Amitābha* Buddha and his accompanying *Bodhisattvas* – *Avalokiteśvara* (Guan Yin) and *Mahāsthāmaprāpta* (Da Shi Zhi) as well as preliminary light and *Sukhāvātī* realm.

In addition to these *Sūtras*, many other *Mahāyāna* texts also feature *Amitābha* Buddha, and a total of 290 such works have been identified in the *Taishō Tripiṭaka*.<sup>1</sup>

*Sūtras* of Pure Land Buddhism preaches that Dhamma brings effects equally without distinction of saints or the imperial family. This is one of the reasons that became most popular among the populace.

The three principle *Sūtras* teach about *Amitābha* and his Pure Land of Bliss, called *Sukhāvātī* but the related *Sūtras*.

The *Sūtras* appear to have taken the key teaching of Buddhism and add onto *Bodhisattva* ideal<sup>2</sup> of *Mahāyāna* teaching with maybe Chinese philosophical and traditional influence.

### 2.1.2 Meaning in Dictionaries

The form of Buddhism focuses on the Buddha *Amitābha* and the “Pure Land” he created. Appearing in China in the fourth century c.e. and later Japan, Korea

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<sup>1</sup> “Taishō Tripiṭaka”, Lapis lazuli texts, Retrieve on 9 March 2018, <https://lapislazulitexts.com/tripitaka>.

<sup>2</sup> JC Cleary, **Pure Land Pure Mind**, (Taiwan: The Corporate Body of the Buddha Education Foundation, 1994), pp. 147-148.

and other nations, this form of Buddhism has the largest following of all the different types of Buddhism. Pure Land is aimed at the average person in its recognition that most people cannot achieve enlightenment and so are hopeless forever to stay in *Samsāra*. So *Amitābha* set up a “Pure Land” in the “West” –a paradise- to which people can go when they die. To again entrance, people simply have to call on the power of *Amitābha*.

A realm free from suffering in which it is easier to attain *nirvāṇa*; the most famous one, *Sukhāvātī*, is the Pure Land of *Amitābha* Buddha and requires only calling out his name in order to be reborn in it; "Pure Land Buddhism" refers to this devotion directed towards *Amitābha*.

The story of *Amitābha* as found in the Longer *Sukhāvātī vyūha-sūtra* rehearsed elements that were fundamental to the *Mahāyāna* vision: the *bodhisattva* vocation with its initial set of vows and subsequent accumulation of merit through austerities, the attainment of supreme enlightenment, and the creation of a land through stored merit for the salvation of all sentient beings. Consequently, the practices affiliated with the Pure Land tradition were reflective of *Mahāyāna* values and were inseparably embedded within a complex of cultivation and liturgical regimens that overcame throughout the *Mahāyāna* tradition.<sup>3</sup>

*Mahāyāna* contains soteriological paradox<sup>4</sup> that historically led to wide disparities with regard to Pure Land practice, as well as to contrasting views on the nature and function of that practice. On the one hand, *Amitābha*'s Pure Land itself was the result of cultivation of the *bodhisattva* path, thus serving as an example that encouraged emulation in all of those seeking the Pure Land. They too were expected to diligently follow that path, rigorously engaging in the requisite spiritual disciplines and austerities, all the while attending to the welfare of all sentient beings. On the other hand, the Pure Land as a place of refuge and liberation was a creation of

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<sup>3</sup> Pomnyum Sunim, *The Story of Amitayurdhyana Sutra*, (Korean version), (South Korea: Jungto Publishing, 2006), p. 7.

<sup>4</sup> A. S. Hornby, *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, 5<sup>th</sup> Edi, 1995, Oxford University Press, P 839

*Amitābha's* beneficent vows to save all sentient beings and as such became a goal for those seeking liberation not through their own effort but through faith in *Amitābha's* salvific power. Thus, only through easier practices and through *Amitābha's* assistance could people hope to attain liberation.

### 2.1.3 Meaning in Contemporary Time

Contemporary Pure Land traditions see *Amitābha* expounding the Dhamma in his *buddha-field* (Skt. *buddhakṣetra*), or "pure land", a place offering relief from *karmic* transmigration. *Amitābha's Sukhāvātī* is described in the *Longer Sukhāvātīvyūha Sūtra* as a land of beauty that surpasses all other realms. In Pure Land traditions, entering the Pure Land is seen as equivalent to the attainment of enlightenment. Upon entry into the Pure Land, the practitioner is then instructed by *Amitābha* Buddha and numerous *bodhisattvas* until full and complete enlightenment is reached. This person then has the choice of returning at any time as a *bodhisattva* to any of the six realms of existence in order to help all sentient beings in *saṃsāra*, or to stay the whole duration, reach Buddhahood, and subsequently deliver beings to the shore of liberation.

Although it is the Smaller *Sukhāvātīvyūha Sūtra* that is actually chanted and in use until today, grandmasters of both *Ch'an* or *Zen* in Japanese and Pure Land all promoted teachings in the key *Mahāyāna Sūtras* such as the *Lotus Sūtra* with its *Bodhisattva* ideal, *Avatamsaka Sūtra*<sup>5</sup> with its interconnectedness and interdependence, *Heart Sūtra* on the emptiness of five *khandha* and nature of *nirvāṇa* which is *asamkata*. In the Pure Land *Sūtras*, *Sakyamuni* Buddha describes and explains the Pure Land, advises to recite *Amitābha* Buddha's name and seek rebirth in his land.

The commentary to the Ten Stages of *Bodhisattva* gives two paths – difficult and easy path. The difficult path is self-reliance with limitless hard trainings aeons after aeons and aeons and aspiration of non-falling back. The easy path is to believe in

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<sup>5</sup> JC Cleary, **Pure Land Pure Mind**, (Taiwan: The Corporate Body of the Buddha Education Foundation, 1994), pp. 88-128.

the Buddha's words, practice Buddha name recitation and vow for rebirth in the Pure Land. The Buddha's vow power will assist and one is certain of rebirth.

In Korea, *Pomnyun Sunim* from Jungto Society divides Pure Land into three dimensions –Other Pure Land (他方) , Future Pure Land and Mind Pure Land. Other Pure Land means external existence Pure Land, for rebirth upon death. Future Pure Land, a perfect land such as the *Sukhāvātī* from rebirth upon death, it does not mean only *Sukhāvātī*, there are those who aim for rebirth in *Tusita* and awaits the coming of the *Maitreya* Buddha. To him, the most important is to be contented here and now, there is no need to go other place or wait for future deliverance. *Pomnyun Sunim* emphasizes the Mind Pure Land which means Pure Land = Pure Mind. Here he emphasizes present moment to moment mindful living, Dhamma bliss and free from suffering – free and happy mind in this imperfect world.

In conclusion, it refers the principle belief here is of a *Sukhāvātī* and rebirth in it through *Amitābha* name recitation. *Sūtras* of Pure Land Buddhism preaches that Dhamma brings effects equally without distinction of saints or the imperial family. This is one of the reasons that became most popular among the populace.

## 2.2 Significance of Pure Land

Pure Land teaching with its root in *Mahāyāna* must always be understood from its *trikaya* teaching<sup>6</sup>, Pure/ Original Mind, non-duality in practice and the *Bodhisattva* Path. Hence, in *sammuti*, we talk about individual Pure Land when one practices *Buddhanussati*, in this case, single-minded *Amitābha* name recitation and vow for rebirth in *Sukhāvātī*, not forgetting *Sīla samādhi paññā* formula of early Buddhism. At the same time, each practitioner should have the underlying thought of all *Mahāyāna* conceptions of *pañña* aspects - *trikaya* teaching, Pure/Original Mind, non-duality in practice and the *Bodhisattva* Path.

From the *sammuti* aspect, all practitioners are individuals going along the *Bodhisattva* path towards achieving *Bodhi*. Each individual is working towards his

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<sup>6</sup> “The Trikaya”. Though Co, Retrieve on 9 March 2018, <https://www.thought-co.com/trikaya-three-bodies-of-buddha-450016>.

own Pure Land but also dependent upon other individuals in the society to cultivate his or her *parami* along the path. The practice of *Amitābhanussati* in recitation aims to keep one's mind pure and calm. A pure mind without the discrimination of self and other is needed for *parami* cultivation either through Dhamma cultivation in retreats, prayers, or even socially engaged welfare activities. It is the spirit of non-duality between each individuals and society and even *Amitābha* Buddha.

This is the ultimate aspect that encompasses the *trikaya* teaching of all *Mahāyāna* schools and not forgetting the non-duality aspect of *sammuti=paramattha*<sup>7</sup> and vice versa due to the '*sunyata* or dependent co-arising aspects of all mental and physical phenomena in the whole universe.

### 2.2.1 Individual Dimension of Pure Land

Discussions on individual dimension of Pure Land very often centers on that of Other Power versus Self Power.<sup>8</sup> Indeed one of the major criticisms of Pure Land Buddhism is its emphasis on the power of *Amitābha* Buddha to lead us into salvation into the Pure Land. For many coming to Pure Land Buddhism for the first time it is perhaps a point which is not encouraging and announcing too much like other spiritual traditions. It is sometimes further suggested that Pure Land seems to be more of a devotional Buddhism and that devotion naturally inclines towards salvific notions.

Self-Power, on the other hand, is a term very often used in the *Zen* tradition indicating spiritual achievement attained solely by one's own efforts. Many Buddhists misunderstand these terms including many Pure Land practitioners. I propose that the misunderstanding comes from the different locus from which one views the issue. The two notions both imply an "I" – "You" relationship. They cannot avoid this. The terms "self" and "other" pre-suppose one another. They only have meaning in relationship to each other. Further the argument on both sides is almost always taken

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<sup>7</sup> "Dilbhadra Maharjan". Retrieved on 9 March 2018, <http://dilbhadramaharjan.blogspot.my/2014/05/sammuti-and-paramattha.html>

<sup>8</sup> Thich Thien Tam (tr.), **Pure –Land Zen Zen Pure – Land**, (Peang: The Penang Buddhist Association), pp. 7-8.

from the “self” stance in the first place. This is natural because it is our ego that likes to argue and see things as separate and discriminate.

When they are able to truly live out Other Power in their own life they become one with *Amitābha* Buddha. In other words the “I” – “You” relationship ceases to exist and it becomes “WE”. It is in this transformation that they are able to transcend pain and sorrow. Not that pain, sorrow and struggle cease to exist for this is the natural working of cause and effect. Rather as we identify with the law of cause and effect they become it; they are it. What distinguishes a spiritual person from an ordinary person is his absolute submission to the law of cause and effect. This enables the spiritual person to transcend the bondage to Cause and Effect and find freedom and peace of mind.

They will always be prisoners of the law of causality from the stance of self that separates, divides and discriminates. When they immerse themselves in the pure consciousness of *Amitābha* Buddha there is no need to struggle with life.

### **2.2.2 Social Dimension of Pure Land**

In traditional *bodhisattva* teachings,<sup>9</sup> practitioners are required to set forth the *Bodhi* Mind: to pursue the *Bodhisattva* Path, and to deliver all sentient beings. Practitioners must diligently practice all kinds of virtues in order to benefit themselves by benefiting others. The discussion in 2.2.1 above on individual dimension of Pure Land seen from the often misunderstood “self-power” and “other power” in practice tells about the common *sammuti* view of an individual in practice and the *paramatha* of five *khandha* actually.

From the *sammuti* aspect, all practitioners are individuals going along the *Bodhisattva* path towards achieving *Bodhi*. Each individual is working towards his own Pure Land but also dependent upon other individuals in the society to cultivate his or her *parami* along the path. Each individual then becomes the conditions and conditioning in addition to his or her own mental and physical phenomena.

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<sup>9</sup> Pomnyum Sunim, **The Story of Amitayurdhyana Sutra**, (Korean version), (South Korea: Jungto Publishing, 2006), pp. 117 -121.

Contemporary teachers such as *Chin Kung*, *Pomnyun Sunim* and *Cheng Yen* all propose creating individual and society Pure Land through their Dhamma teaching and engaged Buddhist activities. Here the first aspect of Pure Land as a place is applied either to build it here on earth to try eradicating *sammuti* sufferings or to have rebirth in the *Sukhāvātī* for an easier practice to achieving *Bodhi*.

The practice of *Amitābhanussati* in recitation aims to keep one's mind pure and calm. A pure mind without the discrimination of self and other is needed for *parami* cultivation either through Dhamma cultivation in retreats, prayers, or even socially engaged welfare activities.

The second and third aspects of the Pure Land practice is more complex. It is the spirit of non-duality between each individuals and society and even *Amitābha* Buddha. This is the ultimate aspect that encompasses the *trikaya* teaching of all *Mahāyāna* schools and not forgetting the non-duality aspect of *sammuti=paramattha*<sup>10</sup> and vice versa due to the '*sunyata* or dependent co-arising aspects of all mental and physical phenomena in the whole universe.

As *Amitābha* Buddha has accomplished all his vows in the causal ground, sentient beings who believe in and accept his teaching of deliverance and practice accordingly must be benefited. So, in *sammuti* there is the social aspect of the Pure Land teaching. Faith in *Amitābha*'s deliverance is based on *Shakyamuni* Buddha's words spoken in the three Pure Land *sūtras*. *Shakyamuni* Buddha taught that *Amitābha* Buddha accomplished his 48 Vows made<sup>11</sup>, the 18th Vow especially is for all aspirants to be reborn in his Pure Land by reciting his name. *Amitābha*-recitation is the principal *kamma* of assured rebirth. Faith refers to practitioners entrusting themselves to *Amitābha* Buddha and the prescribed recitation. By doing so, practitioners live according to the *Mahāyāna* conception of *Bodhisattva* path within the interconnectedness and interdependence of all phenomena, including the *trikaya*

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<sup>10</sup> Thich Thien Tam (tr.), **Pure-Land Zen Zen Pure – Land**, (Peang: The Penang Buddhist Association), p. 259.

<sup>11</sup> Hyeonbeop, **The Longer Sukhāvātī-Vyuha Sūtra**, (Korean version), (South Korea: Yeonggakaas Temple, 1995), pp. 38-50.

of *Amitābha* Buddha, and the *Sukhāvātī* in the whole universe. This brings us to the second aspect of Pure Land practice – the spirit of Pure Land practice. Not forgetting the *sammuti*, practitioners is to start and constantly carry on their practice from the non-duality and *trikaya* view of *Mahāyāna* teaching. This brings us to the third aspect of Pure Land practice – Pure Land = Pure Mind – the Buddha potential in everyone, hence each individual practitioner while striving to purify own mind in *sammuti* aims for the ultimate Pure Mind. This according to the *Bodhisattva* ideal is the non-discriminatory aspect of the *Bodhisattva* path the practitioners engaged in either through transference of merits in *Buddhanussati* – *Amitābha* name recitation or together with active participation in engaged Buddhism in creating a Pure Land on earth. This is where the *sammuti* aspect of individual and social Pure Land is often taken as the most important, forgetting the three-fold aspects discussed above.

If one focuses on the response to *Amitābha*'s 18<sup>th</sup> Vow from the *sammuti* aspects, one is caught in the wrong view of *asmi manassa* in his or her Buddhist path in which he or she sees a real self and the Pure Land where he or she aims for at death. The *paramatha* of no ultimate self whether the Buddha, the practitioner or the society which makes up of each individual is overlooked. Pure Land teaching, a later development of the *Mahāyāna* teaching depends on its *trikaya* teachings – manifested aspects *nirmanakaya* (*sammuti*), *dharmakaya*, the unmanifested, the ultimate truth and the *sambhogakaya*, the *Sukhāvātī* and *Amitābha* Buddha living in his created realm. Ultimately the individual Pure Land and Society Pure Land is interdependent upon *sammuti* view but the *paramatha* aspect must not be forgotten.

In conclusion, it refers the ultimate aspect that encompasses the *trikaya* teaching of all *Mahāyāna* schools and not forgetting the non-duality aspect of *sammuti*=*paramattha* and vice versa due to the 'sunyata or dependent co-arising aspects of all mental and physical phenomena in the whole universe.

## 2. 3 Pure Land in Various Sūtras

The Pure Land teaching is a later development of the *Mahāyāna* tradition. Like other schools of the tradition, there will be underlying *Mahāyāna* thought

especially the Indra's Net <sup>12</sup>of interconnectedness, *Bodhisattva* ideal and its ten stages of *Bodhisattva* path (extension of the Noble Eightfold Path, and perfection of *paramis*) plus the 'sunyata teaching of *Nagarjuna*. These common *Mahāyāna* thought are from the *Avatamsaka*<sup>13</sup>, *Lotus Sūtra*, *Prajñāpāramitāhṛdaya Sūtra* <sup>14</sup>(Heart *Sūtra*) and the *Vajracchedikā Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra*<sup>15</sup> (Diamond *Sūtra*) in addition to the main *Sūtra* of the school.

On the outset, if we take the literal meanings in the *sūtras*, it would appear that they all talk about unshaken faith and devotion to the *Amitābha* Buddha, single-minded pursuit of his name recitation and vow for rebirth with a total believe in the existence of a Pure Land, *Sukhāvatī*. And that there is a focus of the Pure Land as a place of ultimate bliss with its easy practice by dependence upon other power – the assistance of *Amitābha* Buddha, his accompanying *Bodhisattvas* - the *Avoloketisvara* and *Samanthabhadra* with mere *Amitābha Buddhānussati*. However, as stated above, the other key teachings and *Mahāyāna* thought especially in the *Bodhisattva* path which is actually the *Sīla samādhi paññā* formula with its underlying perfection of *paramis* both *sammuti* and *paramattha* must be taken into especially the non-duality and discriminatory conception of *sammuti-paramattha* in *Mahāyāna* thought.

One cannot say what the Pure Land is exactly except that it is a complex development of later *Mahāyāna* thought that started from India but flourished in China due to its philosophical, societal, cultural interactions and reinterpretations of Buddha Dhamma. Perhaps one can say that the underlying theory is *Bodhisattva* ideal but with later day innovations for the general public in contemporary Buddhism.

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<sup>12</sup> "Indra's net". Wikipedia, Retrieved, on 9 March 2018, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indra%27s\\_net](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indra%27s_net).

<sup>13</sup> Thich Thien Tam (tr.), **Pure –Land Zen Zen Pure – Land**, (Peang: The Penang Buddhist Association), p.236.

<sup>14</sup> Pomnyum Sunim, **Commentary on the Heart Sutra** , (Korean version), (South Korea: Jungto Publishing, 1997), pp. 32-44.

<sup>15</sup> Pomnyum Sunim, **Commentaries I and II on the Diamond Sutra**, (Korean version), (South Korea: Jungto Publishing, 1991), pp. 95 -105.

### 2.3.1 Longer Sukhāvati-Vyuha Sūtra

The Longer *Sūkhavatī-Vyuha Sūtra*<sup>16</sup> or the *Amitāyur Sūtra* in Sanskrit describes its origin, its great beauty and conducive environment, residents, the conditions for rebirth and method of practice. This *sūtra* is dedicated exclusively to *Amitābha* Buddha, the direct realization of the Pure Land, the vows which created the Pure Land and rebirth in it. In many ways it is seen as an expansion of the Shorter *Amitābha Sūtra*. The principles of self –cultivation and hope or trust come together, which may also see as the combination of faith and practice. Additionally, the *sūtra* is a demonstration of the transference of merit on a vast scale and of the power of vows. A principle teaching of the Longer *Sukhāvati-Vyuha Sūtra*<sup>17</sup> is that powerful vows may change the external environment of the person who makes them if that person trusts the vows with a calm mind. This causes one to be transformed from one's former state, so it may be said that the mind which trusts a vow participates in that vow. The vow which are responsible for the creation of *Sukhāvati-* are the result of a *Bodhisattva*'s eons of effort. This effort resulted in an incredible storehouse of merit which is now available to sentient beings in order to help them attain *nirvāṇa*.

### 2.3.2 Amitābha Sūtra

The *sūtra* stated the condition for rebirth as above, in addition to faith and vow. There is an emphasis for avoidance of evils plus cultivation of merits with activities to cultivate *pāramitā*.

This Pure Land *sūtra*, like other *Mahāyāna sūtras* aim for the perfection of wisdom and compassion. Superior rebirths such as in the human realm and Buddha Lands are training grounds for perfection of wisdom and compassion. The *sūtra* strongly promotes confidence in *Amitābha Buddha* and to take rebirth in Pure Land yet it states.

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<sup>16</sup> Shinran's jodo monrui jusho & yoshifumi ueda (tr.), **Passage on the pure land way**, (Kyoto: Hongwanji International Center), p. 133.

<sup>17</sup> Hyeonbeop, **The Longer Sukhāvati-VyuhaSūtra**, (South Korea: Yeonggakaas Temple, 1995), p. 59.

The Smaller *Sukhāvātī Sūtra*<sup>18</sup> summarizes the larger one. It is chanted today still in *Mahāyāna* temples together with the (*prajñāpāramita-hṛdayam sūtra* (Heart *sūtra*) which teaches five *khandha* and *sunyata* which is *paṭiccasamuppāda*.

The *Amitābha Buddha* Name can be recited anywhere anytime either verbally or mentally depending on the venue and feasibility. As a result, there is a misunderstanding, misinterpretation or overlooking of the whole *sūtra* teachings.

This *sūtra* echoes the content of the previous minus the long account of its origin and detailed descriptions of the 48 vows. It emphasizes on the conducive environment unsurpassed in beauty and conduciveness. It is much shorter with its highlights of the Buddha Name Recitation, Rebirth, conditions for Rebirth and the threefold training of *Sīla samādhi paññā*.

### 2.3.3 Amitāyur Dhyāna Sūtra

*Amitāyu* is a Sanskrit word referring to the Buddha *Amitāyu/Amitābha* (Endless Life, Endless Light). *Dhyāna* means “meditation” or “meditative concentration.” *Buddhanusmrit* means “visualization or recollection of a Buddha.” The title of this *sūtra* in its original Chinese uses the term “Kuan” which means “recollection through visualization.” The Visualization *Sūtra* was written in the 4<sup>th</sup> century C.E. in Central Asia and was first translated into Chinese between the mid -4<sup>th</sup> and mid -5<sup>th</sup> C.E.

The Visualization *Sūtra* isn't as devotional in tone as the Longer or Shorter *Sūtra*. This *Sūtra* is actually a manual of *Buddhanusmrit* or “Buddha-visualization” which encourages one to have a vision of *Amitābha* Buddha in this life. In the Longer and Shorter *Sūtras*, the primary emphasis is rebirth based on recollection and vows; in the Visualization *Sūtra*, the Buddha vision and how to attain it is emphasized. This *Sūtra* was actually one of a series of visualization *Sūtras* dealing with various Buddha and *Bodhisattvas*, but it's generally accepted that it played the most central role in the emergence of Pure Land Buddhism as a major Buddhist school.

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<sup>18</sup> Hua Master, **A General Explanation of the Buddha Speaks of Amitabha Sūtra**, (California: the sino-America Buddhist association, 1974), p. vii.

This *Sūtra* the Meditation of *Amitāyus*, known informally as the Meditation *Sūtra* or the Contemplation *Sūtra*, is one of the three basic *Sūtras* of the Pure Land Faith. It relates the story of king *Ajatasatur* and his mother *Vaidehi*.<sup>19</sup> One day *Vaidehi*, who was in a state of continual anguish owing to the wicked practices of her son, invokes the help *Sakyamuni*. He comes to her, and assuage her anguish, shows her countless paradises in all directions and asks her to choose one. She chooses the *Sukhāvātī* paradise of *Amitāyus* in the west, and so *Sakyamunu* gave a detailed description of this paradise by means of 16types of visualization<sup>20</sup>.

Many Pure Land Masters of the past combined *Amitābha Buddha* Name Recitation with *Ānāpānasati* practice.

In conclusion, it refers the three principle *Sūtras* teach about *Amitābha* and his Pure Land of Bliss, called *Sukhāvātī* but the related *Sūtras*. The *sūtras* tated the condition for rebirth as above, in addition to faith and vow. There is an emphasis for avoidance of evils plus cultivation of merits with activities to cultivate *paramitā*.

## 2.4 Concluding Remarks

The principle belief is of a *Sukhāvātī* and rebirth in it through *Amitābha* name recitation, a later day innovation of *Buddhanussati* with strong faith and confidence. However, most practitioners focused mainly on *Amitābha* name recitation literally wanting to have rebirth in the Pure Land forgetting the three-fold training in the *Sūtras*. As a result, there is a misunderstanding, misinterpretation or overlooking of the whole *sūtra* teachings. The advice to avoid evil and do well with the *Bodhisattva Path* becomes less important. This results in a blind faith away from its original teachings. Pure Land teaching with its root in *Mahāyāna* must always be understood from *Mahāyāna Trikaya* teaching. Main *Mahāyāna* concepts of Interconnectedness, Dependent Co-arising = '*sunyata*, Pure/ Original Mind, Non-duality in practice and the *Bodhisattva Path* are also to be considered. The Pure Land

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<sup>19</sup> Pomnyum Sunim, *The Story of Amitayurdhyana Sutra*, (Korean version), (South Korea: Jungto Publishing, 2006), pp. 44-67.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid. pp. 125-191.

teaching is dynamic and adapts its practice through changing times and needs. The study shows that *Jungto* Society is a modern example of reinterpretation for Dependent Origination, Four Noble Truths, Eight Noble Path, *Tilakhan-a* and *Bodhisattva* path in *Mahāyāna*.

## Chapter II

### The concept of Pure Land in *Mahāyāna* Buddhism

This Buddha is said to be *bodhisattva Dharmakara* who accumulated limitless merits over past lives and made 48 vows to liberate *saṃsāra* beings. A Pure Land is not a final destination, but a wholesome rebirth location which *nirvāṇa* is thought to be an easy step with conducive conditions and conditioning. The Pure Land practitioners vow for rebirth in *Sukhāvatī*, a perfect dwelling to practice until liberated, Buddhahood in the *Mahāyāna* ideal. It refers the principle belief here is of a *Sukhāvatī* and rebirth in it through *Amitābha* name recitation. *Sūtras* of Pure Land Buddhism preaches that Dhamma brings effects equally without distinction of saints or the imperial family. This is one of the reasons that became most popular among the populace.

#### 2.1 Meaning of Pure Land

Pure Lands are understood in many ways. They might be a state of mind cultivated through practice, or they might be thought of as real places. However, it is understood that within a Pure Land, the Dhamma is proclaimed everywhere, and enlightenment is easily realized. A Pure Land is not a final destination, but a wholesome rebirth location which *nirvāṇa* is thought to be an easy step with conducive conditions and conditioning. The Pure Land practitioners vow for rebirth in *Sukhāvatī*, a perfect dwelling to practice until liberated, Buddhahood in the *Mahāyāna* ideal. Since all conditions in Pure Land propel one towards enlightenment, anyone born there will attain *nirvāṇa* quickly and easily according to the teaching. The principle belief here is of a *Sukhāvatī* and rebirth in it through *Amitābha* name recitation

**2.1.1 Meaning in Sūtras:** The three principle Pure Land *sūtras* are the Longer *Sukhāvatī-Vyuha Sūtra* (Teaching of Infinite Life) and *Amitābha Sūtra* (Smaller *Sukhāvatī-Vyuha Sūtra*) and *Amitāyur Dhyāna Sūtra* (Meditation *Sūtra*)

These *sūtras* describe *Amitābha* and his Pure Land of Bliss, called *Sukhāvātī*.

There are these common features in the three main texts of Pure Land teaching— *Amitābha* Buddha, his created land, devoted faith in him, *Amitābha* name recitation (*Amitābha Buddhānussati*), cumulated merits/virtues and *Bodhisattva* ideal. The descriptions, stories told and even the main method can be different but the common features above can be found. Larger *Sukhāvātī-Vyuha Sūtra* or *Amitāyus Sūtra* and the Smaller *Sukhāvātī-Vyuha Sūtra* are more similar but the Meditation *Sūtra* (Ch. *Kuan wu-liang-shou ching*) emphasizes the method of contemplation, more of *samatha* based practice with the *Amitābha* Buddha and his accompanying *Bodhisattvas* – *Avalokiteśvara* (Guan Yin) and *Mahāsthāmaprāpta* (Da Shi Zhi) as well as preliminary light and *Sukhāvātī* realm.

In addition to these *Sūtras*, many other *Mahāyāna* texts also feature *Amitābha* Buddha, and a total of 290 such works have been identified in the *Taishō Tripiṭaka*.<sup>1</sup>

*Sūtras* of Pure Land Buddhism preaches that Dhamma brings effects equally without distinction of saints or the imperial family. This is one of the reasons that became most popular among the populace.

The three principle *Sūtras* teach about *Amitābha* and his Pure Land of Bliss, called *Sukhāvātī* but the related *Sūtras*.

The *Sūtras* appear to have taken the key teaching of Buddhism and add onto *Bodhisattva* ideal<sup>2</sup> of *Mahāyāna* teaching with maybe Chinese philosophical and traditional influence.

### 2.1.2 Meaning in Dictionaries

The form of Buddhism focuses on the Buddha *Amitābha* and the “Pure Land” he created. Appearing in China in the fourth century c.e. and later Japan, Korea

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<sup>1</sup> “Taishō Tripiṭaka”, Lapis lazuli texts, Retrieve on 9 March 2018, <https://lapislazulitexts.com/tripitaka>.

<sup>2</sup> JC Cleary, **Pure Land Pure Mind**, (Taiwan: The Corporate Body of the Buddha Education Foundation, 1994), pp. 147-148.

and other nations, this form of Buddhism has the largest following of all the different types of Buddhism. Pure Land is aimed at the average person in its recognition that most people cannot achieve enlightenment and so are hopeless forever to stay in *Samsāra*. So *Amitābha* set up a “Pure Land” in the “West” –a paradise- to which people can go when they die. To again entrance, people simply have to call on the power of *Amitābha*.

A realm free from suffering in which it is easier to attain *nirvāṇa*; the most famous one, *Sukhāvātī*, is the Pure Land of *Amitābha* Buddha and requires only calling out his name in order to be reborn in it; "Pure Land Buddhism" refers to this devotion directed towards *Amitābha*.

The story of *Amitābha* as found in the Longer *Sukhāvātī vyūha-sūtra* rehearsed elements that were fundamental to the *Mahāyāna* vision: the *bodhisattva* vocation with its initial set of vows and subsequent accumulation of merit through austerities, the attainment of supreme enlightenment, and the creation of a land through stored merit for the salvation of all sentient beings. Consequently, the practices affiliated with the Pure Land tradition were reflective of *Mahāyāna* values and were inseparably embedded within a complex of cultivation and liturgical regimens that overcame throughout the *Mahāyāna* tradition.<sup>3</sup>

*Mahāyāna* contains soteriological paradox<sup>4</sup> that historically led to wide disparities with regard to Pure Land practice, as well as to contrasting views on the nature and function of that practice. On the one hand, *Amitābha*'s Pure Land itself was the result of cultivation of the *bodhisattva* path, thus serving as an example that encouraged emulation in all of those seeking the Pure Land. They too were expected to diligently follow that path, rigorously engaging in the requisite spiritual disciplines and austerities, all the while attending to the welfare of all sentient beings. On the other hand, the Pure Land as a place of refuge and liberation was a creation of

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<sup>3</sup> Pomnyum Sunim, *The Story of Amitayurdhyana Sutra*, (Korean version), (South Korea: Jungto Publishing, 2006), p. 7.

<sup>4</sup> A. S. Hornby, *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, 5<sup>th</sup> Edi, 1995, Oxford University Press, P 839

*Amitābha's* beneficent vows to save all sentient beings and as such became a goal for those seeking liberation not through their own effort but through faith in *Amitābha's* salvific power. Thus, only through easier practices and through *Amitābha's* assistance could people hope to attain liberation.

### 2.1.3 Meaning in Contemporary Time

Contemporary Pure Land traditions see *Amitābha* expounding the Dhamma in his *buddha*-field (Skt. *buddhakṣetra*), or "pure land", a place offering relief from *karmic* transmigration. *Amitābha's Sukhāvātī* is described in the *Longer Sukhāvātīvyūha Sūtra* as a land of beauty that surpasses all other realms. In Pure Land traditions, entering the Pure Land is seen as equivalent to the attainment of enlightenment. Upon entry into the Pure Land, the practitioner is then instructed by *Amitābha* Buddha and numerous *bodhisattvas* until full and complete enlightenment is reached. This person then has the choice of returning at any time as a *bodhisattva* to any of the six realms of existence in order to help all sentient beings in *saṃsāra*, or to stay the whole duration, reach Buddhahood, and subsequently deliver beings to the shore of liberation.

Although it is the Smaller *Sukhāvātīvyūha Sūtra* that is actually chanted and in use until today, grandmasters of both *Ch'an* or *Zen* in Japanese and Pure Land all promoted teachings in the key *Mahāyāna Sūtras* such as the *Lotus Sūtra* with its *Bodhisattva* ideal, *Avatamsaka Sūtra*<sup>5</sup> with its interconnectedness and interdependence, *Heart Sūtra* on the emptiness of five *khandha* and nature of *nirvāṇa* which is *asamkata*. In the Pure Land *Sūtras*, *Sakyamuni* Buddha describes and explains the Pure Land, advises to recite *Amitābha* Buddha's name and seek rebirth in his land.

The commentary to the Ten Stages of *Bodhisattva* gives two paths – difficult and easy path. The difficult path is self-reliance with limitless hard trainings aeons after aeons and aeons and aspiration of non-falling back. The easy path is to believe in

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<sup>5</sup> JC Cleary, **Pure Land Pure Mind**, (Taiwan: The Corporate Body of the Buddha Education Foundation, 1994), pp. 88-128.

the Buddha's words, practice Buddha name recitation and vow for rebirth in the Pure Land. The Buddha's vow power will assist and one is certain of rebirth.

In Korea, *Pomnyun Sunim* from Jungto Society divides Pure Land into three dimensions –Other Pure Land (他方) , Future Pure Land and Mind Pure Land. Other Pure Land means external existence Pure Land, for rebirth upon death. Future Pure Land, a perfect land such as the *Sukhāvātī* from rebirth upon death, it does not mean only *Sukhāvātī*, there are those who aim for rebirth in *Tusita* and awaits the coming of the *Maitreya* Buddha. To him, the most important is to be contented here and now, there is no need to go other place or wait for future deliverance. *Pomnyun Sunim* emphasizes the Mind Pure Land which means Pure Land = Pure Mind. Here he emphasizes present moment to moment mindful living, Dhamma bliss and free from suffering – free and happy mind in this imperfect world.

In conclusion, it refers the principle belief here is of a *Sukhāvātī* and rebirth in it through *Amitābha* name recitation. *Sūtras* of Pure Land Buddhism preaches that Dhamma brings effects equally without distinction of saints or the imperial family. This is one of the reasons that became most popular among the populace.

## 2.2 Significance of Pure Land

Pure Land teaching with its root in *Mahāyāna* must always be understood from its *trikaya* teaching<sup>6</sup>, Pure/ Original Mind, non-duality in practice and the *Bodhisattva* Path. Hence, in *sammuti*, we talk about individual Pure Land when one practices *Buddhanussati*, in this case, single-minded *Amitābha* name recitation and vow for rebirth in *Sukhāvātī*, not forgetting *Sīla samādhi paññā* formula of early Buddhism. At the same time, each practitioner should have the underlying thought of all *Mahāyāna* conceptions of *pañña* aspects - *trikaya* teaching, Pure/Original Mind, non-duality in practice and the *Bodhisattva* Path.

From the *sammuti* aspect, all practitioners are individuals going along the *Bodhisattva* path towards achieving *Bodhi*. Each individual is working towards his

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<sup>6</sup> “The Trikaya”. Thought Co, Retrieve on 9 March 2018, <https://www.thought-co.com/trikaya-three-bodies-of-buddha-450016>.

own Pure Land but also dependent upon other individuals in the society to cultivate his or her *parami* along the path. The practice of *Amitābhanussati* in recitation aims to keep one's mind pure and calm. A pure mind without the discrimination of self and other is needed for *parami* cultivation either through Dhamma cultivation in retreats, prayers, or even socially engaged welfare activities. It is the spirit of non-duality between each individuals and society and even *Amitābha* Buddha.

This is the ultimate aspect that encompasses the *trikaya* teaching of all *Mahāyāna* schools and not forgetting the non-duality aspect of *sammuti=paramattha*<sup>7</sup> and vice versa due to the '*sunyata* or dependent co-arising aspects of all mental and physical phenomena in the whole universe.

### 2.2.1 Individual Dimension of Pure Land

Discussions on individual dimension of Pure Land very often centers on that of Other Power versus Self Power.<sup>8</sup> Indeed one of the major criticisms of Pure Land Buddhism is its emphasis on the power of *Amitābha* Buddha to lead us into salvation into the Pure Land. For many coming to Pure Land Buddhism for the first time it is perhaps a point which is not encouraging and announcing too much like other spiritual traditions. It is sometimes further suggested that Pure Land seems to be more of a devotional Buddhism and that devotion naturally inclines towards salvific notions.

Self-Power, on the other hand, is a term very often used in the *Zen* tradition indicating spiritual achievement attained solely by one's own efforts. Many Buddhists misunderstand these terms including many Pure Land practitioners. I propose that the misunderstanding comes from the different locus from which one views the issue. The two notions both imply an "I" – "You" relationship. They cannot avoid this. The terms "self" and "other" pre-suppose one another. They only have meaning in relationship to each other. Further the argument on both sides is almost always taken

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<sup>7</sup> "Dilbhadra Maharjan". Retrieved on 9 March 2018, <http://dilbhadramaharjan.blogspot.my/2014/05/sammuti-and-paramattha.html>

<sup>8</sup> Thich Thien Tam (tr.), **Pure –Land Zen Zen Pure – Land**, (Peang: The Penang Buddhist Association), pp. 7-8.

from the “self” stance in the first place. This is natural because it is our ego that likes to argue and see things as separate and discriminate.

When they are able to truly live out Other Power in their own life they become one with *Amitābha* Buddha. In other words the “I” – “You” relationship ceases to exist and it becomes “WE”. It is in this transformation that they are able to transcend pain and sorrow. Not that pain, sorrow and struggle cease to exist for this is the natural working of cause and effect. Rather as we identify with the law of cause and effect they become it; they are it. What distinguishes a spiritual person from an ordinary person is his absolute submission to the law of cause and effect. This enables the spiritual person to transcend the bondage to Cause and Effect and find freedom and peace of mind.

They will always be prisoners of the law of causality from the stance of self that separates, divides and discriminates. When they immerse themselves in the pure consciousness of *Amitābha* Buddha there is no need to struggle with life.

### **2.2.2 Social Dimension of Pure Land**

In traditional *bodhisattva* teachings,<sup>9</sup> practitioners are required to set forth the *Bodhi* Mind: to pursue the *Bodhisattva* Path, and to deliver all sentient beings. Practitioners must diligently practice all kinds of virtues in order to benefit themselves by benefiting others. The discussion in 2.2.1 above on individual dimension of Pure Land seen from the often misunderstood “self-power” and “other power” in practice tells about the common *sammuti* view of an individual in practice and the *paramatha* of five *khandha* actually.

From the *sammuti* aspect, all practitioners are individuals going along the *Bodhisattva* path towards achieving *Bodhi*. Each individual is working towards his own Pure Land but also dependent upon other individuals in the society to cultivate his or her *parami* along the path. Each individual then becomes the conditions and conditioning in addition to his or her own mental and physical phenomena.

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<sup>9</sup> Pomnyum Sunim, **The Story of Amitayurdhyana Sutra**, (Korean version), (South Korea: Jungto Publishing, 2006), pp. 117 -121.

Contemporary teachers such as *Chin Kung*, *Pomnyun Sunim* and *Cheng Yen* all propose creating individual and society Pure Land through their Dhamma teaching and engaged Buddhist activities. Here the first aspect of Pure Land as a place is applied either to build it here on earth to try eradicating *sammuti* sufferings or to have rebirth in the *Sukhāvātī* for an easier practice to achieving *Bodhi*.

The practice of *Amitābhanussati* in recitation aims to keep one's mind pure and calm. A pure mind without the discrimination of self and other is needed for *parami* cultivation either through Dhamma cultivation in retreats, prayers, or even socially engaged welfare activities.

The second and third aspects of the Pure Land practice is more complex. It is the spirit of non-duality between each individuals and society and even *Amitābha* Buddha. This is the ultimate aspect that encompasses the *trikaya* teaching of all *Mahāyāna* schools and not forgetting the non-duality aspect of *sammuti=paramattha*<sup>10</sup> and vice versa due to the '*sunyata* or dependent co-arising aspects of all mental and physical phenomena in the whole universe.

As *Amitābha* Buddha has accomplished all his vows in the causal ground, sentient beings who believe in and accept his teaching of deliverance and practice accordingly must be benefited. So, in *sammuti* there is the social aspect of the Pure Land teaching. Faith in *Amitābha*'s deliverance is based on *Shakyamuni* Buddha's words spoken in the three Pure Land *sūtras*. *Shakyamuni* Buddha taught that *Amitābha* Buddha accomplished his 48 Vows made<sup>11</sup>, the 18th Vow especially is for all aspirants to be reborn in his Pure Land by reciting his name. *Amitābha*-recitation is the principal *kamma* of assured rebirth. Faith refers to practitioners entrusting themselves to *Amitābha* Buddha and the prescribed recitation. By doing so, practitioners live according to the *Mahāyāna* conception of *Bodhisattva* path within the interconnectedness and interdependence of all phenomena, including the *trikaya*

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<sup>10</sup> Thich Thien Tam (tr.), **Pure-Land Zen Zen Pure – Land**, (Peang: The Penang Buddhist Association), p. 259.

<sup>11</sup> Hyeonbeop, **The Longer Sukhāvātī-Vyuha Sūtra**, (Korean version), (South Korea: Yeonggakaas Temple, 1995), pp. 38-50.

of *Amitābha* Buddha, and the *Sukhāvātī* in the whole universe. This brings us to the second aspect of Pure Land practice – the spirit of Pure Land practice. Not forgetting the *sammuti*, practitioners is to start and constantly carry on their practice from the non-duality and *trikaya* view of *Mahāyāna* teaching. This brings us to the third aspect of Pure Land practice – Pure Land = Pure Mind – the Buddha potential in everyone, hence each individual practitioner while striving to purify own mind in *sammuti* aims for the ultimate Pure Mind. This according to the *Bodhisattva* ideal is the non-discriminatory aspect of the *Bodhisattva* path the practitioners engaged in either through transference of merits in *Buddhanussati* – *Amitābha* name recitation or together with active participation in engaged Buddhism in creating a Pure Land on earth. This is where the *sammuti* aspect of individual and social Pure Land is often taken as the most important, forgetting the three-fold aspects discussed above.

If one focuses on the response to *Amitābha*'s 18<sup>th</sup> Vow from the *sammuti* aspects, one is caught in the wrong view of *asmi manassa* in his or her Buddhist path in which he or she sees a real self and the Pure Land where he or she aims for at death. The *paramatha* of no ultimate self whether the Buddha, the practitioner or the society which makes up of each individual is overlooked. Pure Land teaching, a later development of the *Mahāyāna* teaching depends on its *trikaya* teachings – manifested aspects *nirmanakaya* (*sammuti*), *dharmakaya*, the unmanifested, the ultimate truth and the *sambhogakaya*, the *Sukhāvātī* and *Amitābha* Buddha living in his created realm. Ultimately the individual Pure Land and Society Pure Land is interdependent upon *sammuti* view but the *paramatha* aspect must not be forgotten.

In conclusion, it refers the ultimate aspect that encompasses the *trikaya* teaching of all *Mahāyāna* schools and not forgetting the non-duality aspect of *sammuti*=*paramattha* and vice versa due to the 'sunyata or dependent co-arising aspects of all mental and physical phenomena in the whole universe.

## 2. 3 Pure Land in Various Sūtras

The Pure Land teaching is a later development of the *Mahāyāna* tradition. Like other schools of the tradition, there will be underlying *Mahāyāna* thought

especially the Indra's Net <sup>12</sup>of interconnectedness, *Bodhisattva* ideal and its ten stages of *Bodhisattva* path (extension of the Noble Eightfold Path, and perfection of *paramis*) plus the 'sunyata teaching of *Nagarjuna*. These common *Mahāyāna* thought are from the *Avatamsaka*<sup>13</sup>, *Lotus Sūtra*, *Prajñāpāramitāhṛdaya Sūtra* <sup>14</sup>(*Heart Sūtra*) and the *Vajracchedikā Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra*<sup>15</sup> (*Diamond Sūtra*) in addition to the main *Sūtra* of the school.

On the outset, if we take the literal meanings in the *sūtras*, it would appear that they all talk about unshaken faith and devotion to the *Amitābha* Buddha, single-minded pursuit of his name recitation and vow for rebirth with a total believe in the existence of a Pure Land, *Sukhāvatī*. And that there is a focus of the Pure Land as a place of ultimate bliss with its easy practice by dependence upon other power – the assistance of *Amitābha* Buddha, his accompanying *Bodhisattvas* - the *Avoloketisvara* and *Samanthabhadra* with mere *Amitābha Buddhanussati*. However, as stated above, the other key teachings and *Mahāyāna* thought especially in the *Bodhisattva* path which is actually the *Sīla samādhi paññā* formula with its underlying perfection of *paramis* both *sammuti* and *paramattha* must be taken into especially the non-duality and discriminatory conception of *sammuti-paramattha* in *Mahāyāna* thought.

One cannot say what the Pure Land is exactly except that it is a complex development of later *Mahāyāna* thought that started from India but flourished in China due to its philosophical, societal, cultural interactions and reinterpretations of Buddha Dhamma. Perhaps one can say that the underlying theory is *Bodhisattva* ideal but with later day innovations for the general public in contemporary Buddhism.

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<sup>12</sup> "Indra's net". Wikipedia, Retrieved, on 9 March 2018, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indra%27s\\_net](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indra%27s_net).

<sup>13</sup> Thich Thien Tam (tr.), **Pure –Land Zen Zen Pure – Land**, (Peang: The Penang Buddhist Association), p.236.

<sup>14</sup> Pomnyum Sunim, **Commentary on the Heart Sutra** , (Korean version), (South Korea: Jungto Publishing, 1997), pp. 32-44.

<sup>15</sup> Pomnyum Sunim, **Commentaries I and II on the Diamond Sutra**, (Korean version), (South Korea: Jungto Publishing, 1991), pp. 95 -105.

### 2.3.1 Longer Sukhāvati-Vyuha Sūtra

The Longer *Sūkhavatī-Vyuha Sūtra*<sup>16</sup> or the *Amitāyur Sūtra* in Sanskrit describes its origin, its great beauty and conducive environment, residents, the conditions for rebirth and method of practice. This *sūtra* is dedicated exclusively to *Amitābha* Buddha, the direct realization of the Pure Land, the vows which created the Pure Land and rebirth in it. In many ways it is seen as an expansion of the Shorter *Amitābha Sūtra*. The principles of self –cultivation and hope or trust come together, which may also see as the combination of faith and practice. Additionally, the *sūtra* is a demonstration of the transference of merit on a vast scale and of the power of vows. A principle teaching of the Longer *Sukhāvati-Vyuha Sūtra*<sup>17</sup> is that powerful vows may change the external environment of the person who makes them if that person trusts the vows with a calm mind. This causes one to be transformed from one's former state, so it may be said that the mind which trusts a vow participates in that vow. The vow which are responsible for the creation of *Sukhāvati-* are the result of a *Bodhisattva*'s eons of effort. This effort resulted in an incredible storehouse of merit which is now available to sentient beings in order to help them attain *nirvāṇa*.

### 2.3.2 Amitābha Sūtra

The *sūtra* stated the condition for rebirth as above, in addition to faith and vow. There is an emphasis for avoidance of evils plus cultivation of merits with activities to cultivate *pāramitā*.

This Pure Land *sūtra*, like other *Mahāyāna sūtras* aim for the perfection of wisdom and compassion. Superior rebirths such as in the human realm and Buddha Lands are training grounds for perfection of wisdom and compassion. The *sūtra* strongly promotes confidence in *Amitābha Buddha* and to take rebirth in Pure Land yet it states.

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<sup>16</sup> Shinran's jodo monrui jusho & yoshifumi ueda (tr.), **Passage on the pure land way**, (Kyoto: Hongwanji International Center), p. 133.

<sup>17</sup> Hyeonbeop, **The Longer Sukhāvati-VyuhaSūtra**, (South Korea: Yeonggakaas Temple, 1995), p. 59.

The Smaller *Sukhāvātī Sūtra*<sup>18</sup> summarizes the larger one. It is chanted today still in *Mahāyāna* temples together with the (*prajñāpāramita-hṛdayam sūtra* (Heart *sūtra*) which teaches five *khandha* and *sunyata* which is *paṭiccasamuppāda*.

The *Amitābha Buddha* Name can be recited anywhere anytime either verbally or mentally depending on the venue and feasibility. As a result, there is a misunderstanding, misinterpretation or overlooking of the whole *sūtra* teachings.

This *sūtra* echoes the content of the previous minus the long account of its origin and detailed descriptions of the 48 vows. It emphasizes on the conducive environment unsurpassed in beauty and conduciveness. It is much shorter with its highlights of the Buddha Name Recitation, Rebirth, conditions for Rebirth and the threefold training of *Sīla samādhi paññā*.

### 2.3.3 Amitāyur Dhyāna Sūtra

*Amitāyu* is a Sanskrit word referring to the Buddha *Amitāyu/Amitābha* (Endless Life, Endless Light). *Dhyāna* means “meditation” or “meditative concentration.” *Buddhanusmrit* means “visualization or recollection of a Buddha.” The title of this *sūtra* in its original Chinese uses the term “Kuan” which means “recollection through visualization.” The Visualization *Sūtra* was written in the 4<sup>th</sup> century C.E. in Central Asia and was first translated into Chinese between the mid -4<sup>th</sup> and mid -5<sup>th</sup> C.E.

The Visualization *Sūtra* isn't as devotional in tone as the Longer or Shorter *Sūtra*. This *Sūtra* is actually a manual of *Buddhanusmrit* or “Buddha-visualization” which encourages one to have a vision of *Amitābha* Buddha in this life. In the Longer and Shorter *Sūtras*, the primary emphasis is rebirth based on recollection and vows; in the Visualization *Sūtra*, the Buddha vision and how to attain it is emphasized. This *Sūtra* was actually one of a series of visualization *Sūtras* dealing with various Buddha and *Bodhisattvas*, but it's generally accepted that it played the most central role in the emergence of Pure Land Buddhism as a major Buddhist school.

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<sup>18</sup> Hua Master, **A General Explanation of the Buddha Speaks of Amitabha Sūtra**, (California: the sino-America Buddhist association, 1974), p. vii.

This *Sūtra* the Meditation of *Amitāyus*, known informally as the Meditation *Sūtra* or the Contemplation *Sūtra*, is one of the three basic *Sūtras* of the Pure Land Faith. It relates the story of king *Ajatasatur* and his mother *Vaidehi*.<sup>19</sup> One day *Vaidehi*, who was in a state of continual anguish owing to the wicked practices of her son, invokes the help *Sakyamuni*. He comes to her, and assuage her anguish, shows her countless paradises in all directions and asks her to choose one. She chooses the *Sukhāvātī* paradise of *Amitāyus* in the west, and so *Sakyamunu* gave a detailed description of this paradise by means of 16types of visualization<sup>20</sup>.

Many Pure Land Masters of the past combined *Amitābha Buddha* Name Recitation with *Ānāpānasati* practice.

In conclusion, it refers the three principle *Sūtras* teach about *Amitābha* and his Pure Land of Bliss, called *Sukhāvātī* but the related *Sūtras*. The *sūtras* tated the condition for rebirth as above, in addition to faith and vow. There is an emphasis for avoidance of evils plus cultivation of merits with activities to cultivate *paramitā*.

## 2.4 Concluding Remarks

The principle belief is of a *Sukhāvātī* and rebirth in it through *Amitābha* name recitation, a later day innovation of *Buddhanussati* with strong faith and confidence. However, most practitioners focused mainly on *Amitābha* name recitation literally wanting to have rebirth in the Pure Land forgetting the three-fold training in the *Sūtras*. As a result, there is a misunderstanding, misinterpretation or overlooking of the whole *sūtra* teachings. The advice to avoid evil and do well with the *Bodhisattva Path* becomes less important. This results in a blind faith away from its original teachings. Pure Land teaching with its root in *Mahāyāna* must always be understood from *Mahāyāna Trikaya* teaching. Main *Mahāyāna* concepts of Interconnectedness, Dependent Co-arising = '*sunyata*, Pure/ Original Mind, Non-duality in practice and the *Bodhisattva Path* are also to be considered. The Pure Land

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<sup>19</sup> Pomnyum Sunim, *The Story of Amitayurdhyana Sutra*, (Korean version), (South Korea: Jungto Publishing, 2006), pp. 44-67.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid. pp. 125-191.

teaching is dynamic and adapts its practice through changing times and needs. The study shows that *Jungto* Society is a modern example of reinterpretation for Dependent Origination, Four Noble Truths, Eight Noble Path, *Tilakhan-a* and *Bodhisattva* path in *Mahāyāna*.

## Chapter III

### Buddhist Activities of Jungto Society in Korea

Under *Pomnyun Sunim* guidance, members aspire to embody Buddhist teachings, life examples of the Buddha and Bodhisattvas by making themselves happy, free and contributing to making this world a better place to live for everyone. A community based on Buddhist practice by committing ourselves to the life of a bodhisattva, we vow to live as free individuals without suffering and contribute to making the world around us a better place. The Jungto society dreams of Jungto (Pure Land), a world where individuals are happy, societies are peaceful, and nature is beautiful. The Jungto Society is a Buddhist Community Founded with the aim of solving problems prevalent in a modern society such as a greed, poverty, conflict, and environmental degradation based on the teaching of Buddha.

#### 3.1 Background of Jungto Society and Branches of Jungto Society around the World

*Pomnyun Sunim* is one of the most recognized and influential religious leaders in South Korea with active following. Every practitioner creates a happy society through active participation in social movements, protects our environment and the Earth by adopting a simple lifestyle. This vision is expressed in the Jungto society's motto "Open Mind, Good Friends, and Clean Earth."<sup>1</sup> The Jungto Society is a Buddhist community focused on solving problems prevalent in a modern society such as greed generated issues, poverty, conflict, and environment degradation, based on the teachings of Buddha. Key practice of *Mahāyāna* – the *Bodhisattva* ideal is also practiced with altruistic service to all both local and abroad.

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<sup>1</sup> "Avatamsaka sutra", Wikipedia, Retrieved on 12 April 2018, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Avatamsaka\\_Sutra](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Avatamsaka_Sutra).

### 3. 1.1 Background of Jungto Society

*Pomnyun Sunim*<sup>2</sup> is the founder and the guiding Dhamma teacher of Jungto Society. A volunteer run organization modeled after the *saṅgha*; it was created to address problems and crises of today's world based on a Buddhist world view that all beings are interconnected. Under *Pomnyun's* guidance, members aspire to embody Buddhist teachings, life examples of the Buddha and *Bodhisattvas* by making themselves happy, free and contributing to making this world a better place to live for everyone. Committed to the interconnectedness of all beings and the *Bodhisattva* ideal<sup>3</sup>. Jungto Society dreams of a Jungto, Pure Land where individuals are happy, societies are peaceful and nature is beautiful = Pure Land here and now on this earth. The founder leads by example, is actively engaged alongside the JTS branches for global humanitarian and environmental issues. Member organizations of the society are Join Together Society (JTS) 1993, an NGO which focuses on international relief, Good Friends, Peace Foundation, 1996 and Eco Buddha with headquarters in Seoul, Korea. Other branches both in Korea and abroad were then set up according to needs with local governmental blessings.

JTS is committed to eradicating famine, disease, and illiteracy in many Asian countries such as India, Sri Lanka, Philippines and North Korea. Nepal, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam are also included. This humanitarian aid organization is committed to working with people of developing countries in Asia to promote equality, rights to development and sustainable livelihood. It also focused on the 10.000 Day resolution<sup>4</sup> since 1993 so that every individual can be free and happy with others.

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<sup>2</sup> Pomnyum Sunim, **Awakening**, (Korean version), (South Korea: Jungto Publishing, 2015), pp. 162-163.

<sup>3</sup> Pomnyum Sunim, **The Story of Amitayurdhyana Sutra**, (Korean version), (South Korea: Jungto Publishing, 2006), pp. 77-106.

<sup>4</sup> "Jungto Hanja". JTS, Retrieved on 4 March 2018, [http://www. Jungto.org/vo-d/Jungto3\\_01.html](http://www.Jungto.org/vo-d/Jungto3_01.html).

Every practitioner creates a happy society through active participation in social movements, protects our environment and the Earth by adopting a simple lifestyle. This vision is expressed in the Jungto society's motto

“Open Mind, Good Friends, and Clean Earth.”<sup>5</sup> Instead of lecturing about profound Buddhist philosophy, he invites individuals in his audience to ask him questions about their concerns and doubts. He then engages them in a dialogue to help them gain insight into the true nature of their problems with his extraordinary gift for explaining the Buddha's teachings in simple layman terms.

The Jungto Society is confidence in the power of Buddha *Amitābha* which is confidence in compassion. Compassion and wisdom are qualities of all Buddhas.

#### **a) First Establishment of Jungto Society**

Founded in 1988 at Seoul with the aim to purify hearts, foster profound friendships and promote a clean environment. Various characteristics of different individuals come together and form a mosaic Buddha, creating a new civilization of love/*metta*, harmony, and peace is promoted. Key ideas of the Pure Land *Sūtras* are contained in the beliefs and practices of the Jungto practitioners as below:

If suffering is caused by social disorder, then social disorder must disappear for our suffering to end. And, in order for social disorder to disappear, individuals must control their desires<sup>6</sup>. Ultimately, balance and control of desires will lead to happiness. If we can view our world in its entirety, we will know how to live happier lives and realize why we keep falling into misfortune even when we are striving so hard to be happy.

With an emphasis on individual Buddhist practice which transforms people live, the Jungto Society has been promoting various movements such as ecological

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<sup>5</sup> “Jungto Society”. Retrieved on 6 March 2018, <https://www.Jungtosociety.org/>

<sup>6</sup> Pomnyum Sunim, **A Treatise for Young Buddhist Practitioners**, (Korean version), (South Korea: Jungto Publishing, 2008), pp. 17-21.

awareness campaigns; the eradication of famine, disease, and illiteracy<sup>7</sup>; advocacy of people and human rights; and the unification of the Korean Peninsula.

The Jungto Society has been working to create Buddhist communities that enable their members to view the problems people face today from a global perspective and to play leading roles in solving these problems.

### **b) Development of Jungto Society**

Development of Jungto Society can be seen from three aspects – geographical expansion, Dhamma dissemination and the founder’s growing global recognition with three awards the Ramon Magsaysay Award for Peace and International Understanding in 2002<sup>8</sup> and the POSCO TJ Park Community Development and Philanthropy Prize in 2011, Finally, in 2015, *Pomnyun Sunim* received *Kripasaran* Award from the Bengal Association at the 150th Birth Anniversary Celebration of Ven. *Mahasthavir Kripasaran* for his efforts in reviving Buddhism in India.

**Table 3.1 History:** Established Jungto society, Year: 1988

Local	Abroad
<p><b><u>Month</u></b></p> <p><b>January</b> - Founded Jungto Missionary Center in Hongje-dong, Seoul</p> <p><b>March</b> - Founded Korean Buddhist Society Education Center (former Eco Buddha)</p> <p><b>April</b> - Founded Korean Buddhist Society Research Institute (former</p>	<p><b>1992CE</b></p> <p><b>August</b> - 1<sup>st</sup> Dhamma Lecture Tour in the U.S.</p> <p><b>September</b> - 1<sup>st</sup> Retreat and Sharing</p> <p><b>10,000 Day Resolution</b></p> <p><b>1993CE</b></p> <p><b>March</b> - Started 10,000 day Resolution</p>

<sup>7</sup> “About us”. Jungto Society, Retrieved on 3 March 2018, <https://www.Jungto.society.org/about/>.

<sup>8</sup> “Awardee Pomnyun Sunim”. Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation, Retrieved on 9 March 2018, <http://rmaward.asia/?s=pomnyun>.

Peace Foundation)	(1 <sup>st</sup> 1,000 day Resolution)
<b>May</b> - Established Monthly Jungto (magazine)	<b>Established JTS</b>
<b>June</b> - Established Jungto Publication	<b>1994CE</b>
<b>Training and Retreats</b>	<b>January</b> - 1 <sup>st</sup> History tour to China
<b>1991</b>	<b>October</b> - Established JTS India
<b>January</b> - 1 <sup>st</sup> Pilgrimage to India	<b>Good Friends Eco Buddha</b>
<b>December</b> - 1 <sup>st</sup> Retreat of Awakening	<b>1996CE</b>
	<b>March</b> - 2 <sup>nd</sup> 1,000 day Resolution
	<b>December</b> - Founded Good Friends
	Founded Korean Buddhist
	Environmental Education
	Center (former Eco Buddha)

The Pure Mind-Good Friends and Clean Earth formula is further translated into daily living as advised for daily awareness and awakening with present moment focus of the *Ch'an* teaching throughout one's family, work-front, societal and global interactions.

Every practitioner should aim to create a happy society through active participation in social movements, protects our environment and the Earth by adopting a simple lifestyle. Another way to see the development of Jungto society is through the founder's audience growth and recognitions in Korea and abroad. His talks have become very popular over the years and it is not unusual to see an audience of 2,000 or more people at his talks in Korea. His "Hope" speaking tour from 2011 until 2014 was attended by more than 600,000 participants across 436 locations in Korea. In 2014, he went on a global speaking tour. He visited 106 cities around the world in 114 days and delivered 115 talks to more than 20,000 Koreans living overseas of these 115 talks were conducted in English for English-speaking audience.

*Pomnyun sunim's* world of wisdom can be accessed through his books, social media, YouTube, TV, and Radio. He has published more than 50 books since

1994. His latest book, “The Moment of Enlightenment.” Published in January 2015, became the #1 bestseller in Korea within two weeks of publication. He has over 1 million followers in Korean’s Kakao Talk, 100,000 daily download of his podcasts, and over 3 million views of his YouTube videos.

### **3.1.2 Branches of Jungto Society around the World**

They believe that those who are hungry should be fed, those who are ill should be treated and children should be educated.

The history of JTS begins in India in 1993, first with the street dalit children without a school in the marginalized villages near *Bodgaya*. Through village participation and local donations, outdoor classes began and a school building was created. This program has now grown to a full school complex with 600 students and 17 preschools built in around adjacent villages.

Afterwards, JTS soon started responding to the needs from other parts of the world, expanding its programs to the DPRK (1997)<sup>9</sup>, Afghanistan (2002) and Philippines (2003). In addition to its development works, JTS provided emergency relief services to disasters struck areas, the most recent being the Pakistan earthquake in 2005, Java earthquake in 2006, South Asia Tsunami (India & Sri Lanka) in 2004, Iran Earthquake in 2003 and the flood of North Korea in 2006.

In Korea, JTS runs campaigns and programs for the elders and disabled as well as solidarity programs with national NGOs. Affiliated with Jungto Society, it has national chapters in 9 cities in Korea as well as overseas chapters in North Korea (Rasun), USA and Germany.

The Join Together Society (JTS) International, with its headquartered in Seoul, Republic of Korea, consists of field program offices in India, Philippines, North Korea and overseas chapters in US and Germany. Since our beginning in 1993, they have been committed to working with people of developing countries in Asia to promote equality, rights to development and sustainable livelihood. Taking holistic

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<sup>9</sup> “North Korea”. JTS, Retrieved on 10 March 2018, <http://www.jtsint.org/index.php/our-works/north-korea/>.

approach to confronting poverty and development, our development programs focus on encouraging the community's initiatives and capability to bring changes by themselves.

#### **a) Asian Continent**

JTS is committed to eradicating famine, disease, and illiteracy in many Asian countries such as India<sup>10</sup>, Sri Lanka<sup>11</sup>, Philippines<sup>12</sup> and North Korea<sup>13</sup>. Nepal<sup>14</sup>, Cambodia<sup>15</sup>, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam are also included. This humanitarian aid organization is committed to working with people of developing countries in Asia to promote equality, rights to development and sustainable livelihood. It also focused on the 10.000 Day resolution since 1993 so that every individual can be free and happy.

Their mission is to bring hope, empowerment and self-reliance to the member of the under privileged community, to work with the community members themselves to bring not only the changes but also the direction of the changes. They Asians will solve the tragedies of property and sickness in Asia by us.

#### **b) European Continent**

Korea and overseas chapters are found in US and Germany mainly. Since their beginning in 1993, they have been committed to working with people of developing countries in Asia to promote equality, rights to development and sustainable livelihood. Taking holistic approach to confronting poverty and

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<sup>10</sup>“India”. JTC, Retrieved on 4 March 2018, <http://www.jtsamerica.org/?cat=7>.

<sup>11</sup> “Emergency Flood Relief in Sri Lanka”. JTS, Retrieved on 4 March 2018. <http://www.jtsamerica.org/?p=1179>.

<sup>12</sup>“Philippines”. JTS, Retrieved on 4 March 2018, <http://www.jtsamerica.org/?cat=8>.

<sup>13</sup> “North Korea”. JTS America, Retrieved on 12 March 2018, <http://www.jtsamerica.org/?cat=10>

<sup>14</sup>“Nepal”. Earthquake Campaign with JTS “. Retrieved on 4 March 2018, JTC, <http://www.jtsamerica.org/?p=433>.

<sup>15</sup>“JTS”. Retrieved on 4 March 2018, <http://www.jtsint.org/index.php/2012/08/to-be-able-to-do-with-someone-from-cambodia/>.

development, all development programs focus on encouraging the community's initiatives and capability to bring changes by themselves.<sup>16</sup>

Examples of More Gatherings in Europe to Rally for Peace in Korea recently in show of support, in addition to the first gathering in Munich, Germany, more rallies were planned for subsequent December weekends in the three following cities in Europe:

**Berlin** – 14:00 Brandenburg Gate, Pariser Platz

**Paris** – 14:00 Champ de Mars, Mur de la Paix

**London** – 14:30 Trafalgar Square, North Terrace

From August 26, 2014 to December 18, 2014, *Pomnyun Sunim* toured Americas, Asia and Europe, holding 115 'Dhamma Q & A'<sup>17</sup> in 111 locations. During 'Dhamma Q & A' Princeton University, a student wanted to know how Buddhist teachings can help with environmental issues. He then taught about Buddhist values for sustained development.<sup>18</sup>

The above is the development of Jungto Society through its Peace Foundation activities. Other humanitarian efforts include those of Join Together Society, Eco Buddha previously explained through their various branches as below: - München, Germany, Berlin, Germany, Frankfurt and Main, Germany, Hamburg, Germany, UK, Strasburg, France, Paris, France, and Switzerland.

The Pure Mind-Good Friends and Clean Earth formula is further translated into daily living as advised for daily awareness and awakening with present moment focus of the Ch'an teaching throughout one's family, work-front, societal and global interactions.

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<sup>16</sup>“Jungto Zürich.” JTS, Retrieved on 4 March 2018, <https://Jungtozurich.org/>

<sup>17</sup> “Dharma Talk”. Jungto Society, Retrieved on 3 March 2018, <https://www.jungto-society.org/dharma/>.

<sup>18</sup> “We Are Interconnected Beings”. Huffpost, Retrieved on 14 March 2018, [https://www.huffingtonpost.com/venerable-pomnyun/we-are-interconnected-beings\\_b\\_8579002.html](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/venerable-pomnyun/we-are-interconnected-beings_b_8579002.html).

### c) United States Continent

JTS in America, as its other global counterparts, is a society where warmhearted people who want to help the people in difficult situation join us, donate what they have and work together regardless of their race, religion, nationality, sex, thought and ideology.

#### Goal of JTS, America

They want to share what we have with people who suffer from poverty, discrimination, illiteracy, starvation and sickness to put our heart for philanthropy into practice. They have worked in the third world such as India to eradicate starvation, diseases and illiteracy. They have also supplied foods for the children in the North Korea<sup>19</sup>. They want to build a human community where people help one another.

The New Jersey, Seattle, Washington and Florida branches are especially active in the fund raising and relief activities of JTS for third world needs. They focus on Yard Sales, Street Fund Raising, Volunteer service and Urgent Relief all over the globe.<sup>20</sup>

In conclusion, it refers a volunteer run organization modeled after the *sangha*; it was created to address problems and crises of today's world based on a Buddhist world view that all beings are interconnected. Under *Pomnyun Sunim's* guidance, members aspire to embody Buddhist teachings, life examples of the Buddha and *Bodhisattvas* by making themselves happy, free and contributing to making this world a better place to live for everyone. Committed to the interconnectedness of all beings and the *Bodhisattva* ideal.

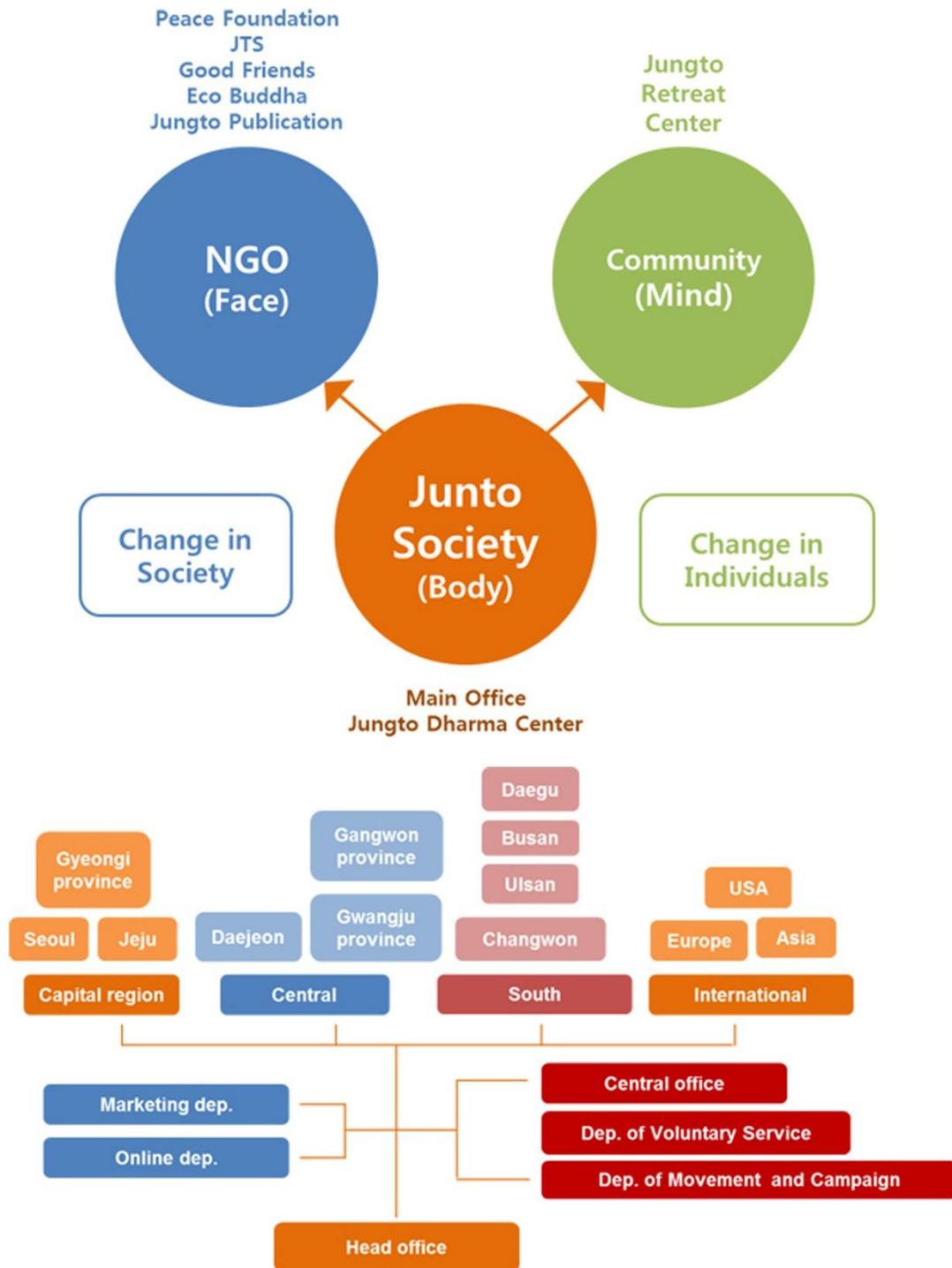
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<sup>19</sup> "North Korea Today". Good Friends, Retrieved on 10 March 2018, <http://goodfriendsusa.blogspot.my/>.

<sup>20</sup> "JTS". JTS, Retrieved on 10 March 2018, <http://www.jtsint.org/>.

Chart-3.2

Organization of Junto Society



## 3.2 Jungto's Manual and way of Practice

They try to keep their mind pure by sincerely doing the prescribed practices of chanting *Amitābha* name, 108 bows etc. They are more aware of daily investigation of the Dhamma, checking their wishes and wants, feelings and emotions in their daily interactions. Jungto members manifest joy, happiness and close community life with political awareness and global outlook. They appear more spirituality minded and civic conscious than Jungto practitioners undertake vows to live in the following way:<sup>21</sup>

Thus, they pursue the path we can live together in happiness. Just as a variety of flowers form a flower garden, we believe that harmony and balance can be achieved through the diversity of characteristics among individuals.

### 3.2.1 Jungto Prayer Retreat Manual

In traditional *bodhisattva* teachings, practitioners are required to set forth the *Bodhi* Mind: to pursue the *Bodhisattva* Path, and to deliver all sentient beings<sup>22</sup>. Practitioners must diligently practice all kinds of virtues in order to benefit themselves by benefiting others. They look to the teachings of the Buddha to find the answers to these crises. Their perspective on the world is based upon the Law of Interdependence.

The practice of daily prayer prevents neglect and maintains our dedication. Jungto retreat strictly follows manuals. Jungto people join consistently and practice. Many changes and more joyful individual practice and social activities involvement are reported. They abstractly understand about interdependent origination, three characteristics and the *Bodhisattva* path. During the retreat, their experience makes them hopeful, believe and confidence with practice power.

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<sup>21</sup> "People of Jungto". Jungto Society, Retrieved on 10 March 2018, <https://www.jungtosociety.org/people/>.

<sup>22</sup> Pomnyum Sunim, **A Treatise for Young Buddhist Practitioners**, (Korean version), (South Korea: Jungto Publishing, 2008), pp. 135 -144.

Practice is not just to chant or meditate, it is the effort to be mindful of Buddhist principles in their interactions internally – feelings and thoughts, their impermanence and change thus non-self-characteristic to reduce self-conception and change self-interests and self-benefit motivations.

**a) Jungto Prayer Retreat Individual Manual<sup>23</sup>**

1. Vows to the Threefold Refuges
2. Words for Practice
3. Repentance
4. 108 prostrations
5. Meditation
6. The Vows of Jungto Practitioners
7. Ten Guides Along the Path (*Bowang sammaeron*)
8. The Four Great Vow
9. Keep the Personal Record on own Practice
10. *Alms* giving (More than a dollar a day)
11. Good deeds (one good deed a day)

**b) Jungto Prayer Retreat Manual**

Jungto Retreat Center has developed and run all kinds of retreat programs to give participants the awakening and experience of enlightenment. It holds Awakening Retreat, Mind-Sharing Retreat, Meditation Practice, 100-Day Retreat, etc. Furthermore, lay practitioners live together to form an eco-friendly retreat community, where people can be always awake, watching their own mind, being good friends to each other, and living harmoniously with nature.

Jungto School of Buddhism<sup>24</sup>: A general education institution to learn about Junnto's ideology, cultivation of mind and practice. Social Activities environment, the unification, welfare, propagation of Buddhism.

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<sup>23</sup> Jungto Society Foundation, **Jungto Practitioner's Booklet**, (Korean version), (South Korea: Jungto Publishing 2008), pp. 88-97.

Opening the mind to live a happy life<sup>25</sup>: The Jungto Retreat Center offers programs for self-awakening retreat program. It is a community that practice mindfulness as good friends an ecological, community living in harmony with nature, and a self-reliant, community for organic farming that values the earth and living beings.

Retreat of Awakening<sup>26</sup>: A cultivation of mind program that helps you become a free and happy person without suffering by carefully examining oneself and seeing the simple truth, using the principle of *Hwadu-Seon* tradition.

*Pomnyun Sunim* reinterprets prayer as letting go – letting go of the self-notion and own desires and self-interests. Jungto members are always advised to be practitioners – putting efforts to practice Buddhist principles in daily life and not mere prayer and hoping for things to happen.

Prayer as such is of self-interest without right view and right intention (right thought) – people pray because they are hopeful or unhappy about natural happenings in life, they want their desires to be fulfilled.

### 3.2.2 *Pomnyun Sunim's Dhamma Q&A*

*Pomnyun Sunim* is also well known for his unique ways of engaging audiences in live Dhamma Q&A<sup>27</sup>. His talks occur in public places like community centers, libraries, universities and churches and are free of charge. This way, people from all walks of life and from different ages and religious backgrounds can easily come. He is also freer to use everyday language to engage with the audience than he would be in traditional Buddhist temple settings. Responding to a variety of questions that people ask, *Pomnyun Sunim* shows how we can apply the insights and wisdom of

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<sup>24</sup>“Jungto School of Buddhism”. Retrieved on 7 March 2018 [https:// edu.Jungto.org/](https://edu.Jungto.org/).

<sup>25</sup> “Retreat Center”. Retrieved on 7 March 2018, [http://www.Jungto.org/training/mungyeonglife\\_49days.html](http://www.Jungto.org/training/mungyeonglife_49days.html).

<sup>26</sup> “Retreat Center”. Retrieved on 7 March 2018, [http://www.Jungto.org/training/training2\\_01.html](http://www.Jungto.org/training/training2_01.html)

<sup>27</sup>“Dharma Talk”. Jungto Society, Retrieved on 3 March 2018, <https://www.Jungtosociety.org/dharma/>.

Buddhist teaching in tackling issues in our everyday lives, such as feelings of stress, anxiety or sadness, as well as social issues.

Its popular appeal is learned by the following reasons. First of all, he visits the audience himself for the lecture, wherever that maybe. Secondly, ‘Dhamma Q&A’ allows the audience to actively participate and has a healing effect. Thirdly, it satisfies a wide range of public preferences by proactive application of the multi-media. Fourth, it’s humorous and practical which entertains the audience. Fifth, he delivers the teachings in a clear way, through illustrations and metaphors. Finally, it’s main theme ‘happiness’ is non-religious and universal, ‘Dhamma Q&A’ seems to have successes on gaining popularity due to interactions of these factors. ‘Dhamma Q&A’ task is set for direction of outcome and based on popular appeal. There is not much explanation of *Dharma* but the its principles are given through life examples and wholesome mental attitudes such as to be contented, not to complain, if one chooses complaining over happiness, one should be prepared for its consequences – more misery. Likewise, positivity promotes more positivity and happiness is highlighted without the mention of the profound *kamma* concept or dependent co-arising.

His recorded ‘Dhamma Q&A’ on YouTube<sup>28</sup> and podcasts have also healed and inspired people around the world.<sup>29</sup>

It is whether this direction can act as a driving force for creating happiness amongst the public, and function as a power to lead the changes in society.

### **3.2.3 Jungto Practitioners Live in the Following Way**

Jungto practitioners are to read, reflect and record their conduct according to the manuals they vow to follow as below.

Jungto practitioner lives in the following way:

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<sup>28</sup>“Jungto TV”. JTS, Retrieved on 6 March 2018, <http://www.Jungto.org-tv/answer.html>.

1. We see everything is interdependent based on the realization that everything in this world's interdependent, we seek to live in harmony with all beings and be happy together.
2. We pursue a harmony of work and practice we seek to bring social changes through the power of individual practice of self-reflection that transforms our lives. Jungto practitioners pray and make a vow each day to cultivate open mind, become good friends with all beings, and live harmoniously with the nature to keep our planet Earth clean.
3. We actively participate in volunteer work we do not expect compensation for the work do for ourselves. Today, around 300 full-time volunteers are working for Jungto Society. Since everything we do to make this world "Jungto" is done for our own benefit, we are happy to do various kinds of volunteer work without expecting anything in return. Volunteering is an act of love and the way one can play a leading role in this world.
4. We do Ten –Thousand –Day Practice<sup>30</sup>. Jungto society is doing Ten –Thousand –Day Jungto practitioner Movement with the goal of making this world "Jungto." When we do 100-day practice, you can realize your true –self. (instill positive mental habits, aware of negativity as reflections are needed for the practice). When we do 1.000-day practice, we can change ourself and our karma. When we do 10.000-day practice we can change the world we are living in. Jungto practitioners vow to change themselves as well as the world they live in.
5. We promote Jungto practitioner (Jungto *HaengJa*) Movement<sup>31</sup>. We are creating communities where no discrimination and isolation exist. Anyone who seeks to change the society through individual practice can become a Jungto practitioner. Jungto practitioners are resolved to make their own

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<sup>30</sup>“Thousand –Day Jungto practitioner Movement”. JTS, Retrieved on 5 March, [http://www.Jungto.org/vod/Jungto3\\_01.html](http://www.Jungto.org/vod/Jungto3_01.html)

<sup>31</sup>“Jugto HaengJa”. JTS, on 5March 2018,<http://www.Jungto.org/vod/ budd4.html>.

destiny and change the world through Buddhist practice, volunteer work, and donations.

If suffering is caused by social disorder, then social disorder must disappear for our suffering to end. And, in order for social disorder to disappear, individuals must control their desires. Ultimately, moderation and control of desires will lead to happiness.

In conclusion, it refers Buddhists especially the misinformed and those who have misunderstood the Pure Land (*Sukhāvatī*) teaching, would often ‘pray’ instead of ‘practice’. According to Jungto founder, prayer is letting go as one always pray with ingrained self-interest actually.

Prayer as such is of self-interest without right view and right intention (right thought) – people pray because they are hopeful or unhappy about natural happenings in life, they want their desires to be fulfilled.

They are to be practitioners – practitioners are defined as ones who would investigate the Buddhist principles – interdependence, *tilakkhana*, four noble truths especially in life and will live mindful of own conceptions and perspectives which bring about *dukkha* – both physical and mental in life, not only for oneself but conditions and causes the same for others, too as they are all interconnected beings.

### **3.3 Buddhist Activities of Jungto Society**

A community based on Buddhist practice by committing their selves to the life of a *bodhisattva*, they vow to live as free individuals without suffering and contribute to making the world around us a better place. The Jungto Society is a Buddhist Community Founded with the aim of solving problems prevalent in a modern society such as a greed, poverty, conflict, and environmental degradation based on the teaching of Buddha. The Jungto society has been working to create Buddhist communities that enable their members to view the problems people face today from a global perspective and to play leading roles in solving these problems. As of November 2013, the Jungto society has 59 regional chapters in South Korea and 20 overseas chapter including 12 in the United States. Jungto Societies offer gatherings for Buddhist Ceremonies, *Pomnyun Sunim’s* Dhamma talks, and other

Jungto Buddhist programs. These societies also actively promote environmental protection and the welfare of those in need, including starving North Koreans and refugees.

### 3.3.1 JTS –Join Together Society

International relief organization JTS <sup>32</sup>is committed to eradicating famine, disease, and illiteracy in many Asian countries such as India<sup>33</sup>, Philippines<sup>34</sup>, Sri Lanka<sup>35</sup>, and North Korea<sup>36</sup>. JTS is planning to expand its activities to other Asian countries including Nepal, Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, and Myanmar.

JTS mean: JTS cultivates hope in the midst of human tragedies. JTS is a society where warm hearted people who want to help the people in difficult situation join their, donate what they have and work together regardless of their race, religion, nationality, sex, thought and ideology.

Motto of JTS: The hungry should be fed. The sick should be treated. Children should be educated in a timely manner.

Goal of JTS: They want to share what they have with people who suffer from poverty, discrimination, illiteracy, starvation and sickness to put our heart for compassion into practice. They have worked in the third world such as India to eradicate starvation, disease and illiteracy. They have also supplied foods for the children in to North Korea. They want to build a human community where people help one another.

JTS has provided education, medical services and village development for 12.000 untouchables who live in *Dongheswari* since 1993. JTS has also tried to open

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<sup>32</sup> “JTS”. Action, Retrieved on 11 March 2018, [www.jtsamerica.org](http://www.jtsamerica.org).

<sup>33</sup> “India”. JTC, Retrieved on 4 March 2018, <http://www.jtsamerica.org/?cat=7>.

<sup>34</sup> “Philippines”. JTS, Retrieved on 4 March 2018, <http://www.jtsamerica.org/?cat=8>.

<sup>35</sup> “Emergency Flood Relief in Sri Lanka”. JTS, Retrieved on 4 March 2018. <http://www.jtsamerica.org/?p=1179>.

<sup>36</sup> “North Korea”. JTS, Retrieved on 9 March 2018, <http://www.Jtsamerica.org-/?cat=10>.

a way of harmony and cooperation between two Koreans by providing foods to children in North Korea and supporting the agriculture of North Korea.

JTS was approved as a corporation on August 1996 by Ministry of Health and Welfare. *Pomnyun Sunim*, the director of JTS, received Ramon Magsaysay award in the areas of peace and understanding on July 2002. JTS has provided educational support for Mindanao area in the Philippines to bring peace there since 2003. It obtained special status from ECOSOC on January 2007 and has provided relief activities for children in Cambodia since 2009 by establishing schools there. When there are calamities in the world, JTS dispatches its member to the area for urgent relief activities. It provided urgent relief activities when there was flood damage in Orissa province, India in 1999. It positively helped people in Mongolia, Ethiopia, Afghanistan, Iran, North Korea, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, the Philippines and Indonesia when these countries got damage from earthquake or flood. It provided urgent relief activities for people in Haiti when they suffered from great earthquake in 2010.

Currently JTS helps people in India, North Korea the Philippines, Cambodia, Indonesia and Sri Lanka with motto: We Asians will solve the tragedies of property and sickness in Asia by us. It will expand its development and relief activities to other countries as Nepal, Mongolia, Laos, Vietnam, and Myanmar.

The Jungto Society has been working to create Buddhist communities that enable their members to view the problems people face today from a global perspective and to play leading roles in solving these problems.

### **3.3.2 Good Friends**

In August 1996, *Pomnyun Sunim*, a Buddhist monk from South Korea, was cruising down the Yalu River between China and North Korea when he saw a boy squatting alone at the North Korean edge of the water. The boy was in rags, his thin face covered in dirt.

*Pomnyun Sunim* shouted to him, but the boy did not respond. *Pomnyun Sunim's* Chinese companion explained that North Korean children were instructed never to beg from foreigners. And when *Pomnyun Sunim* asked if the boat could be

steered closer to the child to bring help, he was reminded that they could not enter North Korean territory.

“Never before had I realized the meaning of a border so painfully until that day,” said *Pomnyun Sunim*, “Never before had I felt so acutely that Korea is a divided nation.” Says *Pomnyun Sunim*.

The encounter led him to establish one of the first relief campaigns for North Korean refugees and to take on an unlikely role for a Buddhist monk. Today, rather than leading a secluded life of quiet contemplation, he is a well-known commentator on North Korea, his online newsletter an important source of information smuggled out of the isolated country.

In 1999, the Buddhist Sharing Movement changed its name to Good Friends,<sup>37</sup> and they now know it as Good Friends, an organization that focuses on activities helping North Korean Refugees; defending their human rights, and promotion of peace on the Korean Peninsula. In recognition for his work, *Pomnyun Sunim* was awarded the Ramon Magsaysay Medal for Peace and International Understanding in 2002. Good Friends—An International NGO for peace, human rights, and Refugees. Good Friends provides relief works for international refugees to become all lives friends peace movement to fundamentally resolve disagreements and human beings face, and human rights movement to protect human rights. Good Friends has been providing information on food shortages in North Korea, raising funds for humanitarian assistance, dispatching activities to national border areas between China and DPRK and having them investigate local situations, and publishing reports on food shortages in North Korea. Currently, Good Friends is making efforts to improve humanitarian and human rights situation of North Korea people and to inform this situation to the international community by:

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<sup>37</sup> “North Korea Today”. Retrieved on 4 March 2018 <http://goodfriendsusa.blogspot.my/>.

Collecting information on food shortages, public health conditions, education, the basic necessities situations and inform humanitarian organizations so that can support North Korea<sup>38</sup> people effectively.

- 1) Reporting the current human right situation in North Korea where rights duly protected by law are being violated; assessing incidents of human rights violations in the process of arrest, punishment, and informing international communities; and requesting that the North Korea Government act to improve human right.
- 2) Investigating the current situations of North Korea refugees in China, and providing protections and aid for them and their children in particular.

*Pomnyun Sunim* says “My aim is neither to support nor to oppose North Korea. I am just drawing attention to the humanitarian crisis.”

### **3.3.3 Peace Foundation**

The peace Foundation<sup>39</sup> is a private research institute established in 2004 to bring permanent peace, stability, and Unification to the Korean peninsula. The Peace Foundation maintains its independent and neutral stance, free from association with any particular ideology, doctrine, or political party. It seeks to contribute to a peaceful world by garnering national consent and promoting open discussion on various social and political issues in the society.

Through Jungto Society, the public learn about practicing *Bodhisattva* path and creating Pure Land here and now on this earth. In addition to the normal areas of service in welfare and education, people are urged to be active and be involved in politics – proposing unification of North and South Korea, propagation of peace and interfaith interactions, human rights, voting rights etc. Jungto strongly promotes eco-balance, eco friendliness and preservation. Youth are urged to be far-sighted and not

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<sup>38</sup> “N.korea”. JTS America, Retrieved on 3 14 2018, <http://www.jtsamerica.org/?cat=10>

<sup>39</sup> “The peace foundation”. JTS, Retrieved on 9 March 2018, <http://www.peacefoundation.or.kr/wpages/>.

to just chase after short-term self-interests forgetting the fact of interconnectedness and dependent co-arising facts of life. The public are taught to guard against wants and not necessities and not to harm Mother Nature.

*Pomnyun Sunim* appealed to the world and South Korean government to put politics aside and help North Korea, and encouraged South Koreans to give liberally to their starving neighbors.

### 3.3.4 Eco Buddha

In 1999 Found Eco Buddha<sup>40</sup>, an environmental organization aimed increasing public ecological awareness based on Buddha's teachings of respecting the life.

They seek to live in harmony with nature. Eco Buddha campaigns<sup>41</sup> for ecological awareness and promote living a simple life (i.e. eating less, consume less, and being more diligent)

Based on the Buddha's teaching to respect all living beings. Eco Buddha established new environmental ethics, educates people from all walks of life about the importance of natural environment, and puts ecological life styles into practice in the everyday life.

Eco Buddha organizes Ecology Camps and promotes Zero-Waste Campaign<sup>42</sup>, encouraging people to empty their plates at every meal and avoid using disposable products through clean plate campaign.

Tying Buddhist principles for daily practice. Guiding the society members and sympathizers to put them into their daily life. The society's contribution as a whole include application of Buddhist principles into their life, building a simplified

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<sup>40</sup> "Eco Buddha". JTS, Retrieved on 9 March 2018, <http://www.ecobuddha.org/>.

<sup>41</sup> "Eco activities". JTS, Retrieved on 11 March 2018, [http://www.Jungto.org-activity/activity1\\_01.html](http://www.Jungto.org-activity/activity1_01.html).

<sup>42</sup> "Zero-Waste". JTS, Retrieved on 11 March 2018, [http://www.Jungto.org/activity-activity1\\_03.html](http://www.Jungto.org/activity-activity1_03.html)

and globalized community of like-minded practitioners, social change, global relief, peace research and preservation, volunteer service, environmental preservation.

Jungto members world-wide and also through its Eco Buddha campaign for less consumption, green issues and leading of simple life actively while they practice these ideals in their daily life. This positive change came about with changed perception of interconnectedness of all beings, including the Mother Nature which sustains us. Jungto members and the general public both local and globally are also often educated about sustained development in the Buddhist perspectives, for example in Holistic Sustained Development.

In conclusion, it refers all activities of Jungto JTS, Good Friends, Peaceful Earth and Eco Buddhism have the common aim in mind – actively practicing Buddhist principles for the welfare and good of all sentient beings, to meet contemporary social needs and develop the practitioners’ spiritual capacity onwards onto ultimate happiness – enlightenment.

### **3.4 Concluding Remarks**

Under *Pomnyun Sunim’s* guidance, members aspire to embody Buddhist teachings, life examples of the Buddha and *Bodhisattvas* by making themselves happy, free and contributing to making this world a better place to live for everyone. Committed to the interconnectedness of all beings and the *Bodhisattva* ideal.

He has been advocating a new paradigm of civilization movement in which everyone becomes happy through practice. Every practitioner creates a happy society through active participation in social movements, protects our environment and the Earth by adopting a simple lifestyle.

They have been committed to working with people of developing countries in Asia to promote equality, rights to development and sustainable livelihood. Taking holistic approach to confronting poverty and development, their development programs focus on encouraging the community’s initiatives and capability to bring changes by themselves. Their mission is to bring hope, empowerment and self-reliance to the member of the under privileged community, to work with the community members themselves to bring not only the changes but also the direction

of the changes. They Asians will solve the tragedies of property and sickness in Asia by their.

## **Chapter IV**

### **Analysis on the Pure Land Concept *Mahāyāna* Buddhism Applied by Jungto Society**

Concept of Pure Land in Jungto can be analyzed by its founder *Pomnyun Sunim*'s skillful teachings of the Dhamma, the society's philosophy, motto and activities carried out. All these are in line with the basic Buddhist teachings of *tilakkhana*, *paṭiccasamuppāda*, Eight-fold Path, Four Noble Truths etc. It can perhaps be said that the Pure Land concept in Jungto Society is the advice to first change the selfish perceptions and perspectives, then experience the interconnectedness of all in the society with engaged Buddhist practices. Pure Land is not an ultimately existing place either here or anywhere else whether in the future or even now but a call for mindful living within the *Bodhisattva* ideal of *Mahāyāna* conceptions of two truths – the *sammuti* and *paramatha* which is no difference from one another. They depend on each other for us to purify our mind and walk the Buddhist path.

#### **4.1 Application on Pure Land Concept by Jungto Society**

In Jungto Society, the focus is on practical applications of Buddhist principles according to their threefold conceptions of Pure Land - The first is called other-world Pure Land.<sup>1</sup> This refers to the much-described manifested aspect in the Larger *Amitāyus Sūtra*. The other-world exists in a different spiral dimension but in the same time dimension as the one in which they live.

The second category of Pure Land is the Future – world pure Land<sup>2</sup>, they do not need to try to find where Pure Land is because the world where they live right

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<sup>1</sup>Pomnyum Sunim, **The Story of Amitayurdhyana Sutra**, (Korean version), (South Korea: Jungto Publishing, 2006), pp. 8 -9.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

now can become a Pure Land of the future.<sup>3</sup> Once *Maitreya* (Future Buddha) descends to this world from *Tusita* Heaven.

The third is Within –Mind Pure Land<sup>4</sup>. Pure Land does not exist in some other place or in the future. When anguish disappears from their minds, the current world in which they live become a beautiful place as it is. When their minds are pure, the world is clean and pure. No single one among Other-World, Future-World, or Within-Mind Pure Land can be said to be absolute because all three of the Pure Lands exist in their manifested aspects in this world.

#### 4.1.1 Ultimate Buddhism

With a conception of a ‘Pure Land’ in three dimensions but not in ultimate reality, *Pomnyun Sunim* further proposes – Ultimate Buddhism, easy Buddhism and everyday Buddhism. In an attempt to correct the contemporary practices and views in Korean society such as prayers for blessings, for longevity and for the deceased etc. which “cannot fundamentally alleviate the suffering in their lives. To root out their suffering, they need to return to the basic teachings of the Buddha and recover the true faith of Buddhism, the truth in Buddhism, all Buddhists should return to the basic teachings of the Buddha, this is ultimate Buddhism.”<sup>5</sup>

Basically, ‘truth’ in Buddhism refers to the core teachings of the historical Buddha.<sup>6</sup> All Buddhist teachings lead to one thing in their *sammuti* life – peace of mind, peace between peoples, and also how to live a uncertain life conducive to our mental purification towards the ultimate truth – *nirodha* in early Buddhism or

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid, pp. 8-11.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, pp. 11-13.

<sup>5</sup> Pomnyun Sunim, **A Treatise for Young Buddhist Practitioners**, (Korean version), (South Korea: Jungto Publishing, 2008), pp. 32-39.

<sup>6</sup> “Shakyamuni Buddha”, Thought Co, Retrieved on 11 March 2018, <https://www.thoughtco.com/shakyamuni-buddha-449787>.

achieving *Bodhi*, enlightenment becoming a *sammāsambuddha*<sup>7</sup> in the *Bodhisattva* ideal of *Mahāyāna* Buddhism.

Ultimate Buddhism refers to getting rid of fixed notions and always seeing the truth of the Dhamma and not deviating from the fundamental teachings of the Buddha. Mental purification in all they do is highlighted. In other words, they practice the *Bodhisattva* path cultivating the six *pāramitās* but ultimately, they should not claim or owned that there is an ‘I’, ‘me’, ‘mine’ in either the practice or the ‘self’ involved.

The Jungto movement in Korea first seek to change perception - *sukha* is *dukkha* in disguise with life examples, *tanha* brings about *dukkha* and *sukha* through pleasures of life, feelings and emotions attached and chased after.

#### 4.1.2 Simplify Buddhism to Everyone

If they insist on the theoretic of the fundamental Buddhist principle such as non-self, non-form, and emptiness, Buddhism will come across as mysterious and too difficult to most people. In order to overcome this problem, Buddha taught with various methods according to the individual’s character. Therefore, fundamental Buddhism should begin by first solving the real problems of each person. This is “Simplify Buddhism to everyone.”<sup>8</sup>

All they need is the right intention to begin any form of spiritual practice, whether it is according to a certain school or teaching or simply bowing to the Buddha, chanting *Sūtras*, repentance, meditation, or other such practices. Any of these can form the basis of a daily practice. One can also visit a Buddhist temple or monastery to participate in pilgrimages, precept retreats, seminars, summer camps, short-term monastic retreats, or other such activities. Right view and right intention are most important in whatever one chooses to do.

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<sup>7</sup>“Sammāsambuddha” Encyclopedia. Com, Retrieved on 11. March 2018, <https://www.encyclopedia.com/religion/dictionaries-thesauruses-pictures-and-press-releases/samma-sambuddha>.

<sup>8</sup> Pomnyum Sunim, **A Treatise for Young Buddhist Practitioners**, (Korean version), (South Korea: Jungto Publishing, 2008), pp. 17-21.

The main purpose of spiritual practice is to develop one's power of will to persist. Even with things like offering incense, bowing to the Buddha, reading or chanting *Sūtras*, or meditation. Easy Buddhism does not mean *Amitābha Buddhanussati*, *Buddhanussati* or any other Buddha, it is the right view of the core teaching, non-discrimination, interconnectedness and interdependence of all in the society. It is the right intention to purify oneself, develop oneself according to whichever Buddhist practice one devotes oneself to towards enlightenment.

Some people may like to meditate, while others will benefit from reciting *Amitābha* Buddha's name. Chanting different *sūtras* will resonate with different people, too. We should be flexible in our practice and always respectful of others. Whatever, we do, it's the right view of the fundamentals in Buddhism and one's right intention that counts.

#### 4.1.3 Buddhism Based on Everyday Life

Buddhism based on Everyday Life<sup>9</sup> is to know the interconnectedness and interdependence of all without an ultimate 'I' and 'you'. We are only five *khandhas*<sup>10</sup>, mental and physical phenomena subject to causes and conditions. Remember the non-discrimination of the two truths. Keep a free, peaceful and pure mind in all they do. Be happy, cheerful and hopeful that they each create their own *kamma* and they are responsible for their destination.

Practice seeing the *trikaya* in their daily life, the more they see, the more they can change their perception and live a more mindful life every day in all that they think, say and do. The practice of daily prayer prevents neglect and maintains their dedication. Jungto retreat strictly follows manuals. Jungto people join consistently and practice. Many changes and more joyful individual practice and social activities involvement are reported. During the retreat, their experience makes them hopeful, believe and confidence with practice power.

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<sup>9</sup> Pomnyum Sunim, **Awakening**, (Korean version), (South Korea: Jungto Publishing, 2015), pp. 153-156.

<sup>10</sup> "Five Skhandhas", Thought Co, Retrieved on 11 March 2018, <https://www.thoughtco.com/the-skandhas-450192>.

No single one among Other-World, Future-World, or Within-Mind Pure Land can be said to be absolute because all three of the Pure Lands exist in their manifested aspects in this world. Therefore, they should first work on our perceptions and practice the Middle Way. “One person’s thoughts will also keep changing. They have to understand this in principle, then through practice. That is how they approach middle way. They have to experience it, the more their experience, the more flexible they become.”

In conclusion, it refers in contrast to popular misconception of ‘other power salvation’ with Pure Land teaching, Jungto society highlight mindful daily living with Buddhist principles to practice *Bodhisattva* path undertaken. On the outset, the three different dimensions of Pure Land – other, future and mind not to be separated is instilled. All Jungto practitioner vow to take the *sīla – samādhi – pañña* training of Buddhism. They are also to practice awareness and constant self-reflection throughout daily interactions and experiences. Mental culture and purification is always highlighted.

## 4.2 Application on the Main Teachings by Jungto Society

While promoting the Pure Land teaching, Jungto Society integrates core teachings of the Buddha and *Mahāyāna Bodhisattva* ideal through *Mahāyāna* worldview of non-discrimination, ‘*sunyata*, as well as interconnectedness and interdependence of all. Pure Land teaching with its root in *Mahāyāna* must always be understood from its *trikaya* teaching<sup>11</sup>, Pure/Original Mind, non-duality in practice and the *Bodhisattva* Path.

Jungto advocates that all beings are interconnected, influencing and are mutually influenced through a countless of causes and conditions. The *Vimalakīrti*

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<sup>11</sup> “*Trikaya*”. **Encyclopædia Britannica**, Retrieved on 11 March 2018, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/trikaya>.

*Sūtra*<sup>12</sup> says that non-duality is pure awareness and away from any views. Non-duality is the virtues and mind of enlightened beings.

#### **4.2.1 To See Everything is Interdependent**

The founder of Jungto attempts to change perceptions and perspectives of the masses with the practical principle of *paṭiccasamuppāda* by applying to the everyday practice through daily experiences. He tries to teach interconnectedness as an answer to overcome the self-centrism of our modern living today.

Jungto began as widespread communities based on Buddhist principles, seeking an alternative way of thinking and living in response to contemporary society's emphasis on mass consumption, commercialism, competition, and the misuse of the natural resources. While their activities overlap in promoting peace and ecological preservation, Jungto is well known for its humanitarian aid programs in impoverished areas of the world.

A historical being means that humans are linked by time. Their current mental state is not a problem that concerns them alone. Their parents' mental state played a major role in creating their mental state because the society they live in affects their lives, they need to understand social issues to the same degree they understand their own personal problems.

The working of *paṭiccasamuppāda* is highlighted. Hence, trying to effect a paradigm shift from discriminated 'I' and 'You' with its self-interests to holistic and holistic view of care and compassion for the interconnected 'selves' of ever changing mental and physical phenomena in the world.

Thus, Jungto with practical advice of key Buddhist principles seek to create a Pure Land right here and now.

#### **4.2.2 To Cultivate with the *Bodhisattva* Path**

According to the *paṭiccasamuppāda*, and interconnectedness teachings, the *Bodhisattva* Path is to be actively applied in life throughout the Jungto Society and

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<sup>12</sup> JC Cleary, **Pure Land Pure Mind**, (Taiwan: The Corporate Body of the Buddha Education Foundation, 1994), p. 236.

beyond. As *Mahāyāna* practitioners, ‘*Bodhisattva*’ here is the term for anyone who, motivated by great compassion, has created *Bodhicitta*. In addition to no differentiation of ‘I’ and ‘you’, *sammuti* = *paramattha* and vice versa is also the practicing concept for Bodhisattva path practitioners in engaged Buddhism.

Jungto Society practices the Pure Land practice but it is under *Mahāyāna* Buddhism. *Mahāyāna* is based principally upon the path of a *Bodhisattva*. *Mahāyāna* Buddhism encourages everyone to become *bodhisattvas* and to take the *bodhisattva* vows<sup>13</sup>. Although not real *Bodhisattvas* yet, hopeful *bodhisattvas* with these vows, promise to work for the complete enlightenment of all sentient beings by practicing the six *pāramitās*<sup>14</sup>. Hence, the motto of Open Mind, Good Friends and Clean Earth – striving to create a Pure Land on earth right here and now through mental purification in daily life through mindful living.

Jungto practice also involves being actively engaged in humanitarian issues – reliefs, volunteer service, propaganda for unification of North and South Korea etc. Jungto members are to concentrate on:

Individual practice<sup>15</sup> – this involves morning chanting and 108 full prostration to reinforce and form wholesome habits for mental and physical purification.

Dana – this does not mean financial but all other forms of dana.

Volunteer work – at home and abroad for the needy, mainly education, medical, agricultural advice, environmental preservation, conflict resolution, unification of North and South Korea, conservation of peace.

They are also to meet regularly for guidance through Dhamma teaching, Dhamma Q &A, Dhamma discussions with the founder either in person or through

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<sup>13</sup> Thich Thien Tam (tr.), **Pure –Land Zen Zen Pure – Land**, (Peang: The Penang Buddhist Association), p.254.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid, pp. 250-251

<sup>15</sup> Jungto Society Foundation, **Jungto Practitioner’s Booklet**, (Korean version), (South Korea: Jungto Publishing 2008), pp. 88-97.

modern media. Next, the members are to cultivate their *Bodhisattva* path within their family, relatives, friends, community, societies and globally as well. *Kalyanamitta* is highly emphasized for mutual sharing and advice in their Buddhist path.

Jungto members take the Buddha and *Bodhisattvas* as their role models in life. A *bodhisattva* is one who has a determination to free sentient beings from *samsāra* and its cycle of death, rebirth and suffering. This type of mind is known as the *bodhicitta*, mind of awakening.

#### 4.2.3 To Understand the Three Characteristics

Every phenomenon arises, stays and goes away according to the *paṭiccasamuppāda*. Principle – when A is B is, when A is not, B is not. By showing this, the *anatta* concept is not mentioned but no total control over causes and conditions and conditions as causes again are emphasized over and over again. Trying to reduce the ‘I-ness, right view is instilled and right intention/thought is also instilled together, the founder and leaders consistently advise and remind Jungto practitioners to reflect<sup>16</sup> on interrelation, interconnectedness, *trikaya* throughout daily interactions. The ‘*sunyata*’ principle at work. Ultimately, there is no ‘I’ or ‘you’ in the interconnectedness of all beings through the *paṭiccasamuppāda*.

Jungto members are to combine their practice with social change. They seek to change their individual self-centeredness and self-interest to selfless practices through perception and perspective change. The practitioners need to understand the Buddha’s teaching, then consistently practice the chanting and 108 bows to instill pure mind away from delusion, anger and greed.

According to the Buddhist tradition, all phenomena other than *nirvāṇa* are marked by three characteristics, sometimes referred to as the Dhamma covers: impermanence<sup>17</sup>, suffering<sup>18</sup>, and no-self<sup>19</sup>. According to tradition, after much

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<sup>16</sup> Pomnyum Sunim, **Awakening**, (Korean version), (South Korea: Jungto Publishing, 2015), pp. 153-156.

<sup>17</sup> “Impermanence”. Wikipedia, Retrieved on 11 March 2018, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Impermanence>.

meditation, the Buddha concluded that everything in the physical world (and everything in the phenomenology of psychology) is marked by these three characteristics.

All these are in line with the basic Buddhist teachings of *trikaya*, *paṭiccasamuppāda*, Eight-fold Path, Four Noble Truths etc. It can perhaps be said that the Pure Land concept in Jungto Society is the advice to first change the selfish perceptions and perspectives, then experience the interconnectedness of all in the society with engaged Buddhist practices.

According to the *paṭiccasamuppāda*, interconnectedness teachings, the *Bodhisattva* Path is to be actively applied in life throughout the Jungto Society and beyond. As *Mahāyāna* practitioners, ‘*Bodhisattva*’ here is the term for anyone who, motivated by great compassion, has created *Bodhicitta*. In addition to no differentiation of ‘I’ and ‘you’, *sammuti* = *paramattha* and vice versa is also the practicing concept for *Bodhisattva* path practitioners in engaged Buddhism.

In conclusion, it refers the founder consistently strives to change the perception of individualization to interconnectedness of all beings. In teaching about connectedness, the principle of ‘when A is, B is’, ‘when A is not, B is not’ is always focused. By showing this, the *anatta* concept is not mentioned but no total control over causes and conditions and conditions as causes again are emphasized over and over again. Trying to reduce the ‘I-’ness, right view is instilled and right intention/thought is also instilled together, the founder and leaders consistently advise and remind *Jungto* practitioners to reflect on interrelation, interconnectedness, *trikaya* throughout daily interactions.

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<sup>18</sup> “Suffering”. Wikipedia, Retrieved on 11 March 2018, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Suffering>.

<sup>19</sup> “Non - self”. ThoughtCo, Retrieved on 11 March 2018, <https://www.thoughtco.com/what-is-the-self-450193>.

#### 4.2.4 The Other Buddhist Teachings

Jungto School of Buddhism: A general education institution to learn about Jungto's ideology, cultivation of mind and practice. Social Activities environment, the unification, welfare, propagation of Buddhism.

### 4.3 Contributions of Jungto Society

Jungto activities are to free us as slaves from life and find true happiness and “ownership” for it, not being tortured by externals. *Pomnyun Sunim's* ongoing advocacy and relief efforts reflect his belief that Buddhists must engage the “real world” they experienced and thus act to relieve suffering along by *Bodhisattva* path.

#### 4.3.1 Bring Happiness to Individual

One who is aware and mindful is awakening. Experiencing and knowing this, in daily life, one sees the conditions and conditionings and that we totally cannot control or order.

Tying Buddhist principles for daily practice. Guiding the society members and sympathizers to put them into their daily life<sup>20</sup>. Jungto founder emphasized much on personal choice and mental habit of happiness one is to practice investigating own role and responsibility for one's situation in life.

“The world exists in our awareness and we exist in the world. Making the world better and becoming enlightened cannot be separate,” says *Pomnyun Sunim*. This is in line with the non-duality view of *Mahāyāna* where *samsara* and *nirvāṇa* are mutually dependent and one is to cultivate the *Bodhisattva* path amidst his daily life whether ordained or lay.

“People tend to blame others for their hardships and suffering. However, if they look carefully, they will see that they themselves selves make their own happiness and unhappiness. Those who make themselves miserable will feel

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<sup>20</sup> Jungto Society Foundation, **Jungto Practitioner's Booklet**, (Korean version), (South Korea: Jungto Publishing 2008), pp. 88-97.

miserable even in heaven, and those who make themselves happy will be happy even in hell.” Says *Pomnyun Sunim*.

#### 4.3.2 Bring Peaceful to Society

What he is doing is to pursue both paths in helping to improve individuals' happiness and to change the society. *Pomnyun Sunim* has been advocating a new paradigm of civilization movement in which everyone is happy through practice, creates a happy society through active participation in social movements, and protects our environment and the Earth through a simple life style.

Concept of Pure Land in Jungto can be analyzed by its founder *Pomnyun Sunim*'s skillful teachings of the Dhamma, the society's philosophy, motto and activities carried out.<sup>21</sup> All these are in line with the basic Buddhist teachings of *triakaya*, *paṭiccasamuppāda*, Eight-fold Path, Four Noble Truths etc. It can perhaps be said that the Pure Land concept in Jungto Society is the advice to first change the selfish perceptions and perspectives, then experience the interconnectedness of all in the society with engaged Buddhist practices. Pure Land is not an ultimately existing place either here or anywhere else whether in the future or even now but a call for mindful living within the *Bodhisattva* ideal of *Mahāyāna* conceptions of two truths – the *sammuti* and *paramattha* which is no difference from one another. They depend on each other for us to purify our mind and walk the Buddhist path.

To pray in Jungto does not mean the regular praying but with daily self-reflection of Buddhist principles taught to transform own life and influence the society at large to preserve peace and harmony not only amongst human but nature. Mere belief is never enough for the pragmatic minded Jungto society leader, actual practice of self-reflection, repentance, making compensations through Dhamma investigations in daily life interactions are the main focus. Through Jungto Society, the public learn about practicing *Bodhisattva* path and creating Pure Land here and now on this earth.

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<sup>21</sup>Pomnyun Sunim, **Awakening**, (Korean version), (South Korea: Jungto Publishing, 2015), pp. 147-152.

What he is doing is to pursue both paths in helping to improve individuals' happiness and to change the society. It can perhaps be said that the Pure Land concept in Jungto Society is the advice to first change the selfish perceptions and perspectives, then experience the interconnectedness of all in the society with engaged Buddhist practices. Pure Land is not an ultimately existing place either here or anywhere else whether in the future or even now but a call for mindful living within the *Bodhisattva* ideal of *Mahāyāna* conceptions of two truths<sup>22</sup> – the *sammuti* and *paramattha* which is no difference from one another.

### 4.3.3 Create a Beautiful Nature

Nature is beautiful does not mean mere preservation and creation of visual beauty, more importantly it is to be helpful for living and practice of Buddhism in the Jungto society.

Changed perspectives of connectedness is not only within the human family but in the simple and eco awareness lifestyle adopted to preserve the mother earth as well.

Currently, they are destroying our environment in the name of development so that they can live better by consuming their lives. Ironically, the measures that they took to improve their lives have ended up polluting the air, the water, and the food they intake. Now, their world has become an unsafe place where they worry about the lack of safe food, pure water, and clean air. No matter what development without destroying the environment. Economic growth is only sustainable when the pace of development stays within nature's ability to regenerate. They must not lose sight of the Law of Interdependence, which gives us the fundamental perspective, "I can live only when you live." Since the environment is so vital to their survival, they need to save and preserve the environment at all costs by keeping their lands clean and nature unharmed. Nature is not an object of human conquest. Actually, it is what enables us

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<sup>22</sup> Pomnyum Sunim, *The Story of Amitayurdhyana Sutra*, (Korean version), (South Korea: Jungto Publishing, 2006), pp. 117-121.

to continue living. Thus, a harmonious and balanced relationship must be maintained between humanity and nature.”<sup>23</sup>

A Clean Earth means we shouldn't view nature as something to conquer. Rather, they should look for ways to achieve balance and harmony in our world after realizing that nature is the foundation of their existence and the origin of life.

In conclusion, it refers *Pomnyun Sunim* has been advocating a new paradigm of civilization movement in which everyone is happy through practice, creates a happy society through active participation in social movements, and protects our environment and the Earth through a simple life style. The impact and change seen through its four main activities – JTS, Good Friend, Peace Foundation and Eco Buddha is not only local Buddhists but interfaith and global.

#### **4.4 Impact to the Society in Korea**

Jungto activities are to free us as slaves from live and find true happiness and “ownership” for life, not being tortured by externals.<sup>24</sup> *Pomnyun Sunim*'s ongoing advocacy and relief efforts reflect his belief that Buddhists must engage the “real world” we experienced and act to relieve suffering in *Bodhisattva* path. *Pomnyun Sunim* quotes, “You need both good seeds and good field in order to flower. If each individual are seeds, society we live in or environment that surrounds us are the field.” What he is doing is to pursue both paths in helping to improve individuals' happiness and to change the society. The impact and change seen through its four main activities – JTS, Good Friend, Peace Foundation and Eco Buddha is not only local Buddhists but interfaith and global. In its initial stage, Jungto Society managed to get over a million signature for its North South Korean Peace.

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<sup>23</sup> Pomnyun Sunim, **Awakening**, (Korean version), (South Korea: Jungto Publishing, 2015), pp. 57-59.

<sup>24</sup> “People of Jungto”. **Jungto Society**, Retrieved on 15 March 2018, <https://www.jungtosociety.org/people/>.

#### 4.4.1 Restoration of the Buddhist Fundamental Teachings

Concept of Pure Land in Jungto can be analysed by its founder *Pomnyun Sunim*'s skillful teachings of the Dhamma, the society's philosophy, motto and activities carried out. All these are in line with the basic Buddhist teachings of *trikaya*, *paṭiccasamuppāda*, Eight-fold Path, Four Noble Truths etc. It can perhaps be said that the Pure Land concept in Jungto Society is the advice to first change the selfish perceptions and perspectives, then experience the interconnectedness of all in the society with engaged Buddhist practices. Pure Land is not an ultimately existing place either here or anywhere else whether in the future or even now but a call for mindful living within the *Bodhisattva* ideal of *Mahāyāna* conceptions of two truths – the *sammuti* and *paramatha* which is no difference from one another. They depend on each other for us to purify our mind and walk the Buddhist path.<sup>25</sup>

Hence, Pure Land practitioners in Jungto are advised to constantly be aware of their perceptions of self, others and conditions not as static concepts but changing conditions that are ultimately empty and practice the practical aspect of *paṭiccasamuppāda* of mutual dependence and interconnectedness in all their bodily, speech and mind actions. As one becomes aware of the problems of clinging to the notion of self in his daily interactions, one will be more mindful on the results of his mental and bodily *kamma* creations and their effects on others and vice versa. One will then live more mindfully in keeping with the basic Buddhist teachings of Eightfold Path and the threefold training of *Sīla samādhi paññā*. Practicing the *Mahāyāna* teaching of *Bodhisattva* Path within the Pure Land teaching of cultivating a Pure Land here and now, one comes to know of his role in the society.

They have become true practitioners who are devoted to the three studies. Do not pray to some outside beings or rely on somebody but instead make sure that they are determined to become the 'master of your own destiny.' That is why they have become true practitioner.

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<sup>25</sup> Thich Thien Tam (tr.), **Pure –Land Zen Zen Pure – Land**, (Peang: The Penang Buddhist Association), p. 248.

Here, one can clearly see that in Jungto Society, the threefold training of *Sīla samādhi paññā* is much focused. Calling upon *Amitābha* Buddha does not mean dependence upon Other Power but one has to walk the *Bodhisattva* path by observing the *Sīla samādhi paññā* training and refuge in the triple gem.

#### 4.4.2 Intellectual Contribution on Various Social Issues

Jungto people says this about their founder – “*Pomnyun sunim* leads and various open eye for us many ways. Focus is to create our happy life with others. He makes good friendship other religious people<sup>26</sup>. His ideas are interconnecting power as *bodhisattva*’s path. Hope concert is encouraging young people’s problem with their job, relationship. Hopeful life is given. He is awakening relation between environment and beings. Environment of situations show earth one of one global families. Eco Buddha movement is good example.”<sup>27</sup>

From household, relationship, studies, works up to religion to politics, economics, psychology, sociology, history, he is well able to handle. He is well informed and well prepared, and quick-witted with Buddhist principles and values in answer.<sup>28</sup>

Any issues at all about life can be communicated openly with the founder for advice. Buddhists and non-Buddhists all over the world can talk to him openly to discuss issues about small issues or big issues.

#### 4.4.3 Stimulation of Harmony Living with Nature

“Buddhism views that everything in the world is interconnected. When Buddha gained enlightenment, it was the realization that interconnectedness is the true nature of all beings. We are not only connected to other people, but to the air through

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<sup>26</sup> “Christmas Message in Church”. Ohmynew, Retrieved on 14 March 2018, [http://www.ohmynews.com/NWS\\_Web/Tag/index.aspx?tag=%EB%B2%95EB%A5%9CEC%8A%A4EB%8B%98+%EA%B5%90ED%9A%8C+%EC%84%A4EA%B5%90](http://www.ohmynews.com/NWS_Web/Tag/index.aspx?tag=%EB%B2%95EB%A5%9CEC%8A%A4EB%8B%98+%EA%B5%90ED%9A%8C+%EC%84%A4EA%B5%90).

<sup>27</sup> “Zero waste”. Ecobuddha, Retrieved on 15 March 2018, <http://www.ecobuddha.org/zero-waste>.

<sup>28</sup> “Dhamma ‘q&a’”. Pomnyun, Retrieved on 14 March 2018, <https://pomnyun.com/>.

our breathing and to the universe through light. Thus, severing these interconnections means death for all beings, says *Pomnyun Sunim*.”

“While overdevelopment of nature may seem beneficial to humans from a short-term perspective, eventually there will be long term consequences that will harm humans. Thus, the most important Buddhist value is to respect all living things and not carelessly harm or destroy them. I believe that environmental problems can only be resolved when we adopt the Buddhist world view that all beings are interconnected”, *Pomnyun Sunim* emphasized.

“Examine that environmental problem becoming the most serious worldwide one human being is facing, to protect environment, *Pomnyun Sunim* established Eco-Buddha in 1994 and has worked on green campaigns and movements, research of alternative civilization and its model and community experiment on conversion of life mode and value judgment harmonizing with nature. *Pomnyun Sunim* mentions "Good life is not about producing more and consuming more."

From August 26, 2014 to December 18, 2014, he toured Americas, Asia and Europe, holding 115 question and answer sessions in 111 locations. During a question and answer session at Princeton University, a student wanted to know how Buddhist teachings can help with environmental issues.

“When Buddha attained enlightenment, he recognized the true nature of existence as being continuous and interconnected. So those relationships have to be in balance with each other. So, in that sense when men develop nature to your advantage, it has to be within, what can be sustained by nature, otherwise you destroy nature and ultimately yourself,” says *Pomnyun Sunim*.

#### **4.4.4 To Educate and Establish Permanent Peace**

*Pomnyun Sunim* has been advocating for peace on the Korean Peninsula since 1997. He has also worked extensively to supply humanitarian aid to famine victims in North Korea and defend the human rights of North Korean refugees in China.

Humanitarian assistance to North Korea began immediately after the 1995 flood when the famine situation arose in 1995 and had published reports on the ‘North

Korean Food Crisis’, ‘North Korean Refugees Situation’ and the ‘Comprehensive Reports on the Human Rights Issues in North Korea<sup>29</sup>’.

*Pomnyun Sunim* established The Peace Foundation<sup>30</sup>, a private research institute, in 2004, to bring permanent peace, stability, and unification to the Korean Peninsula. Its main goal is peace and reunification of the Korean Peninsula and it is working as a platform to find and train new paradigm of leaderships and to develop a policy for peace and reunification of the Korean Peninsula.

It offers many educational programs such as Youth Leadership Academy, Peace Leadership Academy, Women Leadership Academy, Experts Forum, Symposium, etc.

Advocating to transform critical situation into opportunity for change, the 1000 day prayer was started in Aug 2015 until now<sup>31</sup>.

To focus on building peace on the Korean peninsula, he also established the Peace Foundation to engage experts in analyzing how best to bring about peace between the two Koreas and between North Korea and the United States, as well as to bring together Buddhists and Christians in a dialogue about peace.

To bring about peace in Korea, *Pomnyun Sunim* emphasized the need to focus first on relieving the suffering of North Koreans, including North Korean refugees. Finally, unification would be necessary for Koreans to finally resolve their differences and move on toward the future.

Positive impact of the Jungto Society to Korean societies is clear from two aspects – one in teaching a more effective way of life with Buddhist principles of interconnectedness, constant reflection of self-interests and self-centredness, non-acceptance of changing circumstances, own desires and wishes to control situations,

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<sup>29</sup> USKI. <http://www.uskoreainstitute.org/news/buddhism-in-asia-peace-and-reconciliation-on-the-korean-peninsula/>.

<sup>30</sup> “Peace movement”. The Peace Foundation, Retrieved on 6 March 2018, <http://www.peacefoundation.or.kr/wpages/>.

<sup>31</sup> “Thousand-Day Jungto Practitioner Movement”. JTS, Retrieved on 5 March, [http://www.Jungto.org/vod/Jungto3\\_01.html](http://www.Jungto.org/vod/Jungto3_01.html)

things or people and inability to let go of emotions, feelings which cause suffering. Two, in giving hope both materially and spiritually. Actively engaged in aids and expertise volunteer plus generous donations is a normal practice of the Society. Public perception of Pure Land Buddhism as another world concerned is significantly changed with the growth of its branches. Jungto Society is found to follow *Mahāyāna* teaching even it is presented in modern- days.

In conclusion, it refers the Jungto Society is a modern and innovative way of Buddhist practice in contemporary times with reinterpreted terms but in according to basic Buddhist principles. Jungto practitioners seemed to show rather balanced mind amidst the challenges of modern day Korea and are flexible to self-reflect and self-correct through community living, simple lifestyles and social engagement.

#### **4.5 Concluding Remarks**

Observers both Buddhists and objective researchers quoted in previous chapters find Jungto members to manifest joy, lesser individualistic view and perspectives, global peace and environmental minded. People from all walks of life whether in Korea or the global branches of Jungto are always reminded of their vows and practice undertaken both individually and as a community. Periodical meetings of members to hold Dhamma discussions and share experiences are a norm in Jungto Society worldwide. Each member is to seek own improvement and encourage each other in their Dhamma practice.

Reducing self-interests and self-importance, Jungto members volunteer whole heartedly not only locally but also worldwide. The founder advises one to practice and not teach Buddhism – no mere theories but putting the basics into practice for own and others’ good, just as the Buddha says – *bahunnaṃ vata atthāya*.

“If we become aware of our behavior, *Pomnyun Sunim* stressed, they can keep from being addicted to any habit. This kind of self-awareness is essential to finding peace of mind. “Addiction is something natural that happens to the brain when we do something repeatedly,” said *Pomnyun Sunim*. “That cognitive habit — and the whole scheme of cognitive habits — is called *kamma*. That *karma* becomes your master. So, it’s that *kamma*, or group of habits, that is leading you. So, it’s very

important to practice freeing yourself from that *kamma*.” By doing so, one is practicing mindfulness in daily life to reduce one’s *dukkha* and achieve *sukha* here and now. One reduces mental proliferation and keep one’s mind pure, too. This is similar to “awakening” knowing and experiencing the truths of life and reducing our becoming slaves to our mental habits.

Own effort in practice instead of praying with self-interests in the background is always hi-lighted and advised in Jungto founder’s world tour speaking engagement and teachings in Korea.

One’s own effort for own cultivation is never enough, Jungto members are to be Good friends to each other and all interconnected beings all over the world. They are to practice as a community according to Jungto handbook with *Bodhisattva* vow, 108 bows and even vow to reflect daily. Jungto members are to meet regularly as a big Dhamma family to share experiences, practice Dhamma retreats, attend Dhamma teachings via modern technology and participate actively in the four main activities focused on. Not just through action but one is to actually record one’s practice to remind and form positive mental cultivation habit.

There is a lot of psychology, sociology integrated with early Buddhist teaching and *Mahāyāna* concepts in practice although not mentioned. The dynamic 1000 prayer speech for Unification of North and South Korea for world peace is a clear example.

## **Chapter V**

### **Conclusion and Suggestions**

This study starts with the concept of Pure Land (*Sukhāvātī*) in *Mahāyāna* Buddhism. Meanings of Pure Land from the *sūtras*, dictionaries and its change in contemporary times are first looked into. Significance of Pure Land concept to individual practitioner and its social consequence are then studied. After the above, the Jungto Society which strongly promotes creating a Pure Land on earth is studied in detail – its concept and application of Pure Land teachings, its contributions and impact both locally and abroad. Having a better understanding of Jungto society in Korea, the researcher then compares and contrasts the results with the Pure Land teaching in *Mahāyāna* teaching as a whole before conclusion remarks and suggestions for further studies are decided as below.

#### **5.1 Conclusions**

Jungto Society is found to follow *Mahāyāna* teaching even it is presented in modern ways. Five important factors below show that Jungto Society is a present day interpretation to fit the needs, but it still follows key Buddhist teachings.

##### **a) Important Linkages with Early Buddhist Teaching and Southeast Asia *Therāvāda* Tradition**

As Pure Land Buddhism spread from India into China, Korea then to Japan and Southeast Asia, technical terms have been reinterpreted and reworded but we can still make important conceptual linkages between Jungto Society, a reformed Korean Pure Land teaching and early Buddhist teaching.

*Pomnyun Sunim's* use of psychology, common wordings, laymen terms instead of the technical have their origin from core early Buddhist teaching of *trikaya*, Four Noble Truths, Noble Eightfold Path, *Patīccasamupāda*. His sutra teachings, Dhamma teaching

Dhamma retreats, Jungto practice handbook, world speaking engagements, books, dialogues, all socially engaged activities have Buddhist worldview and the core early Buddhist teachings at heart. This is clear from discussions in Chapter IV on the analysis of Pure Land concept applied and the intention for all its social engagement activities.

The founder consistently strives to change the perception of individualization to interconnectedness of all beings. In teaching about connectedness, the principle of ‘when A is, B is’, ‘when A is not, B is not’ is always focused. By showing this, the *anatta* concept is not mentioned but no total control over causes and conditions, and conditions as causes again are emphasized over and over again. Trying to reduce the ‘I-’ness, right view is instilled and right intention/thought is also instilled together, the founder and leaders consistently advise and remind Jungto practitioners to reflect on interrelation, interconnectedness, *trikaya* throughout daily interactions. Strongly advocating mindful living each day as such, practitioners are to be aware, “awakened” to own intentions, self-centredness, feelings, emotions and their consequences. To the founder, real awakening is from changed perception and perspectives consistently and gradually. It is not a once and “forever” kind.

#### **b) Reintroduction of Three Dimensions of Pure Land Teaching Consistent with *Mahāyāna* Tradition**

In contrast to popular misconception of ‘other power salvation’ with Pure Land teaching, Jungto society highlight mindful daily living with Buddhist principles to practice *Bodhisattva* path undertaken. On the outset, the three different dimensions of Pure Land – other, future and mind not to be separated is instilled. All Jungto practitioner vow to take the *sīla – samādhi – pañña* training of Buddhism. They are also to practice awareness and constant self-reflection throughout daily interactions and experiences. Mental culture and purification is always highlighted.

Practical key *Mahāyāna* teaching of ‘*sunyatā = nihsvabhava = paṭiccasamuppāda*’ is put into practice through community living and actual practice of *Bodhisattva* path with all Jungto humanitarian works. Practitioners have the *Bodhisattvas* of past as role-models and to follow their worldview of non-discrimination of *sammuti* and *paramattha*, one against another etc. They are to

practice happy (*dhamma* joy) and peaceful mind without being effected by daily life problem. Jungto members are to take the *Bodhisattva* practice as their discipline. They should be aware of the need and be empathetic and compassionate enough to help without the ideation of self in either the helper or the helped.

### **c) Application of Buddhist Principles for Individual and Social Good**

Promoting ‘Individual happiness’, ‘Peaceful Society’ and Eco Buddhism’ may seem to focus on the *sammuti* in life. However, if one looks deeper into how ‘happiness’ is defined – pure mind, without individualistic interest, letting go, going with the flow, without desiring to control etc, in the founder’s writings, dialogues and Dhamma Q& A. His sharp and witty correction of greed, anger and delusion manifestations in complaints and questions forwarded not only give him wide acceptance as wise and compassionate teacher but shows the typical *Ch’an* style of questionings and didactics in guidance. Jungto people and audience everywhere are constantly challenged to seek answers by themselves through Dhamma investigations in own mental and physical phenomena manifested. They are to find answers from within and not external is always highlighted.

### **d) Reinterpretation of ‘Prayer’ and ‘Practice’**

Buddhists especially the misinformed and those who have misunderstood the Pure Land (*Sukhāvatī*) teaching, would often ‘pray’ instead of ‘practice’. According to Jungto founder, prayer is letting go as one always pray with ingrained self-interest actually.

When we discriminate and are unhappy, not mindful and going with the flow in life, we will be sad, angry or depressed even. All these have the delusion of ‘I’, ‘me,’ and ‘mine’ against ‘you’ actually. When we do not accept facts of life we pray for things to go the way we want subconsciously. We can even be angry, blame or lose hope if we are mere believers – believers are self-centred and pray to other power for wishes and wants.

They are to be practitioners – practitioners are defined as ones who would investigate the Buddhist principles – interdependence, *tilakkhana*, four noble truths especially in life and will live mindful of own conceptions and perspectives which

bring about *dukkha* – both physical and mental in in life, not only for oneself but conditions and causes the same for others, too as they are all interconnected beings

**e) Highlighting of own Effort, Collective Effort (*kalyana mitta*) in Dhamma Practice According to Early Buddhist Teaching**

In line with the motto of Open Mind, Good Friends, Clean Earth Jungto Society propagates the four *brahmavihara* in practice. This can be seen from its main activities of JTS, Good Friends and Peaceful Earth although *metta*, *karuna*, *mudita* and *upekkha* are not mentioned. They are translated into actions with different wordings in their daily reflections, practice handbook and activities carried out.

One is to consistently practice self-reflection, daily 108 bows – first with humble mind to reflect and repent on own faults, then “awakened mind” in appreciation and gratitude to the triple gem, and to remind of the *Bodhisattva* vows undertaken.

## **5.2 Suggestions for Further Research**

Jungto practitioners seemed to show rather balanced mind amidst the challenges of modern day Korea and are flexible to self-reflect and self-correct through community living, simple lifestyles and social engagement. However, only a very minor section – the youth research is widely publicized and with very little quantitative method to gain more accuracy into the qualitative studies. The data gathered is only self-reports.

It would be good if future researchers can involve psychological, sociological, political and economic together with Buddhist experts, in addition, observations, longer term studies and bigger data base for both qualitative and quantitative data can be gathered for a more accurate study perhaps.

Not only *Mahāyāna* but early Buddhist scholars are needed to study the concept of Pure Land more in depth. Buddhist historians are needed to trace the concept from past till present. As suggested by scholars from Oxford bibliographies, Pure Land is collective and complex dimensions of practice and more studies are needed. So far, research on Pure Land concentrate mainly on its practices and lead back to its concepts and theories.

There are seven basic terms dedication of merits, faith and three minds, invoking the name of *Amitābha* Buddha, ordinary deluded person, original teaching, Pure Land, three ages of Dhamma under.

The changes in interpretation and meaning since the Pure Land was first brought from India to China, then Korea and Japan. In re-examining their origins, better understanding can be seen.

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