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Explore the Phenomenon of Buddhist Temple Stay in South Korea for Tourists

Wei Wang

University of Nevada, Las Vegas

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Explore the Phenomenon of Buddhist Temple Stay in South Korea for Tourists

by

Wei Wang

Bachelor of Art in Tourism Management
Shanghai Institute of Foreign Trade in Shanghai
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William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration

Graduate College
University of Nevada, Las Vegas
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Abstract

Temple Stay program is a newly developed but comparatively mature tourism product in Korea, which is to accommodate and cater tourists in Buddhist temples and have them experience over 1700 years Korean traditions of Buddhism and culture. As a product of compromise between Korean Ministry of Culture and Tourism and the most influential Buddhist organization Jogye Order, Temple Stay program was first launched in 2002 during FIFA World Cup to receive excessive international tourists. Through almost ten-year systematical development, Temple Stay program turns out to be a distinctive phenomenon which successfully establishes a unique identity of Korean culture and tourism, as well as expand the influence of Korean Buddhism.

The paper aims at familiarizing readers with Temple Stay program in Korea through historical background of religious tourism worldwide and Buddhist tourism in Korea, current conditions of Korean Temple Stay program and the benefits and criticism received by Temple Stay program. The study will explain what Temple Stay program is, how it is developed, why it is special and who the participants are for the program.

Key Words: temple stay, Korea, Buddhism, religious tourism

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Table of Contents

Abstract.....	2
Acknowledgement.....	3
Table of Contents.....	4
PART ONE:	
Introduction.....	5
Purpose.....	6
Justification.....	6
Constraints.....	7
PART TWO:	
Buddhism and Buddhist Tourism.....	8
Brief introduction of Buddhism.....	8
Derivation of Buddhist tourism.....	9
Buddhist Tourism in Korea.....	13
Overview of Korean Buddhism.....	13
History of Buddhism in Korea.....	14
History of Buddhist tourism in Korea.....	20
Introduction and Development of Temple Stay program.....	24
Definition of temple stay.....	24
Unorganized temple stay in other Asian countries.....	24
Temple Stay program in Korea.....	28
PART THREE:	
Summary of Temple Stay Phenomenon and Temple Stay Program.....	42
Historical background of temple stay in classic Korea.....	42
Critical regulations and incidents of temple stay in modern Korea.....	44
Unique temple stay program.....	46
Benefits, Criticism and Conclusion.....	47
Benefits and Criticism.....	47
Conclusion.....	48

Part One

Introduction

Temple stay simply means “stay in a temple”. The special form of accommodation has long been a traditional choice for religious travelers under different names in different countries where Buddhist temples exist. For many Buddhist temples, temporary stay at temples is used to be offered to outside practitioners along their pilgrimage or mendacity tours, and to Buddhism believers who seek a retreat for religious practice temporarily. Along with the connection of Buddhism and tourism, temple stay now has been gradually transformed to an option for regular tourists as well.

The conversion in Korea started from Joseon dynasty (AD 1392 – AD 1897) under the pressure of promoting Confucianism and oppressing Buddhism (Lee, 2006) and finally became a unique Temple Stay program supported by both Ministry of Culture and Tourism and Jogye Order in 2002. The program was initiated during FIFA World Cup 2002 while Korea was expecting tens of thousands of foreign travelers coming for the huge event. The concerns of insufficient hotel rooms greatly inspired Korea government to come up with the idea to cooperate with the largest Korean Buddhist organization Jogye Order and accommodate part of foreign visitors in Buddhist temples. From then, Kaplan (2010) defined Temple Stay program as “a new and prominent Korean tourist attraction in which visitors are invited to many of the major Buddhist monasteries throughout the country to stay for a couple of days and experience the traditional monastic lifestyle.” During the 2002 World Cup, 33 temples participated in this program to accommodate 991 foreign tourists. In 2006, 50 temples participated and a total of 70,914 guests were received through the

program. Moreover, Korean Temple Stay Committee in its 10-year plan expected 100 temple participants and 455,092 travelers in 2015 (Kaplan, 2010).

Temple Stay program in Korea is a great example of religious tourism and hospitality. It does not only provide readers with a fresh perspective on this special form of accommodations for domestic and international tourists, but also gives industry professionals, educators and even government ministry a thought of how to preserve and promote national cultures and traditions in collaboration with tourism and hospitality industry.

Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to introduce the history and current conditions of temple stay phenomenon and Temple Stay program in Korea and provide a systematic summary by examining the existing literature and tourism trends.

The paper will review the history of Buddhist tourism, the development of Korean Buddhism, and the evolvement of temple stay phenomenon, with a special focus on Korean Temple Stay program including its initiation, activities and typical experience. The benefits and the criticisms will be discussed as well.

Justification

As a fresh and interesting form of tourism attraction that developed from the traditional way of Buddhist accommodation, temple stay has experienced fast growth in Korea. Although Temple Stay participants do not account for a large portion of total international tourist arrivals, the percentage has been doubled from 0.63% in 2004 to 1.15 in 2006 (Korean Tourism Organization, <http://english.visitkorea.or.kr/>). It is an important and

successful example of integrating religion and culture into tourism and hospitality. However, there is little related academic literature available in English and very few explore the phenomenon systematically.

The paper could be an interesting digest for readers who would like to know more about the temple stay phenomenon and Temple Stay program in Korea. It is also an inspiring reading for professionals who work in tourism, hospitality, culture or religion related area.

Constraints

First, constrained by no approval from IRB, there is no raw data collected and analyzed, nor interview in any forms conducted in the paper.

Second, there are very limited academic journal articles in English or Chinese (which is the first language of the author) related with this topic. Therefore, information retrieved from formal websites or magazine articles is occasionally used in the paper other than academic paper. Meanwhile, there could be several academic papers existing in Korean language that include more accurate and comprehensive information but are not accessible for the author due to language barrier.

Part Two

Buddhism and Buddhist Tourism

Brief introduction of Buddhism.

Buddhism was founded back in the 6th century B.C. by Lord Buddha. Originally named Siddhartha Gautama (563B.C. – 483B.C.), Lord Buddha was born as a Shakya prince in Lumbini Garden (Nepal nowadays). According to the record, the future Buddha had been hidden away from all the worldly sufferings during his early life by his father until he decided, at age of 29, to leave the luxuries and pleasures to pursue the truth and reality of life. After years of ascetic life and meditation, he had finally attained enlightenment at the age of 35. Lord Buddha had found the Middle Way between extremes of self-mortification and self-indulgence, and had realized the causes of suffering and steps to eliminate them. Instead of holding the achievement to himself, Lord Buddha had dedicated the rest of his life on enlightening the others. (Thera, 1998) lead

Buddhism is a group of theories or philosophy developed from the teachings of Lord Buddha. Basically, Buddhism pursues the way of spiritual development, and thus leads an insight into the genuineness of life. The major goal of Buddhism is to realize the truth of life, reach liberation and thus end the suffering from succession of lives. In accordance with Buddhist doctrines, the only way to reach the destination of reality is to “purify and train the mind, heart and soul”. (Buddhist tourism, www.buddhist-tourism.com)

In the modern world, Buddhism is regarded more of a religion than a method of thought. It pays great attention on moral discipline, meditation and wisdom rather than worships Lord Buddha. Buddhism, in history, started in India from 483B.C. and since then

spread its influence to Sri Lanka during 3rd century B.C., to Tibet in 173 A.D., to China in 475A.D, to Korea and Japan in 550A.D, to many other countries of Central Asia and Southeast Asia afterwards and even to Western Nations from 1850 A.D. onwards. Today, Buddhism is one of the major religions in the countries and areas of Central Asia, Sri Lanka, Tibet, China, Korea, Japan and Southeast Asia. (Buddhist tourism, www.buddhist-tourism.com)

Derivation of Buddhist tourism.

The definition of religious tourism.

Along with the spread of religions, more traveling was involved in practices of missionaries and practitioners. Not only Buddhism, religion on the whole has long been an essential motivation for carrying out journeys and is usually considered as one of the oldest forms of non-economic travel. As described by Rinschede (1992), 200 million pilgrims took part in international, national, and superregional pilgrimage journeys in year of 1992. This number increased to 240 million estimated by Jackowski (2000). In 2010, religious tourism has become an industry that generates over \$18 billion annual revenue and more than 300 million visitors' yearly around the world, reported by Laura Bly (2010) in USA today.

Rinschede (1992) defined Religious Tourism as “a type of tourism whose participants are motivated either in part or exclusively for religious reasons”. Today, it is a worldwide phenomenon which includes every major religion and numerous smaller religious groups. For example, the religion-motivated journey played a significant role in the history of Hinduism. Traveling to rivers and streams, especially the Ganges, has been most important

pilgrimage objective for Hinduism practitioners. In constant pilgrim, Hindus explore in those holy places the atonement of sin, the accomplishment of merit, the way to connect with the supreme, and an ease of the suffering. According to Rinschede (1992), over 20 million Hindus pilgrims visit some 150 well known sacred sites annually. In U.S., religious tourism is also prevalent and has become more so as several new religious sites have sprung up in recent years. USA Today pointed out that religious tourism became one of the top ten trends in the U.S. today (Bly, 2010). As we all know, religious tourism is also very big in Muslim countries (Okhovat, 2010).

Besides religious reasons, cultural elements have evolved to be another important motivation of religious tourism. Rinschede (1992) mentioned that religious tourism today is closely related with holiday and cultural tourism, especially where the religious sites are simultaneously significant cultural sites or with cultural event taking place. Buddhist tourism, similar to many other religions, is one of examples combining religious and cultural factors. It had gradually changed its image of pure pilgrimage to a culture blended experience in its history.

From pilgrimage to mass tourism.

During the first two thousand years of Buddhism, it had focused on the meaning of the pilgrimages and had believed that the dying pilgrim direct entrance into heavenly Nirvana. “The pilgrimage sites are predominantly associated with the life of Buddha, his activities, religions, and legends” (Rinschede, 1992). Referred in descriptions of various article and journals, pilgrims were the major travelers during the early years of Buddhist tourism. Tibet’s pilgrims who believed in Lamaism, a special form of Buddhism, sought out natural

sites such as caves, springs, lakes, and mountains. Pilgrimage journeys to these sites were frequently associated with the special festivals, at which more than 10,000 pilgrims gathered. The pilgrimage has been popular in Japan in all its practiced religions as well, mainly Buddhism and Shintoism. Many of the old pilgrimage sites and holy places attract true pilgrims. (Rinschede, 1992)

With the reform and evolvement taken place in society, the subject of Buddhist tourism has grown into a wider range in many East Asia countries.

First, fast pace of modern society make more people take Buddhism religion as a spiritual support. With the longing for release from stress and escape from noise, many people choose to visit Buddhist sites on a temporary trip. However, together with some strict rules of Buddhism, the intensive life style also sets obstacles for people to truly practice the belief and pursue long distance pilgrimages. Due to the hustling life of the modern world, most people seldom have time to indulge in the long-term religion practicing out of family and work. Besides, many strict schools of Buddhism consider marriage or sexual engagement as an offence to Buddhism and Lord Buddha. For example, traditional Vinaya rules prohibited monks from either encouraging or performing a marriage ceremony (Buddhist Ethics, 1996). This makes it difficult to practice true pilgrimage. Temporary visits made by lay people or regular tourists emerged at the moment and gradually evolved into mass tourism. Today, there are also visits to national or international religious centers, festivals and conferences that do not possess the character of a pilgrimage journey, said Rinschede(1992).

Second, political attitudes and cultural compositions have also largely influenced the

secularization of Buddhism and the transition to mass tourism. J. Zhe (2009) described in his article the revival, innovation and secularization of Buddhism in China. These changes of Buddhism encouraged a lot of tourists who pursue culture experience to visit and stay at Buddhists temples. At the end of 1970s, when the policy of “Reform and Open up” was carried out in China, Buddhism began to recover from three decades of suppression. Buddhism has progressively regained favor among people and has become the largest institutionalized religion in China with at least 100 million practitioners according to the record. The Fourth Congress of the Buddhist Association of China (BAC) held in Beijing in 1980 marked the formal beginning of the institutional reconstruction of Chinese Buddhism. During the process, a lot of literary compositions and movies helped the reconstruction. The film “Shao Lin Temple” was produced in 1981 and described the legend story of the martial monks in Shao Lin Temple, Henan Province. This film attracted millions of viewers and inspired a popular interest. According to Zhe (2009), from September 1974 to the end of 1978, there were only 200,000 visits to Shao Lin Temple in total, but in 1982 one year alone, the number of visitors jumped to 700,000 and then was trebled again by 1984. Among the visitors, many of them were non-believers. Buddhists leaders quickly became aware that they could spread Buddhism more effectively if they promoted many of its teachings and institutions under the name of “culture” rather than solely “religion”. This “Buddhism as culture” strategy was first announced in April 1986 and had been identified not only in theory but also in practice. “Buddhist tourism” was developed as an industry catering mass population.

Third, the culture, architecture and traditional event preserved in Buddhist destination

also attract many regular tourists to make a visit. Today, mass tourism is a common phenomenon in Sri Lanka as well. Pfaffenberger (1983) mentioned in his paper as early as 1983 that in a survey, only 6 percent of survey participants were going to “fulfill a vow”. In contrast, 18 percent went there to “see the place” and 23 percent went there to “attend the festival”. He wrote that “the authentic pilgrimages of yore have given way, in Sri Lanka, to tourism”.

In conclusion, despite the raised criticisms against secularization, Buddhist tourism has gradually become an activity not only for worshippers but also for mass tourists. The transition prevails in many countries where Buddhism exists. South Korea was one typical example among the countries.

Buddhist Tourism in Korea

Overview of Korean Buddhism.

Korea is one of the most important countries in East Asia with society and culture marked the influence of Buddhism. In line with 2003 statistics released by the Korean government (www.koreanbuddhism.net), about 55.3 percent of the Korean population claimed religious affiliation, and among them about 47 percent were Buddhist, with a total population of 12 million. The Association of Korean Buddhist Orders is a religious organization that manages different Buddhist schools (orders) in Korea. Currently it has twenty-five Buddhist orders. Jogye Order is the largest one. Out of over 3,000 temples nationwide, Korean government recognizes preserves and supports 870 traditional temples nationwide, and Jogye Order is in charge of 840 temples (96.6 percent). These temples boast more than 65 percent of Korea’s designated National Treasures and Local Treasures.

Today, Korea also holds the oldest and best-preserved Chinese translation of Buddhist scriptures: the Tripitaka, 81,258 wooden blocks engraved on both sides (Baker, 1997). As the largest religion in Korea, Buddhism has greatly integrated with Korea society and culture.

History of Buddhism in Korea.

Jang (2009) wrote in her book “Journey to Korean Temples and Templestay”, that Buddhism in Korean has evolved during a long history, experiencing ups and downs and forming the strong basis for Korean society. These are briefly outlined below.

Goguryeo kingdom and Three Kingdom (37B.C. – 668A.D.).

Goguryeo Kingdom was established during the first century B.C. and was defeated in 668 A.D. at the hands of Silla. This era is also called Three Kingdom Period because there were three kingdoms, Goguryeo, Silla and Baekje, existed on Korean peninsula at the time. Buddhism was first introduced from China to Korea.

Goguryeo Kingdom was founded after years of expansion and centralization through constant wars. King Sosurim of Goguryeo was trying to maintain domestic stability and unite various conquered tribes, so he introduced Buddhism as the national religion by inviting a monk from northern China in 372 A.D to Goguryeo Kingdom. The monk carried many Buddhist scriptures and Buddha statues with him. After his arrival, Buddhism was quickly accepted by the Goguryeo royalty because it encouraged its people to examine and improve oneself rather than complain about or ask from the society. Soon, the ruler of Goguryeo regarded Buddhism not only as supernatural protection for the nation, but also as a force for internal unification and moral guidance. Silla, the other one of three kingdoms,

followed the practice and benefited the most from Buddhism. In 636 A.D., the Silla monk Jajang was dispatched for his journey to China to study Buddhism. Upon his return, he worked to import Chinese culture and Buddhism, and also helped spread Buddhism from the royal community to the general public. Later, Buddhism served as a source of religious patriotism, and played an important role in Silla's unification of the divided peninsula, which ended Three Kingdom Era.

Unified Silla kingdom period (668A.D. – 935 A.D.).

After Silla unified the three kingdoms, Buddhism continued to develop and grow on the aspects of both academic research and culture. Its close relations with academy and culture made Buddhist temples a place not only preserved religion heritage but also reflected the comprehensive society.

Some of the finest Korean arts and architecture were created during this time, including the building of major temples, pagodas and statues, which become chief resources of Buddhism tourism today. In the field of culture, Wonhyo, widely considered as the greatest thinker in Korean Buddhism, had produced no less than eighty-six works and left twenty-three of his works well preserved until today. However, the unified Silla dynasty started to fall apart due to the conflicts within the ruling class and the rise of local warlords at the beginning of ninth century.

Goryeo dynasty (918A.D. – 1392A.D.).

Founded in 918 A.D., Goryeo Kingdom again united the whole Korean peninsula around 936 A.D.. Throughout this period, Buddhism reached the peak of its prosperity but it was also the last dynasty before Confucianism took place and became the new favored

ideology of the nation.

For the period of the Goryeo, successive kings have been supported a strong connection between the government and the Sangha (male and female practitioners, or monks and nuns), and maintained Buddhism as national religion. Goryeo Buddhism was especially famous for its monumental wood-block editions of the Chinese Buddhist scriptures, Tripitaka. Consisted of more than eighty-thousand wood blocks, it took sixteen years to complete the whole. Goryeo monks enjoyed considerable economic prosperity because of the support from royal court and the nobles. However, complaints were generated in the company of tremendous increase of Sangha's economic power. The bureaucratization of the monks experienced most criticism from the newly introduced Confucianism ideology and the prosperity of Buddhism in Korea has ended with the Goryeo Dynasty.

Joseon dynasty (1392A.D. – 1897A.D.).

The new government, Joseon government, decided to limit the influence of Buddhism in order to establish its firm dominance. Lately imported Confucianism gained the favor from the ruler and became the new ideology of the nation. The number of monks and nuns was restricted and the ordination was completely banned at the time. “The number of temples was first reduced to 242, but eventually only thirty-six temples were allowed to stay open” according to Jang (2009). Monastic lands were confiscated, all the city temples were closed and Buddhist monks were forbidden to enter urban areas. Sangha had to leave for the remote countryside, isolated from the intellectual and cultural life of the society. In a word, Buddhism experienced severe suppression during the Joseon dynasty, and its

activities remained largely restricted to the rural area, away from mainstream life of the nation. It is the most difficult time for Korean Buddhism until the Korean War. For the duration of this domination, with the steady decline of Buddhism, the transition of the function of the temples and monks had been taken place gradually.

Korea under Japanese rule (1910A.D. – 1945A.D.)

Japan's involvement in the region began with the 1876 Treaty of Ganghwa. Korea was officially annexed to Japan in 1910 under an annexation treaty (Jang, 2009). During the colonial period, the Japanese government on one hand ruined some traditions of Buddhism in Korea, but on the other hand accidentally helped the restoration of some Buddhist heritage.

Negatively, the Japanese government attempted to have control over the Korean Sangha and thus forced its incorporation with the Japanese Buddhism sects. Japanese required Korean monks to marry and offered only those married ones the leadership positions within the Sangha. In 1926, Japanese required the Korean monasteries to remove any rules against marriage, which resulted in the division of celibate monks (bigu-seung) and married monks (daecho-seung) afterwards in 1960's. The married monks gradually became the majority during the colonial period. It accelerated the secularization process of Korean Buddhism, which received a great deal of criticism saying “colonial ambition of controlling the Korean Sangha”, wrote by Galmiche (2010).

Positively, the Japanese government lifted the ban on monks' entry into urban areas and allowed most religious activities. Moreover, Japanese announced the Regulations on the Preservation of Ancient Sites and Relics of Chosen in the year of 1916. The regulation

made the government start to take various measures to preserve Korean heritage, including investigating archeological remains, maintaining, monitoring and rebuilding monuments, registering “national treasure”, improving infrastructure for tourist sites, and establishing museums in Korea. According to Kaplan (2010), by the end of the colony, 591 items had been enrolled on the “Korean National Treasure” List developed by Japanese, with an overwhelming predominance of Buddhist items. To some extent, the colonists, ironically, initiated the preservation and restoration of Korea’s cultural assets and helped set foundation for Buddhism tourism in Korea.

Revitalization of Korean Buddhism and cultures (1950s -1970s).

Due to the political turmoil during 1950s, the heritage project was suspended for a while and then re-launched by President Park Chung-Hee in 1962. President Park served the Korean government for 17 years, until 1979. In his administration, several important regulations and activities advanced the development of Buddhist tourism in Korea, including Cultural Assets Preservation Law (Munhwajae Pohobop), Law for the Control of Buddhist Property (Pulgyojaesan Kwallibop), reconstruction of prestigious temples, temple ticketing system and Korea national parks system. This will be elaborated in the following discussion of Buddhist tourism in Korea. (Kaplan, 2010)

Despite the government’s effort to develop Buddhist tourism, religious organization had been struggling on the way between “revitalization” and “secularization”. On one hand, temples, used to be located mostly in the remote mountain areas during long-term depression and chaos, now realized the benefits of its connection with laity and tourism industry in urban areas. On the other hand, temples tried to limit the tourists’ disturbance to

keep its authenticity of monastery life. (Kaplan, 2010; Galmiche, 2010) Jogye Order, the largest and most influenced order in the Association of Korean Buddhist Order, constantly stressed its identity of authentic and solid monastic community, living in accordance with the Buddhist monastic rules during the conflict from 1950s to 1970s (Galmiche, 2010).

Modernization of Korean Buddhism and cultures (1980s - present).

Since the 1980s, the standing and image Buddhism within South Korea society has experienced many alterations in conjunction with support from government and attitude change from major religious organization.

Buddhism strengthened its urban presence considerably during the 1980s and 1990s. First, the rapid spread of temples into city area changed the relationship between clerics and lay Buddhists. Lay people started to visit temples near their homes on a more frequent and regular basis. Second, Many programs towards laity have emerged and opportunities to study Buddhism have greatly increased. A noticeable number of temples began to offer various courses and lectures related with doctrine and practice of Buddhism for lay people. Third, people's intention to experience more traditional forms of practicing became popular and intensive. "Many lay Buddhists in Seoul also attend mountain monasteries for ceremonies, lectures, personal visits and other various reasons." It creates the demand for temple stay, which allows laity the chance to live for a short time in a monastic manner in order to deepen their religious knowledge. In 1980s, Jogye Order formally claimed the development of its relations with the laity (Galmiche, 2010).

As lay Buddhists grew, they raised an important claim together with religious reformists, which is to develop deeper education and training. Buddhist education

effectively started in the 1980s, with an intention to educate monks and nuns as well as spread the basic knowledge among lay fellows (Galmiche, 2010). The emphasis on religious education has been a key feature in the modernization of Buddhism.

Buddhism has left an indelible mark upon the Korean people and their culture. Most Koreans today, although they may not call themselves Buddhists, maintain a Buddhist perspective of life and have a picture of the afterlife that is shaped by Buddhist beliefs. Even those following other religions keep many customs which are Buddhist in origin--for Korean culture has been inextricably linked to Buddhism (Kaplan, 2010).

History of Buddhist tourism in Korea.

Emergency of Buddhism tourism in Korea.

As mentioned above, The founder of the Goryeo dynasty, Tae Jo Wang Kun, adopted Buddhism as the founding philosophy (Kwen 1987) and governing rules. Social ideology during this era were highly Buddhism oriented (Hong 1991). The prototype of Buddhist tourism in Korea started within the dynasty.

During the Goryeo period, the government built many Buddhist temples all over the country and encouraged the people to visit them to study Buddhist values and ideologies. The temples were usually built in remote areas according to the basic Buddhist value that one must be away from the secular world to reach the state of enlightenment. With such clearly defined goals, religious pilgrimages to the Buddhist temples were highly encouraged during the Goryeo dynasty.

Function change of Buddhist temple and monks.

Since the Joseon kingdom was founded, although Buddhism was oppressed by the

enhancement of Confucianism during the period, people still visit to Buddhist sites for non-religious purpose. Lee (2006) analyzed all over 30 classic travelogues written between 1349 and 1894 during the Joseon dynasty that have been found and interpreted by the Korean classic literature academia. These classic travelogues recorded who the travelers were, what their modes of travel were, where they visited and what they did. The activities were no longer studying Buddhism. Lee (2006) found that when people traveled in the classic eras, they were always searching for the beauty of nature, or connecting travel to cultural legends. In many of the studied travelogues, travelers discussed the unique myths of the area they were visiting, thus creating legendary charm for the visited places. Influenced by political trend, classical travelers tended not to pay religious visits to the Buddhist temples. The temples gradually became cultural icons to signify the power and dominance of the past.

Along with the core meaning's change of Buddhist temples, the functions of which had been converted as well. Buddhist temples were turned into service providers for the travelers and monks were perceived as the secular role of caterer (Lee, 2006). Temple functions were even more comprehensive than those of traditional inns. The traditional inns typically provided accommodation and meals to the travelers, while Buddhist temples usually provided "tour guide services" as an addition.

This phenomenon reflected the cultural transformation of Buddhism in the society. Various dedicated and hospitable service activities in the temples were described in the travelogues: monks would "receive travelers at the temple entrance with warm reception"; besides, they "catered for the visitors' meals and prepared special breakfasts for the

travelers before guiding the visitors around to show the respect and welcoming spirit; they even “provided departing travelers with gifts that would be useful on their journeys” (Lee, 2006).

The role transition of monks from spiritual guides to cultural guides was obvious in the travelogues found by Lee (2006). The guiding monks would speak of places near the temples and provide interesting stories about them.

The temples were apparently significant religious establishments during the Goryeo dynasty when Buddhist ideologies played an important role in the society, but not so anymore in a society dominated by ideology of Confucianism. Therefore, the travelers were visiting the Buddhist temples for cultural memory rather than religious practices.

Buddhists tourism development in modern Korea.

As mentioned in the history of Korean Buddhism, a new era of Buddhist tourism development begun in the post colonial period. Since 1960s, the Korean government and President Park had dedicated tremendous effort in promoting Buddhist tourism in Korea.

Two laws put forward in 1962 set the basis of the prosperity of Buddhism tourism. The first law was the Cultural Assets Preservation Law. It carried out the official action of reorganizing, registering and appending the heritage list that was initially created by the Japanese government during colonial times. With the help of the Law, Korean cultural heritage was “identified, and selected by government, reconstructed, awarded a national certificate of authenticity, and commercialized for the tourism industry” (Kaplan, 2010). The second law was the Law for the Control of Buddhist Property. This law nationalized the Buddhist temples across the country and granted government the right to have impact

over economic condition of Buddhist temples and to maintain police agents in the temples. Although the power of government over temples was brought down a little after its modification in 1987, this law still keeps government's major control over temple economics and renovation activities. These two laws formed the basis of modern Buddhist tourism in Korea and also set the Buddhist tourism activities in Korea apart from those in the other Asian countries. It is the government control over Buddhist temples made the Temple Stay program in Korea feasible and special.

During the service of President Park, his government also sponsored some major reconstruction of Korean cultural assets. He personally directed the reconstruction of Kyongju Historic Area and endowed large sums of money on renovating Buddhist shrines and monuments, including turning Pulguk temple from ruins into a national symbol (Kaplan, 2010). After the mass restoration, tourism was promoted to bring people to these places.

Resulting from improved transportation system and growing economics, the number of tourists visiting temples increased dramatically and thus more intensive protection of the relics became necessary. A ticketing system, allowed by the Cultural Assets Preservation Law mentioned above, was established for many temples on the heritage lists to collect fees from visitors with an intention to fund the preservation of their assets. Haeinsa was the first temple that joined the tourism industry by carrying out this system. During 1960s to 1980s, numerous temples started to charge entrance fees. The entrance fee provided a common source of funding at the time. According to Kaplan, today there are about sixty-seven temples of the Jogye Order that charge entrance fees. Between 2001 and 2005,

31,511,107,397 won (more than thirty-one million U.S. dollars) of funding was contributed by entry tickets, while only 1,318,535,533 won (less than one and a half million U.S. dollars) came from the government for preservation activities.

Another significant element contributing to the growth of Buddhist tourism was the Korean national parks system introduced in 1967. Many natural destinations were recognized and converted into national parks by Korean government. While many Buddhist temple were used to be located in secluded mountainous areas, they were then finding themselves in the center of national parks, attracting lots of hikers and climbers in addition to the tourists. Also, the construction of the nearby infrastructures facilitated the tourists with easy accessibility to the temples (Kaplan, 2010).

Introduction and Development of Temple Stay program

Definition of temple stay.

The phenomenon of temple stay is widely seen today in many Asian countries such as China, Japan, Korea, Thailand and India, where Buddhism has been one of the major religions. With the main purpose used to be accommodating pilgrims and in house monks during early times, Buddhist temples nowadays are open to domestic and international tourists as well regardless of their beliefs.

Unorganized temple stay in other Asian countries.

Temple stay is not a unique phenomenon in South Korea. Many other Asian countries also perform actively in restoration and promotion of tourism on Buddhist heritage sites. United Nation has been helping with funding and administering the transformation of Buddhist sites into tourist attractions as well (Kaplan, 2010). However, temple stay in other

Asian countries stays officially unorganized. It differs in rules and flavors from country to country, or even temple to temple.

China.

In China, there are no official numbers about how many temples offering Temple Stay program for visitors. Tour guide would tell people that whether the temples provide accommodations or not could be shown through the gesture of Skanda Bodhisattva. The statue of Skanda Bodhisattva is usually located in the Hall of Heavenly Kings, at the back side of Meitreyā Buddha and facing Sakyamuni that in the Grand Hall. The pose of Skanda Bodhisattva is usually decided at the construction point of a temple, depending on the temple scale and rules. The gesture of the status Skanda Bodhisattva generally depicts the role the temple plays. If the Skanda Bodhisattva holds the pestle over his shoulder, or puts his two palms together and holds the pestle horizontally across his arms, it means the temple is either of big or medium size and is able to accommodate outside pilgrims and visitors. On the contrary, if the Skanda Bodhisattva gesture put his pestle against the ground with one hand and with the other hand on hip, it means the temple is of small size and does not provide accommodations to outside visitors (Dou, 2006).

However, the temple size and functions could be changed with the pass of time. Tourists could also simply ask the monks in Guest Reception area if accommodations are provided within the temple. Since there is no unified management over different temples, each temple decides how they would like to provide temple stay experience, so the cost and trip arrangements of different temples vary in great deal.

For example, Guang Jue Temple (T'ai Shen Centre, www.taishendo.com) located near

Shanghai offers basic courses of meditation retreats, mindfulness training, and introduction to pure Land Practice, and Guided Retreats in language of English, French and Chinese. The rate is based on donation, including vegetarian meals and accommodation. Another example of Bailin Temple (China Reflection, www.chinareflection.com) in Hebei offers a two day temple stay package including guided sightseeing, vegetarian meals, overnight stay and round trip transportation from and to Beijing, charging about \$200 per person. Shao Lin Temple (Shao Lin Martial Arts Academy, www.shaolins.com) even has its own certified academy that provides visitors and students with martial arts training from one month up to four years.

Japan.

Temple Stay in Japan has a special Japanese word for it - “Shukubo” - which specially refers to those temples or shrines offer accommodation facility for laity or tourists. Shukubo used to facilitate worshippers and followers, but now have become casual places where everyone can stay and learn. However, it is still not an officially organized program and tourists would not know which temple has function as “Shukubo” from any official sources.

Website “Temple Lodging in Japan” (<http://templelodging.com/>) contains the most information. According to the website, meditation is one of the major training courses offered by some temples. The vegetarian meals are offered in temples, which is completely away from meat or fish and reduces the using of seasonings. The website also summarizes some information about temple stay which includes location, transportation, telephone number, room capacity, check-in or check-out time, and a brief introduction for 117

Shukubos across the country.

Lacking a nationwide Temple Stay program, some tourist destinations organized the temple lodging information within its own area. For example, Mountain Koya (Koyasan), one of the famous Buddhist tourism destinations in Japan entitled by UNESCO as World Heritage Sites in 2004, has provided a list of lodging temples on its official websites (<http://www.shukubo.jp/eng/>). 52 temples are on the list which includes information about their capacity, parking and facilities. Reservations can only be made through faxing over the reservation form that is provided on the website.

Thailand.

Thailand is considered to be the “most Buddhist” country in the world. About 95 percent of the Thai population are Buddhists. Temples in Thailand are called “Wat”. Similar to many other Asian countries, there is no official program of temple stay. Visitors can find options for a Wat visit or stay in Bangkok, Phuket or Chang Mai in Thailand. A lot of Wats accept overnight stay there.

Since Buddhism is the national religion in Thailand, Thai people take their religion seriously and Buddhist life in Thailand could be very strict as well. “Overall, the goal is to be mindful and not concentrate on the standard civilian luxuries you are missing.” (Birkelbach, 2011)

Besides those mentioned above, temple stays exists in a lot of other East Asian countries as well, such as Myanmar, India, Bhutan, Bangladesh and Nepal (Kaplan, 2010). However, the Temple Stay program in Korea is still a unique concept that takes Buddhist tourism into a brand-new stage because of the close cooperation of Ministry of Culture and

Tourism and the Jogye order as well as the innovative branding approaches. Temple Stay program, initiated in 2002 during FIFA World Cup, has been well developed and promoted as a nationwide year-round tourist attraction in Korea.

Temple Stay program in Korea.

Introduction of Temple Stay program.

Buddhism in Korea, and probably in many other countries as well, has been facing the dilemma of maintaining the authenticity of its monastic basis while establishing close ties with the public. The Temple Stay program is the product of compromise. However, to reach at this compromise, Korea has experienced hundreds years of developments and changes in politics, history, legal regulations, and attitude of religious organization that was mentioned above in the history of Korean Buddhism and Korean Buddhist tourism.

“Temple Stay program” is defined slightly differently from “temple stay” here. While “temple stay” means overnight accommodation in a temple, sometimes with optional services added, “Temple Stay program” in this paper specifically refers to the comprehensive religious and cultural program initiated by Korean government and Korean religious organization in 2002. According to the definition of Cultural Corps of Korean Buddhism and Korea Tourism Organization, Temple Stay program is a unique cultural program designed to let people experience the life of Buddhist practitioners at traditional temples which preserve the 1700 year old history of Korean Buddhism and culture. Temple stays offer various kinds of practicing methods such as Yebul (ceremonial service involving chanting), Chamseon (Zen meditation), Dahdoh (tea ceremony) and Balwoo Gongyang (communal Buddhist meal service) (OECD, 2009)

Two groups played major roles in building up this special program: Korean Ministry of Culture and Tourism and Jogye Order. The cooperation between the two has significant meaning in preserving and promoting not only Korean Buddhism but also Korean culture, which is in combination called Koreanness by Uri Kaplan (2010)

Initiation of Temple Stay program.

The opportunity of Temple Stay program emerged in 2002 during FIFA World Cup co-hosted by Korea and Japan. In the year of 2002, Korea obtained much attention from the world. It received over 5 million tourists from outbound during the year (Korea Tourism Organization, <http://kto.visitkorea.or.kr>) and about 1.2 million travelers stayed overnight in Korea in the period of 2002 FIFA World Cup from May 31 to June 30 (Cho, 2005).

The emergence of the Temple Stay program was motivated by various considerations: 1) Government's concern over accommodation capacity for packs of tourists flowing in during the game; 2) Jogye Order's wishes to expand the influence of Korean Buddhism but maintain the authenticity; 3) the intention of Ministry of Culture and Tourism to differentiate and establish Korea's tourism image.

The concern over accommodation capacity was the most urgent problem at the time. It has been reported that special event participants, especially sports fans, were less affluent than typical tourists and more likely to spend less (Cho, 2005). Therefore, it requires that the accommodation offered to tourists to be worthy and of decent value. Moreover, the short-term feature of the sports game was another important consideration. Huge volume of accommodation specially designed and built for the event could cause over supply during post event period (Cho, 2005). Therefore, the idea of adapting the existing facility into

accommodation alternatives was raised into discussion. Temples became one of the best choices as they had been receiving worshippers and tourists for a long time in the Buddhist tourism history and also had sufficient capacity to house foreign travelers.

However, the concept received strong opposition when it was first presented to Jogye Order by Ministry of Culture and Tourism. Jogye Order, which had long insisted its authenticity and solid foundation of Buddhism, showed hesitation in receiving loud football fans in their tranquil temples. Surprisingly, as the negotiation between the Jogye Order and Ministry of Culture and Tourism went on, an interesting compromise was built. Temples agreed to provide not only accommodations but also cultural and spiritual experience as a package, which became the prototype of Temple Stay program. According to executive director of the Jogye Order, Korean Buddhist temples, which preserved 1700 years of history and traditions, were going to open the doors to tourists from all over the world, for them to realize “the inner self” and also taste “a slice of Korean culture”. Kaplan (2010) interpreted the words from the Jogye Order in a double intention: the Buddhist universalistic intention to spread its teachings to the public as well as the tourists’ nationalistic intention to experience Korean traditions.

In the research of Temple Stay program by Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, the idea of theme-based tourist attraction was mentioned. “A differentiated theme may capture the attention of potential visitors and may become an attraction in its own right if it is presented and interpreted well and is coupled with services that meet visitors’ requirements”(OECD, 2009). Temple stay was taken as a typical example in the research. What Temple Stay program brings and establishes is also what

Korean Ministry of Culture and Tourism wishes to accomplish: establishing Korea's unique image through developing religious/cultural tourism.

Carried with the threefold motivation and expectation, temples stay program took its first attempt during the 2002 FIFA World Cup.

Attempts of Temple Stay program during special events.

The first attempt of Temple Stay program was launched during 2002 FIFA World Cup. Temples housed 952 international participants in total during the thirty-two-day event as published by Korean Ministry of Culture and Tourism (Cho, 2005). Although it did not reach the expected popularity that forty-five thousands tourists would attend this program during the game, the process of Temple Stay program went smoothly and it received many enthusiastic replies from the participants. (Kaplan, 2010)

After evaluated the positive feedback from the first attempt, Jogye Order decided to run the program once again. The second attempt was carried out soon after the first one during the 2002 Asian Games held in Busan city from September 29 to October 14, 2002. Fourteen temples located in Busan area were formally announces their involvement in providing Temple Stay program from September 26 to October 30, 2002. Different from the first attempt, Koreans were also welcomed to attend to program. This time turned out to be more successful that 1,567 visitors chose to join the Temple Stay program in thirty-six days.

The program was paused after the second attempt for a while due to the resistance expressed from Jogye Order. However, after a half year's negotiation and reconsideration, the program resumes within one year in Daegu Universiade (World University Games).

Sixteen temples in Daegu area accommodated 3,755 tourists between July 2003 and December 2003.

Although the number of tourists participated in Temple Stay program severely increased every time, Temple Stay program had been a seasonal program accompanying with the special events before the establishment of Cultural Corps of Korean Buddhism in 2004.

Temple Stay program turned into formal tourist attraction.

The founding of Cultural Corps of Korean Buddhism in 2004 brought Temple Stay program into a new stage. The organization was partly affiliated with Jogye Order: it does not belong to any of the five main divisions under Jogye Order but it reports directly to the president of Jogye Order. Meanwhile, the organization is also partly funded by Ministry of Culture and Tourism. Therefore, the new affiliation functions as a bridge between the government and the religious organization. It is in charge of creating temple souvenirs and other Buddhist products, producing temple websites and administering Temple Stay program. In 2004, Temple Stay Committee had moved from the propagation division to Cultural Corps of Korean Buddhism (Kaplan, 2010). This marked the beginning of strengthening relationship between Temple Stay program and Ministry of Culture and Tourism, as well as the transition of the objective of temple stay program from Buddhism propagation to cultural presentation.

In 2004, Temple Stay program was first time turned into a year-round tourist activity. Thirty-six temples nationwide participated in the program and received a total of 36,902 tourists from both domestic and international in 2004.

Since then, the figures of both tourists and temples participated in the Temple Stay program have seen dramatic increase as shown in Table 1. Temple Stay program gradually stepped into maturity. Several official websites with multiple language information related with Temple Stay program have been developed and an online reservation system was established as indicated in Table 2. Temple stay committee had made a ten-year development plan for Temple Stay program from 2005 to 2015 (Kaplan, 2010). A new temple stay quarterly magazine “Lotus Lantern” has been publishing since the spring of 2009 and a yearly temple stay festival “Lotus Lantern Festival” has been held in every May.

Government has also played an active role in funding and promoting Temple Stay program, holding a purpose to differentiate Korean tourism image and make it attractive and competitive. In 2007, more than 1.5 billion won (\$1.3 million U.S. Dollar) was provided from Tourism Development Fund to promote the Temple Stay program. Funds were used to develop infrastructure (such as accommodation facilities, roads, toilets, etc.), publish promotional materials such as guide books, videos, magazines, conduct FAM (familiarization) tour, training program and so on. The Korean government would finance the Temple Stay program with more than 248.9 billion won (\$223 million U.S. Dollar) within ten years to develop cultural tourism in Korea (OECD, 2009).

As Temple Stay program officially become a tourists attraction, travel agencies have also joined the promotion effort. Travel companies such as Goway and Tour East Holidays offer temple stay as an adjunct product or as part of a general tour package to Korea to individuals, couples, and small groups (Gould, 2010).

Table 1

Temple Stay program Participation (Temples and Tourists)

Year	Temples	Period of Running	Locals	Foreigners	Total
2002 World Cup	33	42 days (May 20- Jun 1)	N/A	991	991
2002 Asian Games	14	36 days (Sept 26 – Oct 30)	1,299	268	1,567
2003 Universiade	16	180 days (Jul – Dec)	N/A	N/A	3,755
2004	36	366 days	33,695	3,207	36,902
2005	41	365 days	45,033	6,528	51,561
2006	50	365 days	61,417	9,497	70,914
2007	73	90 days (Jan – Mar)	9,899	1,145	11,044
2009	87	365 days	N/A	N/A	N/A
2015 (estimate)	100	365 days	N/A	N/A	455,092

Source: Kaplan, 2010

Table 2

Official Websites related with Temple Stay program

Name	Organization	Website Address	Language
Temple Stay (with reservation system)	Temple Stay Committee, Cultural Corps of Korean Buddhism	www.templestay.com	Korean, English, Japanese, Chinese, French, German, Spanish
Jogye Order of Korean	Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism	www.koreanbuddhism.net	English, Japanese, Chinese

Buddhism			
Korea Temple	Korea Temple	www.koreatemple.net	Korean, English
MCST	Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism	www.mct.go.kr	Korean, English, Chinese, Japanese, Spanish, Vietnamese
Lotus Lantern Festival	Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism	www.llf.or.kr	English, Japanese, Chinese, French, German, Spanish

Typical temple stay activities.

According to the research conducted by OECD (2009), major religious activities in the Temple Stay program include attending the Buddhist ceremonial service involving chanting (Yebul), Zen meditation (Chamseon), tea ceremonies (Dahdoh) that elevate one's meditative efforts, communal Buddhist meals offering (Balwoo Gongyang), and community work (ullyok). Other activities related with Buddhist life offered by most temples include Buddhist martial arts training, lotus lantern-making, Buddhist prayer bead (yomju) making, informative tours around the temple grounds, forest meditation to maximize oneness with nature, and hikes to nearby hermitages (OECD, 2009; Kaplan, 2010).

Based on the tourism feature of Temple Stay program, Ministry of Culture and Tourism and Jogye Order also encouraged temples to develop their own special temple stay agendas. Many temples developed various activities concerning arts and crafts, culinary arts and festivals as referred in Table 3. These made the temple stay program carry on more

cultural meaning. The traditions of Korean society have been reintroduced into temples exclusively as heritage displays. With further support and funding from the ministry, it is likely that numerous other heritage programs will be introduced to the temples, with an increasing focus on Korean traditional cultural contents (Kaplan, 2010).

Table 3

Special Activities for Tourists of Temple Stay program

Temple Name	Special Activities
Kapsa	Music experience of four Dharma instruments; making copies of historical scripture; Korean ceramic art experience.
Taehungsa	Crafting of Korean woodcut signboards.
Chondungsa	Making traditional Korean paper crafts.
Popchusa	Making natural soap in traditional methods.
Kuryongsa	Traditional natural method of cloth dyeing.
Chin'gwansa	Making traditional rice cakes (ttok).
Samunsa	Crafting of Korean traditional envelopes.
Sudosa	Traditional cooking with equipped kitchen classroom.
Hongbopsa	Ha Na Rae Culture Incorporation: traditional drum dancing, pottery, Korean mask dance, Korean paper art and kite making, and preparing traditional Korean bean paste.
Other temples	Seasonal Temple Stay program: Making kimchi during kimchi season in December; making dumplings during New Year Temple Stay program (Kolgalsa); Tripitaka festival Temple Stay program (Haeinsa).

Source: Kaplan, 2010

Regardless of numerous activities provided within the program, typical religious temple stay agenda is usually strict. Tourists are provided with robes as uniform throughout the temple stay. Bell chanting at around 3:30am marked the beginning of the day. Followed is the ritual of 108 bows to relive disturbing thoughts and worldly desires. Meals are only offered twice a day: breakfast and lunch, both of which are served in a formal way with four bowls and each with a specific function and meaning. Usually no waste is allowed and no dinner is served but some snacks (Anderson, 2005; Gould, 2010). Besides chanting, bowing, meals and work period, meditation is another important activity on schedule. “Sitting meditation could be done in two or three hours blocks, consisting of thirty to forty minutes of sitting or standing, alternated with ten minutes of walking meditation” (Anderson, 2005). Lights go out at around 9:30pm after the evening chanting (Gould, 2010).

Temple Stay program international tourists analysis.

In order to get a deeper insight of the temple stay program and its effect, a major survey to investigate visitors’ experience and perception towards Temple Stay program was carried out between October and December in 2007. A total of 360 questionnaires were collected from foreign visitors. There are several interesting findings by utilizing and analyzing the existing data from the survey.

Table 4

International Participants Religious Distribution

Religion	Number	Percentage
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Buddhists	22	6.1%
Catholic	84	23.3%
Christians	60	16.7%
Muslim	3	0.8%
No Religion	71	19.7%
Other Religion	79	21.9%

Source: OECD 2009

As shown in Table 4, the religious distribution of the temple stay participants indicates that Catholic (23.3%), Christians (16.7%) and Other religion (21.9%) become the major religious group in Temple Stay program. Besides, people without any religious belief account for a major part (19.7%), too. The distribution implies Temple Stay program is more likely to be viewed as a cultural tourism attraction instead of a religious activity. Temple Stay program draws attention from people who share different beliefs to get together to enjoy Korean traditions rather than practice religions. In this way, not only Korean Buddhism benefits from the innovative approach to spread its teachings and influence unconsciously, but also Korean image has been carried forward.

Table 5

Motivations for Participating in Temple Stay program

Items	1 st Motivation	2 nd Motivation
Experience Korean Traditional Culture (Buddhism)	55.8%	13.6 %
Have leisure time in Temple	2.5 %	6.7 %
Interest in Buddhism	21.1 %	14.7 %

Escape from daily routine	2.8 %	6.4 %
Leisure time for relieving tension and fatigue	1.4 %	4.2 %
Desire to have an opportunity for self-reflection	5.8 %	15.0 %
Appreciation of beautiful scenery	1.1 %	8.3 %
Interest in religion, philosophy	8.1 %	17.2 %
Others	0.6 %	5.8 %
No answer	0.8 %	8.1 %
Total	100 %	100 %

Source: OECD, 2009

Table 5 demonstrated an overwhelming of 55.8% of respondents identified their first motivation as “Experience Korean Traditional Culture”. Table 6 indicated the major benefits were “New cultural experience (Buddhism)” (54.2%) and “Understanding Korean traditional culture” (28.6%). The result perfectly matches the intent of marketing for Temple Stay program, which is to demonstrate Korean culture through comprehensive temple stay experience. Meanwhile, the double intention of Temple Stay program mentioned earlier is also reflected through the data: the first motivation was mostly to taste Korean culture and the second motivation was mainly related with religious effect, such as “interested in religion and philosophy” and “desire for self-reflection”.

Table 6

Benefits from Temple Stay program Participation

Items	1 st Benefit	2 nd Benefit
New cultural experience (Buddhism)	54.2 %	8.3 %

Understanding Korean traditional culture	9.2 %	28.6 %
Enhancing interest in Buddhism	7.5 %	13.9 %
Understanding tourist destination around temple	N/A	1.1 %
Leisure time for relieving tension	1.1 %	5.8 %
Opportunity for self-reflection	7.8 %	13.6 %
Appreciation of beautiful scenery	2.8 %	8.1 %
Others	4.3 %	2.8 %
No answer	13.1 %	17.8 %
Total	100 %	100 %

Source: OECD, 2009

Table 7

Barriers for Participating in Temple Stay program

Barriers	Number	Percentage
Lack of time	144	40.0 %
Lack of money	11	3.1 %
Inconvenient transportation	33	9.2 %
Lack of information	105	29.2 %
Religious reason	28	7.8 %
Others	23	6.4 %
No answer	16	4.4 %
Total	360	100 %

Source: OECD, 2009

Barriers that prevent tourists or set inconvenience for tourists from attending Temple Stay program shown in Table 6 indicated direction of improvements. Time (40%), information (29.2) and transportation (9.2%) were three major concerns from the tourists in this survey of 2007. It could explain why millions U.S. Dollar of funding was donated by the government for Temple Stay program in 2007 and afterwards. The major part of the funding has been used on infrastructure improvement and temple stay promotion. Online reservation system was built hence.

The findings restate the pioneering meanings of Temple Stay program. Temple Stay program has become a comprehensive display of Korean traditions in religion, culture and society. Its prosperity signifies the successful cooperation and innovation of Jogye Order and Korean Ministry of Culture and Tourism. According to OECD (2009), the Temple Stay program is a unique cultural resource that has gained iconic status in the Republic of Korea and enhanced both the concept of Buddhism and its host territories of Korea within a relatively short period of time

Part Three

Summary of Temple Stay Phenomenon and Temple Stay Program

As mentioned above, temple stay is a prevailing phenomenon in numerous East Asian countries, such as Japan, China, Thailand, Myanmar, India, Bhutan, Bangladesh and Nepal (Kaplan, 2010). In most countries, temple stay remains self-administered by either individual Buddhist temple or single scenic area. Therefore, accommodation facilities, temple activities, infrastructure conditions and travel information could be inconsistent or inconvenient to access.

Temple Stay program in Korea has become a more mature tourist product compared with those in the other countries. It is a national program sponsored by Korean Ministry of Culture and Tourism and the country's leading religious organization Jogye Order. Temple Stay program was initiated in 2002 during FIFA World Cup to accommodate excessive international tourists and then gradually became a year-round program to expand the influence of traditional Korean culture and Buddhism, as well as establish a unique image for Korean tourism industry. So far, it has achieved the expected effect and will anticipate nearly half million domestic and international temple stay participants in 2015 in its ten-year plan (Kaplan, 2010). Several marketing strategies have been developed to promote Temple Stay program to reach new heights. The success of Temple Stay program has close connection with Korean Buddhist history, and occurrences of several laws and incidents.

Historical impacts on Temple Stay program in classic Korea.

From a vertical perspective, Korea Buddhist history has definitely had an impact on formation of Temple Stay program.

Introduced in Korea in year 372 during Three Kingdom Era by Goguryeo Kingdom, Buddhism had since been regarded as national religion until the end of Goryeo Dynasty in year 1392 (Jang, 2009). Dominators of the country took advantages of Buddhism to consolidate their regimes every time after the war, because the teachings of Buddhism aimed at promoting peaceful and compatible society. Throughout the prosperity period of Buddhism, many achievements had been attained: major Buddhist temples, pagodas and statues were built, a great deal of Buddhist philosophers emerged, a large number of Buddhist academic studies were accomplished, and Buddhist practitioners “Sangha” received great economic and policy support from government (Jang, 2009). The success of Buddhism at the time had provided abundant cultural, architectural and traditional resources for today’s Temple Stay program. In official definition of Temple Stay program, 1700 years history of Korean Buddhism and culture was cited in particular (Temple Stay, www.templestay.com). Meanwhile, Buddhist tourism emerged at the time because religious pilgrimages to the Buddhist temples that located away from the secular world were highly encouraged.

Started from Joseon Dynasty in year 1392, Buddhism in Korea experienced the downturn that resulted from the royal’s favor for Confucianism. Between year 1392 and year 1897 (Joseon Dynasty), ordination was completely banned at one time, the number of open temples was trimmed down, and monks were not allowed to enter urban area (Jang, 2009; Kaplan, 2010). Severe suppression implemented on Buddhism during the period unconsciously converted the role of Buddhist temples and monks from religious affiliations to primitive tourism provider. Under the influence of Confucianism, which attach important

meanings to integration of nature and human beings, people started to visit the remote landscape around temples to appreciate the beauty of nature. Buddhist temples took the responsibilities of receiving, accommodating and catering those visitors. Multiple services provided by monks were illustrated in 30 classic travelogues written in Joseon Dynasty, including accommodation, meal preparation, tour guide and so on, which were the prototype of temple stay activities today (Lee, 2006).

Critical elements for Temple Stay program in modern Korea.

After Joseon Dynasty, Buddhism in modern Korea gradually regained its presence started its revitalization. There were several regulations and incidents which had particular impact on shaping temple stay in modern Korea from 1910s to 1980s ((Kaplan, 2010)).

Three regulations.

The first one was “Regulations on the Preservation of Ancient Sites and Relics of Chosen” by Japanese colonial government. Sadly, the process started under the rule of Japanese colonial power, which did enforce lots of negative influence on Korean Buddhism and culture. However, the regulation did help to preserve Korean heritage. Under the regulation, government started to investigate archeological remains, maintain, monitor and rebuild monuments, register “national treasure”, improve infrastructure for tourist sites, and establish museums in Korea. By the end of colonial age in 1945, nearly six hundred of heritage items were registered in “Korean National Treasure” list under the Regulations with a majority of Buddhist items.

The second one and the third one were “Cultural Assets Preservation Law” and “Law for the Control of Buddhist Property” by Park Chung-Hee and Korean government in 1962.

Under Cultural Assets Preservation Law, official action of reorganizing, registering and appending the heritage list was carried out. Korean cultural heritage was acknowledged by government, reconstructed, awarded a national certificate of authenticity, and commercialized for the tourism industry. With the help of Law for the Control of Buddhist Property, Buddhist temples across the country were nationalized and government kept major control over economic condition and renovation activities of Buddhist temples

The actions under the regulations above definitely provided temple stay with material prerequisites and offered Korean government a general control over monasteries, so that the cooperation with Jogye Order becomes feasible. These laws formed the basis of modern Buddhist tourism in Korea and made Buddhist tourism activities in Korea special.

Two systems.

The first one was “temple ticketing system”. The system was derived from Cultural Assets Preservation Law in 1962 and allowed Buddhist temples to collect entrance fees from visitors to preserve religious and cultural assets. The practice has been used until now, which supplies temples with three fourth of the funds with the other quarter comes from government.

The second was “Korean national parks system” introduced in 1967. Many remote natural destinations where temples located were recognized and converted into national parks by Korean government. Temple visits from tourists and hikers increased for the fame of national parks. The improved infrastructures facilitated the tourists with easy accessibility to the temples.

The introduction of these two systems established close ties between Buddhist temples

and tourism industry, which prepared temples for receiving tourists and providing Temple Stay program afterwards.

One announcement.

The announcement refers to Jogye Order's formal claim on building up its relationship with laity in 1980s. Since then, various authentic lectures and training classes had been provided in urban area and temple stay had been open to lay people who visit mountain monasteries. The announcement manifests the attitude change of Jogye Order from insistence on its strict authenticity to interaction with public society, which made it feasible for the following cooperation with Ministry of Culture and Tourism.

Uniqueness of Temple stay program.

Based on the above mentioned preconditions, the unique Temple Stay program could be implemented. Under the management of one Temple Stay Office co-administered by Ministry of Culture and Tourism and Jogye Order, the program could accomplish unified events and promotion, conduct systematical maintenance and construction, develop diversified activities in different temples, and integrate the religious practice with cultural experience to make it a more complete and mature tourism product. This could not be achieved in the other countries which lack of organized support from government and nationwide religious organization. Therefore, Temple Stay program in Korea could provide tourists, especially international tourists, with more reliable information, more comprehensive experience, more accessible destinations and greater safety and security.

Since its first attempt in 2002, the number of temples participated in the program has been almost tripled from thirty three to almost ninety; the number of tourists increased

from less than one thousand to over seventy thousand. By 2015, Korean government expects one hundred temple participants with about half million domestic and international tourists. During the past ten years, three specialized websites have been established, one ten-year plan for Temple Stay program has been created, one quarterly magazine has been published and one festival has been held annually. The Korean government would finance the Temple Stay program with more than 248.9 billion won (\$223 million U.S. Dollar) within ten years to develop cultural tourism in Korea (OECD, 2009).

Benefits, Criticism and Conclusion

Benefits and Criticism.

Without doubt, temple stay program brought numerous benefits to Korean government, Korean Buddhism and Tourists. Criticism is received as well.

For Korean government, Temple Stay program helps to establish a fresh identity of Korean tourism industry and even Korea as a country. OECD's research in 2009 mentioned that foreigners who held a unilateral view towards Korea from Korean War return home with a new perspective of Korea. Kaplan (2010) also found through a participants satisfaction survey that Temple Stay program, branded to reflect comprehensive image of Korean culture, nature and traditions rather than strictly Buddhism, definitely attracts and satisfies a greater variety of participants. Temple Stay program also conveys an economic effect. As a bundle tourism product of themed attractions, the economic benefit of religious tourism is dispersed more widely. As mentioned above, even solely entrance fee collected by temples is able to fund the most of their assets preservation, which release the burden from Korean government. Temple Stay program is regarded as a sustainable tourism

product as well because it is “environmentally-sound, socio-culturally identifiable, and economically viable” (OECD, 2009).

For Korean Buddhism, Temple Stay program assist in expanding its influence worldwide and in maintaining temples operation. Galmiche (2010) described in his research that temporary monastic experiences “bring lay devotees and monastics closer”. In a survey carried out by OECD in 2007, about one fifth of the participants feel Temple Stay program enhanced the interest in Buddhism. OECD (2009) concludes that Temple Stay program raises the private religious organization’s ability to increase attractiveness of religious sites, and supports private religious organizations to overcome investment and upgrading shortage through public capital and administrative support.

For tourists, Temple Stay program offered an inexpensive and stress-free option for holiday and vacations with reliable information and security. Officially organized program and certified tour operators make the tourists feel more comfortable while making decisions. For example, Korea Tourism Organization’s office in U.S. reaches out to U.S. travel retailers and helps to organize groups that range from twenty to fifty and bring them in Korea for Temple Stay experience. “About 630, 000 Americans are projected to visit South Korea in 2009, which is a 3% increased from 2008”. (Kiesnoski, 2009)

Criticism on Temple Stay program mainly focuses on keeping authenticity of Korean Buddhism. In Kaplan’s (2010) research, critics from Myra Shackley and Henrik Sorensen were discussed. Some scholars think that retailing of religious places for mass tourism requires monks to provide many services that are not related with Buddhism and will thus diminish quality of religious spirit.

Conclusion.

In conclusion, Temple Stay program in Korea is a unique and comparatively mature tourism product. The win-win success of Temple Stay program brings out a fresh perspective on cooperation between government and religious organization in developing religious or cultural tourism. It could have future implication on collaborative work between government and any private associations. Tourism could be utilized by government to establish a national identity, preserve traditions and heritage, and generate economic effect, as well as by religious organization to expand its influence, improve public relationship, and gain economic support. The cooperation between Jogye Order and Ministry of Culture and Tourism has been set a positive example for tourism development in the other country or in the other fields.

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