

Wonhyo on the *Lotus Sūtra*

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1 Wonhyo's Life

Although there is no comprehensive extant biographical source for Wonhyo, scholars have been able to construct a general outline of his life based on a several fragmentary accounts. The most complete among these is that found on the *Goseonsa Seodang Hwasang tapbi* (Stele of the Reverend Seodang [Wonhyo] from Goseon Temple 高仙寺誓幢和尚塔碑).¹ These include *Wonhyo bulgi* (Wonhyo the Unbridled 元曉不羈), contained in the *Samguk yusa* 三國遺事;² the *Silla guk Hwangyongsa Wonhyo jeon* (*Biography of Wonhyo of Hwangyongsa in the Tang Dominion of Silla* 唐新羅國黃龍寺元曉傳), and the *Dang Silla guk Uisang jeon* (“Biography of Uisang from the Tang Dominion of Silla” 唐新羅國義湘傳) in the *Song gaoseng zhuan* (Song Biographies of Eminent Monks);³ the *Wonhyo guksa jeon* (“Biography of National Preceptor Wonhyo” 元曉國師傳) in the *Dongsa yeoljeon* (*Biographies of Eastern Masters* 東師列傳);⁴ and so forth. Fragmentary accounts of Wonhyo's life can be found in the *Zongjing lu* (*Record of the Axiom Mirror* 宗鏡錄),⁵ *Linjian lu* (*Record of the Forest* 林間錄),⁶ in the *Uisang jeongyo* (“Uisang's Life and Teachings” 義湘傳教)⁷ and the *Sabok bureon* (Story about the Dumb Snake-boy 蛇福不言) from the *Samguk yusa*.⁸

Wonhyo was born in the 39th year of the Jinpyeong reign (617). His secular family name was Seol 薛. He is said to have chosen the name “Wonhyo” indicating his desire to be the light of Buddhism. Although the precise date of Wonhyo's ordination is not recorded, it is thought that this happened at around the age of fifteen,⁹ after which he studied under a number of

¹ The *Goseonsa Seodang Hwasang tapbi* is a stone monument on which was written a short biographical sketch of Wonhyo. The upper and lower parts, which had been broken off from each other, were discovered separately. The lower part was discovered in three smaller pieces in Goseonsa, Amgok Village, Naedongmyeon, Weolseonggun, Gyeongju city, on May 9, 1915; the upper part was discovered in the vicinity of the Dongchansa ruins in Gyeongju city early in September, 1968. The lower part is presently kept in the National Central Museum, and the upper part is kept in the Dongguk University Museum.

² HBJ 6.347b17–348b19.

³ T 2106.50.730a6–b29.

⁴ HBJ 10.996b13–c16.

⁵ T 2016.48.477a22–28.

⁶ XZJ 148.590a2–9.

⁷ HBJ 6.348b20–349c22.

⁸ HBJ 6.349b23–350a19. Biographical data for the study of the life of Wonhyo was compiled by Gim Yeongtae 金煥泰 in his *Wonhyo yeongu saryo chongnok* (Wonhyo hak yeonguwon, Janggyeonggak, 1996). In this book Prof. Gim assembled all the material related in whole or part to the life of Wonhyo, arranged in detailed tables.

⁹ There is only one extant account of Wonhyo's year of entry into the saṅgha, which is found in the biography of Wonhyo contained in the *Song Version of the Biographies of Eminent Monks* 宋高僧傳. There it says he entered into the order in the year of Guancai. (T 2106.50.730a7–8)

accomplished teachers.¹⁰ Seeing the vast scope of his numerous writings, it is obvious that he had full access to developments in the various forms of Buddhist doctrine being studied in China at that time.

One of the best known events of Wonhyo's life is that of his attempt to go to study in the Tang — a cherished aim of Korean monks for a number of centuries. Wonhyo was particularly interested in gaining access to the new Yogâcâra teachings that were being introduced by Xuanzang and Kuiji.¹¹ On the way, however, Wonhyo lost his interest in taking this trip, and returned home. What stopped Wonhyo from pursuing this opportunity to go to the Tang was none other than an awakening experience. As the story goes, when Wonhyo and his colleague Uisang arrived at their port of embarkation, their ship's departure was delayed by inclement weather. Caught in the rain without a place to stay, they took shelter for the night in a nearby cave where they found gourds from which to drink rain water, and so were able to get a decent night's sleep. It was only at the first light of dawn that they realized that the cave they stayed in was actually a tomb, and that the "gourds" from which they had drunk were actually human skulls. Their departure was delayed for another day and they were forced to spend another night in the same cave. This time they spent a sleepless night, plagued by ghosts and nightmares. As Wonhyo reflected on this experience, he suddenly became deeply aware of the extent to which his perception of the world was based on the condition of his own mind. He experienced a great awakening to the principle of mind-only, after which he decided that there was, after all, no need to go to China in search of the Dharma. He composed a verse to express the content of his experiences, which goes:

With the arising of thought, various phenomena arise; with the cessation of thought, a cave and a grave are not two. (心生故種種法生, 心滅故龕墳不二¹²)

This is a play on the verse in the *Awakening of Mahāyāna Faith* that says "when a thought arises, all dharmas arise, and when a thought ceases, all dharmas cease."¹³ And thus he is reported as having said: "Since there are no dharmas outside of the mind, why should I seek them somewhere? I will not go to the Tang."¹⁴ Wonhyo, having seen that there was nothing to seek outside of his own mind, returned home to Silla. After having an affair with the princess Yoseok, Wonhyo returned to the secular life, taking up the name of "Layman of

¹⁰ Wonhyo is said to have studied the *Lotus Sūtra* under from the eminent monk Nanji (*Samguk yusa*: Nangji Seungun Bohyeon su 朗智乘雲普賢樹; T 2039.1015a29. ff.) and in the process of his commentarial work, often consulted with the monk Hyegong (*Samguk yusa*: Ihye dongjin 二惠同塵; T 2039.1004b10 ff.). He is also said to have studied the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra* and *Vimalakīrti-sūtra* together with Bodeok and Uisang. (*Samguk yusa*: Bojangbongno Bodeok iam 寶藏奉老普德移庵; T 2039.988b18 ff.).

¹¹ The reference to Wonhyo's specific interest in studying Yogâcâra is found in the biographical sketch contained in the *Song gaoseng zhuan* at T 2061.50.730a11–12. "He went with Uisang to [study in] the Tang, as he yearned for the teachings of the Tripiṭaka Master Xuanzang and Kuiji." 「嘗與湘法師入唐。慕奘三藏慈恩之門。」

¹² This story is given in Uisang's biography, starting on T 2061.50.729a3.

¹³ 心生故種種法生, 心滅故種種法滅 T 1666.32.577b22.

¹⁴ 「心外無法 胡用別求 我不入唐」 *Song gaoseng zhuan* "Biography of Uisang," T 2061.50.729a3.

Minor Lineage” 小姓居士.

After returning home, Wonhyo is said to have followed an unfettered lifestyle, carrying out extensive commentarial work and delivering lectures, yet also hanging around in bars and brothels, and playing the lute here and there. He is said to have sometimes slept in mausoleums, or the homes of the common people. Other times he engaged in seated meditation in the mountains or along the riversides, according to his inclination. It is also said that he spent much time teaching the common people how to attain salvation by chanting the name of the Buddha. Wonhyo died suddenly in at the age of 70 in the third lunar month of 686 at Yeolsa. His son Seol Chong brought his remains to Bunhwangsa (芬皇寺; the temple with which Wonhyo had been primarily associated during his monastic career), where he made a clay image and interred his ashes.

2 The Structure of Wonhyo's Writings

Wonhyo was an extremely prolific writer, recorded as having composed over 200 fascicles in more than eighty works.¹⁵ Among these, twenty-three are extant either in full or fragmentarily (the full list is provided at the end of this paper).¹⁶

We do not have precise dates for most of these works, but based on clues from citations within Wonhyo's own corpus, citations *in* works of others, and citations *of* works of others, such as those of Fazang and Zhiyan, a rough sequence of composition can be extrapolated, which goes approximately like this: *Expository Notes to the Awakening of Mahāyāna Faith* → *Doctrine of the Two Hindrances* → *Commentary to the Awakening of Mahāyāna Faith* → *Doctrinal Essentials of the Sūtra on the Ascension of Maitreya* → *Commentary on the Discrimination between the Middle and the Extremes* — *Doctrinal Essentials of the Perfection of Great Wisdom* — *Critique of Inference* → *Doctrinal Essentials of the Sūtra of Immeasurable Life* → *Doctrinal Essentials of the Nirvāṇa Sūtra* → *Exposition of the Vajrasamādhi-sūtra*, etc. It can be presumed that Huayan related works such as the *Commentary on the Flower Ornament Sūtra*, and the *Doctrinal Essentials of the Flower Ornament Sūtra* were written

¹⁵ See Ishii Kōsei 石井公成, “Shiragi bukkyō ni okeru *Daijō kishinron* no igi: Gangyō no kaishaku wo chūshin to shite” 新羅佛教における大乘起信論の意義: 元曉の解釋を中心として. (The Significance of the *Awakening of Faith* in Silla Buddhism: Focusing on the Commentaries by Wonhyo) Hirakawa Akira. ed., *Nyoraijō to Kishinron*. Tokyo: Shunjūsha, 1990. pp.551–553. Gim Sanghyeon, *Yeoksa ro ilk nun Wonhyo* (Wonhyo as a Reader of History) Goryeo Academy, 1994, pp.186–189.; Nam Dongsin, “Wonhyo ui daejung gyohwa wa sasang chegye” (“Wonhyo's Proselytizing and Thought System”) PhD. Diss. Seoul National University, 1995, pp.111–116; Ishii Kōsei, *Kegon shisō no kenkyū* (Studies in Huayan Thought). Tokyo: Shunjūsha, 1996, pp.195–197; Fukushi Jinin “Jeosul ul tonghaeseo bon Wonhyo ui sasang” (“The Thought of Wonhyo Seen through his Writings”). *Silla munhwa jehaksul balpyo hoe nun munjip 20 jip Bunhwangsa ui jejo myeong, Silla munhwa seonyang hoe*, 1999, pp.113–138; Fukushi Jinin, “Wonhyo joesul i hanjung il sanguk bulgyo e michin yeonghyang” (“The Influences of Wonhyo's Writings on the Buddhism of the Three Countries of Korea, China, and Japan”). PhD. Diss. Wongwang University, 2001, p.21.

¹⁶ This number of twenty-three is arrived to by counting Wonhyo's two commentaries on the *Awakening of Mahāyāna Faith* as separate works. In the first volume of the HBJ these are combined into one work, which makes the list of titles there twenty-two.

after 670.¹⁷

If we look at the list of even Wonhyo's extant writings, the breadth of his interest is striking, as he explicated almost all of the most important texts from the major Mahāyāna traditions being studied in China at the time, with the exception of Esoteric Buddhism. Doctrinal traditions covered in his works include Prajñāpāramitā, Three Treatise (Madhyamaka), Nirvāṇa, Tathāgatagarbha, Lotus, Tiantai, Vinaya, Pure Land, Yogācāra, Huayan, and Buddhist Logic. Wonhyo conducted extensive research on most of the major Mahāyāna scriptures and treatises of the time, along with their associated doctrines, with his own work advancing these studies significantly.

3 Doctrinal Essentials (*jong-yo*)

One of main types of exegetical work that Wonhyo carried out was his personal genre of commentary that he called "doctrinal essentials" 宗要. This is an essay-formatted commentary that limits its discussion to the most essential doctrinal problems of the text. After starting off with a prolegomenon that expresses the overall taste of the text under discussion, Wonhyo will usually explicate the title, after which he will explain the text's doctrinal themes in relation to the dominant strands seen in other relevant works, especially in terms of where the content of the work might fit in to the popular doctrinal taxonomies of the period. After this, he takes up key passages for explication and analysis. However, as distinguished from a standard commentary, he leaves out the bulk of the explication of the text itself. Wonhyo also wrote a large number of full commentaries that contained detailed explications of the text, which are designated with the standard Sino-Korean label for a commentary: *so* 疏.

As with the rest of Wonhyo's commentaries and treatises, the discussions in the *jong-yo* are taken up from a standpoint that is unusual for its lack of sectarian slant, since it is never Wonhyo's intent to support the doctrinal view of a particular school of Buddhism. His purpose was to fully examine and analyze a range of views seen in the variety of positions taken up by his past and contemporary colleagues, in order to understand why a certain scholar or a certain scriptural tradition valorized a chosen perspective. He therefore preferred to present the arguments made on all sides of the issue as (1) a way of fully unpacking what the range of problematic issues were, and (2) to show how, if one understands the underlying framework each scholar is bringing to his particular argument, there is no need, in most cases, to see these positions as being mutually exclusive or incommensurate.

Wonhyo's "doctrinal essentials" on such scriptures as the *Lotus Sūtra* and on the *Sūtra of Immeasurable Life* are of special interest, as they provide an insight into these texts from a scholar who, while being deeply versed in the broad range of Mahāyāna doctrines, was not an adherent of the Lotus or Pure Land traditions. Thus, the approaches he takes toward these texts show a measure of distance not seen in the works of proponents of these traditions: he

¹⁷ Seok Giram, "Wonhyo ui Bobeop Hwaecom sasang yeongu" (A Study of Wonhyo's Universal Hwaecom Thought). Ph.D. dissertation, Dongguk University 2003, pp.30–42.

doesn't place the *Lotus Sūtra* in privileged position the way Zhiyi did, and he doesn't accord a special status to the *Sūtra of Immeasurable Life* the way Shandao, or the other Pure Land masters did.

4 *Doctrinal Essentials of Lotus Sūtra (Beophwa jong-yo)*

Thus, the *Doctrinal Essentials of Lotus Sūtra* is written for the purpose of resolving what Wonhyo takes to be the most problematic issues of the *Lotus*. In noting what Wonhyo takes to be of importance in a given text, the issues he regards as being problematic may well be different from those that are of concern to an adherent of the specific doctrinal tradition. For example, in the *Doctrinal Essentials of the Sūtra of Immeasurable Life*, Wonhyo pays great attention to standard paradigms of Buddhist causality in trying to work out how, exactly, it might be proven within the Buddhist reality that a regular, unenlightened person could jump over the incalculable eons of practice deemed necessary in Yogācāra and other traditions, and be born in the Pure Land of Amitābha on the basis of having done a mere ten recitations of that Buddha's name. While this may not be an issue that would ever come to the mind of a Pure Land teacher, for someone like Wonhyo, who is compelled to make this fit into the larger framework of the Mahāyāna Buddhist doctrine, it may be construed that some kind of principle is being abrogated here. For Wonhyo, the universe, reality — and thus, the Buddhist reality — must be singular, commensurate, contiguous; it cannot be contradictory, or containing exceptions. Thus, what is usually of interest to Wonhyo, is not only how a certain principle is perceived by the members of a given textual tradition, but how that principle meshes with the larger matrix of Mahāyāna teachings.

One of the primary intentions of the authors of the *Lotus Sūtra* was to establish the ultimacy of the one vehicle, and to clarify its relationship with the three (or, as the case may be, two) vehicles. This discussion in the *Lotus* arises as a direct refutation of the three vehicle doctrine that had been established primarily through the works of the Yogācāra school, but which had also become ubiquitous in other forms of Mahāyāna scriptures and their commentaries. The *Lotus*, as we well know, maintains that the teaching of the three vehicles was delivered earlier, as a more rudimentary way of allowing practitioners possessing relatively lesser developed religious acuity to gain access into the Buddhist teachings and especially to clarify the fundamental differences between the so-called Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna approaches to practice and liberation. The one vehicle teaching comes along, graphically elaborated by the parable of the burning house, to make Buddhists see that there was, all along, really nothing but the one vehicle.

The matter of the relationship between the one vehicle and three vehicle doctrines can be seen as being relatively straightforward in the way that it is presented in the *Lotus*, but for Wonhyo, that text is not necessarily the be-all and end-all of Buddhist scriptures — it is merely one text in the broad Mahāyāna canon. Thus the competing three vehicle doctrine articulated in such seminal Mahāyāna texts as the *Samādhinirmocana-sūtra* is something that

cannot be simply brushed aside, as that scripture and its surrounding commentarial tradition is also articulated within a sophisticated and well-respected system, and thus he feels it imperative that these two scriptures (and other related works) be brought face to face, their underpinnings analyzed, to attempt to provide some sort of rational explanation for their apparent differences. Thus, the *Beophwa jong-yo* takes up as its main topic of discussion the issue of the relationship between the one and three-vehicle doctrines of various Mahāyāna traditions.

We can say then, that Wonhyo brings a level of criticality to his commentarial work not normally seen among Buddhist scriptural exegetes. But that “criticality” is still different in nature than that which would characterize the work of a modern-day secular scholar, in that despite his lack of sectarian ties, Wonhyo is still after all, a devout Buddhist, who takes scriptural authority for granted. Hence for him it is not possible for one sūtra to be “right,” and another “wrong.” Since they were spoken by the Buddha, they both have to be right. This being the case, how are we to deal with the differences in their teachings?

The standard strategy for dealing with this problem that developed in East Asia was that of classifying doctrines according to stages of teleological development (*pangyo* 判教), going from rudimentary forms of the teaching to some sort of “perfect teaching” — which inevitably represented the teaching of one’s own school. Wonhyo’s basic inclination in the treatment of inter-scriptural discrepancies was quite different. While not denying the fact of the historical development of the doctrines of the various Buddhist schools, he clearly saw the move to compartmentalization as way of avoiding the task of thoroughgoing examination of the philosophical underpinnings of the divergent positions.¹⁸

While virtually all of his contemporary exegetes in China were practitioners of doctrinal classification, Wonhyo became known as a practitioner of something called *hwajaeng* 和諍 or “harmonization of disputes.” The discourse of *hwajaeng* thoroughly penetrates and guides all of Wonhyo’s writings, where we can see him incessantly taking the differing positions of various schools or masters, thoroughly investigating the presuppositions and motivations that they bring to their work, and showing how when these views and motivations are fully understood and elaborated, the Mahāyāna Buddhist system can still be seen as an integrated whole. Wonhyo relentlessly pursues ostensibly variant or conflicting Buddhist doctrinal positions, investigates them exhaustively until identifying the precise point at which their variance occurs, and then shows how differences in fundamental background, motivation, or sectarian bias on the part of the proponent of that particular doctrinal position lead to the production of such apparent contradictions. It is in reflection of this propensity that he was posthumously

¹⁸ Thus, he says at the conclusion of his *Doctrinal Essentials of the Nirvāṇa Sūtra* “Yet, if you use the scheme of four teachings to categorize the scriptures, or use five time periods to delimit the Buddha’s intention, this is just like using a snail shell to scoop out the ocean, or looking at the sky through a tube!” 「而欲以四宗科於經旨 亦以五時 限於佛意。是猶以螺酌海用管天者耳。」 (T 1769.38.255c5–7)

honored with the title of “National Master of Harmonization of Disputes” 和靜國師.¹⁹

As noted, a major concern for Wonhyo in dealing with the *Lotus Sūtra* is that of reconciling its one vehicle position with that of the broader Mahāyāna scriptural tradition. For example: given the fact that the one vehicle position is taken to represent the “true Mahāyāna” position, exactly what is its relationship with the bodhisattva vehicle of the three vehicles? This answer is not so simply arrived to, since the exact content of the bodhisattva vehicle is defined variously by different texts. Thus, the varying positions of these texts need to be scrutinized in a systematic way, paying attention to the underlying assumptions brought to the table by different masters of the doctrine. An inseparably interwoven fundamental theme relating to the *Lotus Sūtra*’s articulation of the one and three vehicles is that of the relationship of the real 實 and the expedient 權, and thus the connotations of both are explored thoroughly in various contexts.

As with many of his other works — especially, for example, his Pure Land commentaries, Wonhyo’s primary approach to dealing with the systematicity and congruence of the arguments of any given doctrinal system as contained in a scripture is to test its agreement with that of the basic Buddhist principle of cause and effect. In the *Doctrinal Essentials of the Sūtra on Immeasurable Life*, Wonhyo demands that the issue of rebirth in the Pure Land be explicable and fully congruent with the general laws of cause in effect as established in Abhidharma and Yogācāra literature. In the *Lotus Sūtra*, the doctrines of attainment of the effects (i.e. realizations) of the three vehicles, and of the one vehicle, must also be shown to be commensurate with basic karmic principles, which are explained through the categories of Buddha-bodies, path theory, and so forth.

Wonhyo is also much concerned with issues of such as how “becoming Buddha” is explained within various traditions, and how this relates to vehicle theory. For example, he takes up the issue of the logical conundrum involved in the fact that all sentient beings are

¹⁹ From the *Goryeo sa* 高麗史, fasc. 11, sixth year of Sukjong, eighth month, Gyesajo. At this time, Wonhyo was given the posthumous title of “National Preceptor of Harmonization of Disputes” and Uisang was given the title “National Preceptor of the Perfect Teaching.” It is thought that these two monks were conferred with these titles based on petition to the emperor made by Uicheon. (See Gim Sanghyeon, *Wonhyo yeongu*. Minjoksa, 2000, and pp.290–291) Note that in the *Goryeo sa*, the reference to Wonhyo as National Master of the Harmonization of Disputes is written as 和靜國師 rather than 和靜國師. This notation is also seen in the subsequent *Dongsa yeoljeon* 東師列傳, which lists Wonhyo with the same title. (HBJ 10.996c16) Gim Busik (金富軾; 1075–1151) of the Goryeo period in his Stele for the National Preceptor of the Harmonization of Disputes at Bunhwangsa (now kept Dongguk University Museum) also referred to Wonhyo by this name. Countless volumes have been written on Wonhyo’s *hwajaeng* in Korea. For discussions in English, see the 1966 essay by Bak Jonghong entitled “Wonhyo ui jeolhak sasang.” This first appeared in the volume *Hanguk bulgyo sasang* (Seoul: Ilsinsa, pp.59–88), and has been made available to the English speaking audience through the translation by Robert Buswell with the title “Wonhyo’s Philosophical Thought” (in *Assimilation of Buddhism in Korea: Religious Maturity and Innovation in the Silla Dynasty*, pp.47–103). See also Park, Sung Bae, *Silla Buddhist Spirituality*, in “Buddhist Spirituality: Later China, Korea, Japan and the Modern World,” Takeuchi Yoshinori, ed. NY: Crossroad Publishing, pp.57–78).

supposed to become buddhas, yet at the same time all buddhas used to be sentient beings, while the number of both is said to be infinite. This is a topic that he also treats in his *Simmun hwajaeng non* 十門和諍論²⁰ and *Pan biryang non* 判比量論²¹ — both texts that especially deal with logical approaches. For Wonhyo, the matter of logical consistency must always be addressed. He is therefore keenly sensitive to the perspective and aim of the argument — to the standpoint of the expounder of the doctrine and the listener, and so forth. Yet on the other hand, apparent logical contradictions can ultimately be resolved by the attainment of the state of non-conceptualization.²²

Being fully aware of the centrality of the *Lotus Sūtra* for Zhiyi in his construction of his doctrinal taxonomies, Wonhyo also feels compelled to address the issue of the discrepancies with the placing of the *Lotus* in *pangyo* 判教 systems of the *Lotus* and the *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra* (i.e. Faxiang/Yogâcāra). As usual, he first works very hard to show that the differences in interpretation are based on the distinctive approaches that the masters of each of these two traditions bring to their argument, but nonetheless — somewhat unusually — ends up acknowledging the position of the Lotus School with its sūtra constituting the complete revelation as being valid.

In terms of sources for his ideas, the influence that Wonhyo received from Jizang (549–623) has been cited by numerous scholars,²³ but there is probably no place in Wonhyo’s writings where that influence is as evident as it is here, as Wonhyo liberally adopts unreferenced lines from Jizang’s *Fahua youyi* 法華遊意 (T 1722). He also, as usual, relies on his wide repertoire of Mahāyāna texts to provide the scriptural support for his arguments. And as in his Pure Land commentary, he avails himself extensively to an influential commentary by Vasubandhu, this time the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-upadeśa*.

5 Overview of the Doctrinal Essentials of the Lotus Sūtra

The *Beophwa jong-yo* explains the *Lotus Sūtra* from six perspectives: (1) The prolegomenon, which expresses the overall sense of the sūtra 述大意; (2) the articulation of its fundamental doctrinal issues 辨經宗; (3) the clarification of the function of the explainer/explanation of its discourse 明詮用; (4) the explication of its title 釋題名; (5) the disclosure of its doctrinal categories 顯教攝, and (6) the exegesis of the main text 消文義. Unfortunately, this sixth

²⁰ HBJ 1.839b9–16. This argument is examined in A. Charles Muller’s “Wonhyo and Logic.” *Bulletin of Toyo Gakuen University*, vol. 16 (March, 2008), p.1–17. (available at <http://www.acmuller.net/articles/tgu-kiyo-2008-wonhyo-logic.html>)

²¹ See HBJ 1.816b8–16; also treated in the article introduced in the prior note.

²² Please see my discussion of the issue of Wonhyo’s treatment of the relationship of logic with the nonconceptual state in “Faith and the Resolution of the Four Doubts in Wonhyo’s *Doctrinal Essentials of the Sūtra of Immeasurable Life (Muryangsu gyeong jong-yo)*”, *Bulletin of Tōyō Gakuen University*, Vol. 15 (March 2007), pages 1–15.

²³ See, for example, Jörg Plassen, “Entering the Dharma-gate of Repeated Darkening: Towards a Re-assessment of *Hwajaeng* in its Chinese Context” (in *Korean Buddhism in East Asian Perspectives*, Jimoondang: Paji-si, Korea, 2007).

section is not extant. Wonhyo takes the central teaching of the *Lotus Sūtra* to be that of explaining the main purpose for the appearance in the world by the various buddhas — which is to show the entrance to the single way that leads all sentient beings to salvation. The Buddha appears in the world for one great purpose: to open the door of the three vehicles in order to awaken people and then to show them the ultimate teaching of the one vehicle.

Next, he points out that the fundamental teaching of the *Lotus* is to show the true aspect of the one vehicle. Wonhyo next distinguishes the teaching into the two perspectives of (1) the person who avails himself to the teaching 能乘人 and (2) the teaching to which one avails him/herself 所乘法. Those who avail themselves to the teaching are not only practitioners of the one vehicle, but also practitioners of the three vehicles, which implies that all beings are capable of availing themselves to the one vehicle. That to which practitioners avail themselves is distinguished into the four aspects of (1) the principle of the one vehicle 一乘理, (2) the teaching of the one vehicle 一乘教, (3) the causes of the one vehicle 一乘之因, and (4) the effects of the one vehicle 一乘之果. The principle of the one vehicle refers to such things as the dharma-body, the one dharma-realm, and the tathāgatagarbha. The teaching of the one vehicle refers to all the verbal teachings explained by the buddhas of the ten directions and the three time periods from their first attainment of enlightenment up to their entry into nirvāṇa. The causes of the one vehicle are of two basic types: causation by possession of inherent nature (the Buddha-nature possessed by all sentient beings) and causation by effort (the wholesome roots produced by moral behavior and meditation). The effect of the one vehicle is the attainment of Buddhahood, which is distinguished into the pair of intrinsic effects and activated effects. Intrinsic effects refer to the fact that the Tathāgata is originally endowed with the dharma-body *qua* effect, but according to the situation this must sometimes be skillfully manifested as the response body or transformation body to save sentient beings.

To explain number (3) and (4) above (i.e. causes and effects of the one vehicle) it is not surprising that Wonhyo relies on Yogācāra teachings of cause and effect — thus seed theory, Buddha-body theory, etc. He relies much for his explanation on the explication of these categories on the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-upadeśā*²⁴ by Vasubandhu, which is itself of course deeply grounded in basic Yogācāra paradigms.

In the third section, that of Clarifying the Function of the Explainer of the Discourse, the function of the explainer is distinguished into the two functions of opening up the door of the skillful means of the three vehicles, and directly showing the true aspect of the one vehicle. Here, *opening* 開 means to open up the gate of the expedient teaching of the three vehicles. *Showing* 示 means to show the true aspect of the one vehicle. Finally, in the last part of this section, Wonhyo explains the combined function of opening and showing.

In the fourth section, the Explanation of the Title, Wonhyo breaks the title of Marvelous-Dharma-Lotus-Flower-Sūtra 妙法蓮華經 into the two parts of “marvelous-dharma” and

²⁴ T 1519.

“lotus-flower.” The meaning of “marvelous-dharma” (*myobeop* 妙法) is distinguished into the four connotations of skillful 巧妙, excellent 勝妙, uncanny 微妙, and sublime 絕妙. “Lotus-flower” is explained as having the four connotations of pure whiteness, the magical character of its blooming, its perfect fragrance and beauty, and its ability to have deep roots while never touching a drop of water or mud.

In the fifth section, the Clarification of the Doctrinal Categories, Wonhyo addresses the issue of where the *Lotus Sūtra* should be understood as fitting in between the categories of the fully revealed teaching 了義 and partial revelation 不了義. First the sūtra is placed in the context of the three wheels of the dharma as taught in the texts of the Faxiang School, which takes it as an incomplete teaching, and then it is shown in the context of the three divisions of the teaching made by the Sanlun master Jizang 吉藏, where it is seen as the fully revealed teaching. This is followed by a series of arguments posed by interlocutors who take various positions in regard to this issue. In conclusion, the position of the Lotus containing the fully revealed doctrine is judged as being the most accurate overall.

6 The Prolegomenon (*daeui*) to the Doctrinal Essentials

It is Wonhyo’s standard practice to open up his commentarial works with a “prolegomenon” — a terse, poetic passage, in which he attempts to express the gist of the text to be explicated. The Sino-Korean *daeui* 大意 means, in this case, the “overall sense” that the subject text aims to articulate. Thus his commentaries inevitably start off with a statement such as “first I will explain the general sense,” or “I will briefly explain the general sense,” etc. After this, Wonhyo presents, in compact form, his own perspective on the subject text. This tersely flowing mode of discourse is a style that is similar to that of the “mystic discussions” 玄談 found in the Daoist tradition. It is different from a standard, discursive type of preface, most importantly in its being very poetic and lively in style. The beauty, profundity, and distinctive character of Wonhyo’s prolegomena has resulted in their being a perennial topic of research by specialist scholars of Buddhism and literature in Korea. For us to gain a sense of Wonhyo’s general view of the *Lotus*, it is helpful to read the prolegomenon:

The *Sūtra of the Lotus Blossom of the Marvelous Dharma* reflects the broad purpose of all the buddhas in the ten directions and three divisions of time appearing in the world.

It is the vast gate through which all those of the nine paths²⁵ and the four kinds of birth²⁶ enter into the single way.

The text is artful and the meaning profound, such that there is no level of subtlety to which it does not reach.

Its words are well-arranged and its principle is all-embracing, and thus no teaching is not explained.

With the text and words being artful and well-arranged, the text is attractive, yet contains the real.

With the meaning and principle being profound and all-embracing, there is reality, yet it

contains the provisional.

“The principle being profound and all-embracing” implies non-duality and non-distinction.

“The words being artful and well-arranged” implies opening the provisional to show the real.

“Opening the provisional” is like when [the father] reveals that the three wagons outside the gate are provisional — and that the jeweled city [seen] during the trip is conjured.

His enlightenment under the bodhi tree was not the beginning, and his passing into nirvāṇa between the Śāla trees was not the end.

“Showing the real” is like when the Buddha shows that the beings born in four ways are all his children, and that the adherents of the two vehicles will all become buddhas.

Numerical calculation is not adequate to express the length of his life.

The eon-ending conflagration cannot scorch the ground of his Pure Land.²⁷ This is what is meant by the “artfulness of the prose.”

The meaning of “not-two” is that there is only one great matter,²⁸ in the Buddha’s view, which is to reveal [the truth for sentient beings], show them, awaken them, and make them enter.

[The Buddha’s teaching being] unsurpassed and unaltered, he has caused them to understand it and realize it.

The meaning of “no distinction” is like the three kinds of equality²⁹ where all vehicles

²⁵ Since the ensuing term is the four kinds of birth, we may guess that Wonhyo is talking about a range in types of sentient existence, and thus he probably referring to the nine abodes of sentient beings as taught in the **Abhidharma-saṃgīti-paryāya-pāda-śāstra*: (1) 欲界之人天 the world and the six deva-heavens of desire in which there is variety of bodies (or personalities) and thinking (or ideas); (2) 梵衆天 the three brahma heavens where bodies differ but thinking is the same, the first dhyāna heaven; (3) 極光淨天 the three bright and pure heavens where bodies are identical but thinking differs, the second dhyāna heaven; (4) 遍淨天 the three universally pure heavens where bodies and thinking are the same, the third dhyāna heaven; (5) 無想天 the no-thinking or no-thought heaven, the highest of the four dhyāna heavens; (6) 空無邊處 limitless space, the first of the formless realms; (7) 識無邊處 limitless perception; (8) 無所有處 nothingness, the place beyond things; and (9) 非想非非想 beyond thought or non-thought. (Skt. *nava sattvāvāsaḥ*) 阿毘達磨集異門足論 T 1536.26.446b14–29.

²⁶ The four kinds of birth are (1) Oviparous (born from eggs) 卵生 (Skt. *aṇḍajā yoniḥ*); (2) Viviparous 胎生 (Skt. *jarāyujā yoniḥ*). Creatures that are born from the womb — mammals; (3) Born from moisture 濕生 (Skt. *saṃsvedajā yoniḥ*); also understood as born from causes and conditions 因緣生, or born as the result of the combination of heat and cold 寒熱和合生. Basically includes insects and other smaller life forms for which eggs were not readily detectible; (4) Metamorphic, or born through transformation, born spontaneously 化生 (Skt. *upapādukā yoniḥ*). For example, celestials 天, hell denizens 地獄, etc. all of whom are born according to their prior karma.

²⁷ T 262.9.54c10.

²⁸ The phrase saying that there is only “one great matter” for which the Buddha appears in the world to teach is one of the most cited lines in the *Lotus Sūtra*, repeated in many later East Asian Buddhist texts. See T 262.9.7a21.

²⁹ As taught in the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-upadeśa*, these are (1) equality of vehicle 乘平等, which means that *śrāvakas* can enter the same one vehicle; (2) equality of mundane existence and nirvāṇa 世間涅槃平等, which means that when Prabhūtaratna Tathāgata enters into nirvāṇa, he doesn’t distinguish between

and all bodies follow the same method, and the mundane world and nirvāṇa have never been two different realities.

This is the subtle mystery of the meaning of the principle.

Thus, the text and its principles are both wondrous.

It is the principle that lacks no profundity, the standard free from crudity, and is thus called the marvelous dharma.

The provisional flowers are scattered broadly, and the real fruit is amply manifested.

With unsullied beauty, it is described as being like the lotus flower.

Yet why is the marvelous dharma which is perfectly excellent sometimes three, and sometimes one?

This perfected person [the Tathāgata] is most mysterious: how could [his life span] be determined as short or long?³⁰

Initially, one is dull-minded, and entering is not easy.

The children are all running around, so getting them out is extremely difficult.

It is here that the Tathāgata draws them out with expedients.

Enticing them with the goat-cart in the Deer Park, he shows them his coarse body that is dependent on physical existence.

Hitching up the white ox at Vulture Peak, he reveals his limitlessly long life.

“From here, he borrows the one to refute the three, and with the three removed, the one is also abandoned.”

“He provisionally uses the long to remove the short, and once the short is removed, the long is forgotten.”³¹

Since this dharma cannot be shown, signs of the words and text are annihilated.

Vanishing, it can’t be grasped; totally serene, it abandons all dependencies.

Not knowing what to call it, I am forced to name it the “flower of the marvelous dharma.”

This being the case, those who share a seat and are allowed to listen will some day take the seat of the wheel turning kings, Indra, and Brahma.

Those who hear a single phrase all attain the guarantee of the attainment of perfect enlightenment — not to mention that the merits of receiving and transmitting the teaching lie far beyond calculation.

The broad purport of the sūtra is shown in its title: thus it is called the *Sūtra of the Lotus*

nirvāṇa and saṃsāra; (3) equality of body 身平等, which means that when Prabhūtaratna Tathāgata enters into nirvāṇa, he re-manifests his own body, other bodies, and the dharma body without distinction.

³⁰ The most literal reading of 誰短誰長 would be something like “who is short and who is long,” but this doesn’t make much sense in this context. Prof. Hiroshi Kanno of Soka University, a specialist in *Lotus Sūtra* commentaries, suggests that since the length of the life of the Tathāgata is a prominent theme in the sūtra, this phrase refers to that theme.

³¹ The cited text is found in Jizang’s *Fahua youyi* at T 1722.34.633c2–3. Here both 脩 and 修 are being read with their rare meanings of 長. For a Japanese translation of this section of the *Fahua youyi*, see KANNO Hiroshi *Hokke kyō to wa nani ka: Hokke yui wo yomu*. Tokyo, Shunjūsha, 1992.

Blossom of the Marvelous Dharma.³²

7 Wonhyo's Extant Works

These works are listed in the order that they appear in Volume One of the *Hanguk bulgyo jeonseo*

1. *Doctrinal Essentials of the Great Perfection of Wisdom Sūtra (Daehyedo gyeong jong-yo)* 大慧度經宗要; 1 fasc. HBJ 1.480–487; T 1697)
2. *Doctrinal Essentials of the Lotus Sūtra (Beophwa jong-yo)* 法華宗要; 1 fasc.; HBJ 1.487–494; T 1725.34.870c–875c)
3. Preface with the *Commentary to the Flower Ornament Sūtra (Hwaomgyeong so byeongseo)* 華嚴經疏并序; preface and fragment of fasc. 3, out of ten fascicles; HBJ 1.495–97)
4. Preface with the *Commentary to the Sūtra of the Diadem of Past Acts (Bosal yeongnak bon-eop gyeong sobyeong seo)* 菩薩瓔珞本業經疏并序; preface and fasc. 1 among three original fasc.; HBJ 1.498–523)
5. *Doctrinal Essentials of the Nirvana Sūtra (Yeolban jong-yo)* 涅槃宗要; 1 fasc.; HBJ 1.524–546; T 1769.38.239a–255c)
6. *Doctrinal Essentials of the Sūtra of Maitreya's Ascension (Mireuk sangsaeng gyeong jong-yo)* 彌勒上生經宗要; 1 fasc.; HBJ 1.547–552; T 1773.38.299–303)
7. Preface to the *Commentary on the Saṃdhinirmocana-sūtra (Haesimmilgyeong so seo)* 解深密經疏序; only the preface is extant from a work listed as being three fascicles; HBJ 1.553)
8. *Doctrinal Essentials of the Sūtra of Immeasurable Life (Muryangsgyeong jong-yo)* 無量壽經宗要; 1 fasc.; HBJ 1.553–562; T 1747.37.125b–131c)
9. *Commentary on the Amitābha Sūtra (Bulseol Amitageong so)* 佛說阿彌陀經疏; 1 fasc.; HBJ 1.562–566, T 1759)
10. *Yusim allak do* (遊心安樂道; 1 fasc.; HBJ 1.566–580; T 1965.47.110–120)

³² 妙法蓮華經者、斯乃十方三世諸佛出世之大意。九道四生咸入一道之弘門也。文巧義深、無妙不極。辭敷理泰、無法不宣。文辭巧敷、華而含實。義理深泰、實而帶權。理深泰者、無二無別也。辭巧敷者、開權示實也。開權者、開門外三車是權。中途寶城是化。樹下成道非始、林間滅度非終。示實者、示四生並是吾子、二乘皆當作佛、算數不足量其命、劫火不能燒其土。是謂文辭之巧妙也。言無二者、唯一大事於佛知見開示悟入。無上無異、令知令證故。言無別者。三種平等、諸乘諸身、皆同一揆、世間涅槃、永離二際故、是謂義理之深妙也。斯則文理咸妙。無非玄則、離龜之軌、乃稱妙法。權華開敷、實菓泰彰。無染之美、假喻蓮華。然、妙法妙絕何三、何一。至人至冥、誰短誰長。茲處恍惚、入之不易。諸子瀾漫、出之良難。於是如來引之以權。羨羊車於鹿苑、示有待之龜身。駕白牛於鷲岳、顯無限之長命。“斯乃借一以破三、三除一捨。假修以斥短、短息而脩忘。是法不可示。言辭相寂滅。蕩然靡據、肅焉離奇。不知何以言之、強稱妙法蓮花。是以、分坐令聞之者、當受輪王、釋梵之座。逕耳一句之人、竝得無上菩提之記。況乎受持演說之福。豈可思議所量乎哉。舉是大意以標題目。故言妙法蓮花經也。(HBJ 1.487c) Please note that extensive correction and annotation has been done on this Sino-Korean source text, which is explained in my forthcoming full translation of the *Beophwa jong-yo*.

11. *Essentials of Observing and Violating the Code of Bodhisattva Precepts (Bosal gyebon jibeom yogi 菩薩戒本持犯要記; 1 fasc.)*
12. *Personal Notes on the Fundamentals of Bodhisattva Precepts in the Sūtra of Brahma's Net (Beommang gyeong bosal gyebon sagi 梵網經菩薩戒本私記; 1 fasc.; HBJ 1.581–585; T 1907.45.918–921)*
13. *Exposition of the Vajrasamādhi-sūtra (Geumgang sammae gyeong non 金剛三昧經論; 3 fasc.; HBJ 1. 604–676; T 1730.34.961a–1008a)*
14. *Expository Notes on the Awakening of Mahāyāna Faith (Daeseung gisillon byeolgi 大乘起信論別記; 2 fasc.; HBJ 1.677–697; T 1845.44.226a–240c)*
15. *Commentary on the Awakening of Mahāyāna Faith (Daeseung gisillon so 大乘起信論疏; 2 fasc. HBJ 1.698–722; T 1844.44.202a–226a)*
16. *Doctrine of the Two Hindrances (Ijangui 二障義; 1 fasc. HBJ 1.789–814)*
17. *Critique of Inference (Pan biryang non 判比量論; fragments of 1 fasc. HBJ 814–817, XZJ 860)*
18. *Commentary on the Discrimination of the Middle and the Extremes (Jungbyeon bunbyeollon so 中邊分別論疏; third fasc. remains among four fasc. HBJ 1.817–837)*
19. *Reconciliation of Disputes in Ten Aspects (Simmun hwajaeng non 十門和諍論; fragments only from 2 original fascicles; HBJ 1.838–841)*
20. *Awaken Your Mind to Practice (Balsim suhaeng jang 發心修行章) (1 fasc.; HBJ 1.841–2)*
21. *Great Vehicle Ritual of Repentance for Indulgence in the Six Faculties (Daeseung yukjeong chamhoe 大乘六情懺悔 1 fasc.; HBJ 1.842a–844a; T 1908)*
22. *Praise of Amitābha's Realization of His Nature (Mita jeungseong ga 彌陀證性歌; 1 section; HBJ 1.843)*

ABBREVIATIONS AND TEXTS

- HBJ *Hanguk bulgyo jeonseo* 韓國佛教全書 [The Collected Texts of Korean Buddhism] (1984). Seoul: Dongguk University Press.
- T *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* [Japanese Edition of the Buddhist Canon] (1924–35). Tokyo: Daizōkyōkai. (Electronic Texts from SAT and CBETA used as sources)
- XZJ *Xuzangjing* 續藏經. Taiwanese Reprint of *Zokuzōkyō* [*Dai nihon zokuzōkyō*] (1905–1912). Kyoto: Zōkyō shoin. (Electronic Text from CBETA used as source)

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元暁の法華経解釈

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韓国の仏教学者・元暁（617-686）は、中国、韓国、および日本に仏教が受容される時期に流入した大乘の経典や論書に対して極めて豊かで深い洞察をなした思想家として知られている。元暁は大きな影響力をもつほとんどすべての経と論とに解釈を加えながら、東アジアのほとんどの経典解釈学者たちの場合とは異なって、公式にはいかなる特定の宗派や主義にも所属しなかったこともあり、研究対象に対する態度の公正さと批判精神において、他の思想家たちに比して水際立っている。元暁は特定の経典を自己の信念体系の頂点に立てるべく考察や論述を進めるのではなく、諸経典や論書が仏教の基本的原則である論理と因果律とに齟齬を来す場合を丹念に検討し、そこに見られる矛盾や相違を調停するための解釈学を打ち立てていった。本稿の主題とする『法華宗要』では、元暁は法華経が他の経との間で顕在化する相違点を慎重に公正な態度で判定していった。本論文はこの過程を詳細に辿ってみる。