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A Hermeneutical Dialogue of Understanding: Reading Prayers in Christianity, Buddhism and *Tonghak*, Utilizing *Hwajaeng* Philosophy*

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I. Introduction

A summary of human life in modern times cannot be anything other than dissolution and conflicts that originated from the inner contradiction of human existence and from the outer heterogeneity of political, economical and cultural conditions, respectively. According to the explosive amount of information and unavoidable openness to modern civil heterogeneity, such dissolution and conflicts has unprecedently and vehemently accelerated at the levels of both individuals and societies, particularly by the process of modern globalization. No doubt, this bizarre and grotesque phenomenon has been chiefly manipulated by the unilateral process of the West-centered globalization which

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made the non-Western populace put to marginal and redundant beings, whereby the whole global communities, both the East and the West, had been critically suffered in every aspect of human life. To make matters worse, such dissolution and conflicts in global communities has been seriously exacerbated all over the world, especially in the name of God and religions. Despite the fact that Buddhism and Christianity are the two dominant religions in contemporary Korea and form integral parts of social and religious life in the country,[1] the two religions have not always had an amicable relationship, and the conflict between them has at times even turned violent.[2] Such strains and animosity in general appear chiefly due to a lack of mutual understanding accompanied by a creative encounter. This work seeks to offer a modest contribution to ameliorating the divisiveness among three religions. A hermeneutical dialogue of understanding is, therefore, an interpreting process of accommodation to the counterpart or the recipient, in which the same or similar connotation in each part nevertheless always needed different denotation to be understood.

Exploring how and what the prayers ultimately deal with human world and people's life, this work explores a possibility of hermeneut-

1) Approximately, 54% of Koreans are religious, and 55% of the religious are Christian, while 43% are Buddhist, according to a recent survey. Jin Y. Park & Kyeongil Jung, "Guest Editor's Introduction," *Journal of Korean Religions* 5, no. 1 (2014), 5-14, at 14 n 3. Keel Hee-Sung observed that Korea is the only country in the world where the "two religions are nearly equal in strength"("Chapter 2 : Meister Eckhart's Asian Christianity, Mysticism as a Bridge between Christianity and Zen Buddhism," *Philosophy and Culture* 1 [2007], 41).

2) See a serious report on this in *New York Times*: "Religious peace under threat in South Korea" (OCT. 14, 2008).

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ical dialogue for understanding on the religious prayers and thus ultimately how to utilize Asian religious fragrance and gist in each tradition for constructing a good hermeneutical paradigm, so as to well answer for and cope with the Asians' sufferings and conflicts in particular. For creating such a holistic hermeneutical dialogue of understanding, I will carefully adopt for methodology the *hwajaeng* philosophy by *Wŏnhyo* (617- 686 CE) who was renowned for having surmounted the then-pressing issue of the conflict between schools in East Asian Buddhism, and succeeded in establishing the philosophy of *ilsim* (一心, one mind), constituting the core of his thought.[3] To be sure, at the very level of *ilsim* which clearly exposed his great and mature state of enlightenment, he constantly intended to interpret, accept though partially, and have a reconciliatory dialogue even with other religious arguments about the truth. Hence, he was given the posthumous title of *hwajaeng kuksa* (National Preceptor of Harmonization of Disputes; 和諍國師) at the time of King *Sukchong* in *Coryŏ* Dynasty.

However, still mixed in with the other East Asian modes of discourse like classical Chinese and Indian Buddhist, *Wŏnhyo*'s works on *hwajaeng* can be said basically none other than detailed arguments of the logic of Buddhist emptiness (*śūnyatā*) relying on the paradigm of "essence-function"(體用), ultimately asserting the integrity of the *Mahāyāna* system.[4] In that sense, rather than establishing a holistic and consistent systematicness within *Mahāyāna*, *Wŏnhyo* seemed to attempt to do more broadly

3) Dong-shin Nam, "Wonhyo's Ilsim Philosophy and Mass Proselytization Movement," *Seoul Journal of Korean Studies* 8 (1995), 143.

4) Muller, "Wŏnhyo's Approach to Harmonization," 20.

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"make sense of the wide range of disparate strands" of *Mahāyāna* teachings that had been flowing into East Asia, quite similar to the underlying motivation of the rest East Asian Buddhist commentators of the sixth to eighth centuries in China and Korea.[5] In such a mature attitude to hermeneutical understanding by *Wŏnhyo*, a deeper exploration of the three religious prayers by extracting the beautiful balance of transcendence and immanence, deity and humans, and individuals and entirety, will surely reveal their respective splendors and ever greater mutual resonance, even promoting the possibility of their cross-fertilization and dialogic transformation.

II. Wŏnhyo's *Hwajaeng* (和諍, Syncretic Harmonization)[6]

Wŏnhyo thought that anyone who sees the reality of all dharmas as it is will not dispute with other people in the world, capable of tolerating such disputes. Despite any dichotomy of unenlightened and enlightened, and even Buddhist and non-Buddhist teachings, they all come from the one Buddha-nature and return to that origin.[7] For

5) Ibid., 11.

6) In *Wŏnhyo*'s works, this word *hwajaeng* was literally employed just twice: *Simmun hwajaeng non* (Ten Approaches to the Harmonization of Doctrinal Disputes; 十門和諍論) and the *Yŏlpan chong-yo* (Doctrinal Essentials of the Nirvana Sutra; 涅槃宗要). Classification system in this paper is based on the Archive Service System of Dongkuk University, computerized from the *Hankuk Pulkyo Chŏnsŏ* (韓國佛教全書, Korean Buddhism Collection; Abbreviated by H.), accessed on Sep 30, 2019, http://kabc.dongguk.edu.

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Wŏnhyo, Buddha-nature is commensurate with a universal good and cosmic love, having no limit and boundary, that the world religions also can find in a deep level through the experience of union with the ultimate reality. Hence, it was not so problematic for *Wŏnhyo* that any path of all religions ultimately ends up becoming the path leading to the one vehicle, the one single truth. His *hwajaeng* as a syncretic logic is therefore maintaining a universal character which can be applied to all religions that participate in arguments.[8] *Wŏnhyo* indiscriminately considered the "Buddha-nature"(佛性) as a common denominator of all religions, and argued that all truth claims can be "reconciled through the religious experiences of returning to the origin of the one mind," the essence of the Buddha-nature.[9] Centering on Buddha-nature as the common foundation of all universal religions and teachings, *Wŏnhyo* thought that all religions teach different ways but each one has its own way of salvation, which can be viewed from one vehicle.[10] That means the ultimate reality is called by different names but originates from the one. It is well remarked by *Wŏnhyo*, "Because these many scriptures intend to show the same meaning in spite of different phrases, these many names, which are originated from one Buddha-nature, are given"

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7) Yong-pyo Kim, "Wonhyo's Perspective on the Common Essence of Religions and Pluralistic Inclusivism," *International Journal of Buddhist Thought & Culturer* 20 (2013), 35; Wŏnhyo, *Pŏphwa chong-yo*: H. 1, 489a.

8) Sung-bae Park, *Hanguk* Sasang-kwa *Bulgyo* [Korean Philosophies and Buddhism] (Seoul: Hyean, 2009), 89-90; Tae-won Park, "Wonhyo's Login of Reconciliation and Healing Disputes of Opinion" *Buddhist Studies* 35 (2013), 99-138.

9) Yong-pyo Kim, "Wonhyo's Perspective," 35.

10) Ibid.

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(爲顯是等諸經異文同旨 故於一佛性 立是諸名也; *Yŏlpan chong-yo*: H. 1, 545a). That is why *Wŏnhyo* referred to it *ilsim* (one-mind; 一心) as the body and essence of the Buddha-nature (佛性之體正是一心, *Yŏlpan chong-yo*: H. 1, 538b).[11] He partially accepted other arguments of truth at the level of the *ilsim* (one mind).[12] As for *Wŏnhyo*, therefore, any reconciliatory hermeneutics may have a genuine meaning only for those who have already experienced the fountainhead of the one-mind, not simply an emotional state in union. The one-mind as the "essence"(體) of Buddha-nature, however, is not a substantial reality or an absolute truth, but a religious experience of returning to the original pure mind and mutually dynamic relations.

1. *Hwajaeng* and *Ilsim* (一心, the One Mind)

Notably, the *ilsim* (one mind) as the primary conceptual framework of *Wŏnhyo*'s *hwajaeng* that plays a pivotal role in his discussions of Buddha-nature in the *Awakening of Faith, Vajrasamādhi Sūtra,* and *Nirvana Sūtra*, he frequently used it in a more comprehensive sense that merges the real and mundane; *Ilsim* is described as being bound to neither existence nor non-existence, neither real nor mundane, neither one nor two, neither pure nor defiled. As "non-dual of the real and mundane, without sticking to unity"(眞俗無二 而不守一; *Kŭmkang sammaekyŏng non*; 金剛三昧經論 H. 1. 658c14-15), *Ilsim* practically unfolds

11) Wŏnhyo frequently used the word "one mind" interchangeably with "Buddha-nature" or "Tathagata's womb" (如來藏); *Yŏlpan chongyo*: H. 1, 544c-45a.

12) Yong-pyo Kim, "Wonhyo's Perspective," 41.

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his logic of harmonization, in which the "essential nature and characteristics are interfused; past and present are wrapped up in each other, and the diverse arguments of the one hundred philosophers are harmoniously reconciled with each other."[13] It is commensurate with the mind of *Tathāgatagarbha*, the one ultimate reality that includes everything. *Wŏnhyo* well highlights such a liberal and ultimate characteristic of it (*Yŏlpan chong-yo*: H. 1, 538c1-2).[14] In other words, *Wŏnhyo* have used the term "one mind" in a liberal and paradoxical as well as profound way. According to his *Kŭmkang sammaekyŏng non* (Exposition of the *Vajrasamādhi Sūtra*: H. 1, 615c18-22), since the one mind is the source of all dharmas and it is something all dharmas rely on, it becomes the basis of all dharmas. The one mind that includes everything is even like the sands in the river Ganges that is equipped with all clean and unclean virtues.

Even in the one mind as the center of 's philosophy and hermeneutics, are there included both the "arising-and-ceasing aspect"(生滅門) and the "aspect of thusness"(眞如門) which are the two aspects of the one mind. The *Awakening of Mahāyāna Faith* (大乘起信論), which was written by Asvaghosa (馬鳴) in 1-2 century CE, reconciles the conflicting two by explaining that they are actually only two aspects of the one mind.[15] It explains that everything is reasonable, since the one mind

13) Muller, "Wŏnhyo's Approach to Harmonization," 30.

14) 一心之性遠離諸邊 遠離諸邊故都無所當 無所當故無所不當; "The nature of the one mind gets away from all surroundings. Because it takes distance for all surroundings, there is nothing that it applies to. Because there is nothing that it applies to, there is nothing that it does not apply to."

15) Regarding the one mind/two aspects paradigm as the basis for *Wŏnhyo*'s harmonization,

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as the one ultimate reality appears so different and diverse according to historical and cultural contexts. His open and broadmindedness is blooming in this phrase: 由非一故 能當諸門 由非異故 諸門一味 ("Because it [one mind] is not one, it applies to every part, and because it is not a different thing, all gates taste the same"; *Yŏlpan chong-yo*: H. 1, 525c20-21). In point of fact, the two aspects of the one mind in *Wŏnhyo*'s *hwajaeng* works not only as the key hermeneutical tool to deal with scholarly incongruents, but also serving as personal meditative practice for undoing a habituated tendency of one's own consciousness, the tendency "to instantaneously and unconsciously move in the conceptual directions of reification or nihilation."[16] This is most extensively propagated in the prolegomenon of the *Kŭmkang sammae kyŏng non* H.1, 604b7-20.[17]

Muller identifies a new development of *Wŏnhyo*'s "Two Truths hermeneutics" in the various analogs of the two truths, such as the absolute (*chin*, 眞) and conventional (*sok*, 俗), emptiness (*kong*, 空) and existence (*yu*, 有), conditioned (*yuwi*, 有爲) and unconditioned (*muwi*, 無爲), etc; Muller, "*Wŏnhyo*'s Approach to Harmonization," 31-33. Understandably, however, such a mutual containment of the two truths in *Wŏnhyo*'s works, following explicitly the articulation in *Madhyamika*, is still the two aspects of one mind as "not being two yet not being one."

16) Ibid., 32.

17) Indeed, it is full of quandary but key expressions of *Wŏnhyo*'s one mind, such as *ipyŏn pichung* (離邊非中; "leaving behind all extremes and yet not being in between") and *muri jijiri* (無理之至理; "the ultimate principle of no-principle"), *puryŏn chidaeryŏn* (不然之大然; "great suchness of not being such"; or *piyŏn piburyŏn* [非然非不然], "neither correct nor incorrect") etc. Such a pure uncertainty of its nature is delineated most strikingly in the very first phrase: 一心之源 離有無而獨淨; "The origin of the one mind is free from existence and non-existence and is entirely pure." Through such a perplexing articulation, Wŏnhyo tries to precipitate a transcendent point of view as *piyu pimu* (非有非無; "neither existent nor nonexistence") that cannot be pinned to any specific position.

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As Pak Chong-hong interprets, it allows an "interfusion of two contrary positions but without obscuring the independence of those positions either."[18] As an "irrational rationalism and illogical logic," it is indeed to break any habituation or absolutization of constructing and maintaining dualism in either direction (i.e., reification or nihilation), non-attachment to extremes which is the endless Buddhist problem of attachment (*chip*, 執). This thought is the most fundamental hermeneutics in *Wŏnhyo*'s philosophy of the one mind that is characteristically "leaving words and going beyond thoughts"(*yiŏn chŏllyŏ*; 離言絶慮), which is adopted invariably throughout his works. Therefore, a caution is necessarily warranted that ilsim, repeatedly warned of its absolutization and substantialization by *Wŏnhyo*, is in fact a different designation of Buddha's enlightenment or Buddha nature itself that cannot be described and defined by words and thoughts. This argument is never opaque in his *Taesŭngkisillon so* (Commentary on the *Awakening of Mahāyāna Faith*; 大乘起信論疏: H. 1, 741a-b).[19]

2. *Hwajaeng* and Doctrinal Disputes

As *Wŏnhyo* explicates, there are simply all different sorts of words at-

18) Chong-hong Pak, *Hankuk sasangsa: Pulkyo sasang p'yŏn* [韓國思想史: 佛教思想編; History of Korean Thought: Buddhism] (Seoul: Sŏmundang, 1972), 98-99; Trans. Robert Buswell, Jr., "Wŏnhyo's Philosophical Thought," *Philosophy and Culture* 5 (2008), 68-69.

19) 然旣無有二 何得有一 一無所有 就誰曰心 如是道理 離言絶慮 不知何以目之 强號爲一心也; "Although it is already not two, how can there be one? Although there is not one thing, what can we call as the mind? Since this principle leaves remarks and goes beyond thoughts, I did not know how to point it out and forced myself to call it as the one mind."

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tempting to express the Buddha nature, and nevertheless they are not what the reality is revealed by words at all (SHN: H.1, 839a14-15; 唯有一切言說自性 非性所顯). Thus, if *Mādhyamika* (中觀論) consistently offers an "apophatic approach" that comprehensively refutes the validity of all statements made about the Buddhist dharma, then *Yogācāra* (瑜伽論 or 唯識論) maintains a "kataphatic approach" that offers a number of different ways from which to advocate legitimate positions.[20] But their problem is, according to *Wŏnhyo*, to completely neglect and reject the legitimacy of the position of the other. It is stupid and ignorant (愚癡). Therefore, through his *Commentary* and *Expository Notes* on *Aśvaghosa*'s (馬鳴) *Awakening of Mahāyāna Faith* (大乘起信論), a syncretic text attempting to merge these two main Buddhist philosophies, *Wŏnhyo* points out that while one advocates a position of its own, it does not neglect critiques of that position; and while critiquing its own, it also does not neglect to acknowledge the legitimacy of that position.[21] In other words, if we return to the source of the one mind, there is nothing that is not established and nothing that is not refuted ("還一心之源 [...] 無所不立 無所不破"; *Taesŭng kisillon so/pyŏlki*; Expository Notes on the *Awakening of Mahayana Faith*; 大乘起信論別記 H.1, 678a9-10).

Focusing on dialectical harmonizing of *apophasis* (cessation) and *kataphasis* (concession) relating to advocacy and refutation, he further provides a flexible and syncretic logic in *Taesŭng kisillon pyŏlki* (H.1, 678a16-18).[22] Combining *apophasis* and *kataphasis*, *Wŏnhyo* argues that

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20) Chong-hong Pak, "Wŏnhyo's Philosophical Thought," 58.

21) Ibid.

22) 無不立而自遣 無不破而還許 而還許者 顯彼往者往極而遍立 而自遣者此與者 窮與而奪;

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if one is obsessed by a "discriminative knowledge"(分別知) produced by formal logic, it should be refuted, and that if one sublates such a discriminative knowledge from the perspective of "equanimity of the single taste"(一味平等), then one can acknowledge the validity of all standpoints.[23] It is the very *Wŏnhyo*'s logic of *hwajaeng* that flexibly and boldly adopts the mundane concepts of *ippa* (立破, advocacy and refutation), *yŏt'al* (與奪, concession and deprivation), and *hŏ-purhŏ* (許不許, allowance and prohibition). It is because language is simply *upāya* to be ultimately overcome for the single taste of *Tathāgatagarbha*, not the reality itself.[24]

It is necessary to examine the way how *Wŏnhyo* sought to synthesize the two approaches of soteriological strategies in Buddhism (*Mahāyāna*) at that time, that is, apophatic and kataphatic; The former *apophatic* or passive approach (*muchŏk* [無的]; *via negativa*; cessation) attempts to return to the source of being through introspective techniques, which *Wŏnhyo* refers to as *kwiwŏn* (歸原, return to the source) or *kwiilsim* (歸一

"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." "Accept everything" means that if the refuter carries his refutation to its ultimate extreme he will have established a thoroughgoing kataphatic perspective. "Negate itself" elucidates the fact that one who carries a kataphatic analysis to its extreme will achieve apophasis.

23) Chong-hong Pak, "Wŏnhyo's Philosophical Thought," 59; Myong-hee Kim, "The Spirituality of Wonhyo's Hwajeng and Interreligious Dialogue: based on a comparison of the accommodation of Matteo Ricci and the mysticism of Enomiya-Lassalle," *Studies in Religion* 76, no. 2 (2016), 2-3.

24) Tae-won Park, *Wŏnhyoui Simmmun hwajaeng non* [Wŏnhyo's Ten Approaches to the Harmonization of Doctrinal Disputes](Seoul: Sech'ang Ch'ulp'an-sa, 2013), 44; Myong-hee Kim, "Spirituality of Wonhyo's Hwajeng," 42.

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心, return to the one mind); and the latter *kataphatic* or active approach (*yuchŏk* [有的]; *via positiva*; comprehensiveness) strives to perfect all of the virtues incumbent on one intent on enlightenment, which *Wŏnhyo* adopts vernacular terms like *saengki* (生起, bringing into being) and *sŏngmantŏk* (成萬德, perfect the myriad virtues).[25] The former offers a comprehensive dialectical critique of all views to which a person might cling, whereas the latter undertakes a thoroughgoing analysis of all dharmas, establishing their respective profundity or shallowness.[26] So, *Kyŏntŭng* (見登; d.u.; ca. *Silla* period) remarks the mutual inclusiveness and complemental nature of *Wŏnhyo*'s soteriological strategy in his *Taesŭngkisillon tongi yakchip* (大乘起信論同異略集; H.3, 695a18-22).

Both striving to develop merits and constant abiding in meditation are none other than two aspects of the one mind, faultlessly leading to the identical and indiscriminative Buddha-ground. Both approaches are complimentarily beneficial to attain such a perfect stage of Buddhahood by the same cessation of the obstacles of defilement and intellectual knowledge. In his *Yŏlban chong-yo*, *Wŏnhyo* himself tried to clarify this soteriological strategy in a slightly, but more deeply, different way in H.1, 533a2-8.[27] *Wŏnhyo*'s *hwajaeng* is in fact intended to demonstrate

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25) Chong-hong Pak, "Wŏnhyo's Philosophical Thought," 55; Hyo-gul Lee, "*Wŏnhyo ŭi Hwajaeng sasang e taehan Chaegŏmt'o*"[A Review of Wŏnhyo's Thought of Harmonization] *Journal of Buddhist Studies* 4 (2002), 5-34.

26) Chong-hong Pak, "Wŏnhyo's Philosophical Thought," 58.

27) 佛地萬德略有二門 若就捨相歸一心門 一切德相同法界 故說唯是第一義身 無有色相差別境界 若依從性成萬德門 色心功德無所不備 故說無量相好莊嚴 雖有二門而無異相 是故諸說皆無障礙 爲顯如是無礙法門; "There are briefly two approaches to the myriads of virtues of the *Buddhabhumi*. [First,] if we have the *approach that abandons "characteristics"(or*

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how these two different approaches are not contradictory or impeding each other, though they are obviously disparate in appearance. Both the way of abandoning characteristics (相) as apophatic and the way of following the true nature (性) are unimpeded approaches to *Buddhabhūmi*. His approach is thus called the true consilience and *muae* approach to the dharma, adverse to any discriminating ignorance.[28]

Hence *Wŏnhyo* introduces his rhetorical strategy of *kaehap* (開合, opening and combining, i.e., analysis and synthesis) that worked toward his "disallowing of rigidly holding to a specific doctrinal position" in the prolegomenon to *Hwaŏmkyŏng so* (Commentary on the *Flower Ornament Sutra*; 華嚴經疏: H. 1. 495a6-10), somewhat similar to Chan (禪) trope of "rolling out and taking back up."[29] As plausible bases of *Wŏnhyo*'s *hwajaeng*, Chong-hong Pak thus introduces *Wŏnhyo*'s two strategic concepts of harmonization: *chongyo* (宗要, thematic essentials) and *kaehap*,[30] whereby *chongyo* does not differ from *kaehap*. *Kaehap* is the

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"conceptual delusions") and returns to the one mind, then the characteristics of all meritorious actions will be identical to the dharmadhātu, so that one's words become merely the ultimate truth, and one's body has no material characteristics or any discriminative sensory spheres. [Second,] if we take the *approach that relies on the "nature"*(or "*chilli daum*"[truthness]) *in order to complete the myriad virtues, then there will be none of the material and mental virtues with which one is not endowed,* so that the Buddha is said to be endowed with an immeasurable major marks and regalia. Although there are two approaches, they have no contradictory characteristics. Therefore, all theories are unimpeded, and likewise reveal an unimpeded approach to the dharma"(emphasis mine).

28) Chong-hong Pak, "Wŏnhyo's Philosophical Thought," 55.

29) Muller, "Wŏnhyo's Approach to Harmonization," 18.

30) *Kae* (開) is to "open up to the reader the vast numbers of different ideas presented in a text"; and *hap* (合) is to "provide a synthetic perspective which can reveal how those various ideas complement one another"; *chong* (宗) is to "open up the many parts of a text

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most prominent literary techniques of *Wŏnhyo*'s methodology for *hwajaeng* to carry out his commensuration of disparate positions. Such opening and combining, analysis and synthesis is in fact closely related to his penchant for "establishing and refuting the same notion in a single passage"[31] that simultaneously applies both analysis and synthesis into the explication of a text, in which one is free to advocate certain positions and to critique others (開合自在 立破無礙; *Taesŭng kisillon so*: H.1, 733c13).[32] In other words, one may "advocate something without gaining anything" and "critique something else without losing anything" (立而無碍 破而無失; H.1, 733c14). In this context, *Wŏnhyo*'s *hwajaeng* is said to be characterized as syncretic logic, clarifying the thematic essentials of a text through use of analytical and synthetic approaches.[33]

The practical meaning of these two approaches (*kaehap* and *chongyo*) becomes more transparent in *Wŏnhyo*'s *Kumkang sammaekyŏng non* (金剛三昧經論, Exposition of the *Vajnasamādhi sūtra*:H.1, 604c2-605a22).[34]

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for analysis"; and *yo* (要) is "to combine those parts into their overriding ideas"(Chong-hong Pak, "Wŏnhyo's Philosophical Thought," 56).

31) Muller, "Wŏnhyo's Approach to Harmonization," 15.

32) *Wŏnhyo* said: 開則無量無邊之義爲宗, 合則二門一心之法爲要, 二門之內, 容萬義而不亂, 無邊之義, 同一心而混融; "If one statement is analyzed, then it has its theme immeasurable, limitless meanings. If this is synthesized, then it has as its essential 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"(*Taesŭng kisillon so*; H.1, 733c9-12).

33) Chong-hong Pak, "Wŏnhyo's Philosophical Thought," 57.

34) 有開有合, 合而言之, 一味觀行爲要, 開而說之, 十重法門爲宗.[…] 開不增一, 合不減十, 不增不減, 爲其宗要也; "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

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Ultimately returning to *ilsim* and affirming there is nothing that Buddhism does not advocate and nothing that it does not refute, *Wŏnhyo* adopted a number of other similar terms that demonstrated his syncretic logic: *yŏ* (與, concession) or *hwanhŏ* (還許, allowance) for advocacy (立); and *t'al* (奪, deprivation), *kyŏn* (遣, negation), *wang* (往, return), or *purhŏ* (不許, prohibition) for refutation (破), all of which are the language of lay people, not the language of the monastic and philosophical. Utilizing such popular words, *Wŏnhyo* explicates his syncretic logic in *Taesŭng kisillon pyŏlki*; 大乘起信論別記, Expository Notes on the *Awakening of Mahayana Faith*; H.1, 678a17-18.[35] This represents a dialectical analysis based on *Wŏnhyo*'s flexible viewpoint of the "equanimity of the single taste" between *apophasis* and *kataphasis*, which is the final arbiter of the host of controversies.[36] *Wŏnhyo*'s syncretic approach is in effect a proposition that human language, fluid and elusive, always involves some latent dangers of distortion of fact, and he dialectically problematized appeals and attempts for certainty.

Wŏnhyo's consilient philosophy was to be open to each other, to frequently come and go across, and to accept and embrace one another

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doctrine involves ten types of approaches to dharma. [...] But even if this sūtra is explained analytically, [its ten analytical approaches] do not add to the one [taste]; even it is interpreted synthetically, it does not detract from those ten. Neither increase nor decrease is the thematic essential of this [sūtra]."

35) 而還許者 顯往者往極而遍立, 而自遣者明此與者, 窮與而奪; "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."

36) Chong-hong Pak, "Wŏnhyo's Philosophical Thought," 59.

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(*t'ongsŏp*, 通涉).[37] It precipitates each one to play its own role in its place and to open itself to all directions without losing its own identity, but shedding a warm light to fertilize each other (i.e., "mutual identity and mutual interpenetration," *sangchŭk sangip*; 相卽相入).[38] In that sense, *hwajaeng* and *t'ongsŏp* would be a good news for the way of healing and boiling down any exclusive violence and raging disputes at the levels of both individuals and societies, and consequently the way of universal discernment for common good.

III. Contexts and Underpinnings of Three Prayers

People often feel at ease in hanging on to religious texts by the skin of their teeth, scrupulously memorizing such texts in their spiritual lives as a means to ward off dangers and secure peace. This is especially the case in the memorization of liturgical prayers, whether short or long,

37) In this respect, therefore, his consilience (通涉) must not be confused with the similar concept of encompassing or assimilation (統攝) that accompanies with a coercive absorb and unifying power, which has been practically adopted for a perfect tool for secret evangelism.

38) Tae-won Park, *Wŏnhyo's Hwajaeng*, 16. For this reason of consilience in Wŏnhyo, Park prefers the word 通攝 to 統攝. But for the same sense, Kim Myong-Hee employs the word 通涉 as "mutual interfusion and penetration" in her work, "The Spirituality of Wonhyo's Hwajeng," 7 n.4. "Mutual identity and mutual interpenetration"(相卽相入), essential thought of the *Flower Adornment Sutra* (華嚴經), means both "absolute identity," telling all dharmas and teachings are identical in the one mind, and "relative identity," saying everything exists just in relationship with others. Myong-Hee Kim, "Hermeneutic Approach to the Hwajeng Idea of Wonhyo, focused on the theory of dialogues among religions," *Wonbulgyosasang kwa Jonggyomunhwa* 38 (2008), 149-150.

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which have long been cherished as a precious resource.[39] Indeed, prayers that become part of the very texture of the mind have latent value in their readiness for deployment in moments of need. Such characteristics are particularly true for the *Heart Sūtra* (hereafter "HS") in Buddhism, the *Lord's Prayer* (hereafter "LP") in Christianity, and the *21 Ja Chumun* (21 Letters Incantation; hereafter "TJC") in *Tonghak*.

All three prayers (LP, HS, and TJC) were produced respectively in their own traditions and contexts that had been characteristically very different from each other, both in form and contents. Because the prayers were to response to the "specific needs of particular people at particular times and places,"[40] practitioners of each tradition might have experienced displeasure and even taken offense to each other's way of thinking, criticizing each other as inappropriate or even illusive. The following section offers the meaning and significance of prayers by delineating them in their own specific contexts and embedding them in their cognitive environments.

1. The Lord's Prayer[41]

As its context, the Sermon on the Mount characterizes Jesus as radical, essential, and a liberal interpreter of Torah who upended sectarian

39) Joseph S. O'Leary, "Knowing the Heart Sūtra," *Religion and the Arts* 12 (2008), 356-7.

40) John P. and Linda K. Keenan, *I AM/No Self: A Christian Commentary on the Heart Sutra* (Leuven; Paris; Walpole, MA: Peeters, 2011), 17.

41) For a recent discussion on the underpinnings and context of the Lord's Prayer, see Chong-Seong Cheong, "Partaking of Jesus' Mystical Experience: Reading the Lord's Prayer in Jewish Wisdom Tradition" *KENTS* 48 (2017), 40-74.

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and casuistic argumentation of Jewish authorities. In it, Jesus' Eight Beatitudes[42] was imbued with much more essential, radical, and universal spirit in nature. Jesus' diatribe against the Pharisaic claims is more clearly understood by six antithetical statements on anger, adultery, oaths, revenge, love and hate (Matthew 5:21-47), radically getting to their roots. This is crystallized in his Sermon on the Mount, particularly through LP.

As the iconic Christian prayer, LP is a paradigmatic homily delivering the essence of the teachings of Jesus.[43] LP sounds the serious motifs of Jesus' rejection and death more explicitly.[44] Here, the historical audience, Jesus' disciples, is probably wandering preachers who were persecuted and harassed by Jewish authorities.[45] So critically bewildered and shocked by these incidents as the "silence of God," they asked Jesus how to pray to God at all. Those disciples who had to go mission-traveling with nothing and be solely reliant on God in faith desperately needed a resolution coming from wisdom teacher. Not surprisingly, however, the returning answer by Jesus for the disciples to listen to was neither a promise of divine protection nor of powerful engagement for revenge, but on the contrary a shocking call to obey to the Father's will, to be alert "not to disappoint and give up their faith."[46] They urgently

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42) Eight blessings are propagated to the poor in spirit, meek, sorrowing, thirst for righteousness, merciful, pure in heart, peace-making, and persecuted (Matthew 5:3-12).

43) Witherington III, *Jesus the Sage*, 224. See Chong-Seong Cheong, "Partaking of Jesus' Mystical Experience," 56.

44) Chong-Seong Cheong, "Partaking of Jesus' Mystical Experience," 56.

45) Ibid., 57.

46) Chong-Seong Cheong, "The Lord's Prayer and Heart Sūtra," *Korean Journal of Christian*

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needed to prepare for such unexpected difficulties.[47] It is no doubt grounded in what Jesus himself had exemplified with his immediate and intuitive experience of God the father as embodied in LP.

In such context, the underpinnings of LP is none other than the suffering of the early Christian community as much as Jesus' rejection and death, and thus it is the language of wisdom to be followed. The very first word "Father" who Jesus called to is the very heart of the wisdom Prayer.[48] His call to Father actually spelled out the whole meaning and desperate situation of LP. It is because the wisdom motif of Jesus' rejection and death is deeply penetrated by his call to Father into LP, particularly toward the early persecuted Christian community.

However, it is significant to recognize that Jesus' immediate and intuitive awareness of God did not mean that the ever-present human reality of suffering could be alleviated, suffering which was to be likewise assumed by his disciples. Jesus' kingdom on earth would be crystallized only by man's absolute surrender and the emptying of himself, i.e., freedom from all desires and fears, a freedom that likewise Jesus foretasted on the cross: "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit"(Lk 23:46). Jesus' self-negation is commensurate with his willingness to detachment from himself and self-centered pride. Through this complete detachment from the self, his self-denial conversely aligned him to be "mystically one" with the Father, that is, to "go beyond." Becoming

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Studies 109 (2018.7), 25.

47) Chong-Seong Cheong,"Partaking of Jesus' Mystical Experience," 58.

48) Joachim Jeremias, *The Prayers of Jesus* (London: SCM, 1967); idem, "Abba," *The Central Message of the New Testament* (London: SCM, 1965), 9-30.

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empty led him to be full, as the logic of wisdom in hwajaeng. Becoming one with God, in which the individual completely permeates into the entire, is the underpinnings of LP as a wisdom prayer, particularly in milieu of the incomprehensibility of deity.

In particular, the three "Thou" petitions in the first half are related to the rigorous self-emptying of the humans in the Absolute God, whereas the next three "We" petitions in the latter half are more concerned about solidarity with the suffering neighbors, necessary to care for their immanent problems. By assimilating to God and forming a union with him, all devout practitioners praying with LP are likewise to be unified with all humans and all things from his perspective. Jesus' plea of "on earth" here in the world of the sentients, that is, hunger, hatred, and distrust, signals his engagement in and solidarity with them, immersing himself into the everyday world as the responsible being. In such cosmic eyes, transcendence and immanence, heaven and earth, one and whole are not different, though not the same.[49] Indeed, LP taught that the two are inseparable and co-dependent, which is culminated by Jesus' life. Only when such two aspects converge face to face, Jesus' religion becomes the religion of true efficacy.[50]

2. The *Heart Sūtra* (般若心經)

In the very context of *Mahāyāna* Buddhism, HS arose and took its

49) Chong-Seong Cheong,"Jesus' Mystical Experience," 65-66; Jonathan T. Pennington, *Heaven and Earth in the Gospel of Matthew* (SNT 126; Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2007), 247.

50) Chong-Seong Cheong,"Jesus' Mystical Experience," 66.

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meaning as the movement of *Perfection of Wisdom* dated between 100 BCE and 100 CE.[51] It arose as a blacklash against the previous *Abhidharma* scholasticism which drastically departed from the original teaching by Buddha *Śākyamuni* (d.ca.486 BCE), who had taught people in their everyday reality that is lived and experienced by practical life.[52] The teaching of Mahāyāna in general had the propensity of universality of their tenets and intentions.[53] Mahāyāna thought similarly stressed the virtue of compassion more and more which had been only subordinate in the older Buddhism. In that milieu, the foremost innovation of the Mahāyāna was heard of the *Bodhisattva* who willingly sacrifices his life for the santient's welfare and salvation.

Retrieving such ideal of Bodhisattva, Mahāyāna gave much greater weight to the laity and their daily problems, claiming that lay people are as important as *Dharma* itself, the people who were so despised by the rich and elite monks but in the end proved paramount. HS is a gist of the distinctive foundational teachings of Mahāyāna, particularly in "emptiness"(*śūnyatā*, devoid of substantial being or identity). The concept of emptiness in HS is so richly and unfathomably articulated that any definition by verbal language can not but be a mere illusion of knowledge. HS arises from the Buddhist conviction that all worldly objects are unreal and a mirage, resulting from ignorance and attachment.

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51) Edward Conze, "Prajñāparāmitā Literature," in *Thirty Years of Buddhist Studies*, ed. Edward Conze, (Oxford: Bruno Cassirer, 1967), 1-11; Keenan, *Christian Commentary on the Heart Sutra*, 17, 20.

52) O'Leary, "Knowing the Heart Sūtra," 358.

53) Conze, "Mahayana Buddhism," 48.

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In it, the concept of emptiness triggers to see what transcends those worldly objects. Moreover, every human discernment in the world, worldly or supramundane, absolute or relative, is thought simply fictitious, being nothing in and of itself. By doing so, it signifies something else, something that is attainable only to those who can see beyond the words.

HS means "the core of the *prajñāpāramitā* is the way that we have to practice with,"[54] which comprises three parts, similar to LP: Opening sentences introducing the Bodhisatta *Kuanyin*; main body, negating most of the Buddhist basic teachings, cited form *Kumārajīva*'s Chinese version of *The Large Sūtra on the Perfection of Wisdom*; and conclusion by mantric prayer.[55] It consists of 262 letters widely used in Chinese translation from the original Sanskrit. This ritual, a prayer package of spiritual and intellectual dynamite as its title refers to the *hṛdaya* (heart or essence), has long been recited, chanted, copied by the Buddhists that carried in their hearts.[56]

It begins with the subject title of "*Avalokita*, the Holy Lord and Bodhisattva" who gives the full discourse of HS as its body. Surprisingly, Buddha himself does not mentioned in this text, unlike Jesus does in LP. *Avalokiteshvara* in *Mahāyāna* is the Bodhisattva, entirely governed by compassion holding a lotus, who is capable of transforming himself

54) Ho-sung Kim, "A Contemplation on the Subject of *prajñāpāramitāhṛdayasūtram*," *Bulkyo Hakbo* 44 (2006), 5.

55) Jan Nattier, "The Heart Sūtra: A Chinese Apocryphal Text?" *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 15, no. 2 (1992), 155.

56) Ho-sung Kim, "prajñāpāramitāhṛdayasūtram," 3; O'Leary, "Knowing the Heart Sūtra," 357.

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into any shape he desired. Hence *Avalokiteshvara* is named as the "celestial Bodhisattva."[57] The first and foremost emphasis in HS is very simple: Everything is negated as emptiness. That is, of course, a hyperbolic propagation, being promulgated against the Abhidharma. But in HS, the voices of such negation sound so thoroughgoing, exhaustive and radical, to an extent that they do not seem to leave nothing behind, even including its own definition, let alone its own identity.[58] Its thoroughness sounds like the voice from Mt. Sinai, promulgating the First Commandment to have absolutely forbidden of making idols. For Mahāyāna, the emptiness, as the ultimate non-existent, refers to the concept as "an absolute transcendental reality beyond the grasp of intellectual comprehension and verbal expression," practically amounting to "an attitude of perfected even-mindedness," contrary to the ways of the mundane world.[59] Hence, emptiness is called "suchness," not a void (虛空), but without anything added to or subtracted from it. Paradoxically, in this thought, everything is always the same: both Nirvana and Samsara, the Absolute and relative, mundane and supramundane, even both Buddhists and non-Buddhists were perceived indistinguishable. In essence, emptiness as suchness is not other than transcendental reality, which is the true knowledge in Mahāyāna, expe-

57) Edward Conze, "Mahayana Buddhism," in *Thirty Years of Buddhist Studies*, ed. Edward Conze, (Oxford: Bruno Cassirer, 1967), 67.

58) Five *skandhas* (五蘊) or Aggregates, making up what we sentient beings call 'the self,' are negated empty, in the fact that they have no substance at all. Even the Eighteen Spheres (i.e., Six senses, Six sense-objects, Six sense-faculties), Twelvefold Chain of dependent origination and its extinction, and even Four Noble Truth are all claimed empty.

59) Ibid., 77.

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riencing that both the subject and object, affirmation and negation, and to be and not to be are equally true and untrue; all is identical with its own negation.[60] In terms of LP, human incomprehensibility of God seems to be self-contradictory to Jesus' experience of self-emptiness and solidarity with suffering people, which paradoxically reveals the most likely ways to draw out the truth of what there actually is.

The concluding mantra in short words contains much meaning and usually left untranslated, which basically means: "go, go, go beyond, go completely beyond to complete enlightenment." With this mantra, HS surely suggests that it focuses more on the liturgical practice, in which its practitioners can enact the emptying it expresses, tasting joyful release from all negated shackles, and thus it combines "joyful disengagement with compassionate engagement on behalf of deluded, suffering beings."[61] This mantra is obviously characterized to reinforce the mystical experience of Mahāyāna, converging the transcendant and the immanent within.

3. The 21 *Ja Chumun* (21 Letters Incantation)

In *Tonghak*, there are several incantations for worship: congregational, domestic and individual. The most common incantation is *pon chumun* (本呪文, original incantation) composed of thirteen characters which was revealed at the time of *Su-un Ch'oe Che-u* (水運 崔濟愚, 1824-1864 CE)'s divine experience in 1860; and another well-known in-

60) Ibid., 78.

61) O'Leary, "Knowing the Heart Sūtra," 369.

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cantation is *kangnyŏng chumun* (降靈呪文, incantation for descending the Spirit) consisted in eight characters:

Si ch'ŏnchu chohwa chŏng yŏngse pulmang mansa chi (侍天主造化定 永世不忘萬事知).

Bearing the Heavenly Lord, I shall become one with all creation; remembering the Lord forever, I shall discern the essence of all things.[62]

Chiki kŭmchi wŏnwi taekang (至氣今至 願爲待降)

Ultimate Energy now within, I long for it to pour into all living things.[63]

The TJC[64] that combines the two main incantations as shown above is usually practiced by the devotees of *Tonghak* (now "*Ch'ŏntogyo*," 天道教) who seek oneness with the Heavenly Lord, praying for help to contact and evoke divine principles within oneself and ask empowerment by the spirit. However, the real power of chumun in *Tonghak* is not so much for simply expressing the divine-human relationship as seeking to influence everyday spirituality through practicing regular prayers. Along with the Confucian moral discipline of "*susim chŏngki*"(守心正氣,

62) Paul Beirne, *Su-un and His World of Symbols: The Founder of Korea's First Indigenous Religion* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), 118.

63) Beirne, *Su-un and His World of Symbols*, 117. These incantations are recited in the Chinese characters.

64) Byeong-Ook Son defines the frame of the 21 Letters *Chumun* by "Samch'ilcha chumun" (三·七字 呪文; "three- seven letters" incantation), based on the Korean traditional *Tankun* (檀君) mythology and the culture of *Silla* (新羅). Byeong-Ook Son, "*Tonghak ŭi samch'ilcha chumun kwa Tasikaepyŏk ŭi hamŭi*"[The Implications of "Twenty-One Letters Incantation" and "*TasiKaepyeok*"(Opening a new beginning of the world) of Donghak] *Tonghak hakpo* 18 (2009), 201-204.

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keeping pure mind and right conduct) to secure for self-cultivation, *Su-un* was inspired to proffer such a mystical *chumun*, a totally new articulation expressing a profound religious sentiment, in order to embrace a dynamic transcendence localized in the heart of people. It was mainly because he deeply felt a need to resuscitate and revitalize the Korean traditional virtues, overcoming inherent contradictions which had already been reduced to a mere formalism and lost their power to guide human relationships.[65] This combined incantation is typically practiced for domestic devotions, especially for a daily ritual and for spiritual training exercises as well. It is recited in both ways, loudly and silently.

The impact of *Tonghak* to the general Korean society, particularly during the transition period of modernization, was so enormous that its followers always played a key role in the consecutive revolutionary movements against diverse social and economic injustice and foreign domination (e.g., China and Japan) from the late nineteenth century to the early twentieth century.[66] Under such a tremendous social upheaval, *Su-un*'s new teaching attracted mainly those peasants and impoverished *yangban* (scholar-aristocrats, 兩班) who were most dissatisfied with the society at that time and thus probably found a hope of radical reformation in this new movement. His teaching as a union of basic principles from Confucianism, Buddhism, Daoism, and elements of Korean folk traditions which had been long practiced in Korea was

65) Myŏng-sook Moon, "Donghak and the God of Choe, Je-u: Through the Donggyeong Daejeon and the Yongdam Yusa," *Catholic Theology and Thought* 79 (2017), 225.

66) So Jeong Park, "Individual and Entirety in Donghak Thought," 121.

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more accessible to people and easier to follow so as to revitalize Korea both spiritually and socially. That's why his movement is called *Tonghak* (Eastern Learning, 東學), mainly to distinguish from the growing encroachments of *Sŏhak* (Western Learning, 西學).[67] Thus, *Tonghak* as a frequent peasant uprising at that time had successfully gained a wide popularity in southern Korea, mainly due to its direct opposition and antagonism against feudal oppression and the disabled official ideology of Confucianism, seeking the establishment of equality and of freedom of religion.

Interestingly, however, if we go beyond his overt criticisms on the Western Learning and religion what becomes literally noteworthy is his unique experience of a personal God. Moreover, his experience of God and encounter with the Western Catholicism in such a context of tremendous social upheaval has ultimately led him to re-evaluate the traditional religions, Confucianism in particular, which had long dominated the religious landscape of the later *Chosŏn* dynasty.[68] He has desperately sought the underpinnings of existing religions that could not give sufficient answers enough to overcome such social and personal incapabilities.

Expounding on the similarities and differences between the Western Religion and Tonghak, Su-un asserted their fundamental agreements in destiny and truth,[69] but nevertheless he criticized how these things are

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67) *Nonhakmun* (論學文) no.4 of TT; Benjamin B. Weems, *Reform, Rebellion and the Heavenly Way* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1964), 4-8.

68) Myŏng-sook Moon, "Donghak and the God of Choe, Je-u," 220.

69) Su-un understood the Western Religion in "*kihwa chisin*"(氣化之神; personal God in

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codified as religious expression, the criticism that is based on a contradictory relationship between their humanistic God and their concerns for the quality of human life.[70] Su-un really had a critical thinking that might challenge the religious people to retrospect the genuine meaning of religiosity, those religious who live in a religiously pluralistic culture.

The most important aspect in his concept of deity is his formal, traditional designation of God as *Ch'ŏnju* (天主, Heavenly Lord, God), more often called Hanullim in Korean rendering of God.[71] It is found at the beginning of the *p'odŏkmun* (布德文, Propagating Truth) where he describes God as imminent being in the nature, both personal and impersonal.[72] To be notable, the attributes of God, called Chŏnju or

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Spirit) to be intimate and consilient to him; Chong-Seong Cheong, "*Kitokkyo wa Tonghak ŭi Taehwa: Luk 10:25-26 ŭi 'Hannim sarang-iut sarang' kwa Su-un ŭi 'sich'ŏngchu-koachŏng' e taehan pikyo yŏnku*"[Dialogue between Christianity and Donghak: Comparative Study on Jesus' "Double Love Command"(Lk 10:25-26) and Suwoon's "Sich'ŏnchu" and "koachŏng"] *Sinhak nontan* [Theological Forum] 81 (2015), 333.

70) Myŏng-sook Moon, "Donghak and the God of Choe, Je-u," 226.

71) *Hanullim* is mentioned in e.g., "*Kyohunka*"(校訓歌, songs for education) and "*Ansimka*"(安心歌, songs for relief) of YY. In my work, I will translate the divine name *Ch'ŏnchu* (天主), adopted by Su-un in his writings, into the Korean rendering *Hanullim* which has been unified as such in the modern *Ch'ontokyo* (天道敎) since 1978. However, it is also true that, in the early period of *Tonghak*, it was rendered as "ᄒᆞ늘님" (or "하늘님") in YY, and even many different renderings were used simultaneously as ᄒᆞ날님, 하날님, 하늘님, 한우님, 한울님, particularly at the time of *Ŭi am*. Thus, *Hanallim* or *Hanŭllim* also has the same connotation. For this discussion, see Yong-hwui Kim, "Reconsidering of the Idea of God in Donghak," *Tonghak hakpo* 9, no. 1 (2005), 331-333.

72) 盖自上古以來 春秋迭代 四時盛衰 不遷不易 是亦天主造化之迹 昭然于天下也; 曰何爲其然也 曰吾道無爲而化矣 守其心正其氣 率其性受其敎 化出於自然之中也; "Since the beginning of time, the exchanges of seasons have been repeating in an orderly fashion without error. The natural environment, in which humankind and all beings live, has been shaped according to the changes of seasons. This order of seasons, the order of nature,

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Hanullim by Su-un, in which he tries to articulate, are surely those of intimacy and affectation bearing the divine personality within, as well as the natural power as repeating orderly fashion in the four seasons. For example, in the "*uŭm*"(偶吟, instant expression of thought in poetry) of TT, Su-un associates the idea of Hanullim with the Creator: 天生萬民道 又生 各有氣像吾不知("Heaven produced all people and the Truth. I did not know why everything has unique features and shapes"). By integrating the divine Creator and Hanullim as such, he has "proffered a positive and hopeful vision of humanity and the world."[73] Understanding the nature of deity, he has a broad, pluralistic and syncretic perspective that may be seen as the Being in process and change with elements of consolidation, conflict and convergence.[74]

As a matter of fact, "*innaech'ŏn*"(人乃天) and "*sain yŏch'ŏn*"(事人如天) as Tonghak's ultimate religious objective strenuously motivated a relevant faith of *chisang ch'ŏnkuk* ("the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth," 地上天國) and also fostering another key concept of *kaepyŏk* ("a new creation," 開闢) which has implications of both spiritual and social. However, such millenarian thoughts are never otherworldly, but they are solely focused on constructing a paradise on earth where all peoples of the

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is evidence of the power of God, Hanullim, by which all things are made"(*P'odŏkmun* 1); "They asked, "Why is that so?" I answered, "Our Way is the Natural Way. If each person preserves a good mind, rectifies the vital force, follows their original nature, and receives the Divine teaching, all will turn out well naturally"(*Nonhakmun* 9a).

73) Myŏng-sook Moon, "Donghak and the God of Choe, Je-u," 224.

74) Utilizing Whitehead's process philosophy, therefore, Kim Sang-Yil defined the concept of God in Tonghak as "Becoming." Sang-Yil Kim, *Tonghak kwa kwajŏng ch'ŏlhak* [Tonghak and Process Philosophy] (Seoul: Chisik sa, 2001).

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world live on equality and freedom after making the world of returning to the origin and becoming one.[75] Given such a down-to-earth principle, *Su-un*'s propagation of *kaepyŏk* consequently became an activating force to *Tonghak* in a way that the aeon of new creation now began when the deity revealed himself to *Su-un*, in order to reform and reconstruct the first world.[76]

Viewing from the perspective of a cosmical cycle in history, *Su-un* argued that humankind is now standing in the last period of *sŏnch'ŏn*, fallen into the state of confusion and degeneration as *Chosŏn* society in the disorderly mid-nineteenth century. Significantly, however, such circumstance has conversely been a symptom preparing for the new era of *huch'ŏn*. Passing swiftly through this *sŏnch'ŏn* era and independently preparing for the era of *huchŏn*, people need to change their corrupt minds, full of selfishness (*kakchawisim*, 各自爲心), into the mind of God. It is

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75) In that milieu, *Tonghak* movement was more probably influenced by the *Taiping* Rebellion (also known as *Taiping* Civil War, *Taiping* Revolution) by *Hong Xiuquan* (洪秀全), the self-proclaimed brother of Jesus Christ, that was massively waged in China from 1850 to 1864, quite an overlapping period. Interestingly, the goals of the Taipings were also religious, nationalist, and political in nature. They sought the total "conversion of the Chinese people to the Taiping's syncretic version of Christianity" and "a wholesale transformation and reformation of the state," accessed on Oct 23, 2019, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taiping_Rebellion.

76) Interestingly, he had a view of human history in a cosmological perspective and classified it by two categories, that is, *Sŏnch'ŏn* (先天, civilization era before beginning of Tonghak; era of pre-cosmic creation) and *Huch'ŏn* (後天, civilization era after beginning of Tonghak; era of post-cosmic creation). The *Sŏnch'ŏn kaepyŏk* by Su-un was meant to be executed by the *Whanwung ch'ŏnwhang* (桓雄天皇; the founding king of the ancient *Chosŏn*), the first man and the first king in it, as written in *Ch'ontokyo kyŏngchŏn* (Byeong-Ook Son, "*Tonghak ŭi samch'ilcha chumun*," 219).

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the movement of *huch'ŏn kaepyŏk* (後天開闢), an era of spiritual civilization that mankind can open up a new level of life by constructing a *chisang ch'ŏnkuk* (地上天國). It can be fulfilled by practical embodiment of such key slogans as *pokuk anmin* (輔國安民, supporting the nation and comforting the people), *p'odŏk ch'ŏnha* (布德天下, spreading truth throughout the world), *kwangche ch'angsaeng* (廣濟蒼生, delivering peoples everywhere from suffering). Thus, *Su-un*'s *huch'ŏn kaepyŏk* motivated and supported many inner movements for social modernization, such as the foundation of political parties and farming cooperatives, a strong focus on education for children and women, and social activism.[77]

The entire religio-philosophical principle to *Tonghak* is surely generated by and also conjugated with its fundamental faith in *sich'ŏnchu* (侍天主, "bearing God within me"), including *chohwachŏng* (造化定, "becoming one with all creation") and *chiki* (至氣), propagated by *Su-un* himself,[78] mainly written in his works as TT and YY. It richly expounds his holistic doctrine that human beings bear and worship God (*Hanullim*) in their bodies and minds, an incantation of religious experience that presupposes another key concept of *huch'ŏn kaepyŏk*, which is the prerequisite to the realization of its ultimate ideal, *tongkwi ilch'e* (同歸一體, returning to the origin and becoming one).

Holding meaningful spaces separate from the Neo-Confucian concepts of deity such as *Ch'ŏn* (天, heaven), *Ch'ŏlli* (天理, heavenly princi-

77) Hyŏng-gi Kim, *Huch'ŏn kaepyŏk sasang yŏnku* [A Research on the Millenarian Creative Enlightenment Thought] , P'aju: Hanul Ak'ademi, (2004), 93, 102.

78) Ho-yŏng Ahn, "*Mosim kwa Alm ŭi T'ongilsŏngmunche e taehan siron*"[A Study on the Identification of '*Mosim*'(侍) and '*Alm*'(知)] *Tonghak hakpo* 30 (2014), 334.

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ples), *Li* (理, principles) and *Sanche* (上帝, the Lord above), Su-un deliberately posits his fundamental idea of *sich'ŏnchu* to an exquisite plain of the "one essence two aspects," in which the immanent deity, *Hanullim,* is imminently and intimately present within humans and nature, and, at the same time, the transcendent deity as *Ch'ŏnchu* (天主, the personal God) dwells in the distant Golden palace of heaven.[79] Thus, *Hanullim* and *Ch'ŏnchu* (天主) elaborates a sophisticated aspect of the personal deity deliberately adopted by Su-un,[80] without any reduction of its immanent character, particularly in the context of social upheavals created by the inner inefficacy of the government and traditional religions, as well as conflicts caused by the Western culture and religion. In doing so, he could preserve the integrity of Korean cultural identity, as far as the holistic and inclusive understanding of deity is concerned. Such a pluralistic concept of the deity can be defined as a sort of panentheism, that is, everything in God and vice versa. Indeed, it is *sich'ŏnchu* that made *Tonghak* into Tonghak as its underpinnings and essence,[81]

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79) Myŏng-sook Moon, "Donghak and the God of Choe, Je-u," 224. In Korean grammar, the honorific suffix of "*nim*"(主) which is appended to "*Ch'ŏn*"(天) as in the case of *Ch'ŏnchu* (天主) specifically characterizes the personality of a living being. In that sense, even the traditional name of Hanullim can be said to originally substantiate such a personal character of Han Al (ᄒᆞᆫ ᄋᆞᆯor 하늘, 天) in the ancient Korea. See "ᄒᆞ늘님" in YY.

80) The Sino-Korean term *Ch'ŏnchu* (天主) and the Korean term *Hanullim* are mainly used in Su-un's main work TT written in the classical Chinese and YY written in the vernacular Korean, respectively. Both terms were used simultaneously at that time, not a translation of the former from the latter and vise versa (So Jeong Park, "Individual and Entirety in Donghak Thought," 128 n.20).

81) Kyŏng-Jae Kim, "Su-un's Experience of *Sich'ŏnchu* and Tonghak's Perspective on Deity," *Tonghak Yŏnku* 4 (1998), 24.

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which is clearly delineated in *Nonhakmun*12-13 of TT:

> 氣者虛靈蒼蒼 無事不涉 無事不命 然而如形而難狀 如聞而難見 是亦渾元之一氣也;
> 侍者 內有神靈 外有氣化 一世之人 各知不移者也
> *Ki* is the Spirit, both empty and full, so that, in its emptiness and fullness, it does never fail to penetrate into all and to give orders to them; It surely has aspects, however, it is difficult to render it into an image; Its voice seems to be audible, however, it is difficult to see; This also can be said to be the One Spirit working everywhere as the cosmic origin (*Nonhakmun* 12; translation mine);[82]
> By bearing, I mean that internally there exists a sacred spirit and also externally a doing energy in the world, so that all people do understand that they [viz. the sacred mind and the doing spirit] do not move separately (*Nonhakmun* 13; translation mine).

His own explanation of TJC successfully betrays Suun's understanding of himself as the individual and the heavenly God as the whole, that is, the relationship of self and *chiki* (至氣, ultimate energy), which was another key thought generated by his own mysterious religious experience encountering with God as *chiki*. The *chi* (至) here denotes by himself *kŭk* (極, the Ultimate) in *Nonhakmun* 12, and so his understanding of *chiki* (至氣, the Ultimate Spirit) is very important for the

82) "*Honwŏnilki*"(渾元一氣) could be rendered into "a single sacred energy that works in various ways on a variety of levels." Choon-Sung Kim, "Donghak: Towards Life and Spirituality," *Korea Journal* (2002), 162.

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exact rendering of his conceptuation of the heavenly deity,[83] harmonizing the existing traditional faiths: Amitabha of Buddhism that penetrates into all (無事不涉) and Taoism that *To* (道), both empty and full, creates and governs the universe,[84] and it also goes beyond from there along with the Western mysticism or the Apophatic tradition as "having aspects with difficulty to render into image"(如形而難狀). Su-un uniquely explicates the nature and work, the essence and function of *chiki*. In that sense, his incantation for descending of the Spirt (*kangnyŏng*, 降靈) best described the interaction between the two aspects of the Spirit, in that the power of Heaven pervading all creation would now work within the individual heart, leading to the desire of becoming good vessels of the heavenly power and proclaiming it throughout the world. Earnestly listening to such explication on the nature of *ki*, therefore, the devotees in *Tonghak* could realize that, invisible though, it mysteriously and effectively works both within and out of all beings in the universe as their dynamic energy to be originated from.[85] It is ontologically one and the same Spirit (i.e., "*honwŏnilki*") that redemptively works at different levels both in humans and *Hanullim*,[86] although its efficacy to work

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83) A literal translation of *Chiki* (至氣) is the Ultimate Energy, but for Su-un connotating more as entirety, ultimate presence, and God in the contexts (So Jeong Park, "Individual and Entirety in Donghak Thought," 124 n.11).

84) Myŏng-sook Moon, "Donghak and the God of Choe, Je-u," 227.

85) Byeong-Ook Son defines Su-un's *chiki* as the Absolute and Prevalent Being in the universe that succeeded the ancient Korean *Sŏn* (仙) ("*Tonghak ŭi samch'ilja chumun*," 209-210).

86) Yong-Hae Kim, "Shichonju Chowhachong: The Principle of the Faith and the Healing," *Tonghak hakpo* 17 (2009), 254. That's why *Su-un*'s philosophy on *ki* that more emphasizes the active nature of human mind is not the same as the precedent *ki* (or qi) philosophies focusing on "humans' passive nature and its conformity with universal energy"(Choon-Sung

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may be economically so different and diverse, mainly due to its contingence, which results to moving in different layers as the individual *ki* or the holistic *chiki*. Nevertheless, however, it is never opaque in *Su-un*'s message that the essence of *ki* and *chiki* is not different from each other (i.e., *tongkwi ilch'e*, 同歸一體), so that *haewŏl* and *ŭiam* successively propagated a nearly same concept of *insich'ŏn* (人是天) and *innaech'ŏn* (人乃天), respectively.

For the exact rendering of si (侍), significantly *Su-un* does not go to the bewildering scholarly realms, a sophisticated conceptualization of God distinctively as his predecessors did, but instead, he simply employs a vernacular language to explain its meaning and mode relevant to the reality. Surly, he attempted to make plain a religiosity which can engage with his contemporary world. Here, the two aspects of *si*, that is, internal sacred spirit (*naeyu sillyŏng*, 內有神靈) that makes the humans into the spiritual life and the external doing energy (*oeyu gihwa*, 外有氣化) that helps human life to be an organic body, having unified by the material, the soul and the spirit, is deftly to denote the nature and mode of how God exists in all creation,[87] as well as ultimately lead to the religious experience of bearing God both in mind and body. In so doing,

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Kim, "Donghak: Towards Life and Spirituality," 168).

87) Chong-Seong Cheong,"*Kitokkyo wa Tonghak ŭi Taehwa*," 345; Kyŏng-Jae Kim, "*Su-un ŭi sich'ŏnchu ch'ehŏm kwa Tonghak ŭi sinkwan*," 31-32. It is well known that *Su-un*'s understanding of "*ch'ŏn*"(天) has been drastically changed as such, particularly since his mystical experience of the so-called "*ŭlmyo chŏ'nsŏ*"(乙卯天書, receiving a heavenly letter in *ŭlmyonyŏn*) at his hermit place of *yŏsi panvit kol* in 1855 (Yong-hwi Kim, "*Tonghak sinkwan ŭi chaekŏmt'o*," 335-336). Up until that time, his concept of *chŏn* had still remained as neo-Confucian "Heavenly Principles"(理法天).

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Su-un tried to highlight the importance of religious experience bearing God through the awakened knowledge, the God who was already carried in the body.[88] Without awakening, however, bearing God within practically does not take place, even though God was carried within the body. In that sense, it is the *naeyu sillyŏng* that makes the living humans be self-consciously awakened as the spiritual being, whereas the *oeyu gihwa* helps the human body to be a universal being, so as to generate the sense of great oneness of all universe. So, *sich'ŏnchu* is none other than the "awakened" bearing God within, which accords to denote what can be experienced in the personal consciousness,[89] the experience of fundamental transformation in one's personality.[90] In fact, such an awakening experience of oneness and personal *kaepyŏk* was the very central ideal of Su-un's *si*, which substantiated the "sense of fairness and respect for human life and its dignity."[91]

Significantly, in so doing, *Su-un*'s *Hanullim* is portrayed and believed as the personal "Thou," harmoniously characterizing paradoxical aspects of both the absolutely reliable being as vividly experienced in his revelation and the presently immanent Spirit working in all creation.[92]

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88) Chong-Seong Cheong, "*Kitokkyo wa Tonghak ŭi Taehwa*," 345; Dong-ho Kim, "*Tonghak ŭi 21 cha chumun kwa kitokkyo chukitomun ŭi sangchingsŏngkwa sot'ongsŏng koch'al*'[A comparative study of symbolism and communication of Tonghak's 'incantation of twenty-one letters' and the Christian's Lord's Prayer] *Wŏnpulkyo sasang kwa Chongkyo munhwa* 48 (2011), 289.

89) Chong-Seong Cheong, "*Kitokkyo wa Tonghak ŭi Taehwa*," 345; Kyŏng-Jae Kim "*Su-un ŭi sich'ŏnchu ch'ehŏm*," 31-32; Yong-hwi Kim, "*Tonghak sinkwan ŭi chaekŏmt'o,*" 339-340.

90) Yong-hwi Kim, "*Tonghak sinkwan ŭi chaekŏmt'o,*" 339-41; Kyŏng-Jae Kim, "*Su-un ŭi sich'ŏnchu ch'ehŏm*," 32-33; Chong-Seong Cheong, "*Kitokkyo wa Tonghak ŭi Taehwa*," 345.

91) Myŏng-sook Moon, "Donghak and the God of Choe, Je-u," 227.

92) Dong-ho Kim, "*Tonghak ŭi 21 cha chumun*," 283, 305.

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That is, knowing what and how the internal sacred spirit and the external energy indivisibly works together, that is, *kakchi puri* (各知不移), then practically a genuine bearing God is plausible and complete, to a degree that he or she will become *chisang shinsŏn* (地上神仙; divine person on the earth) who can truly realizes the ideal *tongkwi ilch'e* (同歸一體) in *chisang sŏnkyŏng* (地上仙境; the divine world on the earth).[93] While the internal sacred spirit and the external doing energy refer to the one essence of humans and the deity, which is indispensible to bear God, then *kakchi puri* focuses more on the aspects of human awakening to attain the efficacy of bearing God. This is also already transparent in the incantation for descending the Spirit (降靈呪文) with his concept of "*honwŏnilki*"(渾元一氣) that God-human relationship ought not to be reduced into the relationship of subject-object, contract law, or even cause and effect, but rather that of interfusion and *p'oham* (包含, mutual inclusion) which is indivisible.[94] That's why *Su-un* pointedly adds to his explanation on the meaning of "*chu*"(主), a honorific suffix to "*ch'ŏn*" (天): 主者 稱其尊而與父母同事者也 ("The reason why I mention *chu* here is because the dignity to bear God within is not other than revering our parents"). In so doing, *Su-un* tries to reveal the substance and nature of bearing the personal God as much as of human reverence toward our parents. Consequently, this teaching is applied into all to honor all

93) *Todŏkka* (道德歌) in YY; Byeong-Ook Son, "*Tonghak ŭi samch'ilja chumun*," 206. All of these concepts that *Su-un* adopted were inherited from the ancient Korean *Sŏn* (仙) rather than Taoism. See Dae-hoon Kim, "*Tonghak e kyesŭng toen Sŏnkyo wa kŭ Sayuch'ekye*"(Seongyo [仙教] Succeeded Donghak and its Structure of Thought) *Tonghak hakpo* 49 (2018), 368, 376.

94) Yong-Hae Kim, "Shichonju Chowhachong," 255.

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things in the nature as we do God or fellow human beings.[95]

IV. Conclusion

People often feel at ease in hanging on to religious texts by the skin of their teeth, scrupulously memorizing such texts in their spiritual lives as a means to ward off dangers and secure peace. This is especially the case in the memorization of liturgical prayers, whether short or long, which have long been cherished as a precious resource. Indeed, prayers that become part of the very texture of the mind have latent value in their readiness for deployment in moments of need. Such characteristics are particularly true for the *Heart Sūtra* in Buddhism, the *Lord's Prayer* in Christianity, and the *21 Cha Chumun* (21 Letters Incantation; 21 字 呪文) in *Tonghak*. Contemplation with these prayers illuminate the minds of the practitioners, and it can even be said that prayers invoke or "spark a dazzling epiphany," enhancing and texturizing a certain state of ecstatic experience or the deity being beseeched.[96]

Wŏnhyo's *hwajaeng* is an extensive argument analyzing positions of the incongruent, showing their underpinnings and contextual framework leading to each position, wherein it creates a commensuration of

95) Choon-Sung Kim, "Donghak: Towards Life and Spirituality," 172. In this respect, particularly, Tonghak does differ from the Western dichotomous thinking and dualism that "distinguishes body from phenomena, matter from mind, God from humanity, humanity from nature, and God from nature," by endeavoring to understand them as separate entities. Ibid., 171.

96) Joseph S. O'Leary, "Knowing the Heart Sūtra," *Religion and the Arts* 12 (2008), 356-57.

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variant doctrines and interpretations. His *hwajaeng* is the ultimate task for the resolution of discrepancies to be undertaken, trying to reveal the truth by cutting off conceptual hallucination resorting to the words. In doing so, *hwajaeng* surely helps us to acknowledge every religious teaching as it is. Utilizing *Wŏnhyo*'s *hwajaeng* philosophy as methodology to understand the Lord's Prayer, the Heart Sūtra and Tonghak's "21 Letters Incantation" which appear to be very different from each other in forms and contents, this work explored a possibility to understand each other in such a hermeneutical dialogue, however still preserving their unique views on humanity and the sense of deity.

More than anything else, going beyond their literal formulation and returning to the ultimate origin, that is, *ilsim* ("one mind"), there are not a few convergencies to be found between them: they commonly more or less comprise dual aspects of transcendence and immanence, God and humanity, individual and entirety, seeking their own unique religious practices of faith within mundane life, particularly at the time of suffering, persecution and incomprehensibility of God. If LP impels its devotees into the active engagement by self-denial and compassion toward everyday people in specific time and place, then likewise a multitude of subtle deconstructive discourses in HS, even while demonstrating its own incoherence, is empirically, not logically, enumerated as actions that are indispensable to demonstrating salvific capability, and TJC also concerns desperately pleading humans, as well as such God who dwells and is worshipped within their bodies at the same time. In it, *sich'ŏnchu* characterized God as dwelling in the heart of every person, as well as the spiritual energy prevalent in the world, which is con-

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vergently assumed in all prayers to some extent, though its wording is not identical.

Through rigorous detachments from conceptual language in prayers, *Wŏnhyo*'s *hwajaeng* is never opaque for all practitioners to commonly experience both dimensions of heaven and earth, emptiness and fullness. If religious language is adopted in an overtly concrete or univocal manner, as Paul Knitter alerts, there is always to be a temptation to turn it into a power or coercive language. Not only does this leads to the shackling of the mystery of God but also surreptitiously leads to shackling each other.[97] The language of religious prayers, either kataphatic teaching as the Christian prayer or apophatic discourse as the Buddhist prayer or even more spiritual and shamanistic (仙的) incantation as TJC of Tonghak, ultimately seeks to precipitate their devotees to collaborate for the conflict release, public happiness and common good, avoiding "blind ideas" that lead to nothing but shackles and danger. Concerning about human suffering and human answerability for it, three prayers partly call to the transcendental deity as the salvific reality, as well as partly recognize in practice the immanent responsibility for others. A common understanding may be formulated by a subsumed-transcendental deity. To be sure, interreligious dialogue of these prayers brings the mutual potential for enculturation and cross-fertilization, particularly through *Wŏnhyo*'s *hwajaeng* philosophy of *ilsim*. In so doing, neither an increase nor a decrease is their thematic essentials (不增不減 爲其宗要) but instead all of them are fertilely clarified.

97) Knitter, *Without Buddha I Could not be a Christian*, 59.

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Through *Wŏnhyo*'s hermeneutic of *hwajaeng*, it is effectively demonstrated how these discrete religious prayers might be complemented one another, though they are obviously disparate.

주제어 Keywords

Hermeneutical Dialogue of Understanding, Wŏnhyo's *Hwajaeng*, Lord's Prayer, Heart Sūtra, 21 Letter Invocation, Interreligious Dialogue, Conflict Release
이해를 위한 대화의 해석학, 원효의 화쟁, 주기도문, 반야심경, 21자 주문, 종교간 대화, 갈등해소

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한글 초록

이해를 위한 해석학적 대화:
원효의 화쟁철학을 활용한 기독교, 불교, 동학의 기도문에 대한 연구

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오늘날 우리 한국사회는 계층과 이해집단 사이의 분쟁과 갈등이 격화되고 있는 가운데, 종교는 비인간적이며 비사회적인 근본주의 신념은 물론 타종교를 스스럼없이 악으로 규정하며 스스로의 정체성에 모순되는 고립과 배제의 교리를 더욱 확산하면서, 사회적 분열과 갈등을 더욱 심화시키고 있다. 본 연구는 이러한 종교적 갈등현상 속에서 종교간 이해와 소통을 위한 원리의 해석학적 담론을 제시하고 있다. 본 연구는 원효의 화쟁철학을 방법론으로 활용하여 기독교, 불교, 동학 기도문의 서지학적 분석을 통한 대화와 소통의 해석학적 실험이다. 화쟁철학은 당시 동아시아와 신라시대에 백가쟁명처럼 난무하던 수많은 불교학설들을 중재하고 조정하였던 화회회통의 철학사상이었다. 원효는 화쟁철학과 자유로운 실천을 통해 갈등과 대립을 거침없이 풀어나가며, 특히 언어와 개념의 환상에서 벗어나 한 마음으로 돌아가게 한다. 이에 각 기도문이 고유성이 훼손되지 않으면서도 동시에 보편에 함몰되지 않는 화쟁을 통해 구체적인 대화와 소통의 마당을 열어간다. 그 틀 속에서, 연구자는 주기도문이 초월과 내재의 통합적 신앙을 주문하고 있는 지혜 기도문으로, 신에 대한 헌신과

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자기초월을 통하여 신의 침묵과 같은 고통 가득한 삶의 현장에서 오히려 자아적 관심을 넘어 책임적 존재로 삶의 현장에 뛰어 들어 갈 것을 촉구하고 있음을 드러낸다. 그리고 공(空)과 연기(緣起)로 요약할 수 있는 반야심경은 철저한 부정개념들을 사용하여 역설적으로 동체대비(同體大悲)의 자비심으로 나아가라는 보살도(菩薩道)의 실천 명령으로 이해하고 있다. 또한 연구자는 동학 "21자 주문"이 도교적(道敎的) 세계관보다는 오히려 초월과 내재를 아우르며 사회변혁 및 인간개조를 동시에 지향하는 한국인들의 전통적인 선적(仙的) 심성을 그대로 반영하고 있음을 주장한다. 특히 "시천주 조화정"(侍天主 造化定)은 동학의 신관과 인간관이, 결국 역설적 반대일치의 논리구조를 바탕으로, 인간이 몸으로서의 존재가 비록 신은 아니지만, 동시에 몸의 현존 자체가 신으로부터 분리 존재하는 것도 아니라는 포월적 (包越的) 신관을 내포하고 있음을 강조한다. 특정한 문화적 역사적 상황 속에서 특정한 문화적 역사적 질문에 대한 반응과 해결책으로 주어진 각 기도문을 타인과의 대화를 위한 보편성의 마당으로 초청하기에는 다소간의 어려움이 있다. 그러나 연구자는 원효의 화쟁이 강조하는 초월적 언어관을 통하여, 종교의 교리적 사고방식에서 벗어나, 있는 그대로의 표현 속에 내포하고 있는 반대일치를 깨달음으로서, 유한과 무한, 긍정과 부정, 창조와 무위이화, 주체와 객체, 초월과 내재, 성과 속, 신성과 인간성 등이 결코 서로 대립되거나 모순된 것이 아니라는 사실과, 진정한 신앙적 체험이 사회적 소통과 화해의 촉매제가 될 수 있음을 주장하고 있다. 이를 통하여 연구자는 대화 주체들에게 상대의 진리체험을 있는 그대로 겸허하게 경청하고 서로를 보완적으로 보며, 특히 지구촌의 고통과 죄를 극복하고 갈등해소를 통해 공동행복을 추구하려는 구동존이(求同存異)의 연대와 협동, 그리고 진리의 무궁함과 신비로움에 끊임없이 귀를 기울이려는 빈 마음을 촉구하고 있다.

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