

Chapter 5 : Wŏnhyo's Philosophical Thought

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Chapter 5

Wŏnhyo's Philosophical Thought*

Chong-hong Pak

RESOLVING BUDDHIST DOCTRINAL CONTROVERSIES

Wŏnhyo is rather well known for establishing the foundation for new and

The late Chong-hong Pak was an Emeritus professor of Seoul National University. This article was translated by Robert E. Buswell, Jr.

*Translator's introduction: This is an edited translation of Pak Chong-hong's "Wŏnhyo ūi ch'ŏrhak sasang," an article that first appeared in his *Han'guk sasangsa* (History of Korean Thought) (Seoul: Ilinsin, 1966), 59-88; it was reprinted in his *Han'guk sasangsa: Pulgyo sasang p'yŏn* (History of Korean Thought: Buddhism), Sŏmun mun'go, no. 11 (Seoul, 1972), 85-127. Much of Prof. Pak's article involves Korean readings of passages from Wŏnhyo's works, which he then cites verbatim in their original Sino-Korean. I have tried to emulate Prof. Pak's strict standards of philological accuracy in preparing the translations from Wŏnhyo's writings that appear herein; to avoid needless repetition, however, I liberally paraphrase Pak's Korean glosses so as to clarify the implications raised in those passages. I hope that this more paraphrastic translation of the Korean will help to ring out better the insights presented in Prof. Pak's classic study.

Pak cites all of Wŏnhyo's works from the ten-volume anthology, *Wŏnhyo's taesa chŏnjip* (The Complete Works of the Great Master Wŏnhyo), *Silla pulgyo chŏnsŏ*, no. 1 (The Complete Writings of Silla Buddhism) (Seoul: Tongguk University, 1949); the only exception is *Kŭmgang sammaegyŏng non*, which Pak cites from the Tongguk University photolithographic reprint, edited by Paek Sŏng-uk (Seoul: Tongguk munhwasa, 1958). As those two editions are not easily available outside Korea, I have also cited editions of Wŏnhyo's texts that are included in *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* (Taishō Revised Edition of the Buddhist Canon) (hereafter T), ed. Takakusu Junjirō and Watanabe Kaikyoku (Tokyo: *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō kankōkai*, 1924-1935), and the *Dai-Nihon zokuzōkyō* (Japanese Supplement to the Canon), cited from the Hong Kong reprint, *Hsü tsang-ching* (hereafter HTC) (Hong Kong: Hsaing-kang ying-yin Hsü-tsang-ching hui, 1967). T is cited by the text's sequential number, page, register, and line (where relevant); HTC by volume number, page, register, and line. The author's own notes will be indicated as such in brackets; all other notes are the translator's.

epoch-making developments in Korean thought. This he accomplished by synthesizing the various Buddhist schools that had been transmitted to Korea during the Three Kingdoms period into a unified system of Buddhist thought, and then acting this out in person amid the ordinary life of the Korean people. His place in Korean history is so great that legends have been told about him and his talents in miracle-working. In this article, however, rather than focusing on mythical tales that may stretch credulity, I intend to elucidate exclusively the philosophical aspects of his thought by drawing on his extant works.

While the Buddha Śākyamuni was still alive, relatively few doctrinal disputes arose within the Buddhist religion, for people heard his sermons personally and could thus realize for themselves their true significance. By the time Buddhism was transmitted to Korea, however, several centuries had already passed and the religion had been widely disseminated; accordingly, a number of variant theories had appeared. If one group were to make exclusive claims for the orthodoxy of its dogma, while rejecting those of all other groups, then its rivals would challenge it. This process created persistent controversies between the various schools of Buddhism. The most basic feature of Wŏnhyo's thought was its attempt to unify these disparate views and to resolve the controversies within Buddhism, just when these long-simmering controversies had escalated into a threat to the viability of the religion itself.

The preface to Wŏnhyo's *Simmun Hwajaeng-non* (Ten Approaches to the Reconciliation of Doctrinal Controversy) reveals his concern over this state of affairs:

These vain theories diffused like clouds. Some claimed they were right while others were wrong, or that they were correct while others were incorrect. Thus these claims became more and more farfetched.¹

As an official remonstrance states,

These contradictions and controversies had persisted for years. It was finally the Venerable Hyo, born during the Silla period, who resolved the controversies between the hundred schools [of Buddhist scholasticism] and synthesized the *termini* of the two approaches.²

¹ *Simmun hwajaeng non*, in *Chŏnjip* 10: 36. This text has been reconstructed by Yi Chong-ik in his *Wŏnhyo ŭi kūnbon sasang: Simmun hwajaeng non yŏn'gu* (Wŏnhyo's Fundamental Philosophy: Studies in the Ten Approaches to the Reconciliation of Doctrinal Controversy), Tongbang sasang kaenin nonmunjip, 1 (Seoul: Tongbang sasang yŏn'guwŏn, 1977).

² Sŏ Kŏ-jŏng (1420-1488), comp. *Tongmun sŏn* (Anthology of Korean Literature), ed. Chosŏn kosŏ

In this quotation, the “two approaches” refers to two of the variant soteriological strategies taught in Buddhism: an active approach (*via positiva*), in which one strives to perfect all of the virtues incumbent on one intent on enlightenment, and a passive approach (*via negativa*), in which one attempts to return to the source of being through introspective techniques. These Wŏnhyo termed respectively the “bringing into being” (*saenggi*) and “return to the source” (*kwiwŏn*) approaches, or the “perfect the myriad virtues” (*sŏngmandŏk*) and “return to the one mind” (*kwiilsim*) approaches. While active and passive obviously differ, Wŏnhyo sought to demonstrate how they might complement each other, and taught instead an unimpeded (*muae*) approach to the dharma.³

These two strategies are discussed in Wŏnhyo's *Yŏlbyangyŏng chonggyo* (Thematic Essentials of the *Mahāparinirvānasūtra*):

There are, in brief, two approaches to the myriads of virtues of the *buddhabhūmi*. [First,] the approach that abandons “characteristics” and returns to the one mind. Because the characteristics of all meritorious actions are identical to the *dharmadhātu*, one's words will be merely the absolute truth, and one's body will have no material characteristics or any discriminative sensory spheres. [Second,] the approach that relies on the nature in order to complete the myriad virtues. Because there are none of the material and mental virtues with which one is not endowed, it is said that [the Buddha] is endowed with immeasurable major and minor marks and regalia. Although there are two approaches, they have no contradictory characteristics. Therefore, all theories are unimpeded, and reveal, in this wise, an unimpeded approach to the dharma.⁴

kanhaeng-hoe (Seoul: Kyŏnghŭi University Press, 1966-1967), vol. 1, *kwŏn* 27: 24, lines 7-9.

³ Kyŏndŭng (d.u.; ca. Silla period) notes:

Kuryong's (Wŏnhyo) *Hwajaengnon* states, “Now, there are, in brief, two approaches to the myriads of virtues of the *buddhabhūmi*. [First,] if one follows the approach that strives to develop [merits] from the standpoint of causes and in this wise seeks to requite the Buddha's virtues, then those will arise and cease in a moment. What previous masters discussed involved this approach. [Second,] if one follows the approach that returns to the source through bringing an end to conditioning and in this wise seeks to requite the Buddha's virtues, then one is fully absorbed in constant abiding [in meditation]. What later masters discussed also involved this approach. Each and every virtue involves these two approaches. Thus these two approaches are mutually inclusive and do not infringe on one another.” *Taesŭng kisillon t'ongi yakchip* 1, in HTC 71.368a2-6. [Author's note.]

This passage does not appear in the extant fragments of the *Simmun hwajaeng non*. It probably appeared in the ninth section, “Pulsin i ūi hwajaengmun” (“Resolving Controversy about the Different Meanings of the Bodies of the Buddhas”); see Yi Chong-ik, “Wŏnhyo ūi kunbon sasang,” 22-23.

⁴ *Yŏlban'gyŏng chongyo*, T 1769-245b: 14-19; *Chŏnjip* 1: 38.

ANALYTICAL AND SYNCRETIC APPROACHES TO BUDDHISM
AND WŎNHYO'S "THEMATIC ESSENTIALS" (*CHONGYO*)

What then were the plausible bases upon which Wŏnhyo developed his syncretic philosophy? For one who sought to unify the various strata of the Buddhist scriptures and to harmonize the variant approaches to Buddhist thought, the controversies that had plagued the many Buddhist schools had to be resolved. As Wŏnhyo's *Yŏlban'gyŏng chongyo* states, "One must combine the different sections of the canon and return to the 'single taste' of the hundreds of streams. One must expose the absolutely public [nature of the Buddhist teachings] and resolve the controversies between the hundreds of schools."⁵

Wŏnhyo composed on the order of seventeen different works entitled "Thematic Essentials" (*chongyo*), including the *Pŏphwagyŏng chongyo* (Thematic Essentials of the *Saddharmapundarikāsūtra*) as well as the *Yŏlban'gyŏng chongyo* I have already cited.⁶ The "theme" (*chong*) in "thematic essentials" opens up the many parts of a text for analysis, while the "essentials" (*yo*) combines those parts into their overriding ideas. "Thematic essentials" is no different than "analysis and synthesis" (*kaehap*). "Analysis" (lit. "open"; *kae*) opens up to the reader the vast numbers of different ideas presented in a text, while "synthesis" (lit. "combine," *hap*) provides a synthetic perspective which can reveal how those various ideas complement one another. When both analytic and synthetic hermeneutics are applied simultaneously in the explication of a text, one is free to advocate certain positions and to critique others. One can open up for analysis different viewpoints without creating unnecessary complications, as well as synthesize those viewpoints into a single overriding perspective without creating untoward parochialism. Put another way, treating a text either analytically or synthetically neither adds anything to it nor takes anything away. Hence, one may advocate something without gaining anything, or critique something else without losing anything.

These contrasting approaches of analysis and synthesis are presented in

⁵ *Yŏlban'gyŏng chongyo*, T 1769-239a: 21-23; *Chŏnjip* 1: 1.

⁶ For a listing of these works, see Cho Myŏng-gi, *Silla pulgyo ūi inyŏm kwa yŏksa* (The Ideology and History of Silla Buddhism) (Seoul: Tongguk munhwasa, 1964), 96. [Author's note.] Of these seventeen *chongyos*, five are still extant and appear in the *Taishō* canon: *Taehyedogyŏng chongyo*, T 1697; *Pŏphwa chongyo*, T 1725; *Yŏlban'gyŏng chongyo*, T 1769; *Mirŭk sangsaenggyŏng chongyo*, T 1773; and *Posal kyeon chongyo*, T 1906. Nonextant *chongyo* are *Changjin non chongyo*, *Hwaŏmgyŏng chongyo*, *Kisillon chongyo*, *Kwangbaek non chongyo*, *Muryangugyŏng chongyo*, *Nŭnggagyŏng chongyo*, *Posŏngnon chongyo*, *Samnon chongyo*, *Sŏngyusik non chongyo*, *Taep'anya gyŏng chongyo*, *Yumagyŏng chongyo*, and *Yanggwŏn Muryangugyŏng chongyo*.

Wŏnhyo's *Taesŭng kisillon so* (Commentary to the *Awakening of Faith*):

If this statement is analyzed, then it has as its theme immeasurable, limitless meanings. If this is synthesized, then it has as its essentials the two aspects and the one mind. In these two aspects, myriad meanings are fused without creating havoc; these limitless meanings are interfused with the same one mind. Therefore, it is autonomous in either analysis or synthesis, and unimpeded in positing positions or critiquing viewpoints. Analyzing, it is without complications; synthesizing, it is without narrowness. It posits without gaining anything and critiques without losing anything.⁷

The meaning of these four approaches is discussed in Wŏnhyo's *Kūmgang sammaegyŏng non* (Exposition of the *Vajrasamādhisūtra*):

The thematic essentials of this sūtra have an analytic and synthetic aspect. Discussed from a synthetic standpoint, its essential point is the contemplation practice that has a “single taste.” Explained from an analytic standpoint, its fundamental doctrine involves ten types of approaches to dharma (*dharmaparyāya*) But even if this sūtra is explained analytically, [its ten analytical approaches] do not add to the one [taste]; even if it is interpreted synthetically, it does not detract from those ten. Neither increase nor decrease is the thematic essential of this [sūtra].⁸

Wŏnhyo's method for ascertaining truth was to apply these hermeneutical principles of analysis and synthesis with thoroughgoing consistency. Regardless of whatever sūtra or śāstra it was that he was explicating, he would initially develop a general perspective on the text through using both analysis and synthesis and thereby determine its thematic essentials. To be sure, other commentators before Wŏnhyo employed these terms in their own writings; but there is no one whose approach is so clearly characterized by this methodology as is Wŏnhyo, for whom it was the basic attitude governing all of his textual exegeses. Wŏnhyo's logic was thus a syncretic logic, which clarified the thematic essentials of a text through use of analytical and synthetic approaches.

This syncretic logic, furthermore, can approach its subject from still other angles. However, these do not differ from analysis/synthesis and “thematic essentials”; these variant approaches simply allow the student to grasp principles

⁷ *Taesŭng kisillon so*, T 1844-202b18-22; *Chŏnjip* 6: 1-2.

⁸ *Kūmgang sammaegyŏng non* 1, T 1730-961a; Paek Sŏng-uk, ed., *Kūmgang sammaegyŏng non*, 2.

that may be still more profound. We may be better able to clarify what attitude and position are taken through the syncretic logic by exploring first Wŏnhyo's complementary perspectives of apophasis and kataphasis.

APOPHASIS VERSUS KATAPHASIS IN BUDDHIST DOCTRINAL DESCRIPTION

The way of Buddhism first brings to a permanent end the “myriads of sensory impressions,” and finally returns one to their source – the one mind. But explained from this standpoint, there is nothing that Buddhism does not advocate and nothing that it does not refute. This advocacy Wŏnhyo terms “concession” (*yŏ*) or “allowance” (*hwanhŏ*), while refutation he calls variously “deprivation” (*t'al*) “negation” (*kyŏn*), “return” (*wang*), or “prohibition” (*purhŏ*). However, according to Wŏnhyo, Nāgārjuna's *Mūlamadhyamakakārika* and *Dvadaśanikāyaśāstra* – both principal texts of the Mādhyamika School – offer a comprehensive dialectical critique of all views to which a person might cling, to the extent that they even bring to an end both the act of refutation itself as well as the view refuted. But because such Mādhyamika dialecticians do not eventually come to acknowledge kataphatically both the subject and object of this criticism, theirs is a purely apophatic approach, which completely neglects kataphasis. On the other hand, Maitreyanātha's *Yogācārabhūmi* and Asaṅga's *Mahāyānasamgraha* – major texts of the Yogācāra School – undertake a thoroughgoing analysis of all mental states (*dharmas*), establishing their respective profundity or shallowness. But because these Yogācārins do not in turn continue on to critique the *dharmas* that they have in this wise validated, theirs is a purely kataphatic approach, which completely neglects apophasis. This is the reason for the doctrinal controversies that continually racked Buddhism.

If Mādhyamika offers an apophatic approach that rejects the validity of all statements that may be made about the Buddhist dharma, then Yogācāra is a kataphatic approach that provides a number of different ways from which to advocate legitimate positions. However, while Aśvaghoṣa's *Ta sheng ch'i hsin lun* (Awakening of Faith), a syncretic text that attempts to merge these two main branches of Buddhist philosophy, advocates a position of its own, it does not neglect the critique of that position; and while critiquing its own position, it does not neglect to acknowledge the legitimacy of that position as well. Thus, advocacy means that when the apophatic perspective is thoroughgoing, it reveals the comprehensive position that embraces all relative views; and

refutation means that when the kataphatic perspective is perfected, all relative views are shown to be inadequate to reveal the true breadth and splendor of enlightenment. It is precisely for this reason that the *Awakening of Faith* is the ultimate source out of which the views presented in all śāstras derive, and the final arbiter of all doctrinal controversies within Buddhism. As Wŏnhyo's *Taesŭng kisillon pyŏlgi* (Autocommentary to the *Awakening of Faith* Commentary) says:

[Aśvaghoṣa sought to encourage all practitioners] forever to exhaust all the sense-spheres and thence return to the source of the one mind. Through this principle, there is nothing that is not established and nothing that is not refuted. The *Madhyamakakārikā* and *Dvādaśanikāyaśāstra*, [and Śataśāstra of the Mādhyamika School,] etc., comprehensively refute all points at which one might grasp and also refute that refutation, but without eventually acknowledging either the refutation, but without eventually acknowledging either the refutation itself or what has been refuted. These focus on cessation [apophasis], but neglect comprehensiveness [kataphasis]. The *Yogācārabhūmi* and *Mahāyānasamgrahabhāṣya* [of the Yogācāra School], etc., rigorously establish both the profound and the shallow and thereby differentiate various approaches to dharma, but do not refute the dharmas that they themselves have established. They focus on concession [kataphasis] but neglect deprivation [apophasis]. Now, as for this śāstra [*Awakening of Faith*], ... there is nothing that it does not establish and yet it negates itself. There is nothing that it does not refute and yet it in turn accepts everything. "Accepts everything" means that if the refuter carries his refutation to its ultimate extreme he will have established a thoroughgoing kataphatic perspective. "It negates itself" elucidates the fact that one who carries a kataphatic analysis to its extreme will achieve apophasis. Thus, [the *Awakening of Faith*] is the ancestral source of all śāstras and the final arbiter of the host of controversies.⁹

One who grasps at the discriminative knowledge produced by formal logic should perform a dialectical analysis of that position. But if one sublates all discriminative knowledge from the standpoint of the equanimity of the "single taste," then one should acknowledge the validity of all perspectives. This is the flexible logic of Wŏnhyo's syncretic approach, which combines apophasis with kataphasis. Wŏnhyo looked highly on the *Awakening of Faith*, to the extent that

⁹ *Taesŭng kisillon pyŏlgi* 1, T 1845-226b4-12; *Chŏnjip* 7: 1-2.

he saw it as “the final arbiter of the host of controversies.” He wrote an outstanding commentary to that text, which was so renowned both domestically as well as in foreign lands that it came to be called the “Korean Commentary” (*Haedong so*). In the *Awakening of Faith* can be found the syncretic method of affirmation versus negation and kataphasis versus apophasis that Wŏnhyo used. This would seem to be the reason that Wŏnhyo considered it to contain passages that surpassed even those of works from the Mādhyamika and Yogācāra schools.

In addition to his *Haedong so*, there are several other works by Wŏnhyo on the *Awakening of Faith*, including an autocommentary, a “thematic essentials,” a personal exposition (*sagi*), and an outline of the text. Therefore, one can realize how intensely he devoted himself to the study of the *Awakening of Faith*.

According to Aśvaghosa, the Indian to whom authorship of the *Awakening of Faith* is ascribed, sentient beings differ in their spiritual faculties and capacity for practice, which meant that prolix verbiage would only confuse them more. The *Awakening of Faith* was therefore written for the sake of people who preferred the terse words of codes (*dhāraṇī*), which subsumed much meaning and incorporated the limitless meanings of the broad and profound Dharma of the Tathāgatas. Wŏnhyo himself obviously enjoyed ferreting out the profound and rich meaning of Aśvaghosa’s laconic, but lucid, prose. Moreover, it can also be said that that śāstra unfolds a clear and vivid method of discourse, for it contains all the important points that give logical form to the quest for Buddhist syncretism.

Korean Buddhism before Wŏnhyo had developed around the teachings of the Samnon (Three Treatises; Mādhyamika) School of the Korean monk Sūngnang (fl. ca. 490), and the Yusik (Mere Representation; Yogācāra) philosophy of Wŏnch’ŭk (613–696). We can now appreciate that what Wŏnhyo sought to accomplish through his syncretic logic was a sublation of the Three Treatises and Mere-Representation dogmas. In other words, as compared to the more explicitly sectarian philosophies of Sūngnang and Wŏnch’ŭk, the Korean Buddhism that would evolve after Wŏnhyo brought about a reconciliation between these schools from a more profoundly fundamental and comprehensive standpoint. We may even go so far as to say that Wŏnhyo pointed out the correct direction that all of Buddhism should take. We should note, however, that this result was a product of the logical mind and talent of Wŏnhyo, with its free command of affirmation versus negation and kataphasis versus apophasis.

THE LOGIC OF SYNCRETISM

Doctrinal controversy is something that arises from the dogmatic attachment to speculative views. When there is controversy over the rectitude of rival views, the person who advocates, for example, an ontology in which things do exist in reality will inevitably be in conflict with someone who holds otherwise. The converse will also occur: a person who might try to harmonize such diametrically opposed views through some sort of all-inclusive position would only internalize the conflict, for the basic differences between those views, which caused them to be distinguished in the first place, would still be unresolved. But if one insists on admitting both views while continuing to accept their differences, then this would perforce demand that one argue against both. Hence, the ideal syncretic vision is one in which one neither identifies nor distinguishes variant views.

When controversy is rampant among the competing heterodox views, if one advocates a position that is akin to the view of existence, then this will differ from the view of emptiness; if one advocates a position that is akin to grasping at emptiness, then that will differ from grasping at existence. These congruencies and divergences further exacerbate these controversies. Furthermore, if both of those two [congruency and divergence] are identified, then these will conflict with one another within oneself; but if both of those two are distinguished, then oneself will conflict with both of them. For this reason, one must advocate [a position] that neither identifies nor distinguishes [variant positions]. “Not identical” [in the scripture] means accepting those statements as they are described, because he does not sanction anything. “Not distinguishable” means discussing things according to their meaning, because there is nothing that he does not sanction. Because [this absolute position] does not differentiate, it does not go against one’s sensibilities. But because it does not identify, it does not go against the principles of the path. Both are associated in regard to feeling and principle and do not violate each other.¹⁰

Wŏnhyo’s synthetic position- that identity is present even within difference, and that difference is present even within identity – provides the basis for a still further step toward a consummating syncretism: identity and difference may be

¹⁰ *Kūmgang sammaegyŏng non* 2, T 1730-982c:11-17; Paek Sŏnguk, ed., 147-148.

coextensive, but this coextension does not obscure the distinctive qualities and functions of identity and difference. This may be compared to the transition in Hua-yen (Hwaöm) philosophy from the unimpeded interpenetration of principle and phenomena, the third *dharmadhātu*, to the fourth, the unimpeded interpenetration of phenomenon with phenomena. That is, precisely because the identical principle is present in all phenomena, one can thus see an interconnection pertaining between all those phenomena as well – but without obscuring the independent identity and unique feature of each phenomenon in the process. Thus, everything may be in a state of multivalent interfusion, but this does not mean that the universe is a unitary state of “oneness.” This same ontological vision was made into a hermeneutical device by Wŏnhyo.

As his *Kŭmgang sammaegyŏng non* states:

Because [principle and phenomena] are uniform and of a “single taste,” they are not something that the saint can distinguish. But because they are both general and particular, they are not something that the saint can identify. “Cannot identify” means that they are distinguished while remaining the same; “cannot distinguish” means that they are identical while remaining different. “Identical” means to analyze the identity that is in difference; “difference” means to illuminate the difference that is in identity. “To illuminate the difference that is in identity” does not mean to create difference by dividing identity. “To analyze the identity that is in difference” does not mean to create identity by obliterating difference. Due to the fact that identity is not the obliteration of difference, it cannot therefore be said to be identity. Precisely because difference is not the division of identity, it cannot be said to be difference. It is merely because it cannot be said that there is difference that one is able to say that there is identity; because one cannot say there is identity, it therefore can be said that there is difference. Thus, to speak and not to speak are nondual and undifferentiated.¹¹

To the extent that this approach is a clarification and elaboration of Wŏnhyo’s syncretic logic, we do not need to assume that it involves any methodology that differs from the apophatic and kataphatic reasoning of Mādhyamika and Yogācāra, respectively. Still other approaches to describing Buddhist views, such as the Buddha-nature, should also be seen in the same

¹¹ *Kŭmgang sammaegyŏng non* 2, T 1730-974c:26-975a: 5; Paek Sŏnguk, ed., 95.

manner.

It is this that is called the Buddha-nature. It is merely by means of all these approaches that this unitary nature is revealed; it is not that there are separate natures according to the differences in these approaches. If there were no differences, then how could they become identical? It is because they are not identical that all these approaches can be appropriated; but it is because they are not different that all these approaches have but a “single taste.”¹²

Even the so-called “one” is only “one” with reference to “many.” If one cannot say that there is difference, then this would mean that there could be no “many” and thus, by extension, no “one.” But the view that “one” is distinguished from “difference” is based on the premise that “difference” means “many.” This is no different from the argument given *supra* from the *Kūmgang sammaegyōng non* that “‘identical’ means to analyze the identity that is in difference; ‘difference’ means to illuminate the difference that is in identity”; hence, it does no harm that the one is analyzed in relation to the many and the many are illuminated in relation to the one. This is also no different from the relationship that pertains between the absolute (*paramārtha*) and conventional (*samvṛti*) truths, or between form (*rūpa*) and emptiness (*śūnyatā*). An extant verse in Uich’ŏn’s (1055-1101) *Wŏnjong mulliui* (Materials on the Consummate School) reflects this same syncretic logic used in resolving doctrinal controversy: “The undecaying absolute illuminates the mundane, /Indra’s [magnificent] form, with its inherent cause of decay, reveals emptiness.”¹³ This is also no different from the argument expressed above, where the climax of apophasis resulted in kataphasis and the extreme of affirmation led to refutation. It is this same syncretic logic once again that reveals the sublime principle in which contradictory positions are merged.

It is ultimately the nature of the mind itself that allows the possibility of syncretism. That nature is distinct from both its nondual essence and its phenomenal appearances; hence, it may adapt in an infinite variety of ways, depending on the karmic propensities of the individual. As it is free from appearances, it is neither defiled nor pure, neither one nor many, and so forth: that is, its nondualism allows the possibility for a radical apophasis, in which nothing is acknowledged as being absolute. But because the mind is also distinct

¹² *Yŏlban’gyōng chongyo*, T 1769-254c: 1-3; *Chŏnjip* 1: 66.

¹³ Uich’ŏn, *Wŏnjong mulliui* 22, HTC 103.421a: 1.

from the essence, it is both defiled and pure, one and many: that is, its dualism allows the possibility of a thoroughgoing kataphasis, in which the reality of all things can be acknowledged. Thus the true nature of the mind takes any form: ordinary person or a saint, Buddha or bodhisattva. As Wŏnhyo's *Yŏlban'gyŏng chongyo* notes:

Because the true nature leaves behind both characteristics and nature, it is unhindered and unimpeded in regard to all approaches [to dharma]. Because it is separate from characteristics, it is neither sullied nor pure, neither cause nor fruition, neither unitary nor differentiated, neither existent nor nonexistent. Because it is separate from nature, it is both defiled and pure, both cause and fruition, both singular and differentiated, both existent and nonexistent. Because it is both defiled and pure, whether it is called a "sentient being" or "birth and death," it may also be called *tathāgata* or *dharmakāya*. Because it is both cause and fruition, it may be termed either Buddha-nature, *tathāgatagarbha*, bodhisattva, or great nirvāṇa. This is so, up to the fact that because it is both existent and nonexistent, it is called the two truths [absolute and conventional]. But because it is neither existent nor nonexistent, it is called the Middle Way. As it is not unitary, it is in accord with all approaches. As it is not differentiated, all approaches have but a single taste.¹⁴

For a similar set of reasons, mahāparinirvāṇa, the sine qua non of Buddhism, may also be interpreted as a state in which all controversy is obviated. Because it transcends all dualities, and is free from both essence and appearances, it may be interpreted as being either non-self, as the Hīnayāna Buddhists claimed, or the true self, as some Mahāyāna texts like the *Mahāparinirvāṇasātra* proclaimed, or as either empty or nonempty. The differences in the doctrinal formulations of the various Buddhist schools stem from this mistake of focusing on one aspect of that nondual state, and ignoring the larger picture. As the *Yŏlban'gyŏng chongyo* explains:

Great nirvāṇa leaves behind both characteristics and nature; it is neither empty nor nonempty, neither self nor non-self. Why is it nonempty? Because it leaves behind the nature of non-existence. Why is it not nonempty? Because it leaves behind the nature of existence. Furthermore, because it is separate from the characteristics of existence, it is said that it is

¹⁴ *Yŏlban'gyŏng chongyo*, T 1769-240a: 29-b8; *Chŏnjip* 1: 21.

non-self. Because it is separate from the characteristic of non-existence, it is said that it is not non-self. Because it is not non-self, it can be said that it is the great self; and yet, because it is non-self, it is also said that it is non-self. Furthermore, because it is nonempty, it can be said that it exists in reality. Because it is not nonempty, it can be said that it is void and false. Thus is the meaning of the esoteric canon of the Tathāgatas. What need is there for differences of opinion over all this?¹⁵

By the same token, the Buddhist teachings are free from such limitations and can therefore accommodate any partial perspective. Religious controversy arises because of the human tendency to grasp at one's own view as being correct, and to brand all contrary views as heretical. But because Buddhism, and especially the Mahāyāna branch of the church, is so accommodative toward rival perspectives, it can finally put any teaching to use as an expedient means of revealing the way to enlightenment. Hence, as the following passage shows, even if one opens up the Buddhist teachings for analysis (*kae*), and illustrates thereby their immense variety, they are not increased thereby. But even if one treats those teachings synthetically (*hap*), showing the unitary principle to which they all return, they are not thereby diminished. Hence, there is no view that Buddhism cannot incorporate.

The Buddha's path is broad and extensive, unimpeded and limitless. It eternally relies on nothing, and yet there is nothing with which it does not accord. Therefore it is said, "Each and every heterodox meaning is a Buddhist meaning. There are none of the theories of the hundreds of schools that are not correct. The 84,000 approaches to dharma are all able to access the principle." Nevertheless, those who have learned but little hold exclusively to their parochial views. Those with whom they agree, they acknowledge as correct; those with whom they differ, they dismiss as wrong. This is like a person who views the sky through a reed claiming that those who do not look through his reed cannot possibly see the blue sky! This is called the stupidity of one who believes in the few and criticizes the many Those who grasp at existence say there is increase, while those who grasp at non-existence say there is decrease. The theme to which I adhere rejects both existence and non-existence. Desolate, it relies on nothing.¹⁶

¹⁵ *Yŏlban'gyōng chongyo*, T 1769-242c: 17-23; *Chŏnjip* 1: 29.

¹⁶ *Posal kyebon chibŏm yogi*, T 1907-919c: 14-20, 919c-27-29; *Chŏnjip* 5: 5.

This line of reasoning – i.e., just as the dharma is free from either increase or decrease, the mind of each person is similarly free to concede or reject anything, or to express things apophatically or kataphatically – is basic to Wŏnhyo’s syncretic logic, as was seen *supra*. The mind can “concede” (viz. accept everything), because at the level of its fundamental nature it is pure and originally unaffected by anything. But the mind can also “reject” (viz. refuse to accept anything), because at the phenomenal level its involvement with the senses leaves it constantly affected by the external world.

[The mind of the sentient being] “concedes,” because its self-nature is pure and originally immaculate. It “rejects,” because distinct sensory realms come into existence based on extrinsic maculations.¹⁷

Similarly, Buddhism can be regarded as advocating existence, because it partakes of that monistic principle which is the ultimate constituent of all phenomena: the unitary “suchness” (*tathatā*). But Buddhism can also be seen as advocating non-existence, for it in turn acknowledges the differentiation that gives rise to the discriminative, impermanent features of all things.

The “path” in “great path of Buddhahood”: ... Can it be said to exist? [No, for] the unitary suchness, while deriving from it, is empty. Can it be said not to exist? [No, for] the myriads of things are born through employing that [path]. Not knowing how to describe it, they force on it the term “path.”¹⁸

From an absolute standpoint, then, all statements can be shown to be identical; but from a conventional point of view, there are relative hierarchies of truth. This is not an ultimate distinction, however.

The prior statement, that “it exists in reality,” means an existence that does not differ from emptiness. The latter statement, that “it does not fall into existence,” means that it does not fall into an existence that differs from emptiness. Therefore, while both [alternatives] are acknowledged, they are not mutually exclusive. As neither alternative is incorrect, neither may be acknowledged. “Incorrect” here is not something that differs from “correct.”¹⁹

¹⁷ *Kūmgang sammaegyŏng non 2*, T 1730-984b: 27-28; Paek Sŏng-uk, ed., 159.

¹⁸ *Taesŭng kisillon pyŏlgi*, T 1845-226a: 10, 15-16; *Chŏnjip* 7: 1.

To this point, we have seen that Wŏnhyo's syncretic logic is something that can be employed even as far as the relationship between accuracy and error, as the following passage from the *Yŏlban'gyŏng chongyo* notes.

The essence of the Buddha-nature is exactly the one mind. The nature of the one mind leaves far behind all extremes. Because it leaves far behind all extremes, there is nothing with which it is in accord. But because there is nothing with which it is in accord, there is nothing with which it is not in accord. Therefore, as far as the theory of mind is concerned, that mind is neither cause nor fruition, neither absolute nor conventional [truths], neither person nor dharma, neither brought into existence nor concealed. So, too, from the standpoint of the theory of conditionality, the mind is both brought into existence and concealed, becomes both dharma and person, serves as both conventional and absolute, and functions as cause and fruition. This is said to be the meaning of "neither correct nor incorrect" (*piyŏn piburyŏn*). Therefore, all theories are both wrong and right.²⁰

The *Tonggyŏng taejon* (Great Collection of Eastern Doctrine) by Ch'oe Che-u (1824-1864), the founder of the Tonghak (Eastern Learning) movement during the later Chosŏn dynasty, includes as one of its chapter titles the similar idea of "What may seem not so, is so" (*Puryŏn kiyŏn*). It even goes so far as to say that originally "Eastern Learning," as opposed to Occidental thought, meant to accomplish a synthesis of the three teachings of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism. It would seem to be possible to discover in the foundations of Ch'oe's thought strong affinities with the syncretic logic of Wŏnhyo.²¹

THE QUANDARY OF SYNCRETISM: "IT LEAVES BEHIND ALL EXTREMES AND YET IS NOT IN BETWEEN"

A position reached through the syncretic logic can be neither a partial perspective nor one that is the mean of two rival standpoints. It must instead be a transcendent point of view that cannot be pinned to any specific position; it must be able to embrace any limited perspective while remaining itself

¹⁹ *Simmun hwajaeng non*, *Chŏnjip* 10: 37.

²⁰ *Yŏlban'gyŏng chongyo*, T 1769-249b:19-25; *Chŏnjip* 1: 50.

²¹ Ch'oe Che-u, *Tonggyŏng taejŏn*, trans. by Nam Man-sŏng, *Uryu mun'go*, no. 111 (Seoul: Uryu munhwasa, 1973), 127ff.

unaffected thereby.

It is neither existent nor nonexistent. It leaves behind the two extremes, but without being attached to the middle way ... If it is claimed that something really is not nonexistent, then [that view] falls into the category of existence. In the same way, if something does not exist, then it must be nonexistent. If it is said that “while it does not nonexistent, it still does not come into existence,” or that “while it does not exist, it still does not fall into non-existence,” then these are weighted equally without falling [into one limited perspective], and discounted equally without rising [into another parochial view]. Therefore, know that to claim that something is right or to say that something exists has no validity, for such an appraisal then would fall into extremes. Some grasp at the real existence of mutual interdependence and fall into the extreme of increase, while others grasp at the empty non-existence of conditioned origination and fall into the extreme of decrease. Some posit that mundane [truth] is existence while absolute [truth] is emptiness; they support both extremes and fall into a position that is mutually contradictory. Others posit that it is neither existent nor nonexistent; they are attached to still another extreme, the median view of oneness, and fall into a stupid and ignorant theory.²²

Thus, a truly syncretic position is one that neither advocates an extreme nor tries to merge such views together by adopting a median position. It allows the interfusion of two contrary positions but without obscuring the independence of those positions either. It posits nothing itself, and yet there is nothing that it does not posit, because it transcends all limitations.

It is far from the extremes and yet is not [located at] the middle. It is not [located at] the middle and yet is far from the extremes: hence, a dharma that does not exist does not just abide in non-existence; a characteristic that does not nonexistent does not just abide in existence. It is not unitary and yet it amalgamates duality: hence, its nonabsolute phenomena have not once been mundane; its nonmundane principle has not once been absolute. It amalgamates duality and yet is not unitary; hence, there are none of its absolute or mundane natures that have never been established; there are none of its tainted or pure characteristics with which it has not been

²² *Yusim allakto*, T 1965-112c:10-11, 14-20; *Chōnjip* 10: 10. The latter portion of the passage quoted here also appears verbatim in *Muryangugyōng chongyo*, HTC 32:252b, *Chōnjip* 2:17. [Author's note.]

furnished. It is far from the extremes and yet is not [located at] the middle: hence, there are none of the existing or nonexisting dharmas that do not function; there are none of their positive or negative aspects with which it is not equipped. Accordingly, while nothing is negated, there is nothing that is not negated; while nothing is established, there is nothing that is not established. This can be called the ultimate principle that is free from principles, and the great suchness that is not such.²³

Ultimately, then, Wŏnhyo's syncretic logic is an irrational rationalism and an illogical logic.

THE SOTERIOLOGICAL VALUE OF SYNCRETISM

The perfection of a syncretic point of view is not only a hermeneutical desideratum; it also has a profound soteriological effect on the individual, freeing his mind from its limited, subjective perspectives and opening it to liberation. Thus perfection of a true syncretic perspective will perforce demand perfection of the spiritual insights of Buddhism as well.

While the conditioned and the unconditioned are like phantasms, they are nondual. That which is nonarising and that which is free from characteristics absorb internal and external and both are extinguished. That which is extinguished releases the bond of duality and dangles in liberation. That which is nondual has the same one taste and purifies the spirit. Therefore, it can observe with equanimity while roaming amid the three time-periods, and manifest itself while meandering through the ten directions.²⁴

According to Wŏnhyo, the sources of doctrinal conflict are principally two-fold: clinging to either eternalism or annihilationism as being the absolute description of reality. Wŏnhyo shows how the true "Middle Way" (*madhyamapratipad*) of Buddhism retains a place for both views in its comprehensive vision of reality, but without sacrificing in the process its own transcendent point of view.

²³ *Kūmgang sammaegyōng non*, T 1730-961a: 11-15; Paek Sŏnguk, ed., 1-2.

²⁴ *Preface to Haesimmilgyōng so*, *Chŏnjip* 10: 52.

There, then, are many points from which controversy burgeons But there are not more than two ways in which these controversies arise in distinction to one another: grasping at eternalism and grasping at annihilationism²⁵

Requiring the Buddha's meritorious qualities demands that one leave behind both characteristics and nature. Because one leaves behind characteristics, one leaves behind the characteristics of origination and cessation. One is absolutely quiet and still, inactive, and unconditioned; hence it is said that one "constantly abides." Nevertheless, leaving behind the nature is nondual and undifferentiated. Leaving behind characteristics does not differ from leaving behind the nature; hence constant abiding does not mimic [the characteristics of] origination and cessation. Leaving behind the nature does not differ from leaving behind characteristics; hence origination and cessation are not impeded by constant abiding. It is due to this principle that both theories are valid.²⁶

The Mahāyāna teaching that nirvāna and samsāra are ultimately indistinguishable provides the rationale for equating Buddhas with ordinary sentient beings. To maintain otherwise would completely undermine this most fundamental basis of Mahāyāna soteriology.

The absolute realm of nirvāna is then associated with the realm of the mundane world. But even a hair's breadth of difference between these two realms is not sanctioned ...²⁷

Sentient beings and the Buddha-nature are neither unitary nor differentiated. The equality that pertains between all the Buddhas is like space All sentient beings equally possess the Buddha-nature If it is proposed that one is lacking even the slightest bit of the Buddha-nature, this would violate the Mahāyāna teaching concerning the equanimous Dharma-nature. The great compassion that recognizes this identity that pertains in the essence [of all beings] is like the sea, which has the single taste [of salt].²⁸

²⁵ *Yōlban'gyōng chongyo*, T 1769-247c: 1, 4-5; *Chōnjip* 1: 44-45.

²⁶ *Yōlban'gyōng chongyo*, T 1769-248c: 3-8; *Chōnjip* 1: 48. This may be succinctly stated in the following manner. "If one grasps absolutely at oneness, then that would be a total mistake. But if it is explained according to this theory of unimpededness, then that would be correct." (*Yōlban'gyōng chongyo*, T 1769-248b: 27-28; *Chōnjip* 1: 48). [Author's note.]

²⁷ *Simmun hwajaeng non*, *Chōnjip* 10: 38.

²⁸ *Simmun hwajaeng non*, *Chōnjip* 10: 40.

Wŏnhyo uses the same reasoning to show that all the various translations for the term *nirvāna* are equally correct.

The name *nirvāna* then contains two meanings: it is both an esoteric term and a revealed (*nītārtha*) term. Based on the revealed sense of the term, [*nirvāna*] may be translated literally as “crossing over to extinction,” as the previous teachers have explained. Based on the esoteric sense of the term, it then contains a multitude of injunctions, as later teachers have taught. It is because of this principle that both descriptions are appropriate.²⁹

To sum up then, from the synthetic standpoint advocated by Wŏnhyo, all religious positions and philosophical antinomies have at least some validity. And because they are valid in some way or another, none of them can be rejected in a true syncretic philosophy.

Hence, from an all-inclusive perspective, it may be said that all the objections raised have their rationale. Because they have their rationale, there are none that can be rejected. Because there are none that can be rejected, there are none that [syncretism] does not include.³⁰

To the critic who might use the discriminative knowledge that is a product of formal logic to question such seemingly irrational conclusions, Wŏnhyo would answer by saying that the true purpose of the syncretic logic is to engender in the mind of the Buddhist a nonconceptual state that transcends all verbalization. Hence, one who wishes to understand the kind of accommodation among the different teachings of Buddhism that Wŏnhyo sought to forge must also have had the experience of the unconditioned state, which transcends all limiting concepts.

Question: ... If it exists in reality, then it differs from non-existence; it is like an ox horn, which is not the same as a “rabbit’s horn.” But if it does not differ from emptiness, then it certainly does not exist; it is like a rabbit’s horn, which does not differ from emptiness. Now you claim that, while this exists, it does not differ from emptiness. But there is no such thing anywhere in the world; so how can this be proved? ... Answer: That to which you cling is nothing more than names and words. Hence, I draw on

²⁹ *Yŏlban’gyŏng chongyo*, T 1769-240c: 27-29; *Chŏnjip* 1: 23.

³⁰ *Ijang ŭi*, *Chŏnjip* 9: 57.

words and speech to point out that dharma which eradicates words. It is like using a finger of your hand to point out the moon, which has nothing whatsoever to do with your finger. In exactly the same way, you now are clinging to the meaning as expressed by the words. If I were to cite a verbal simile it would be difficult for you to leave behind the verbalized dharma. You would merely look at the tip of my finger and rail that that was not the moon. Hence, the more refined your criticisms become, the farther you move from the principle.³¹

Moreover, Wŏnhyo said that “because the absolute and conventional are identical, the road of speculative opinion is eradicated.”³² Moreover, “all dharmas are extremely profound; they leave behind words and eradicate all ratiocination. It is inappropriate to inquire merely through formal logic and grasp at the meaning as expressed in words.”³³

Once the adept has freed himself from all of the hindrances to correct understanding, he will no longer come into conflict with the world. This is because he will have that all-inclusive viewpoint which will allow him to find what is of value in all limited perspectives. This is why the Buddha said that it was not he who conflicts with the world, but the world that conflicts with him.³⁴

All the Buddhas, the World Honored Ones, are free from all defilement; hence there is nothing more that they need to excise. It is for this reason that the Buddhas are called the Unsurpassed Beings (*musang-sa*). Furthermore, a Surpassed Being (*sang-sa*) is one who is involved in controversies and disputes; an Unsurpassed Being is one who is free from controversies and disputes. The Tathāgatas are free from controversy; it is for this reason that the Buddhas are called the Unsurpassed Beings.³⁵

³¹ *Simmun hwajaeng non*, *Chŏnjip* 10: 37.

³² *Taesŭng kisillon pyŏlgi*, T 1845-226a: 20-21; *Chŏnjip* 7: 1.

³³ *Yusim allakto*, T 1965-112c: 22-23; *Chŏnjip* 10: 10.

³⁴ See *Sutta-nipāta* v. 894: “Standing rigidly to his own view and depending on his own criteria, he [the religious debater] enters into dispute in the world. Desisting from all theories the wise one does not enter into dispute in the world.” (H. Saddhatissa, trans., *The Sutta-nipāta* [London: Curzon Press, 1985], 104). Cf. also v. 787: “He who is attached enters into debate about doctrines. By what and how can an unattached person be characterized? He has nothing to grasp or reject; he has purified all views here itself” (Saddhatissa, 93); and v. 800: “The sage has abandoned the notion of self or ego and is free from clinging. He does not depend even on knowledge; he does not take sides in the midst of controversy; he has no dogmatic views” (Saddhatissa, 95).

³⁵ *Posal yŏngnak ponŏpkyong so* 2, HTC 61: 261a9-12, *Chŏnjip* 4: 38.

From this passage, it should be clear that the ultimate goal of doctrinal syncretism is to resolve all sources of controversy.

If one refers to logic, it is typical immediately to call to mind formal logic. But Wŏnhyo transcends this; while making use of formal logic he has complete command over the employment of the transcendental, syncretic logic. While superficially this might seem to resemble European dialectics, I surmise that this syncretic logic, which tries to clarify the historical processes of creative development to the extent that it evolves into an important appreciative sense, must differ in several regards from dialectics; hence that they cannot be viewed as identical. However, the real purpose of Western dialectics is also not to fuse all contrary positions together. Briefly summing up, then, one must be careful about comparing the two techniques. The relationship between the syncretic logic and dialectics is certainly an important topic that deserves to be addressed in the future.

At any rate, the syncretic logic is a methodology that threads its way consistently through all of Wŏnhyo's philosophy. Even given the obviousness of this evaluation, however, it is in that methodology that Wŏnhyo's philosophical greatness – which includes both the breadth of his claim that there is nothing that is not embraced and the depth of his statement concerning the one taste that absorbs all words – is formed. It is true that Wŏnhyo's accomplishments were well known in T'ang China, and he was studied extensively there. But I conjecture that, more than anything else, it was this syncretic logic that accounts for the influence Wŏnhyo exerted on the philosophy of Fa-tsang (643-712), the systematizer of the Chinese Hua-yen School, especially as seen in Fa-tsang's *Hua yen ching t'an hsiian chi and Ta sheng ch'i hsin lun i chi*.³⁶

Wŏnhyo's *Simmun hwajaeng non*, which in my view has this syncretic logic as its principal theme, was highly regarded even during Wŏnhyo's own lifetime. As one contemporary said:

There was none among the congregation who could get enough of the *Simmun hwajaeng non*. Everyone said, "It is outstanding!"³⁷

This *Simmun hwajaeng non* was disseminated not only within Korea, but also in T'ang China. Through the good offices of the disciples of the Indian

³⁶ Prof. Cho Myong-gi shows that, despite Fa-tsang's place as an immediate disciple of the T'ang master Chih-yen (608-668), the putative second patriarch of Hua-yen, Fa-tsang's philosophical approach actually shares more affinities with Wŏnhyo. See Cho's *Silla pulgyo ūi inyŏm kwa yŏksa*, 205. [Author's note.]

³⁷ *Kosŏnsa Sŏdang hwasang t'appi mun*, *Chŏnjip* 10: 58.

Buddhist logician Ch'en-na (Dignāga; fl. ca. 5th-6th cents.) who had come to China during that period, the text also came to be distributed even in India, the homeland of Buddhism.

Wŏnhyo wrote his *Hwajaeng non*. Disciples of Ch'en-na (Dignāga) came to the territory of T'ang. After [Wŏnhyo's] demise, they returned to the kingdom of T'ien-chu (India) with that treatise.³⁸

There are several missing logographs in the extant version of Wŏnhyo's funerary stele, *Kosŏn sa Sōdang hwasang t'appi mun*, leaving several passages that are difficult to construe. Nevertheless, it seems to say,

They extolled it as a *p'asa* (*vibhāṣā*; exegetical commentary) and translated it into Sanskrit. It was then sent to [illegible] person. This [person?] said, "This is the reason that the *Tripitaka*-jewel is important."³⁹

It may be that this passage is a reference to the above-mentioned disciples of Dignāga taking the *Simmun hwajaeng non* to India. Alternatively, because the *Hwaŏm chongyo* (no longer extant) was mentioned in the stele just before this passage, it could be referring either to this or to some other work by Wŏnhyo that is no longer known. But regardless of whatever work of Wŏnhyo's is meant here, it is certain that it must have covered his fundamental philosophy of syncretism, since all his ideas are developed through this syncretic logic. This approach was absolutely superb, and deservedly praised, as is attested by the fact that it was translated into Sanskrit and transmitted to India. Possible Indian knowledge of Wŏnhyo's writing is an area that deserves further study.

THE PRINCIPLE OF ENLIGHTENMENT

Wŏnhyo held the *Awakening of Faith* (*Ta sheng ch'i hsin lun*) in high regard, and research related to it appears in many of his works. Among those many works, it is well known that his commentary to the *Awakening of Faith* was extolled as the *Haedong so*. Wŏnhyo's commentary was consulted and quoted in expositions of

³⁸ Junkō (ca. 13th century), *Kishinron honsho shoshūki*, k. 2b, *Nihon Bukkyō zensho* 92 (Tokyo: Bussho kankōkai, 1915), 103. Pak's text includes a major misprint, replacing *pang* for *na* in the transliteration Ch'en-na, which completely obscures the fact that it is Dignāga who is meant here.

³⁹ *Kosŏnsa Sōdang hwasang t'appi mun*, *Chŏnjip* 10: 58. Due to the fragmentary nature of the inscription, this translation is tentative.

the same treatise by his contemporary, Fa-tsang (643-712), and by Kuei-feng Tsung-mi (780-841), and it was passed down from Fa-tsang to Ch'eng-kuan (738-840) of the Ch'ing-liang Monastery, the putative fourth Hua-yen patriarch in China. The philosophical content of the *Awakening of Faith* focuses on the theory of enlightenment, and is elaborated as the principle of original enlightenment (pon'gak; Ch. *pen-chüeh*) and actualized enlightenment (*sigak*; Ch. *shih-chüeh*), which will be discussed infra. When the process of actualizing enlightenment is completed through awakening from the long dream of ignorance, this brings about the realization that actualized enlightenment is no different from the innate, original enlightenment.

Another of Wŏnhyo's major works, *Kūmgang sammaegyŏng non*, would more appropriately be termed a so ("commentary"), not a *non* ("exposition"). The ideas in this composition were so highly appraised that the T'ang Chinese gave it the appellation *lun (non)*, which was normally reserved for translated treatises by Indian Buddhist saints. The accounts concerning the composition of the treatise that appear in Wŏnhyo's hagiographies describe how unique that composition was considered to be. Wŏnhyo is said to have placed his writing brush and ink between the two horns of an ox and to have written the entire treatise, from beginning to end, while riding in an ox cart. According to the *Sung kao seng chuan* (Sung Biographies of Eminent Monks):

[Wŏnhyo] said to the messenger, "The theme of this sūtra is the two enlightenments – original and actualized. Prepare an ox cart for me." Taking his writing table, he set it between [the ox's] two horns and laid out his brushes and inkstone. While riding continually on the ox cart, he wrote the commentary, complete in five fascicles ...⁴⁰

The SY account is somewhat abbreviated:

He composed the [*Kūmgang*] *sammaegyŏng so*. He placed his brushes and inkstone between the two horns of an ox; because of this, he was known as Kaksŭng (Horn Rider), which also expressed the recondite purport of the two enlightenments – original and actualized.⁴¹

What finally can we make of this tale? It would seem clear that it indicates that this distinction between original and actualized enlightenment serves as the

⁴⁰ "Hwang lung ssu Yüan Hsiao chuan," in *Sung kao seng chuan* 4, T2061-730b: 10-13.

⁴¹ SY4, T2039-1006b: 22-23.

foundation of Wŏnhyo's philosophical development. Indeed, in *Kŭmgang sammaegyŏng non*, Wŏnhyo himself says, "Knowledge means the two types of enlightenment: original and actualized."⁴²

If the syncretic logic provides the method to Wŏnhyo's philosophy, then it is equally fair to say that the theory of enlightenment, which is elaborated from these two types of enlightenment, presents its inner reality. However, since the forms into which that inner reality has developed do not differ from that method, there is no reason to assume that the syncretic logic and the principle of enlightenment are in contradiction to one another.

According to Wŏnhyo, no dharmas are conceived in the Mahāyāna as having a discrete, unique nature, as the Hīnayāna Abhidharmists had claimed. Since the nature of dharmas was identical to that of the one mind, dharma actually meant the mind of the ordinary, sentient being. In this wise, the doctrine that "the own-essence of all dharmas is merely this one mind" is the point at which Mahāyāna diverges from the Hīnayāna. Accordingly, it is the one mind which may be termed the Mahāyāna dharma.⁴³

Even though the basis of Mahāyāna Buddhism may be this one mind, this term "one mind" is merely of heuristic value; it has no ultimate validity. It cannot be "one," because it transcends all such dualities as "one" and "many." Even "mind" is hardly correct, for if everything is nonexistent – even the "one" – then on what basis can it be given the designation "mind"? For lack of a better term it is called "one mind."

What is the one mind? The natures of all defiled and pure dharmas are nondual. The two gates of truth and falsity cannot be differentiated. Hence, [the one mind] is called "one." All dharmas become real at that point of non-duality. They are not the same as empty space, for their natures are themselves spiritually deft. Hence, it is termed "mind." Nevertheless, since there is no duality, how can it be "one"? If this "one" is nonexistent, then who claims it is "mind"? A principle such as this leaves behind words and eradicates thought. Because I do not know what else to call it, I force on it the name "one mind."⁴⁴

"Because the essence of the one mind is originally calm and tranquil, it is called the basis of the absolute nature."⁴⁵ "This 'absolute nature' can also be

⁴² *Kŭmgang sammaegyŏng non*, T 173-961a23-24; Paek Sŏnguk, ed., 2.

⁴³ *Kisillon so* 1, T 1844-206a :24-29; *Chŏnjip* 6: 13.

⁴⁴ *Kisillon so* 1, T 1844-206c: 27-207a:3; *Chŏnjip* 6: 15.

⁴⁵ See *Kŭmgang sammaegyŏng non*, T 1730-979b: 24-25; Paek Sŏng-uk, ed., 126.

called the 'nature of true suchness', for its nature is indestructible."⁴⁶

The "true" in "true suchness" refers to the indestructibility of the perdurable, original essence, which is real and immutable, neither arising nor ceasing; the "suchness" has the sense of a holistic unity in which everything is in a state of complete equilibrium.

The self-essence of this one mind, whose "nature itself is spiritually deft," is endowed with great wisdom and brightness. As it is not dark, it does not cease; as it is endowed with the brightness of wisdom, it is balanced and nondual, shining over the *dharmadhātu*. This is the enlightenment with which the one mind is always endowed: the original enlightenment.

As for the meaning of "enlightenment," it has two types: original enlightenment and actualized enlightenment. "Original enlightenment" means that the nature of this mind is separate from the characteristic of non-enlightenment. This radiant nature of enlightenment is called "original enlightenment." As a later passage [from the *Awakening of Faith* states]: "This is because its self-essence is endowed with this sense of great wisdom and brightness."⁴⁷

However, "ignorance"⁴⁸ means that through the power of non-enlightenment various sorts of deluded thoughts arise, and, accordingly, the characteristics of arising and ceasing are produced. This is called the "arising-and-ceasing approach" (*saengmyŏl-mun*), and is distinguished from its opposite, the "true-suchness gate" (*chinyŏ-mun*) – the original enlightenment of the own-nature of the mind. But it is because the noumenal suchness of Buddhahood is inherent in the changing phenomena of the mundane world that Buddhahood is called the *tathāgatagarbha*.

⁴⁶ See *Kūmgang sammaeŷyŏng non*, T 1730-978c: 1-3; Paek Sŏng-uk, ed., 120.

⁴⁷ *Kisillon pyŏlgi*, T 1845-230a: 16-19; *Chŏnjip* 7-12; Wŏnhyo is quoting *Ta sheng ch'i hsin lun* (The *Awakening of Faith*), T 1666-579a: 15.

⁴⁸ *Kisillon so* 1, T 1844-214c: 25-28; *Chŏnjip* 6: 39.

The *Awakening of Faith* gives the following definition of ignorance: "As one has not understood the one *dharmadhātu*, the mind is not in accordance [with suchness]. Suddenly, thought arises and this is called ignorance" (T 1666-577c: 5-7). In Wŏnhyo's commentary this section is glossed as follows: "'The mind is not in accordance' clarifies that this ignorance is extremely subtle, and does not yet involve the distinction between subject and object, king and minions. Hence it is said, 'The mind is not in accordance.' This [ignorance] alone is the basis; there is no other defiled dharma or anything more subtle that precedes this. It is with this idea in mind that it is said, 'Thought arises.'" *Kisillon so* 1, T 1844-214c: 25-28.

The essence of this one mind is original enlightenment. As it is affected by ignorance and made to arise and cease, it is in this approach that the nature of the Tathāgatas is concealed so that it is not made manifest; hence, it is termed the *tathāgatagarbha*.⁴⁹

Even though original enlightenment may be infused by non-enlightenment (i.e., ignorance), so that tainted dharmas arise, this does not mean that the original enlightenment vanishes. The tranquil, immobile, and aware nature is never affected by any of the machinations occurring in the phenomenal realm.

[Even while] it conceals the principle so that it does not manifest, the essence of the *tathāgatagarbha* remains calm and unmoving⁵⁰

Even when arising and ceasing is produced by the blowing of the wind of ignorance, this spiritually deft nature is unaltered from its original state “Neither arising nor ceasing” and “both arising and ceasing” are assimilated, so that they are neither identical nor different. Hence, they may comprehensively be termed the *ālayavijñāna* (storehouse consciousness).⁵¹

While ignorance is like the wind that stirs up waves on the limpid surface of the ocean, these waves are not the original nature of that ocean. This limpidity, which is the original nature of seawater, is like something that is hidden. Since waves occur through the interaction of wind and seawater, the waves, which are the eighth consciousness (the *ālayavijñāna*), can be used to refer to both; hence it is associated with the “arising and ceasing approach.”

As the fountainhead of the mind is affected by the motion of the wind of ignorance (i.e., the fundamental non-enlightenment),⁵² engendering thereby the deluded processes of thought, the activating consciousness (*ōpsik*; Ch. *yeh-*

⁴⁹ *Kisillon* so 1, T 1844-206c: 18-20; *Chōnjip* 6: 15.

⁵⁰ *Kūmgang sammaegyōng non*, T 1730-969b9-10; Paek Sōng-uk, ed., 55; quoting *Chin kang san mei ching*, T 273-366c17-18.

⁵¹ *Kisillon* so 1, T 1844-208c: 10-11, 13-14; *Chōnjip* 6: 20-21.

⁵² “The three types of subtle arising and ceasing [which are dissociated from mind; *cittaviprayukta*] are affected by the mind of ignorance The three types of arising and ceasing [which are associated with mind; *cittasamprayukta*] are affected by the wind of sensory experience.” *Kūmgang sammaegyōng non*, T 1730-969c: 5, 7; Paek Sōng-uk, ed., p. 59. “The false wind of ignorance moves the mind-sea and churns up the waves.” *Kisillon* so 1, T 1844-202b: 6-7; *Chōnjip* 6: 1. “Because these three [kinds of subtle consciousnesses] are affected by ignorance, they are classified with the eighth [consciousness]. Because the latter six [viz. the six sensory consciousnesses] are affected by the sense-spheres, they are classified with the seventh consciousness.” *Kisillon pyōlgi* 2, T 1645-234a: 16-18; *Chōnjip* 7: 24. [Author’s note.]

shih) is produced. These deluded thoughts then infuse ignorance once again and the transforming consciousness (*chönsik*; Ch. *chüan-shih*), the subjective point of view, arises, until finally the illusory sensory spheres of the manifesting consciousnesses (*hyönsik*; Ch. *hsien-shih*) appear. These activating, transforming, and manifesting consciousnesses are termed the “three subtleties” (*samsē*; Ch. *san-hsi*). It was Wŏnhyo who first differentiated them from the eighth consciousness, the *ālayavijñāna*; Fa-tsang merely followed him.

The same wind of the sense spheres, moreover, infuses the manifesting consciousnesses and thus produces the discriminative characteristics of the seventh consciousness, the discriminative-knowledge consciousness (*chisik*; Ch. *chih-shih*). From this point on, the six types of sensory objects come into existence, and, due to the continuing consciousness (*sangsoksik*; Ch. *hsiang-hsü shih*), are seized by the various wrongly-grasped signs of the mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*). But the original essence of the one mind is none other than original enlightenment, while ignorance is just the fundamental non-enlightenment. By the collateral non-enlightenment (*chimalpulgak*; Ch. *ch'i-mo pu-chüeh*) is meant all the tainted dharmas, which are produced by the seven consciousnesses as a result of the interaction between the above-mentioned “three subtleties” and the six sensory objects.⁵³ Those coarse objects which exist amid the sensory spheres are what is meant by the realm of ordinary persons (*prthagjana*), and those invite suffering through the actions (*karman*) performed by the aggregate of formations (*samskāraśandha*).

The waves of the “arising-and-ceasing approach” are produced through the interaction between the wind of ignorance (the fundamental non-enlightenment) and the wind of the environment itself (the collateral non-enlightenment). But this does not mean that the original essence of suchness vanishes. While the true-suchness approach and the arising-ceasing approach are distinguished, their essences are not different. Accordingly, at the same time that all dharmas are just the one mind, they are also the mind of ordinary sentient beings.

In the same way, just as the non-enlightenment of ignorance infuses the original enlightenment of true suchness so that tainted dharmas are produced, so also the original enlightenment of true suchness infuses the non-enlightenment of ignorance so that all the pure dharmas are produced. Due to the condition of ignorance, the original essence of the one mind becomes agitated and produces deluded thoughts; but due to the overriding influence of original enlightenment, those deluded thoughts ultimately are endowed with

⁵³ *Kisillon* so 1, T 1844-212a-c, 216b; *Chŏnjip* 6: 31-32, 43-45.

the capacity to express enlightenment. Once the process of mental development that leads up to enlightenment is accomplished, that enlightenment which has been actualized is seen to have always been identical to the original enlightenment. This is what is meant by the term “actualized enlightenment.”

As far as the term “actualized enlightenment” is concerned, this essence of the mind is affected by the condition of ignorance and produces deluded thoughts. But because of the power of the influence of original enlightenment, [those thoughts] come to have a modicum of enlightened function (*kagyong*). Once final [enlightenment (*kugyönggak*; Ch. *chiu-ching chüeh*)] is reached, [the deluded mind] returns to its identity with the original enlightenment. This is called “actualized enlightenment.”⁵⁴

Ordinary persons realize the unwholesomeness of things marked by the characteristic of extinction, and since they cannot awaken from their dreamlike hallucination, which is represented by that characteristic, they have no chance of eradicating the defilements. But gradually they direct themselves toward the original fountainhead of the one mind and cultivate themselves accordingly. As they perfect the various expedients (*upāya*), the “waves,” – the characteristics created by the coming together of the various consciousnesses – are calmed and the characteristics of the continuing mind are extinguished. The *dharmakāya* then appears and the mind’s natural limpidity is restored. At that point, the actualized enlightenment reaches the stage of the final enlightenment, which is equivalent to the original enlightenment, and one’s own mind of clear, great awakening realizes that it is originally unmoving. It is then liberated from the characteristics of arising and ceasing.

As one returns to the empty and calm mind of original enlightenment, the bifurcation between subject and object then vanishes forever; this is termed the “actualized separation” (*silla*; Ch. *shih-li*). In distinction to this, the fact that the empty and calm mind of original enlightenment is innately free from the subject-object bifurcation is termed the “original separation” (*polli*; Ch. *pen-li*). Furthermore, annihilating the characteristics to which one clung previously is termed the “dispatched separation” (*kyölli*; Ch. *ch’ien-li*), while the original emptiness of the characteristics to which one clung previously is termed the “extinct separation” (*milli*; Ch. *min-li*). In the same way, actualized enlightenment means that one eventually achieves liberation from both the subject and object of clinging, while original enlightenment has the sense of the

⁵⁴ *Kisillon pyölg* 2, T 1845-230a: 19-21; *Chönjip* 7: 13.

original freedom from the subject and object of clinging.⁵⁵

Original enlightenment is the pure dharma of true suchness, while non-enlightenment is the tainted dharma of ignorance. Even if there were some way in which the pure dharma of true suchness could become tainted, it would be due to the influence of ignorance that tainted characteristics would be made manifest. Although the original purity of action is absent from the defiled dharma of ignorance, that ignorance is nevertheless endowed with the purity of the enlightened function because of the influence of True Suchness.⁵⁶

If the process of actualizing enlightenment is completed and one returns to the fountainhead of the one mind, then the eight consciousnesses will all undergo an evolution (*parivṛtti*). As the waves of the mundane world no longer occur, arising and ceasing come to an end. The thought processes stop and one arrives at the realm of quiescent immaculateness. At that time, the one mind leaves darkness behind and becomes luminous; it is bright, transparent, and pure. As there are no shadows that are not illuminated, that realm is pure like beryl, and the great, perfect mirror wisdom (*ādarśanajñāna*) manifests. This realm is called either the “ground of knowledge” (*chijī*; Ch. *chih-ti*) or the “vast knowledge” (*hongjī*; Ch. *hung-chih*). Thus, actualized enlightenment does not lead to the attainment of something new; it is identical to the one enlightenment (*ilgak*; Ch. *i-chüeh*), which is no different from original enlightenment. This being the case, the unitary enlightenment is also called the “holy force” (*sŏngnyŏk*; Ch. *sheng-lī*), for there is nothing that it cannot do. As the actualized enlightenment is nothing more than the accomplishment of the original enlightenment, they cannot really be differentiated. Hence, it is this equivalency that is termed *mahāprajñāpāramitā* (the great perfection of wisdom).

Because the original and actualized enlightenments are equal and nondual, it is said that “they are precisely *mahāprajñā* (great wisdom).” Because *prajñā*, in this wise, plumbs the source and exhausts the nature, it is said that it is a “*pāramitā*” (perfection).⁵⁷

According to Wŏnhyo, all of the soteriological stages up to and including the stage of equal enlightenment are still associated with the eighth

⁵⁵ *Kūmgang sammaegyŏng non*, T 1730-965c; Prof. Pak's citation to Paek Sŏng-uk's edition is incorrect here.

⁵⁶ Pak cites *Kisillon* so 1, *Chŏnjip* 6: 134, which cannot be correct; I have been unable to trace this passage in the *Taishō* edition.

⁵⁷ *Kūmgang sammaegyŏng non* 3, T 1730-994b: 11-12; Paek Sŏng-uk, ed., 225; the quote is from *Chin-kang san-mei ching*, T 273-371b: 12-13.

consciousness, the *ālayavijñāna*; hence, they continue to be subject to arising and ceasing and have yet to penetrate to the fountainhead of the mind. However, once sublime enlightenment, the final stage of enlightenment, is achieved, arising and ceasing are ended forever; by plumbing the fountainhead of the one mind of original enlightenment, one accesses the radiant purity of the ninth consciousness, the *amalavijñāna* (immaculate consciousness). This means that Wŏnhyo identifies the ninth consciousness with the original enlightenment – i.e., the final, sublime enlightenment – and it is to be utterly distinguished from the eighth consciousness, which is still subject to the influence of ignorance.

“In the ninth consciousness, [the mind] is brilliantly shining and pure, without the slightest shadow.” The previous stage of equal enlightenment is still involved with arising and ceasing and has yet to exhaust the fountainhead of the mind. Hence, it is involved with the eight consciousnesses. Now, arriving at sublime enlightenment [the student] forever leaves behind arising and ceasing and is able to return to the fountainhead of the one mind of original enlightenment. Hence, he enters into the brilliant purity of the ninth consciousness.⁵⁸

Because it leaves behind all the miscellaneous taints, it is said that “the ninth consciousness flows purely.” Because original enlightenment is exactly the ninth consciousness, therefore the mind is free from discrimination. Because it is no longer affected by sensory objects, “the wind cannot blow.” Because [the wind] cannot blow, the defiled seven [kinds of consciousness] cannot arise. Hence, it is said that “the waves do not arise.”⁵⁹

If one can destroy the characteristics of arising and ceasing that exist within the consciousnesses associated [with ignorance], that will reveal the nature that is neither arising nor ceasing. Hence, it is said, “Destroying the characteristics of the associative consciousnesses reveals the *dharmakāya*.”⁶⁰

Wŏnhyo proposed that Paramārtha’s idea of the ninth consciousness was based on a reference to the *amalavijñāna* in the *Kūmgang sammaegyŏng* (Ch.

⁵⁸ *Kūmgang sammaegyŏng non 3*, T 1730-994c:24-27; Paek Sŏng-uk, ed., 228; the quote is from *Chin-kang san-mei ching*, T 273-371b: 15-16.

⁵⁹ *Kūmgang sammaegyŏng non 2*, T 1730-989b:24-27; Paek Sŏng-uk, ed., 192; the quote is from *Chin-kang san-mei ching*, T 273-307b: 23-24.

⁶⁰ Pak cites Paek Sŏng-ik, ed., *Kūmgang sammaegyŏng non*, p. 325, which cannot be correct. I am unable to trace the reference.

Chin kang san mei ching; Skt. **Vajrasamādhisūtra*), which Wŏnhyo interpreted as: “the amala is the ninth consciousness.”⁶¹ Thus, Wŏnhyo himself treated the *amalavijñāna* as being a ninth consciousness, separate and distinct from the eighth consciousness, the *ālayavijñāna*. This is precisely the same claim made by Wŏnch'ŭk in his *Haesimmilgyōng so* (Commentary to the *Samdhinirmocanasūtra*): “The ninth consciousness, the amala[*vijñāna*], is called the immaculate consciousness . . . It is also called the original enlightenment.”⁶²

As the ignorant minds of all sentient beings are identical to original enlightenment, it is said that there is but one enlightenment. All the Buddhas use this one enlightenment to enlighten sentient beings and prompt them to gain the original enlightenment; this is termed the beneficial influence of original enlightenment, which is the catalyst that serves to transform sentient beings. Transmuting the sensory consciousnesses into the immaculate *amalavijñāna* is termed the process of transformation.

“All the Buddhas, the Tathāgatas, constantly by means of the one enlightenment”: this refers to original [enlightenment], which is the catalyst of transformation. “They evolve all the consciousnesses so that they access the *amala*[*vijñāna*]”: this refers to evolution (*parivṛtti*), which is the object of that transformation.⁶³

Ultimately, actualized enlightenment is just original enlightenment, and that is nothing more than the *amalavijñāna*. Hence, these two are completely interdependent: “The nature of original enlightenment of all sentient beings is based on actualized enlightenment; hence, [that enlightened nature] is termed the mother of wisdom.”⁶⁴

However, Wŏnhyo goes one step further and says that actualized

⁶¹ *Kūmgang sammaegyōng non 2*, T 1730-978a: 7. This phrase is not found in the *sūtra*, as Pak states, but only in Wŏnhyo's commentary; I have amended the translation to reflect this fact. For the term *amala* in the *sūtra* see *Chin kang san mei ching*, T 273-368b: 14.

⁶² Wŏnch'ŭk, *Haesimmilgyōng so* 3, HTC 34-360a: 8, 10; quoted in Pak Chong-hong, *Han'guk sasangsa: Pulgyo sasang p'yŏn*, p. 74, in his chapter on Wŏnch'ŭk. See also Wŏnch'ŭk's *Inwanggyōng so*: “The Tripitaka Paramārtha established a total of nine consciousnesses. The first[viz. the ninth consciousness], the *amala*-consciousness, has suchness – original enlightenment – as its nature. When it is concealed, it is called *tathāgatagarbha*; when it is unconcealed, it is called *dharmakāya*. The *amala*-consciousness is called immaculate consciousness.” *Inwanggyōng so* 3, HTC 40-331a6-8; quoted in Pak Chong-hong, *ibid.*, 83 n. 4.

⁶³ *Kūmgang sammaegyōng non 2*, T 1730-978a:13-15, Paek Sŏng-uk, ed., 116; quoting *Chin kang san mei ching*, T 273-368b: 14-15.

⁶⁴ *Posal yōngnan ponŏpkyōng so 2*, HTC 61-256b: 4; *Chŏnjip* 4: 25.

enlightenment, non-enlightenment, and original enlightenment are also all inextricably interconnected, and finally points toward an original substance that has neither self-nature nor self-characteristic.

Actualized enlightenment is based on non-enlightenment. Non-enlightenment is based on original enlightenment. Original enlightenment is based on actualized enlightenment. Since these are all related one to another, they have no independent natures. “No self-nature” means that they do not possess enlightenment. “They do not possess enlightenment” means that they are interdependent. Since they have their meaning only in interdependence, they are not unenlightened. Because they are not unenlightened, they can be termed “enlightenment.” Not having any independent nature is what is termed enlightenment ...⁶⁵

All tainted and pure dharmas are mutually dependent on one another. They have no independent characteristics that can be described.⁶⁶

CALMNESS AND INSIGHT: THE METHOD OF ENLIGHTENMENT

Wŏnhyo described five different approaches to spiritual cultivation: (1) giving, (2) keeping precepts, (3) patient endurance, (4) energetic effort, (5) calmness and insight. Of these, it was the approach of calmness and insight (*śamatha-vipaśyanā*) in particular that Wŏnhyo discussed philosophically as the method to be followed in achieving enlightenment. Calmness and insight were then subdivided into two distinct approaches, making a total of six soteriological approaches in Wŏnhyo's system.

According to the explanation of the Buddha, there may be many different approaches to dharma (*dharmaparyāya*), but the practices that lead to the initial experience of awakening (= *darsanamārga*) are calmness (*śamatha*) and insight (*vipaśyanā*). Wŏnhyo used a simile of a single city with four separate gates to show that the various approaches to the dharma, while each distinct, nevertheless led to the same goal: entrance into the same city of nirvāna. *śamatha* and *vipaśyanā* were simply two approaches to the same result, taught from two different standpoints: *śamatha* from the standpoint of the absolute, or true-suchness approach, *vipaśyanā* from the standpoint of the conventional, or arising-ceasing approach. These two approaches could thus subsume all

⁶⁵ *Kisillon* so 1, T 1844-209a: 12-16; *Chŏnjip* 6: 22.

⁶⁶ *Kisillon* so 1, T 1844-212a: 16-17; *Chŏnjip* 6: 31.

absolute and phenomenal practices.

Although there are several different approaches to the teachings [of Buddhism], the cultivation intended for the initial access [to awakening] does not extend beyond two approaches [of *śamatha/vipaśyanā*]. Based on the true-suchness approach, one cultivates the practice of *śamatha*; based on the arising-ceasing approach, one produces the practice of *vipaśyanā*. *Śamatha* and *vipaśyanā* should be put into operation simultaneously and the myriads of practices will then be complete. If one accesses these two approaches, all approaches will be penetrated ...⁶⁷

Although there are several approaches to the dharma-gates taught by the Buddha, these do not surpass the two approaches of *śamatha* and *vipaśyanā*. *Śamatha* is so termed, because, while it can subsume all dharmas, its essence is the *dharmadhātu* of the unitary suchness. *Vipaśyanā* is so termed, because, while it realizes that there are no dharmas that are not this unitary suchness, it is able to illuminate all the falsely existing dharmas and show that there are none that are not the principles of the path. Although there may be several approaches, access to the principle is also nondual. It is like a single walled city that has four entrances: although the gates are not one, they are all the same in that they each enter into the city. The sense here is the same. From the standpoint of differentiations, while this approach [*śamatha*] is not that approach [*vipaśyanā*], that approach is also not this approach. And yet, if one subsumes the approach of differentiation into a comprehensive approach, there is then nothing that does not involve these two approaches of *śamatha* and *vipaśyanā*, for they subsume everything that is not *śamatha* and *vipaśyanā*.⁶⁸

Calmness means to calm the discriminative characteristics of all sensory objects. Calmness allows the student to overcome his attachment to the external appearances of objects and focus instead on their fundamental unity. Insight means to have insight into the causal characteristics of all compounded things. It helps one to know the unique qualities by which one thing is distinguished from another.

“Calm all the characteristics of the sensory spheres”: All the external sense-objects are initially produced by discrimination. Now, with enlightened

⁶⁷ *Kisillon* so 1, T 1844-204b: 24-27; *Chōnjip* 6: 8.

⁶⁸ *Pōmmanggyōng posal kyeon sagi* 1, HTC 95.108b: 7-15; *Chōnjip* 5: 13.

wisdom, one destroys all the characteristics of those external objects. Since the characteristics of those objects are calmed, there is nothing that is differentiated; it is for this reason that it is termed calmness . . .

Based on the true-suchness approach, one calms the characteristics of all the sense-realms; for this reason, there is nothing that is differentiated. One then perfects the indiscriminative wisdom. Based on the arising-and-ceasing approach, one discriminates all characteristics and has insight into their principles. One then perfects the subsequently obtained wisdom (*tatprsthalabdhajñāna*).⁶⁹

As for the concrete meditative method of practicing *śamatha*, Wŏnhyo discusses in detail the distinction between sitting erect, which controls the body, and rectifying one's thought, which controls the mind. If we now briefly summarize the essential features of this method, sitting straight means first to prepare the sitting-place and sit stably in either full or half-lotus position. Place the palm of the left hand on top of the right hand and sit erect. The shoulders should be straight, without being twisted or bent. The head and neck should be in a straight line with the nose and navel aligned. As far as rectifying thought is concerned, there are few who have made correct vows among practitioners in the final age of the dharma, while those who have wrong aspirations are many. Since they vainly pass their lives seeking fame and profit, those wrong aspirations must be abandoned. Rectifying thoughts thus means the attainment of the supreme path, in which mind and principle are in correspondence and one is able to ferry across both oneself and others to the other shore of nirvāṇa.⁷⁰

Wŏnhyo next explains the nine kinds of abiding mind: remaining introspective, equanimous abiding, peaceful abiding, intimate abiding, pacification, tranquility, absolute tranquility, abiding solely in one principle, and equanimous retention (= *samādhi*). As the final abiding-mind of equanimous retention abides in the characteristic of true suchness, it is said that it settles into the *samādhi* of true suchness. The *samādhi* of true suchness is the unitary characteristic of the *dharmadhātu*, and produces innumerable *samādhis* starting with the single practice *samādhi* (*ekakārasamādhi*), which is equanimous and nondual. In this way, Wŏnhyo clarifies the fundamental features of *śamatha*.

Now for the cultivation of insight (*vipaśyanā*). All mundane, conditioned dharmas cannot subsist for long and decay in an instant; all mental activities

⁶⁹ *Kisillon* so 1, T 1844-221c: 25-27, 222a: 2-4; *Chŏnjip* 6: 61.

⁷⁰ *Kisillon* so 1, T 1844-222c: 11ff; *Chŏnjip* 6: 63-64.

arise and cease, thought after thought. It is for these reasons that one must develop insight into the truth of suffering. Accordingly, insight into the characteristics of dharmas (*pŏpsang-gwan*) is principally concerned with insight into impermanence, suffering, wandering on (= *samsāra*), and impurity. Among the so-called four types of insight are included insight into great compassion (*taebigwan*), insight into vows (*sŏwŏn-gwan*), and insight into energetic effort (*chŏngjin-gwan*), in addition to insight into the characteristics of dharmas. If one were only to cultivate calmness, the mind might sink into apathy and slip easily into lassitude; therefore, insight must also be practiced. It is for this reason that *śamatha* and *vipāśyanā* must always be cultivated as a pair; for it is only when both are practiced simultaneously that enlightenment can be achieved.

The two practices of *śamatha* and *vipāśyanā* must be completed together. They are like the two wings of a bird or the two wheels of a cart: If both wheels of a cart are not present, the cart will not be able to transport anything; and if one wing of a bird is injured, how will that bird be able to soar off into the sky? Therefore it is said that if *śamatha* and *vipāśyanā* are not both perfected, one will then be unable to access the path of bodhi.⁷¹

⁷¹ *Kisillon so* 1, T 1844-225b: 29-c2; *Chŏnjip* 6: 72. It is, of course, common knowledge that the simultaneous cultivation of *śamatha* and *vipāśyanā* is a teaching that appears in many strata of Buddhist literature. Wŏnhyo's expansion on this idea appears in the Preface to his *Posal Yŏngnak ponŏkyŏng so*, where he describes the dual operation of *śamatha* and *vipāśyanā* (*ssangun chigwan*) as the principal idea of that scripture. He says:

The road that returns to the source is exceedingly level and yet no one can walk it. The gate that accesses the mystery (*hyŏn*) is wide open and yet no one can enter it. This is due to the fact that worldly teachers grasp at existence and stagnate in non-existence. Those who grasp at existing characteristics cling to the coarse body that is dependent for its existence [on various supporting conditions]. While inclined toward the limitless characteristics of dharmas, there are none of those that become their own. They flow along for a long time, following after names. Those who stagnate in empty non-existence serve the blind ideas created by nescience and rely on the doctrinal approach that produces conceptual understanding. Inebriated and drunken, unable to sober up, they shake their heads and won't study. Therefore, the *Tathāgatas*, out of their unconditioned, great compassion, draw on these two varieties [existence and non-existence] and prompt them to access the path to Buddhahood ... the joint operation of *śamatha* and *vipāśyanā* is the two wings that soar high into the empty sky of the dharma-nature. This is the principal idea of the original action (*ponŏp*). (*Yŏngnak ponŏpkyŏng so*, *Chŏnjip* 4: 1. The Preface does not appear in the HTC edition.)

One should also note that Wŏnhyo's statement here – “those that stagnate in empty non-existence serve the blind ideas of nescience and rely on the doctrinal approach that produces conceptual understanding. Inebriated and drunken, unable to sober up, they shake their heads and won't study” – is remarkably parallel to the lament uttered later by the Koryŏ Sŏn master Chinul (1158-1210) about

Śamatha and *vipaśyanā* may also be termed concentration (*samādhi*) and wisdom (*prajñā*).

As for the so-called approach of *śamatha* and *vipaśyanā*, it is *samādhi* and *prajñā* among the six *pāramitās* that are to be cultivated together. Therefore, these two are combined into the approach of *śamatha* and *vipaśyanā*.⁷²

From the standpoint of their characteristics, *samādhi* is called *śamatha*, and *prajñā* is called *vipaśyanā*. From an absolute standpoint, however, *samādhi* embraces both *śamatha* and *vipaśyanā*, and *prajñā* does likewise.⁷³

From a conventional point of view, then, *samādhi* is *śamatha* and *prajñā* is *vipaśyanā*; but from an absolute standpoint, *samādhi* and *prajñā* both completely include the entire essences of *śamatha* and *vipaśyanā*. Wŏnhyo notes in his *Kūmgang sammaegyŏng non* that *samādhi* may be designated by several synonymous terms, including equanimous control (= *samāhita*), equanimous retention (= *samādhi*), equanimous arrival (= *samāpatti*), tranquil thought (= *dhyāna*), stopping (= *śamatha*), one-pointedness of mind (= *cittaikāgratā*), concentration (= *samādhi* or *dhyāna*), and correct consideration (= *samyagupanidhyāna*).⁷⁴ Furthermore, the distinction between adamant wisdom (*vajraprajñā*) and adamant concentration (*vajrasamādhi*) correlates with the difference between *samādhi* and *prajñā*.⁷⁵ However, as *samādhi* and *prajñā* are in equilibrium and cannot be separated from one another, they may also be termed “equanimous retention” (*samādhi*).⁷⁶ Going one step further, “Initially [cultivate] *samādhi* and next [develop] *prajñā*; third, practice *samādhi*

the lackadaisical Sŏn monks of his own era. Chinul bemoans the contemporary state of Sŏn practice in his *Pŏpchip pyŏrhaengnok chŏryŏ pyŏngip sagi*: “I have observed that people of the present time who are cultivating their minds do not depend on the guidance of the written teachings, but straightaway assume that the successive transmission of the esoteric idea [of Sŏn] is the path. They then sit around dozing with the minds in a haze, their labors all in vain, or else they lose their presence of mind in agitation and confusion during their practice of meditation.” (Translation from Robert Buswell, *The Korean Approach to Zen: The Collected Works of Chinul* [Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1983], 263-264.) [Author’s note.]

For Wŏnhyo’s perspectives on meditative practice, see Yi Yŏngja, “Gangyŏ no shikan” (Wŏnhyo’s Calmness and Insight), in Sekiguchi Shindai, *Bukkyō no jissen genre* (Buddhist Soteriological Principles), ed. Sekiguchi Shindai, 429-225 (Tokyo: Sankibō Busshorin, 1977).

⁷² *Kisillon so 2*, T 1844-221c: 8-10; *Chŏnjip* 6: 60.

⁷³ *Kisillon so 2*, T 1844-222a: 15-16; *Chŏnjip* 6: 61.

⁷⁴ *Kūmgang sammaegyŏng non 1*, T 1730-962a25-962c; Paek Sŏng-uk, ed., 11-12.

⁷⁵ *Kūmgang sammaegyŏng non 1*, T 1730-961c: 16-21; Paek Sŏng-uk, ed., 6.

⁷⁶ *Kūmgang sammaegyŏng non 1*, T 1730-962b: 22-23; Paek Sŏng-uk, ed., 11.

and *prajñā* together.”⁷⁷

As for the relation between enlightenment and practice, Wŏnhyo says that “true cultivation” (*chinsu*) means viewing practice from the standpoint of the revelation of original enlightenment, while “cultivating anew” (*sinsu*) means the cultivation performed during the actualization of enlightenment. Both “true cultivation” and “cultivating anew” are valid descriptions of the process by which enlightenment is achieved.⁷⁸ “However, the great enlightenment that returns to the fountainhead is accomplished through the steady accumulation of merit; one cannot suddenly awaken from the long nightmare that follows along with the flow [of birth and death].”⁷⁹

Hence, even though enlightenment may be innate, this does not obviate the fact that morality and wisdom are both necessary for optimal spiritual progress.

Although talented and learned, if one does not observe moral precepts, it would be like being directed to a treasure-house but not even starting on the way. Although one may practice diligently, if it is without wisdom, it would be like a person who wishes to go east but ends up walking west. The practice of the wise is like boiling rice-grains to make rice; the practice of the ignorant is like boiling sand to make rice. Everyone knows enough to eat food in order to soothe pangs of hunger, but no one knows enough to study the dharma in order to correct his ignorant mind. Practice and wisdom that are both perfected are like the two wheels of a cart; to benefit both oneself and others is like the two wings of a bird.⁸⁰

One should not jump to the conclusion that the dual cultivation of practice

⁷⁷ *Kūmgang sammaegyŏng non 1*, T 1730-997c: 26; Paek Sŏng-uk, ed., 248.

⁷⁸ *Kūmgang sammaegyŏng non 1*, T 1730-965c: 18-20; Paek Sŏng-uk, ed., 33.

⁷⁹ *Yusim allakto*, T 1965-110b: 20-21, *Chŏnjip* 10: 2; see also *Muryangsugyŏng chongyo*, HTC 32.247a11, *Chŏnjip* 2: 1. Wŏnhyo divides the sudden/gradual question in Buddhist soteriology into a “sudden/gradual approach based on the person” and a “sudden/gradual approach made with reference to the sense-spheres.” As for the first approach, a “sudden/gradual approach based on the person.” In the case of one who relies on the unique individual characteristic that persists from the beginning of life to its end, one gradually [Pak incorrectly states both gradually and suddenly] purifies all the outflows and one’s wisdom gradually increases. But in the case of one who relies on the continuity in the characteristics common to all people, one suddenly purifies all the outflows and suddenly achieves perfect enlightenment. As for the second approach, a “sudden/gradual approach made with reference to the sense-spheres,” in the case of the ten types of *dharmadhātus*, [the outflows] are gradually removed, while in the case of the one *dharmadhātu*, they are suddenly excised. See *Posal yŏngnak ponŏpkyŏng so*, HTC 61: 256b; *Chŏnjip* 4: 26. [Author’s note.]

⁸⁰ *Palsim suhaengjang*, *Chŏnjip* 10: 1.

and wisdom mentioned in this passage correlates with the previous treatment of *śamatha/vipaśyanā* and *samādhi/prajñā*. Wŏnhyo instead seems to be merely reiterating his previous idea that the true-suchness approach and the arising-and-ceasing approach should not be separated.

Wŏnhyo thus clarifies once again that, from the standpoint of their inner truth, the absolute (the true-suchness approach) and the conventional (the arising-and-ceasing approach) cannot be differentiated.

The aspect of true suchness is the common characteristic of all dharmas. Apart from this common characteristic there are no other dharmas. All dharmas are subsumed within this common characteristic. This is like clay, which is the common characteristic of any ceramic vessel. Apart from that common characteristic, there are no other ceramics, and all ceramics are included in [that category of vessels made from] clay. So it is with the aspect of true suchness.

Now for the arising-ceasing approach. True suchness is the cause of both the wholesome and unwholesome, and produces all dharmas through the interaction of conditions. But even though [suchness] does in fact produce all dharmas, its true nature remains eternally unaffected. For this reason, this [arising and ceasing] aspect also subsumes true suchness. It is like the nature of clay: while clay combines to form ceramics, the nature and characteristics of that clay remain unaffected. Therefore ceramics subsume the clay. So, too, is it with the arising-and-ceasing aspect [which subsumes true suchness]

Now these two approaches are mutually interfused, and their boundaries are indistinguishable. Therefore, they both completely subsume all noumenal and phenomenal dharmas. Hence, it is said, "These two aspects are not separate."⁸¹

Just as arising and ceasing can be incorporated into true suchness, so also is the converse true.

One also should point out the phenomenal characteristics. It is only for the sake of conciseness that this is not mentioned ...⁸²

The self-essence is also present within the arising-and-ceasing approach. It is merely because characteristics derive from essence that this is not

⁸¹ *Kisillon pyŏlgi*, T 1845-227b: 23, 26-28; *Chŏnjip* 7: 4-5.

⁸² *Kisillon pyŏlgi*, T 1845-227c: 6-7; *Chŏnjip* 7: 5.

distinctly mentioned.⁸³

The Silla monk Kyōndŭng (dates unknown) in his *Kisillon t'ongi yak chip* (Consistencies and Contradictions in [Doctrines Presented in] the *Awakening of Faith*), clarifies the meaning of the following passage from Wŏnhyo's *Simmun hwajaeng non*: "These two aspects – the aspect in which things arise from causes and the aspect in which one returns to the source through extinguishing conditions – are interconnected, and not contradictory."⁸⁴ Kyōndŭng remarks:

Original enlightenment is something that, while original, does not differ from the actualized [enlightenment]; for that reason, original enlightenment also involves form and sound. Actualized enlightenment is something that, while actualized, does not differ from original enlightenment; for that reason, actualized enlightenment is also free from form and sound. Since original and actualized [enlightenments] are nondual, form neither does nor does not exist. The fruition-qualities of Buddhahood mean nothing more than to be unimpeded in this way. From time immemorial, form and mind have been nondual: the nature of form is wisdom and the nature of wisdom is form. Through this approach of removing characteristics to return to the source, this singular scholar [Wŏnhyo] explains that it is also correct to claim that there is no distinction between form and sound. But through the approach in which meritorious qualities are derived from the nature, this singular scholar explains that it is also correct to claim that there is in fact a distinction between form and sound. If one is partial toward either description, retained jointly, there is nothing that will not be wrong. But if the meaning of both is understood, there is nothing that will not be right. The sense of [the claim that] both will be right is that there is nothing that will not be upheld. The theme of [this claim that] both will be wrong is that there is nothing that will not be negated.⁸⁵

To this point, we have been able to see vividly that *śamatha* and *vipaśyanā* as soteriological techniques are inseparable from Wŏnhyo's syncretic logic; they are intimately related. However, at the same time, their affinities should be clear

⁸³ Pak cites *Kisillon so*, *Chōnjip* 6: 1, but this citation is incorrect. I have been unable to trace the quotations in either *Kisillon so* or *Kisillon pyōlgi*.

⁸⁴ This passage is not extant in the remaining fragments of Wŏnhyo's *Simmun hwajaeng non*.

⁸⁵ *Kisillon t'ongi yakchip* 1, HTC71-368a-11-b3.

as well with the ontological principle expressed in the *Heart Sūtra* – i.e., “form is just emptiness; emptiness is just form”⁸⁶ – as well as with the processes governing spiritual development.

THE EMBODIMENT OF FREEDOM IN ACTION

“Wŏnhyo, the Unbridled,” the biography of Wŏnhyo that appears in Iryŏn’s *SY* includes this closing eulogy: “Horn Rider [Wŏnhyo] first opened the hub of *samādhi*,/Dancing Gourd was finally suspended in the winds of myriad streets.”⁸⁷ Wŏnhyo, who sought to clarify the principle of enlightenment and the method leading thereto, danced around with a great gourd, which he called Muae (Unhindered), and through such bodhisattva practices proselytized sentient beings. This idea that people must become free from all hindrances to action appears in a passage from the *Avatamsakasūtra*: “All unhindered persons leave birth and death along a single path.”⁸⁸ Wŏnhyo wandered among the thousands of villages and the myriads of hamlets, singing and dancing, trying to convert people through song, so that even children in their straw huts knew the name “Buddha” and could recite it. After an affair with the widowed princess of Prasine Palace, which led to the conception of a son, Sŏl Ch’ong, Wŏnhyo exchanged his monk’s robes for lay clothes and referred to himself disparagingly as Householder Sosŏng (Small Surname = Small Nature), apparently in atonement for transgressing the monastic vow of celibacy. It thus seems that Wŏnhyo was not only investigating theoretically the *Avatamsakasūtra*’s idea of unhinderedness, but actually acted it out in person. Where Wŏnhyo treats the issue of the relative shallowness or profundity of various precepts in his *Posal kyebon chibŏm yogi* (Notes on the Importance of Keeping or Breaking the Precepts in the Bodhisattva *Vinaya*), he finally criticizes as shallow all attempts to interpret the injunctions of the *Vinaya* inflexibly; profound understanding instead means discerning the differences between relative levels of merit or demerit in one’s response to varying situations.

The superior man, who is liberal and virtuous, free of spirit and innocent, does not know how to discriminate between things; he fuses merit and demerit so that they become one and forgets the difference between

⁸⁶ *Po jo po lo mi to hsin ching*, T 251-848c5.

⁸⁷ “Wŏnhyo pulgi” (Wŏnhyo, the Unbridled), in *SY* 4, T 2039-1006b: 28.

⁸⁸ *Tafang kuang fo hua yen ching* 5, T 278-429a19; *Ta fang kuang fo hua yen ching* 13, T 279-68c: 13.

himself and others. As his spirit is always blissful wherever he roams, he neither deprecates himself while praising others, nor reveres himself while criticizing others.

The ignoramus, however, is naïve and unsophisticated and is incapable of distinguishing right from wrong. He finds it difficult to tell pulse from wheat, let alone recognize the good as good or evil as evil. Since his mind is always dull, and he is uncertain whether to love or to hate, he can neither humble himself while praising others, nor commend himself while attacking others. This is the ignoramus' fault of chaotic confusion, while the former is the wise man's virtue of innocence.⁸⁹

The unhindered state cultivated by Wŏnhyo was quite different from this inability to discriminate between things merely out of ignorance.

It is of course a mistake to equate unhindered action with immorality. The biography of Wŏnhyo written by the Sung dynasty author Tsan-ning relates several instances that seem to imply that Wŏnhyo's conduct was less than irreproachable according to the standards of the Buddhist ecclesia. Tsan-ning says, for example,

His utterances were mad and outrageous and his conduct perverted and remiss. Together with householders, he entered bars and brothels. Like Chih-kung (Pao-chih; 418-514), he carried a metal knife and an iron staff. Sometimes he composed commentaries in order to explicate the "Assorted Flowers" (i.e., the *Avatamsaka*, or *Flower Garland Sūtra*). At other times, he plucked the zither in order to enliven the shrines and temples. Sometimes he dwelt overnight at the village gate. At other times he sat in meditation in the mountains and along the streams. He followed the turn of events in any way that he pleased, completely without any fixed regimen.⁹⁰

It is going too far to say that Tsan-ning intended to impugn Wŏnhyo's character, despite his statement that Wŏnhyo's words were crazy and his conduct perverse. Tsan-ning tells us later, for example, that when the Korean king inaugurated a Great Assembly for the recitation of the *Jen wang ching*, a scripture proclaiming Buddhism's rule as a protector of the state, and sought out learned monks to participate, he invited Wŏnhyo, even though the other monks thought his personal character deficient and refused to admit him. This story

⁸⁹ *Posal kyebon chibŏm yogi*, T 1907-920c-27-921a: 4; *Chŏnjip* 5: 8-9.

⁹⁰ *Sung kao seng chuan* 4, T 2061-730a: 12-16.

suggests that Wŏnhyo enjoyed considerable renown, despite the fact that the majority of monks found it difficult to accept his attitude on life.

But does unhindered action like that practiced by Wŏnhyo imply antinomianism? This is not a question posed solely because of Wŏnhyo's conduct; rather, it is an issue relevant to any popularization movement that resists the tendency toward formalization and gentrification, which would subjugate the liberating spirit of Buddhism. Wŏnhyo's contemporary Tæan (d.u.), for example, was well known as a theurgist. Strange in appearance, he constantly went about the marketplace ringing a bronze monks' begging bowl and chanting, "Tæan! Tæan!" (Great Peace), which was how he earned his sobriquet. It was Tæan who first requested that Wŏnhyo lecture on the *Vajrasamādhisūtra*. "[Tæ]an said: 'Quickly take it and entrust it to Wŏnhyo to lecture; don't let anyone else have it.'"⁹¹ This would seem to indicate the congruency of their philosophies. Even Iryŏn notes that Tæan was one "who also 'knew the sound' and 'sang in harmony'" with Wŏnhyo.⁹² From Tæan's statement concerning the *Vajrasamādhisūtra* that appears in the *Sung kao seng chuan* "Just bring the sūtra; I don't wish to cross the threshold of the royal palace"⁹³ – we may surmise that Tæan as well showed a similar attitude of opposition to the trappings of worldly power. On this point, both Wŏnhyo and Tæan would appear to have been in complete accord with one another. While the instruments they beat – Wŏnhyo, his gourd, Tæan, his bowl – and the principles they expressed in their songs may have differed, both nevertheless engaged in bodhisattva practices that were intended to popularize Buddhism. Hence, it would not be a mistake to say that both of these Koreans embodied the ideal of unhindered action.

There are a few anecdotes scattered throughout SY that exemplify Wŏnhyo's freedom of action. It is related, for instance, that Wŏnhyo helped the deaf and dumb boy, Sabok, perform a memorial service for his mother, and assisted the lustful Omjang cultivate one instant of contemplation so that he could accomplish his vow to be reborn in the Pure Land.⁹⁴ Tsan-ning's biography of Wŏnhyo also states, "Hyo's appearances were unpredictable and his

⁹¹ *Sung kao seng chuan* 4, T2061-730b: 9-10.

⁹² SY 5, T2039-1006b: 24.

⁹³ *Sung kao seng chuan* 4, T2061-730b: 8.

⁹⁴ SY 4, T2039-1007a-b; SY 5, T2039-1012c: 13-15. There are a few other stories about Wŏnhyo that are even more relevant here. Along with his friend Hyegong (d.u.), Wŏnhyo is reputed to have gone fishing – an action forbidden to Buddhists (SY 3, T2039-1004c24-26). Perhaps the most graphic tale is that in which Wŏnhyo is said to have asked a woman for a drink from the water in which she was washing her menstrual belt (SY 3, T2039-996c: 16-18).

methods of proselytism varied.”⁹⁵ While the thaumaturgic elements in these stories leave some question as to whether they should be accepted at face value, such tales at the very least suffice to suggest that Wŏnhyo's intention was to draw near to the masses in order to convert them to Buddhism. This is the same Wŏnhyo who turned his own home into a temple, Ch'ogae-sa, once he had gone forth from the household life.

I have sought here to show that Wŏnhyo embodied a sort of sacred libertinism by adopting the guise of a mendicant who wandered the streets striking a gourd, and who sought enlightenment while proselytizing in bars and brothels. At the very least, these stories seem to suggest that Wŏnhyo was intent on becoming the embodiment of the absolute freedom of action that was taught in the Buddhist scriptures. Wŏnhyo's philosophical thought, then, was more than just “thought.” Wŏnhyo, in fact, was a philosopher who, in the true spirit of philosophy, lived out his thought, and who took religious practice as his *raison d'être*. Since Wŏnhyo came to exemplify in his own person this ideal of unhindered action, we may therefore say that the objective of his philosophy was to develop persons who would be completely free of all hindrances, whether social, religious, or speculative.

⁹⁵ *Sung kao seng chuan* 4, T 2061-730b: 19-20.