

Through Many Dynasties

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auspicious grave-site has been of paramount concern to Koreans. Many people selected sites for their graves even while they were still alive. Grave-sites have been the cause of many bloody conflicts in Korean history, among both the nobility and the common people. Overall, finding a proper grave-site came to be more important and popular in Korean geomancy than finding a suitable dwelling-place. This no doubt has to do with the Confucian world-view that the existence of "I" does not terminate with the death of a person but continues living through the descendants.

Ever since the introduction of geomancy into Korea, there

has been an intimate relationship between the geomantic world-view and the social ethic of Buddhism. The connection between making harmony with a geographic location and making harmony with people around you is a logical and organic one. Even in the worst years of Buddhism's persecution by Korean Confucianists, the idea of making harmony with your surroundings retained a strong hold on the Korean mind.

Overall, geomancy has encouraged a world-view in which human beings and nature can both be passive and active at the same time. Once the harmony is established in a site, humans should keep an unchanging relationship by avoiding significant interferences with nature. Thus geomancy encourages a stable (but not static) rather than a radically changing way of life. □

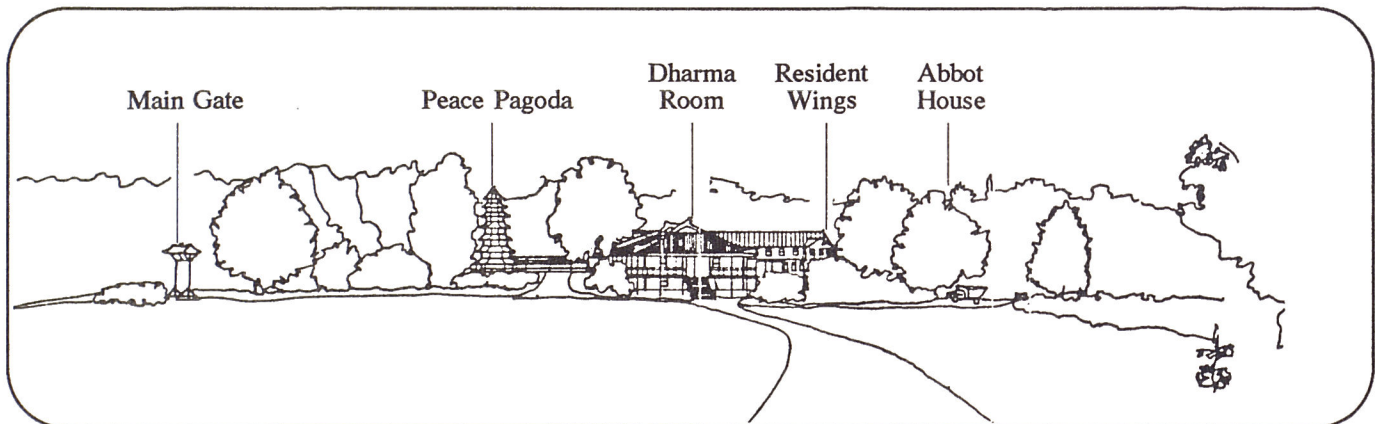
GEOMANCY

Balancing the Energy at Providence Zen Center

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The location and design of the buildings at Providence Zen Center have been strongly influenced by geomantic principles. Ideally a temple site would be encircled by a "Blue Dragon" and a "White Tiger" much like a mother's arms surround and protect a young child. The location of the Diamond Hill Zen Monastery demonstrates these characteristics and thereby provides an environment for meditation practice which is sheltered from the concerns of the outside world and whose energy is nurturing and supportive. The monastery is fronted by a large pond fed by a meandering stream, both of which encourage the accumulation of vital ch'i. The curvilinear design of the Monastery's traditional Korean roof is also intended to retain beneficial ch'i.

The newest projects at Providence Zen Center, the Peace Pagoda and a pond in front of the main Dharma Hall, are both being planned in accordance with geomantic principles. The Peace Pagoda symbolizes our great vow and direction — to relieve the



The Peace Pagoda under construction at Providence Zen Center will balance the geomancy of the complex.

suffering of this world. The design and location of the Pagoda has taken into account geomantic principles of geographic harmony and a balanced relationship with existing structures. Its location is intended to accumulate and enhance the energy flowing from the surrounding hills. Its location and size will also correct a present asymmetry within our existing buildings, creating a more harmonious energy relationship.

Geomancy is a very interesting body of ancient wisdom, leading to some very useful and helpful insights into how to live in a harmonious way. However, Zen means not being dependent on anything. Most important is keeping a mind which is clear and helping others; this is our practice. If we become attached to good geomancy, energy, or anything, then we have already created a hindrance. In many ways a situation which is not so good can also be helpful to our practice since it allows us to see ourselves more clearly. As an Ancient Worthy once noted, the most beautiful lotus flowers emerge from the most murky swamps. □