Wonhyo (617-686):
A Critic of Sectarian Doctrinal Classifications

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ABSTRACT

Most of Korean Buddhist scholars are interested in proving the greatness and uniqueness of Wonhyo 元曉 (617-686) in Korean Buddhist context. However, I discussed Wonhyo's panjiao 判教 (Doctrinal Classification) system in the broader context of East Asian Buddhism rather than in the narrower context of Korean Buddhism. By the use of digitized texts, I comprehensively investigated that by following previous Chinese ecumenical panjiao systems, Wonhyo criticized previous and contemporary sectarian panjiao systems. Even though his own panjiao system is not found out in his extant works but is introduced and commented on it by later Huayan scholars, I discussed only his criticism of previous sectarian panjiao systems in his extant works in this article. When Xuanzang 玄奘 (602-664) introduced some controversial issues of Yogacāra Buddhism to China, he and his followers established Yogacāra sectarian panjiao system. As a reaction against new Yogacāra sectarian panjiao systems, by adopting previous Dilun sectarian panjiao systems, Huayan panjiao systemizers devised other sectarian panjiao systems of Huayan Buddhism. However, as an ecumenical panjiao systemizer, Wonhyo refuted the previous sectarian panjiao systems of the Dilun School and the contemporary sectarian panjiao systems of new Yogacāra Buddhism and Huayan Buddhism. By criticizing those sectarian panjiao systems, he strongly advocated ecumenical panjiao systems in his three extant works, Yeolban jongyo 涅槃宗要 (Essentials of the Nirvāṇa Sūtra), Daehyedo gyeong jongyo 智度經宗要 (Essentials of the Wisdom Sūtra) and Beophwa jongyo 法華宗要 (Essentials of the Lotus Sūtra).

The discussions on Wonhyo's 元曉 (617-686) panjiao systems by Korean scholars Gim Changseok 金昌錫¹, Gim Jun-gyeong 金俊澔² and Go Ikjin 高翊晉³ are useful for a general understanding. Gim Changseok⁴ also examined Jizang's 吉藏 ((549-623) influences on Wonhyo's systems to a very limited extent. Even so, his discussion is loyally incorporated into this article. Korean Buddhist scholars are basically interested in establishing the greatness and uniqueness of Wonhyo in Korean Buddhist context because Wonhyo has been considered the most important figure along with Jinul 知遠 (1158-1210) in the history of Korean Buddhism. So, from the nationalistic necessity, knowingly or unknowingly, they neglected the broader context of East Asian Buddhism for Wonhyo's panjiao systems. A Japanese scholar, Moro Shigeo 師茂樹 very briefly discussed Wonhyo's criticism of his contemporary scholar Xuanzang's 玄奘 (602-664) panjiao system⁵. Even though some of Buddhist scholars discussed Wonhyo's panjiao system in the broader context of East Asian Buddhism, they dealt with it very briefly and to a limited extent.

However, by identifying many indirect and a few direct citations from previous ecumenical panjiao systemizers in Wonhyo's works by the use of digitized Buddhist texts, mostly focusing on Huiyuan 慧遠 (523-596) and Jizang, I conduct research on the extent to which Wonhyo referred to them to back up his ecumenical
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panjiao systems and to react against new Buddhism’s sectarian panjiao systems. Because Huiyuan and Jizang adopted their ecumenical panjiao systems from the previous ecumenical panjiao systemizers Kumārajīva (343-413), Sengrui 仏敎 (352-436), Bodhiruci (d. 527), I locate Wonhyo in the ecumenical panjiao lineage in the context of East Asian Buddhism. I understand Wonhyo’s panjiao system in an interactive relation between sectarian panjiao systems and ecumenical panjiao systems.

Wonhyo is a very prolific writer and mostly dedicated himself to outline the essentials of various scriptures in his works. He criticized previous and contemporary sectarian panjiao scholars mainly in his three extant works Yeolban jongyo 涅槃宗要 (Essentials of the Nirvāṇa Sūtra), Daehyedo gyeongjongyo 大慧度經宗要 (Essentials of the Wisdom Sūtra) and Beophwa jongyo 法華宗要 (Essentials of the Lotus Sūtra). Even though the discussions on his own doctrinal classification are not found in his extant works, later panjiao scholars Fazang 法藏 (643-712)
, Li Tongxuan 李通玄 (d. 730), Huiyuan 慧苑 (673? -743?)
, Chengguan 澄觀 (738-839)
 and others introduced and commented on it. However, in this article, I discuss only his criticism of previous sectarian panjiao systems in his extant works.

1. Historical background

When the body of Buddhist literature was imported into China over several centuries, Chinese scholars were naturally puzzled by numerous discrepancies and contradictions in the translated texts. These discrepancies and contradictions provide the logical beginnings of the panjiao 判教 (doctrinal classification) system in China. Since all the translated scriptures were considered the words of the Buddha, none of these teachings could be false. To account for diversity without rejecting some texts, Chinese scholars devised various panjiao systems.

The panjiao systems function as a critical method to justify the sectarian claim of different traditions. The systems subordinate other teachings to their teachings. The systems systematically interpret various Buddhist teachings in a hermeneutical perspective. The systems also arrange the teachings in a soteriological progress. Each of the panjiao systems is basically devised based upon the sectarian, hermeneutical and soteriological perspectives.

When Kumārajīva came to China in 401, he undertook a massive and systematic project to translate Buddhist texts into Chinese with the support from the court. Chinese Buddhists could then see Buddhism from a broader perspective than before. Previous scholars could not understand Buddhism comprehensively due to the limited number of available texts. Kumārajīva’s massive translations enabled Chinese Buddhists to see Buddhism in a more comprehensive and broader context.

The panjiao systems began to be formulated as Kumārajīva’s translations became known to Chinese Buddhists. Prior to Kumārajīva, some Buddhist texts were unsystematically translated into Chinese. His project of massive and systematic translation of texts with the strong support of the court was the first of its kind in Chinese history. When numerous texts, with their seeming contradictions, were
translated, a system of doctrinal classification was urgently needed in order to explain the contradictions among them.

Based upon the *Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra-sastra*, a comprehensive commentary on the *Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra*, which he himself translated, Kumārajīva classifies the Buddha’s teachings into two groups, Mahāyāna and Hinayāna, and puts the Mahāyāna over the Hinayāna. He is a Mahāyāna ecumenist. In his *panjiao* systems, a diachronic arrangement of the scriptures is also seen.

Of his many disciples, Sengrui and Huiguan 慧觀 (d. 453) are very important in the development of *panjiao* systems. Sengrui adopted the ecumenical perspective on the Mahāyāna scriptures from his master Kumārajīva. However, adopting diachronic explanations on the scriptures from Kumārajīva, Huiguan developed the sectarian *panjiao* system of five period teachings in which each later teaching is gradually being deepened in value and content.

The general functions of the *panjiao* systems in the Southern and Northern Dynasties (386-589) are (1) to analyze and compare each and every scripture in details, (2) to systematically synthesize them, by considering all Buddhist teachings as the teaching delivered by the Buddha, (3) to classify the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra* and the *Huayan Sūtra* as the supreme teaching, (4) to provide the scriptural evidence for the systemization of doctrinal classifications, and (5) to evaluate various scriptures based upon the diachronic preaching order or the content of the teaching.

While a single standard, the preaching order or the doctrinal content, is usually applied in the previous *panjiao* systems, various factors are introduced to classify the scriptures and treatises in the Sui Dynasty (581-618). For example, Zhiyi 智顗 (538-597) established his own *panjiao* systems based on three standards, i.e., the preaching order, the content, and the instructive methods. So, he was then able to comprehensively analyze each scripture from the three aspects to advance his sectarian *panjiao* systems. Jizang also introduced many different factors of understanding texts, e.g., the marginal and central aspects, the esoteric and exoteric aspects, and so on in order to defend his ecumenical *panjiao* systems.

The most important event in the early period of the Tang Dynasty (618-907) is the importation of new Buddhism by Xuanzang. With his introduction of new Buddhism into China, Buddhism experiences a drastic change. Compared to the previous translations, his translations are called the newer-translated works. He mostly translated the Yogācāra Buddhist texts. His most eminent disciple Kuiji 窺基 (632-682) established the Faxiang (Yogācāra) School in China. While the Faxiang School, based upon the newly translated Yogācaric texts, began to prosper, the previous traditional Schools, i.e., the Nirvāṇa School, the Dilun School and the Shelun School declined.

While the traditional schools, especially the Nirvāṇa School, contend that all beings, including *icchāntikas*, can obtain Buddhahood and one vehicle is the ultimate teaching, the Faxiang School asserts that the lowest beings, i.e., *icchāntikas*, in five categorical beings, cannot accomplish Buddhahood and even the teaching of one vehicle is skillful means. And while the traditional schools, especially the southern
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faction of the Dilun School, contend that the storehouse consciousness is real and identical with suchness (Skt. tathatā) and Buddha nature is inborn, the Faxiang School claims that the storehouse consciousness is not real and is not identical with suchness and Buddha nature is acquired upon the attainment of Buddhahood.

Based upon the traditional understanding of Buddhist soteriology, Fazang attacked the newer Yogācāra Buddhism, introduced by Xuanzang and established by his disciple Kuiji into the Faxiang School. Under Fazang’s severe attacks on Kuiji’s Faxiang School, the influence of the Faxiang School began to weaken. Fazang finally recovered the traditional soteriological assertion that all beings, including icchāntikas, can obtain Buddhahood and they have innate Buddha nature.

Almost all scholars in the academic circle of Buddhist Studies in the early Tang period reacted for or against the new Buddhism. Of them, Fabao 法寶 (627-705) systematically summarized the traditional perspective in the Yicheng foxing jiujing lun 一乘佛性究竟論 and the Niepan jing shu 涅槃經疏 in which he asserted that all beings have the inborn Buddha nature and they can obtain Buddhahood without exception.

The Faxiang scholars Xuanzang, Kuiji and Huizhao 慧沼 (650-714) established sectarian panjiao systems in which they proved the superiority of the Saṃdhinirmocana Sūtra and Yogācāra Buddhism. However, loyally following sectarian panjiao systems of the Dilun lineage, the Huayan panjiao systemizers, Zhiyan 智嚴 (602-668), Uisang 義湘 (625-702) and Fazang established other sectarian panjiao systems in which they argued the superiority of the Huayan Sūtra and the Huayan teaching. The Huayan panjiao scholars reacted against the new Buddhism from the perspective of the traditional Buddhism.

With the introduction of new Yogācāra Buddhism in the Tang Dynasty, the sectarian perspective was strengthened in comparison with previous sectarian panjiao systems. The Huayan scholars Zhiyan, Uisang and Fazang emphasized the Huayan sectarian perspective in their panjiao systems. The Yogācāra scholars Xuanzang, Kuiji and Huizhao emphasize the Yogācāric sectarian perspective in their panjiao systems.

In this academic atmosphere, following the traditional understanding on the existential types and the storehouse consciousness, Wonhyo reacted against the new Buddhism. And loyally following the ecumenical perspective on various Mahāyāna scriptures from the preceding ecumenical panjiao systemizers, Kumārajīva, Sengrui, Bodhiruci, Huiyuan and Jizang, Wonhyo opposed Xuanzang’s sectarian panjiao systems.

When new Buddhists and anti-new Buddhists were engaged in debate over controversial issues, Wonhyo was also expected to react to them. He followed the stance of the traditional masters, including Huiyuan, on the storehouse consciousness and the icchāntika’s possibility of obtaining Buddhahood. Because he could not neglect new Buddhism’s impact on contemporary academic circles, he reacted against the exclusion of the icchāntika’s possibility of accomplishing Buddhahood.
Using the term “hwahoe” to harmonize the disputes in the Beophwa jongyo, unlike Fazang’s direct criticism of Faxiang School, he diplomatically criticized Xuanzang’s soteriology in which all beings are definitely determined into five categories and of them, the lowest beings do not have Buddha nature and cannot obtain Buddhahood at all. When Wonhyo introduced the assumed disputes between Xuanzang and Jizang, he criticized new Buddhism based upon Jizang’s ecumenical position.

2. The Yeolban jongyo 涪槃宗要

Wonhyo introduced the panjiao system of five period teachings by the layman Liu Qiu 呂虬 (436-495) in the Yeolban jongyo (Essentials of the Nirvāṇa Sūtra). Liu Qiu devised two panjiao systems, i.e., (1) two teachings and (2) five period teachings. Of them, the two teachings are (1) the sudden teaching and (2) the gradual teaching and the five period teachings are (1) the teaching of humans and heavenly beings, (2) the differentiated teaching of three vehicles, (or the teaching of form), (3) the common teaching of three vehicles, (or the formless teaching), (4) the praising and restraining teaching, and (5) the eternally abiding teaching. Wonhyo changed the title of the fourth period teaching to the teaching of one vehicle even though his explanations on the five period teachings are the same as those of previous scholars. I cannot find an evident explanation in Wonhyo’s works why he changed the title of the fourth teaching.

Wonhyo loyally followed the ecumenical perspective on various scriptures, especially the Mahāyāna scriptures, which was taken by Kumārajīva, Sengrui, Bodhiruci, Huīyuan and Jizang. They saw the Mahāyāna scriptures as having the same value. Wonhyo asserted that the panjiao systemizers considered the Nirvāṇa Sūtra as the ultimate teaching in south China and the panjiao systemizers the Huayan scriptures as the ultimate teaching in north China. Even though Wonhyo did not clearly mention Huīyuan, he loyally adopted the ecumenical perspective from Huīyuan’s Dacheng yi zhang 大乘義章 (Essays on Mahāyāna Meanings) in the Yeolban jongyo as follows: “The Wisdom Sūtra and so on have the tenet of wisdom. The Vimalakīrti-nirdeśa-sūtra and so on have the tenet of liberation (Skt. vimukti). The Lotus Sūtra has the tenet of one vehicle. The Nirvāṇa Sūtra has the tenet of mysterious effect. All of the above scriptures are the ultimate teaching of the final Mahāyāna that produces practical virtues with great understanding.”

Like Huīyuan and Jizang, Wonhyo did not evaluate various Mahāyāna scriptures and he held that the scriptures are basically equal in value. From the ecumenical perspective, he suggested that various Mahāyana scriptures should not be esteemed less than other scriptures because they each have their own unique and invaluable tenet. So, Wonhyo criticized the previous sectarian panjiao systems, such as the panjiao systems of two teachings and the five period teachings in the Southern Dynasties and the panjiao system of four tenets, i.e., (1) the tenet of causes and conditions, (2) the tenet of provisional names, (3) the tenet of non-truth and (4) the tenet of truth, in the Northern Dynasties, both of which basically establish their panjiao systems to prove the superiority of their own scriptures based upon their own sectarian perspectives. While the panjiao systemizers of south China considered the Nirvāṇa Sūtra to be the final and ultimate scripture, superior to any other scriptures, the panjiao systemizers of north China asserted that the Daśabhūmika Sūtra and/or the
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Huayan Sūtra are the final and ultimate scripture(s) and are superior to any other scriptures.

Loyally following Huiyuan’s criticism of Liu Qiu’s five period teachings in the Dacheng yì zhang, Wonhyo discussed contradictions between the diachronic arrangement of various scriptures and the deepening process of content in the Yeolban jongyo. Wonhyo criticized Liu Qiu’s panjiao system of five period teachings in four aspects. (1) He criticized the assertion that the Buddha delivers the Wisdom Sūtra in the middle of thirty years after the Buddha’s enlightenment. (2) He criticized the argument that the Buddha delivers the Wisdom Sūtra to the lower cultivated practitioners. (3) He criticized the thought that the Buddha does not explain Buddha nature in the Wisdom Sūtra. (4) He criticized the assumption that the Lotus Sūtra is an incomplete teaching because it does not reveal the Buddha’s eternal life span and true pure land. Wonhyo’s criticism of Liu Qiu’s five period teachings in the Yeolban jongyo is basically from Huiyuan’s Dacheng yì zhang. Based upon Huiyuan’s ecumenical perspective on the Mahāyāna scriptures, Wonhyo considered all Mahāyāna scriptures to be equal in value.

He criticized the sectarian views on various Mahāyāna scriptures. While Liu Qiu’s systems of two teachings, five period teachings and seven stage teachings represent the sectarian view in the Southern Dynasties, Huiguang’s 慧光 (468-537) system of four tenets represents the sectarian view in the Northern Dynasties. The panjiao systems were basically devised to prove the superiority of the Nirvāṇa Sūtra over any other scriptures in south China and the panjiao systems were originally made to prove the superiority of the Daśabhūmika Sūtra over other scriptures in north China. Adopting the ecumenical lineage of Huiyuan and Jizang of the Sui Dynasty, Wonhyo criticized the sectarian panjiao systemizers in the Southern and Northern Dynasties in the Yeolban jongyo as follows:

Q: Which one is right or wrong between (the panjiao theorists) in the Southern Dynasties and (those) in the Northern Dynasties?
A: If someone holds only the panjiao system of one side, he will lose both of the panjiao systems. If he comprehends (the panjiao systems) without partially giving his own interpretation, both of the panjiao systems will be secured. Why? The Buddha delivers all teachings, including the wisdom teaching, which are extensively profound and cannot be limited to one interpretation.

Also, for example, Zhiyi of Mt. Tiantai 天台山 asked a divine person, “The panjiao system of four tenets is established in north China. Does the panjiao system correspond to the intention (included in) the scriptures?”

The divine person answered, “The panjiao system has many mistakes and a few good things.”

Q: A master in the Chengshi lun 成實論 (Skt. Satyasiddhi Śāstra) established (the panjiao system of) five period teachings. Does the panjiao system correspond to the Buddha’s intention?
A: The panjiao system of four tenets has a few advantages and many disadvantages.

However, even though Zhiyi of Mt. Tiantai had both meditation and wisdom and was regarded as (a master) of great importance in the world, (he asked the above question). It is very difficult (for us, the common persons) to discriminate the common
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(wisdom) and the sage (wisdom). Therefore, you should know that the Buddha’s intention is profound, distant and unlimited. If you want to know the intention in the scriptures with four tenets and five periods, you will be limited in (understanding) the Buddha’s intention.

Wonhyo criticized two different trends of the panjiao systems in south and north China. One interesting thing in the above citation is that Wonhyo located Zhiyi as a questioner to a divine being to prove his criticism of the previous panjiao systems. Unfortunately, I cannot clearly determine his attitude towards Zhiyi’s panjiao systems in the above quotation or in his other works. Aside from the Yeolban jongyo, there is no direct mention of Zhiyi in Wonhyo’s works. Even though Wonhyo basically followed Jizang’s ecumenical perspective, he quoted some passages from Zhiyi’s Tiantai xiao zhi guan 天台小止觀 in his Commentary on the Awakening of Faith in the Mahāyāna 起信論疏 (Kr. Gisinnon so). When Wonhyo wrote the Geumgang sammae gyeongnon 金刚昧經論, he discussed the zhiguan (śamatha and vipaśyanā) based upon the Lotus Sūtra. Even though no passages are found from Zhiyi’s works in the Geumgang sammae gyeongnon, it is reasonable that Wonhyo had some influence from Zhiyi.

When I investigate Zhiyi’s criticism of various previous panjiao systems in his Fahua xuanyi 法華玄義, I can easily see that Zhiyi loyally followed Huiyuan’s criticism of five period teachings included in the Dacheng yi zhang. For example, where Huiyuan claimed that the Buddha’s preaching order does not guarantee the content, Zhiyi also concluded that the Buddha’s preaching sequence does not decide the teaching’s content.

It is probable that Wonhyo mentioned Zhiyi to back up his criticism of previous panjiao scholars. Even though Zhiyi is very flexible in applying the Buddha’s diachronic preaching order and synchronic content in various scriptures, he basically had the Lotus sectarian perspective in his panjiao system to prove the Lotus Sūtra’s superiority over other scriptures. Even though as a loyal successor to Huiyuan and Jizang’s ecumenical panjiao systems, Wonhyo might disagree with Zhiyi’s sectarian panjiao systems, I cannot find any obvious evidence of such criticism in his works.

3. The Daehyedo gyeong jongyo 大慧度經宗要

In the Daehyedo gyeong jongyo (Essentials of the Wisdom Sūtra), Wonhyo comprehensively criticized the Chengshi School’s panjiao systems of two teachings and five period teachings in the Southern Dynasties and the Yogācāra School’s panjiao system of three dharmic wheels in the pre-Tang and Tang Dynasties. The Chengshi School’s panjiao system of five period teachings is shown in Jizang’s Weimo jing yishu 維摩經義疏. The panjiao system is exactly the same as those of Huiguan, Liu Qiu, Sengrou 僧柔 (431-494), Huici 慧次 (434-490), Zhizang 智藏 (458-522), Sengmin 僧旻 (467-527), Fayun 法雲 (476-529) and many other panjiao systemizers in the Southern Dynasties. The panjiao system is basically sectarian
because it is devised to prove the superiority of the Nirvāṇa Sūtra over various scriptures.

The Yogācāra masters, including Paramārtha (499-569) and Xuanzang (602-664), devised the sectarian panjiao system of three dharmic wheels based upon the Saṃdhinirmocana Sūtra. The first dharmic wheel is the teaching of the four holy truths. The second dharmic wheel is the formless teaching in the wisdom teaching. The third dharmic wheel is the teaching of existential characteristics in the Saṃdhinirmocana Sūtra. The first and second teachings are incomplete teachings and the third teaching the complete teaching. Because the Yogācāra masters devised three dharmic wheels to prove its authoritative scripture, the Saṃdhinirmocana Sūtra and its Yogācāra teaching's superiority over other scriptures and teachings, the Yogācāra School's panjiao system was also devised based upon a strong sectarian perspective.

Discussing the essentials of the Wisdom Sūtra, which is classified as the second period teaching of five period teachings and as the second dharmic wheel of three dharmic wheels, Wonhyo criticized two panjiao camps from the ecumenical perspective in seven aspects. When Wonhyo criticized the two major panjiao systems in the Southern and Northern Dynasties in the Yeolban jongyo, he resorted heavily to Huiyuan's criticism of Liu Qiu's panjiao systems in the Dacheng yi zhang. Here, in the Daehyedo gyeong jongyo, when he criticized the Chengshi School's panjiao systems and the Yogācāra School's panjiao system, even though he did not explicitly mention Jizang, Wonhyo loyalty followed Jizang's criticism of evaluative sectarian views on several Mahāyāna scriptures, i.e., the Wisdom Sūtra, the Lotus Sūtra, the Vimalakīrti-nirdesā-sūtra, the Nirvāṇa Sūtra and Huayan Sūtra in the Fahua xuanlun法華玄論 in which Jizang argued that the above Mahāyāna scriptures are equal in value.

(1) Wonhyo criticized the Chengshi School's panjiao system in which the Lotus Sūtra is superior to the Wisdom Sūtra in value. With scriptural evidence from the 83rd chapter "Complete Determination of Non-retreat" in the Wisdom Sāstra, he proved that the two scriptures are equal in value.

(2) Wonhyo criticized the Chengshi School's panjiao system in which the Buddha delivers the Wisdom Sūtra after the Lotus Sūtra. With scriptural evidence from the Renwang banruo jing, he contended that because there are so many different kinds of scriptures in the wisdom teaching, some scripture is delivered earlier than the Lotus Sūtra and some scripture later than the scripture.

(3) Wonhyo criticized the Yogācāra School's panjiao system in which the Wisdom Sūtra is an incomplete teaching and the Saṃdhinirmocana Sūtra a complete teaching. With scriptural evidence from the Greater Wisdom Sūtra, he asserted that both scriptures are complete teachings.

(4) Wonhyo contended that, just as the Saṃdhinirmocana Sūtra explains that three vehicles share one mysteriously pure path, the Greater Wisdom Sūtra teaches that three vehicles should learn the perfection of wisdom in order to obtain enlightenment.

(5) By fully citing a passage from the 87th chapter "The Change" in the Greater Wisdom Sūtra, which says, "The thing with origination and disappearance is changeable. The thing without origination and disappearance, non-changeable, does not criticize the existential characteristics and is nirvāṇa, Wonhyo asserted that
nirvāṇa and Buddha nature are emptiness. He equated the Wisdom Sūtra with the Nirvāṇa Sūtra.

(6) Citing the Greater Wisdom Sūtra in which nirvāṇa is not substantial, Wonhyo contended that like the Nirvāṇa Sūtra, the Wisdom Sūtra also reveals the selfless doctrine.

(7) Wonhyo insisted that, like the Huayan Sūtra, the Wisdom Sūtra is the final and ultimate teaching.

With the above seven aspects, in his Essentials of the Wisdom Sūtra, Wonhyo criticized the Chengshi School’s classification of the Wisdom Sūtra into the second period teaching and the Yogācāra’s assignment of the scripture into the second dharmic wheel. If his seven criticisms are summarized, he equated the Wisdom Sūtra with the Lotus Sūtra, the Samādhi-mārga Sūtra, the Nirvāṇa Sūtra and the Huayan Sūtra. His ecumenical perspective on the Mahāyāna scriptures comes mostly from Jizang’s discussions on the equal value of the Mahāyāna scriptures in the Fahua xuanlun. While Jizang did not discuss the Samādhi-mārga Sūtra in the Fahua xuanlun, Wonhyo discussed the scripture in his criticism of the Yogācāra School’s panjiao system in length in the Daehyedo gyeong so. Based upon Jizang’s ecumenical views on the Mahāyāna scriptures, Wonhyo included the Yogācāra authoritative scripture Samādhi-mārga Sūtra in his ecumenical panjiao system. Of the above seven aspects, even though Wonhyo heavily resorts to Jizang, I can prove that Wonhyo got an influence from Huiyuan only with regard to the third aspect. Because Jizang is a loyal follower of Huiyuan’s ecumenical views on the Mahāyāna scriptures, Wonhyo loyalty followed two major ecumenicist predecessors Huiyuan and Jizang regarding the Mahāyāna scriptures.

4. The Beophwa jongyo

Wonhyo introduced Jizang’s panjiao system and the Yogācāra School’s panjiao system in the Beophwa jongyo (Essentials of the Lotus Sūtra). Jizang had an ecumenical perspective on the various Mahāyāna scriptures. Jizang classified the Lotus Sūtra as a complete teaching in his panjiao system of three dharmic wheels, i.e., (1) the fundamental dharmic wheel, (2) the derivative dharmic wheel and (3) the dharmic wheel that subsumes the derivative into the fundamental wheel. Wonhyo concluded that (1) the Huayan Sūtra of the fundamental dharmic wheel and (3) the Lotus Sūtra of the dharmic wheel that subsumes the derivative dharmic wheel to the fundamental dharmic wheel are complete teachings in Jizang’s panjiao system because the two scriptures teach that all sentient beings, including even icchāntikas, can obtain Buddhahood.

It is related in the Beophwa jongyo that Jizang cited three instances of scriptural evidence and three instances of treatise evidence in order to prove his argument. Of six, two citations are from the Lotus Sūtra. Even though the first citation arguing that the Lotus Sūtra is the supreme teaching is not found in Jizang’s works, the second citation on the Buddha vehicle is widely cited in his works. A citation establishing that the incomplete teaching is based upon skillful means is from the Śrīmālādevī-sīnha-nāda-sūtra. A citation is seen in Jizang’s Commentary on the Śrīmālādevī-sīnha-nāda-sūtra. A citation on the possibility for even the lower level śrāvakas to obtain Buddhahood in the future is from the Fahua lun. It is also seen in Jizang’s works. A citation on the arahan’s accomplishment of Buddhahood is
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from the *Wisdom Śāstra*⁶¹. Even though the citation is not seen in Jizang’s work, it is seen in Zhiyi’s *Fahua wenju* 法華文句⁶². A citation on the icchantika’s possibility to accomplish Buddhahood is from the *Baoxing lun* 寶性論 (Skt. *Ratnagotravibhūga Mahāyānottaratantra-śāstra*)⁶³. It is not seen in Jizang’s works. Wonhyo’s discussion on the icchantika’s possibility of obtaining Buddhahood influenced Fazang⁶⁴.

He also discussed Xuanzang’s *panjiao* system in the *Beophwa jongyo*⁶⁵. Xuanzang identified the *Lotus Sūtra* with the incomplete teaching of the second *dharmic* wheel in his three *dharmic* wheels from the sectarian perspective. He made the *panjiao* system to prove the superiority of his sectarian authoritative scripture *Samdhinirmocana Sūtra* over any other scriptures.

Wonhyo cited one instance of scriptural evidence and one source of treatise evidence in his discussion of the Yogācāra School’s three *dharmic* wheels, i.e., (1) the teaching of four holy truths, (2) the formless teaching and (3) the teaching of existential characteristics. The one piece of scriptural evidence is from the *Samdhinirmocana Sūtra*⁶⁶ in which the lowest being, i.e., icchantika, cannot obtain Buddhahood. The evidence from a treatise is from the *Duifa lun* 對法論 (Skt. *Abhidharma-samājīnaka-śāstra*)⁶⁷ in which the great śrāvaka can obtain Buddhahood. Xuanzang placed the *Lotus Sūtra*, along with the *Wisdom Sūtra*, into the second *dharmic* wheel of the incomplete teaching.

As a loyal successor to Jizang’s ecumenical views on the Mahāyāna scriptures, he diplomatically defended Jizang’s classification of the *Lotus Sūtra* into the complete teaching against Xuanzang’s assignment of the scripture into the incomplete teaching.

When Wonhyo criticized the sectarian *panjiao* systemizer Xuanzang, he attacked him diplomatically with the word “harmonization” 和會 (Kr. hwahoe)⁶⁸ in the *Beophwa jongyo*. Because he did not directly attack Xuanzang’s sectarian perspective, I think that he is a very diplomatic contender. In all of his works, his main and central mission is to attack the sectarian perspectives. His ecumenicism is very well summarized in his *Sipmun hwajaeng non* 十門和諍論 (Treatise on the Harmonization of All Disputes in Ten Aspects)⁶⁹.

Wonhyo did not clearly mention the devisor(s) of the Yogācāra’s *panjiao* system of three *dharmic* wheels, Paramārtha (499-569) and Xuanzang (602-664). He addressed Xuanzang’s *panjiao* system rather than Paramārtha because Xuanzang’s influence was very strong in Buddhist academic circles when he was active. Loally following Huiyuan and Jizang’s ecumenical perspective on the various Mahāyāna scriptures, Wonhyo reacted against Xuanzang’s Yogācāric sectarian *panjiao* system.

In the *Beophwa jongyo*, Wonhyo discussed Jizang’s assertion that all sentient beings can obtain Buddhahood and Xuanzang’s assertion that all sentient beings, excluding sentient beings without Buddha nature, i.e., icchantikas, can obtain Buddhahood⁷⁰. From the ecumenical perspective on soteriology, Wonhyo basically followed Huiyuan and Jizang in asserting that all sentient beings can obtain Buddhahood.

Nevertheless, he could not neglect the *Samdhinirmocana Sūtra* and *Abhidharma- samājīnaka-śāstra*’s discussions that the icchantika, also known as the sentient being without the Buddha nature, cannot accomplish Buddhahood. He tried to resolve contradictory comments found in the six instances of scriptural and treatise
evidence, which back up Jizang's argument, and the two instances of scriptural and treatise evidence, which support Xuanzang's argument.

While Wonhyo assigned Xuanzang's argument that the sentient being without the Buddha nature cannot obtain Buddhahood to the provisional teaching, he classified Jizang's assertion that all sentient beings can accomplish Buddhahood as the ultimate teaching. He very diplomatically resolved the contradictions. Without directly criticizing Xuanzang's sectarian perspective on the Buddhist soteriology, he located Xuanzang's position into a provisional status.

5. Conclusions

In dealing with East Asian Buddhism, Japanese and Western scholars are easily exposed to Japanese Buddhist sectarianism and western Christian sectarianism. However, from the introduction of Buddhism to the period of Wonhyo, there are no institutionalized sects that resemble Western religious sects or Japanese Buddhist sects. For example, the scholars of the Chinese Huayan sect, actually established by Fazang, do not have strong sectarianism, compared to Japanese Buddhist sectarianism and western Christian sectarianism. The "Huayan sect" refers simply to the group of scholars who are interested in Huayan Buddhism. Therefore, a scholar who is categorized under the rubric of the Huayan sect can also be included in another sectarian category. So, when the term "Huayan sect" is used, it means those who hold Huayan Buddhism as a central tenet.

The connotation of the term "sect" in Chinese Buddhism is totally different from its usage in western Christianity and Japanese Buddhism. It is impossible to clearly delimit boundaries among the sects, which are not exclusive. Since the classification of sects is not based upon differences of doctrine and practice, the notion of a "sect" is essentially nominal. For instance, if a monk is living in a monastery founded by a master in the Huayan School, he is automatically classified to a monk of the Huayan School, regardless of his mastery or familiarity in some other doctrine or practice. In this context, the sect has a genealogical meaning in Chinese monasticism.

Chinese Buddhists generally categorize the sects into three categories. First is the category of doctrinal sects, represented by the Tiantai Sect, the Huayan Sect and the Faxiang Sect. Second is the category of practical sects, represented by the Chan Sect and Pure Land Sect. Third is the Vinaya Sect. Since all monks take precepts in the ordination ceremony, they should always keep them. Historically, we assume that Chinese monks live without having strong rivalry and exclusiveness toward other sects. As a hypothesis, we might suggest that it is the third vinaya (rules) that creates a non-sectarian environment. They do not completely exclude other doctrinal and practical sects. Rather than kicking out other sects, they synthesize various sects or tenets in their own doctrinal and practical systems.

Based upon their own sectarian and/or academic background, each modern panjiao scholar is mainly interested in one of sectarian panjiao systems, represented by the Tiantai, Huayan and Faxiang panjiao systems. However, I argue that the panjiao systems can be categorized into two groups, i.e., the ecumenical systems and the sectarian systems. I assume that the panjiao systems can be discussed in terms of interactive relationships between the sectarian and ecumenical panjiao systems.

Wonhyo, loyally succeeding the ecumenical panjiao lineage directly from Huiyuan and Jizang, reacted against early sectarian panjiao systems of the Southern
and Northern Dynasties and the new Yogācāra sectarian panjiao systems that Xuanzang newly introduced and Kuiji systemized. However, his contemporary Huayan scholars also reacted against the new Buddhism’s sectarian panjiao systems based upon their own Huayan sectarianism.

While Wonhyo fiercely criticized Yogācāra sectarian panjiao systems, we cannot find out his definite criticism of Huayan sectarian panjiao systems. I assert that even though Wonhyo’s ecumenical panjiao systems are basically different with Huayan sectarian panjiao systems, Wonhyo and the Huayan scholars collaborated against the common opponent Yogācāra Buddhism. Nevertheless, I argue that because he critically discussed the Dilun sectarian panjiao systems of the Southern and Northern Dynasties, considered the prototypical type of Huayan Buddhism, he indirectly criticized his contemporary Huayan sectarian panjiao systems.

Notes

6. See the Huayan jing tanxuan jì 華嚴經纂玄記, T.35.1733.111a26-b1.
7. See the Xin Huayan jin lun 新華嚴經論, T.36.1739.734c22-25.
8. See the Huayan jing kading jì 華嚴經開定記, Z.5.18a3-9.
9. See the Huayan jing shu 華嚴經疏, T.35.1735.510a20-29.
10. The Dilun (Skt. Daśabhūmīka-sūtra-sūtra) by Vasubandhu (c. the 4th to 5th century) is a commentary on the Daśabhūmīka-sūtra, which is included in a chapter of the Huayan Sūtra, likely composed in Central Asia. It was translated into Chinese in the Northern Wei Dynast (386-535). The Dilun School was begun based upon this text. The Dilun specialists valued the Daśabhūmīka-sūtra and/or the Huayan Sūtra above any other scriptures.
Fazang assigned Xuanzang's Faxiang teaching into the third elementary teaching all over his early representative Huayan wuJiao zhang, T.45.1866.481a7-13. Of them, the most important topics are the first topic on gotra (soteriology), T.45.1866.484c9-485b26, and the second topic on epistemology (i.e., citta and vijñāna), T.45.1866.485b27-488a23.

See the Yeoban jongyo 涅槃宗要, T.38.1769.255a16-28; and the Daehyedo gyeong jongyo 大慧度経宗要, T.33.1697.73a21-25.

See Jizang's Sanlun xuanyi 三論玄義, T.45.1852.5b-14 and Zhiyi's 智顗 (538-596) Fahua xuanyi 法華玄義, T.33.1716.801b-8.

Fayun is an advocate of the doctrinal classifications of three teachings and five periods as are Huiguan and Liuqiu. But he also devised another doctrinal classification of four vehicles, i.e., one vehicle and three vehicles. Here, the three vehicles are the bodhisattva vehicle, the śrāvaka (disciple) vehicle and the pratyekabuddha vehicle. See Fazang's Huayan wuiJiao zhang 華嚴五教章, T.45.1866.481a7-13.

Jizang asserted that the Wisdom Sutra and the Lotus Sutra are equal in value more in detail than did Wonhyo in the Fahua xuanlun, T.34.1720.385c21-386a14.
Ten aspects are as follows: (1) Harmonization of the disputes between existence and non-existence, (2)
harmonization of the disputes on whether the Buddha nature is existent or non-existent, (3)
harmonization of the disputes on self and phenomena, (4) harmonization of the disputes on the nirvāṇa,
(5) harmonization of the disputes on the buddhakāya (body of the truth), (6) harmonization of the disputes
on the Buddha nature, (7) harmonization of the disputes on three natures, (8) the harmonization of the
disputes on two hindrances, (9) harmonization of the disputes on the transcendental truth and the secular
truth, and (10) the harmonization of the dispute between three vehicles and one vehicle.

Citing the same passage from the 87th chapter of the Greater Wisdom Sūtra in his Yeolban jongyo,
T.38.1769.242b14-25, Wonhyo concluded that nirvāṇa and Buddha nature are emptiness,
T.38.1769.242b25-c2. The similar argumentation is applied to equate the Wisdom Sūtra with the Lotus
Sūtra in Jizang’s Fahua xuanlun, T.34.1720.386a8-14 in which Jizang insisted that the Lotus Sūtra is
synonymous with the Wisdom Sūtra. Here, Wonhyo applied Jizang’s argumentative method to equate the
Nirvāṇa Sūtra with the Wisdom Sūtra.


T.33.1697.73c22-25. Jizang also equated the Nirvāṇa Sūtra with the Wisdom Sūtra in the Fahua
xuanlun, T.34.1720.386a14-b1.

T.33.1697.73c26-74a1. Jizang also equated the Wisdom Sūtra with the Vimalakīrti-nirdeśa-sūtra and the
Huayan Sūtra in the Fahua xuanlun, T.34.1720.386b1-387a26 in which he considered all the three
scriptures to be final and ultimate teachings.

Including the same citation from the Greater Wisdom Sūtra, which is also included in Wonhyo’s
Daehyedo gyeong so, T.33.1697.73c12-21, Huiyuan comprehensively discussed in the Guan wuliang
shou jing shu 観無量壽經疏, T.37.1753.250c1-251a6 that three vehicles cannot understand the non-changeability
of the nirvāṇa.

T.34.1725.874c21-875b2.

T.34.1725.874b24-c14.

T.34.1725.875b2.

T.34.1725.875a10-13 and T.34.1725.875a14. Those two are citations from the Lotus Sūtra,
T.9.262.39a13-17 and T.9.262.27b1-2 respectively.

The citation is seen in Jizang’s works, i.e., the Dacheng xuan lun 大乘玄論, T.45.1853.44b7ff; the
Guan wuliang shou jing shu 観無量壽經疏, T.37.1753.236c4-5; the Fahua xuanlun, T.34.1720.410a1-2; the
Fahua yishu 法華義疏, T.34.1721.496c17-18, 568c3-4, 577a8; and the Fahua youyi 法華遊意,
T.34.1722.639c19-20, 644b16-17.

It is also seen in the same work by Wonhyo, T.34.1720.386b25-27. It is cited from
the Fahua lun, T.9.1519.9a18-20, 18b12-14.

The citation is seen in Jizang’s works, i.e., the Dacheng xuan lun 大乘玄論, T.45.1853.44b7ff; the
Guan wuliang shou jing shu 観無量壽經疏, T.37.1753.250c1-251a6 that three vehicles cannot understand the non-changeability
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See Jizang’s Shengman baoku 僧鬘寶窟, T.37.1744.47a2ff.

T.34.1725.875a18-19. It is also seen in the same work by Wonhyo, T.34.1725.871b25-27. It is cited from
the Fahua lun, T.9.1519.9a18-20, 18b12-14.

The citation is seen in Jizang’s Fahua yishu, T.34.1721.566a15ff; and Fahua lunshu 法華論疏,
T.40.1818.818c28-819a1.


T.34.1718.5a43-7.


By citing the same passage from the Baoxing lun, Fazang proved that even the icchāntika can
accomplish Buddhahood in the Huayan Wujiao zhang 華嚴五教章, T.45.1866.486c9-14 and the Fajie
wuchabie lun shu 法界五比列疏, T.44.1838.68c24-28.

T.34.1725.874b24-c14.

T.34.1725.874c8-11. It is a citation from the Saṃdhinirmocana Sūtra, T.16.676.695a22-26. And the
same passage is included in the Yogācārabhūmi Śāstra, T.30.1579.720c23-27. Citing the same passage,
Fazang discussed the icchāntika’s potential to accomplish Buddhahood in the Huayan tanxuanji
華嚴經探玄記, T.35.1733.113a27-c1. and the Duijīa lun, T.31.1606.752b3-10.

T.34.1725.875b3.

Ten aspects are as follows: (1) Harmonization of the disputes between existence and non-existence, (2)
harmonization of the disputes on whether the Buddha nature is existent or non-existent, (3)
harmonization of the disputes on self and phenomena, (4) harmonization of the disputes on the nirvāṇa,
(5) harmonization of the disputes on the buddhakāya (body of the truth), (6) harmonization of the disputes
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disputes on two hindrances, (9) harmonization of the disputes on the transcendental truth and the secular
truth, and (10) the harmonization of the dispute between three vehicles and one vehicle.

T.34.1725.875b3-c17.

See Yoshizu Yoshhide, Kegon-zen no shisōshi-teki kenkyū 華厳禅の思想史的硏究 (Tokyo: Daitō
shuppan-sha, 1985), 16-17.

See Holmes Welch, “Chapter 10. Sects and Dissension,” in The Buddhist Revival in China (Cambridge:
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