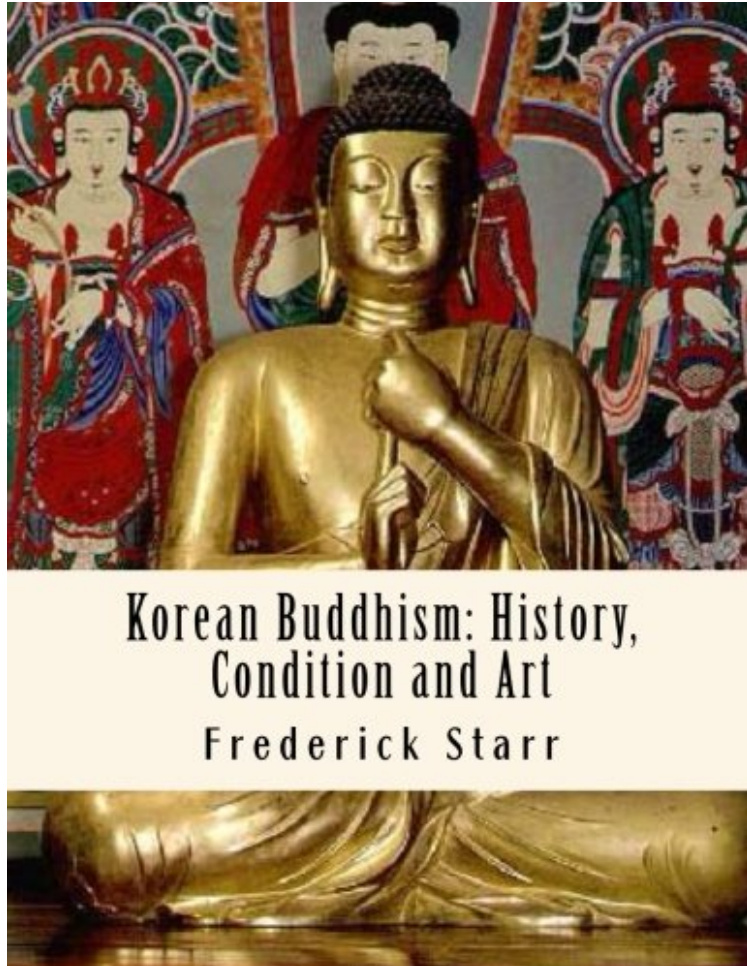


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## Korean Buddhism: History, Condition and Art: Religious Classics

*Frederick Starr*

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Korean Buddhism is distinguished from other forms of Buddhism by its attempt to resolve what it sees as inconsistencies in Mahayana Buddhism. Early Korean monks believed that the traditions they received from foreign countries were internally inconsistent. To address this, they developed a new holistic approach to Buddhism. This approach is characteristic of virtually all major Korean thinkers, and has resulted in a distinct variation of Buddhism,

which is called Tongbulgyo ("interpenetrated Buddhism"), a form that sought to harmonize all disputes by Korean scholars. Korean Buddhist thinkers refined their predecessors' ideas into a distinct form. As it now stands, Korean Buddhism consists mostly of the Seon lineage, primarily represented by the Jogye and Taego Orders. The Korean Seon has a strong relationship with other Mahayana traditions that bear the imprint of Chan teachings as well as the closely related Zen. Other sects, such as the modern revival of the Cheontae lineage, the Jingak Order, a modern esoteric sect, and the newly formed Won, have also attracted sizable followings. Korean Buddhism has also contributed much to East Asian Buddhism, especially to early Chinese, Japanese, and Tibetan schools of Buddhist thought.

About the Author Frederick Starr (September 2, 1858 August 14, 1933) was an American academic, anthropologist, and "populist educator" born at Auburn, New York. As he was avid collector of charms (ofuda) and votive stickers (senjafuda) he was called Dr. Ofuda