
The Essence-Function Formula as a Hermeneutic Device: Korean and Chinese Commentaries on *Awakening Mahāyāna Faith*

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Abstract

Today, many Eastern and Western scholars who study the *Treatise on Awakening Mahāyāna Faith*¹ (hereafter AMF), use a commentary entitled the Ta-ch'eng ch'i-hsin lun i-chi (Taish*. Vol. 44, No. 1846, 240-287.) (hereafter I-chi), written by Fa-tsang (643-712), the third patriarch of the Hua-yen school in China. Ch'eng-kuan (d. 839), the successor of Fa-tsang, however, said the AMF should be studied with the guidance of the Haedongso,² or the Korean Commentary, a commentary on the AMF written by Wōnhyo (617-686), since it is far superior to all other commentaries.³ Nevertheless, the study of the Korean Commentary has been neglected for a long time while the I-chi has enjoyed popularity. No serious comparative study of the two commentaries has yet been done except for a few general comments.

In 1918, a Japanese Buddhistologist, Imazu Kōgaku, published a combined edition of the commentaries on the AMF by the Three Great Masters(Hui-

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¹ *Treatise on Awakening Mahāyāna Faith* is how we have chosen to translate the title of the Ta-ch'eng ch'i-hsin lun(Taish*. Vol. 32, No. 1666, pp. 575-583). This is in contrast to all previously published translations of this text, i.e., D. T. Suzuki's, Timothy Richard's, Wai-tao's, and Yoshito Hakeda's. See my discussion of understanding the title later in section III of this paper.

² The full title of Wōnhyo's Haedongso is Taesūng Kishillonso, which is included in the Taish*. Vol. 44, No. 1844, 202a-226a.

³ For further information, see Kakugen's preface to the publication of the Korean commentary of the AMF (Taish*. Vol. 50, No. 2061, p. 737a, lines 12-13).

yüan[523-592], Wōnhyo, and Fa-tsang), together with two translations by ParamArtha (499-569) and ŚikshAnanda (d. 710).

This text is very convenient for purposes of comparison, yet Imazu did not discuss the meaning of the texts but simply correlated similar passages in his combined edition.⁴ The present paper will discuss several important Buddhological issues that arise in comparing Wōnhyo's commentary to Fa-tsang's, and in passing to those of T'an-yen(516-588) and Hui-yüan, in order to show the uniqueness of Wōnhyo's Haedongso. The discussion will focus on Wōnhyo's method of interpretation and its application to the AMF.

I. Wōnhyo's use of t'i-yung

The most characteristic feature of Wōnhyo's interpretation is his skillful usage of the t'i-yung, or Essence-Function construction. At the beginning of the third section the Haedongso, he interprets the first line of the invocation of the AMF. In his analysis, Wōnhyo divides the Buddha ratna, or Buddha treasure into two aspects: (1) the merit of Buddha's mind; and (2) the merit of Buddha's body. He then further divides each of them into t'i and yung. Wōnhyo analyzes the lines about the merit of Buddha's mind using the t'i-yung formula as follows:

In praising the excellence of 'Buddha's mind' one is praising function (yung) and essence (t'i). The first phrase, "the most excellent act pervading all the ten quarters," praises the function (yung) of Buddha's acts.... The word "omniscient" extols the essence (t'i) of Buddha's wisdom. The reason the operation of [Buddha's] acts pervades the ten quarters is that nowhere does the essence of Buddha's wisdom not penetrate. The essence of wisdom penetrates everywhere. Hence, the word, "omniscient. (Taishō. Vol. 44, 203b, line 22, 203c, line 1.)

In this analysis we see Wōnhyo using the t'i-yung formula for showing the relationship between the acts and the wisdom of the Buddha. In other words, he sees this relationship as that of t'i(here wisdom) and yung (here acts). The main features of Wōnhyo's use of the t'i-yung formula are the following: (1) yung refers to acts which, provisionally speaking, are phenomenal, external, and perceivable; (2) t'i refers to wisdom which,

⁴ Imazu's book entitled *Daij*kishin ron* is included in *Bukkyo daikei*(Tokyo: Bukkyo* daikei kank*kai, 1918). This work is to be used with extreme caution because it has many printing errors.

provisionally speaking, is noumenal, internal, and invisible; (3) although t'i and yung are explained separately, in reality, however, they are inseparable; (4) although the yung aspects of phenomena are easily perceivable by ordinary people, no one is able to see the yung aspects properly unless the t'i aspects are in fact present at the same time. In the case of the Buddha himself, his acts and wisdom are not two. Therefore, there is neither preference on his part nor a temporal priority of t'i or yung, they occur simultaneously. In the case of un-enlightened, ordinary people, however, the yung aspect is greatly in evidence while the t'i aspect is hardly so; therefore, those ordinary people who are seekers should not be overwhelmed by the Buddha's acts but also discern the Buddha's wisdom, otherwise they might bring those acts down to their own lower level where their wisdom is yet hidden. Therefore, the seeker must pay attention to the hidden t'i aspect in as much as a Buddhist practice does not consist simply in imitating the Buddha's acts, but in realizing their essence. As soon as the essence (t'i) of the acts is present, the function (yung) simultaneously appears.

Again, Wōnhyo applies the t'i-yung formula in analyzing the merit of Buddha's body. Wōnhyo says:

There are also two aspects to this. [The word] *muae* (Chinese, *wu-ai*), or "unimpeded," extols the marvelousness of the essence (t'i) of Buddha's body. The word, *chachae* (Chinese, *tzu-tsai*), or "complete freedom," extols the excellence of the function (yung) of Buddha's body. (Ibid., lines 4-11)

When T'an-yen and Hui-yüan interpreted "Buddha *ranta*," they did not use the t'i-yung formula nor carry out their analysis into such detail. T'an-yen takes the phrase, "whose acts are most excellent and omniscient," as referring to the *Dharma-kāya*, or "Dharma-body," and the phrase, "whose body is unimpeded and completely free," as referring to the *Sambhoga-kāya*, or "Reward-body." Hui-yüan, on the other hand, applied the idea of the "marks of good fortune" and the wisdom of the incarnate Buddha for understanding "acts" and "omniscient" in this line.

In contrast to these interpretations of T'an-yen and Hui-yüan, who interpret the virtues of the Buddha *ratna* using aspects of well known Buddhist doctrines, such as the three-body (*trikāya*) theory, Wōnhyo illustrates the inseparability of the two different aspects. As usual, the appropriate section of Fa-tsang's *I-chi* includes almost everything found in the commentaries of T'an-yen, Hui-yüan, and Wōnhyo on the question of Buddha *ratna*. But Fa-tsang does not explicitly implement Wōnhyo's t'i-yung formula; instead he

follows the tendency of T'an-yen and Hui-yüan, to try and introduce technical terms drawn from various Buddhist doctrines.

We may see a discussion similar to Wōnhyo's use of the t'i-yung formula in Chapter Two of the AMF, "On Establishing What Mahāyāna Means." In that chapter of the AMF we read:

In general, there are two ways of explaining the term "Mahāyāna." What are the two? The first is according to its Dharma; the second is according to its significations. The word Dharma means the mind of sentient beings. This mind embraces all worlds. On the basis of this mind the meaning of Mahāyāna is revealed. Why? Because the Suchness aspect of this mind shows the essence of Mahāyāna, [while] the causal and conditional aspect of the arising and ceasing of this mind can show the attributes and function of Mahāyāna's essence itself. (Ibid., Vol. 32, No. 1666, 575c, lines 20-25)

It is debatable whether the concepts "essence," "attributes," and "function" in the AMF are the same as the t'i-yung formula found in the traditional Chinese way of thinking. Two requirements must be met for there to be a proper application of the t'i-yung formula to whatever subject is to be clarified: (1) the subject to be clarified must be self-identical but, (2) the subject to be clarified must appear in two opposite or contradictory aspects, due to which people who fail to see that the two are originally one become attached to that aspect which they see first, inevitably fighting with those who only see the other aspect. Therefore, the t'i-yung formula in Wōnhyo's system is a valuable device for the harmonization of all disputes.

However, one critical question must be raised about the use of the t'i-yung formula, namely, how can we determine that the two aspects of the subject to be clarified are originally not two but one? Is it possible for us to know the one original nature of the two by applying the t'i-yung formula? In the case of the AMF, how did the author of the text determine in the first place that the mind of sentient beings has two aspects, i.e., chen-ju, or the Suchness aspect, and sheng-meih, or the causal and condition of arising and ceasing? Was it by applying the t'i-yung formula, or by some other means? I think that it was by some other means, namely, by practice. This tendency is apparent in Chapter Three of the AMF, where it discusses the inseparability of chen-ju, and sheng-mieh, terms that parallel t'i and yung in their function. The audience of Chapter Three is in the stage of *niyata* or people who have already achieved faith. However, people in the stage of *anīyata* have not fully achieved faith and so have doubts about the

inseparability of t'i and yung. For them, the AMF recommends the practice of charity, repentance, meditation, and the repeated invocation of the name of Amit2bha Buddha. These practices point to an experiential basis for understanding the rest of the text for achieving the deepest level of faith. This indicates that the t'i- yung formula is not a logical formula which may be applied to gain insight, although it might help as a finger points to the moon, but rather a device used to express insight gained by other means, namely by practice.

For Western science, logic is open to everyone without discrimination. It is open to the enlightened and the un-enlightened. For Wōnhyo however, the t'i-yung formula was a device used by enlightened people for the guidance of un-enlightened people still confused by the phenomenal appearance of One-Mind. It is possible that this might have some value for current reflection on the 'logic' of those fields in which the response affects the reality of the matter under discussion.

Although the three greatneses, i.e., t'i (essence), hsiang (attributes), and yung (function) named in the AMF are not identical to Wōnhyo's t'i-yung, Wōnhyo deals with t'i, hsiang, and yung as philosophical devices by which the inseparability of the Suchness aspect and the arising and ceasing aspect of One-mind is proven. For a person like Wōnhyo, who holds this position, it must be a problem requiring solution when the text says that the Suchness aspect of One- Mind has t'i and that the arising and ceasing aspect has hsiang and yung. Wōnhyo takes up this problem and discusses it several times in his commentaries. It is very interesting to notice Wōnhyo's sensitivity to such a problem in the original text. To ordinary eyes it may seem natural that the Suchness aspect corresponds to the t'i (essence) aspect and that the arising and ceasing aspect corresponds to hsiang (attributes) and yung (function) aspects. Even scholastic commentators like T'an-yen and Hui-yūan do not raise this question explicitly as Wōnhyo does. Fa-tsang does raise the question but his explanation is very similar to Wōnhyo's, almost identical. In another commentary on the AMF by Wōnhyo we read:

Question: If each of these two aspects [Suchness plus arising and ceasing aspects] embraces both principal and phenomena, why then in the aspect of Suchness is only the essence of Mahāyāna shown, while in the aspect of arising and ceasing all three- the essence, attributes, and function [of Mahāyāna] - are shown?

Answer: the meanings of "embracing" and "showing" are different. Why? The aspect of Suchness functions to obliterate the attributes so as to manifest the principle. But the obliterated attributes are not eliminated;

therefore, the aspect of Suchness is able to embrace the attributes. Nevertheless, the obliterated attributes are present; and therefore, the attributes of Mahāyāna are not shown in the aspect of Suchness. On the other hand, the aspect of the arising and ceasing functions to grasp the principal so as to perfect phenomena. But since grasping the principle does not destroy the principle, the aspect of arising and ceasing is able to embrace the principle. However, grasping the principle does not obliterate the principle; therefore, the aspect of arising and ceasing also shows the essence of Mahāyāna.

Because I base my answer on this understanding of the meaning of "embracing" and "showing," I provisionally said that the meanings of "embracing" and "showing" are not the same. But speaking from a more penetrating understanding of the meaning of "embracing" and "showing" the meanings of the two are the same. Therefore, even in the aspect of Suchness the attributes of phenomena must be shown. Simply because the author of this treatise was brief, he did not explain this further. (Ibid., Vol. 44, No. 1845, 227b, line 29, 227c, line 7.)

Here we can see the uniqueness of Wōnhyo's interpretive method. In the *Pyōlgi*, he uses the two aspects of Suchness plus arising and ceasing in the same way that he uses the pair of *t'i-yung* in his commentary on the AMF. His purpose was to eliminate a meaningless separation of the two aspects, for *t'i* cannot stand apart from *yung*, and vice versa. Therefore, we must see *t'i* in *yung* in *t'i*. In this way, Wōnhyo implements a dynamic system of mutual interpretation of the two aspects.⁵

Now that we have discussed Wōnhyo's *t'i-yung* methodology, we can proceed in the next two sections to examine how he explicates *t'i* as the essence of Mahāyāna and *yung* as faith, by applying again the *t'i-yung* construction to analyze its very components

II. *T'i* of the Doctrine

The discussion of the essence of the doctrine begins with a passage from the *Haedongso* in which Wōnhyo strongly emphasizes the limitation of human language in describing the *t'i* of Mahāyāna. Wōnhyo says:

The *t'i* [or essence] of Mahāyāna is generally [described as being] completely empty and very mysterious. [However,] no matter how

⁵ In passing, we may note that contemporary interpretations of Fa-tsang tend to take the Suchness or *t'i* aspect as an absolute which then gives rise to the *yung* aspect. As we have seen, Wōnhyo radically denied such an interpretation. I will leave a detailed discussion of this to a future paper.

mysterious it may be, how could it be anywhere but in the world of the myriad phenomena? No matter how empty it may be, it is still present in the conversation of the people. [Although] it is not anywhere but in phenomena, none of the five eyes can see its form. [Although] it is present in discourse, none of the four unlimited explanatory abilities can describe its shape. One wants to call [it] great, [but it] enters the interiorless and nothing remains. One wants to call [it] infinitesimal, [but it] envelops the exteriorless without exhausting itself. One might say it is something, yet everything is empty because of it. One might say it is nothing, yet myriad things arise through it. I do not know how to describe it; [therefore,] I am compelled to call it "Mahāyāna." (Taish*. Vol. 44, No. 1844, 202a, line 22. 202b, line4.)

The understanding of this passage is crucial for the understanding of the entire system of Wōnhyo's Haedongso, but many scholars have not devoted enough time analyzing its doctrinal meaning. Therefore, let us analyze it in order to uncover its structure.

The following is an outline of Wōnhyo's discussion:

(1) The essence of Mah2y2na

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|---|--|
| t'i (essence) | yung |
| (2) empty | (2) mysterious |
| (3) still present in the conversation of the people | (3) but in the world of the myriad phenomena |
| (4) none of the four unlimited explanatory abilities can describe its shape | (4) none of the five eyes can see its form |
| (5) Great? but it enters the interiorless and nothing remains | (6) Infinitesimal? But it envelops the exteriorless without exhausting itself |
| (7) Being? Yet everything is empty because of it. | (8) Non-being? Yet myriad things arise through it. |

(9) I do not know how to describe it, so that

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|--|
| I am reluctantly compelled to call it "Mahāyāna." |
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Here interiorless task is to discuss the essence of Mahāyāna. [1] First, he introduces the terms, "empty" and "mysterious" which usually function as qualifiers for describing the essence of Mahāyāna. [2] However, he immediately warns us not to imagine that the meaning of "empty" and "mysterious" is beyond the world of ordinary people such as philosophers, from the Three Treatise (San-lun) and Yog2c2ra (fa-hsiang) schools posit. In other words, the essence of Mahāyāna should be sought in ordinary people's conversation and in the phenomenal world. [3] But contrary to the claims of some mystics, Wōnhyo again warns us not to think that the essence of Mahāyāna can be seen by our eyes or described with our tongues even if we have special oral and visual abilities. [4] In lines 5-8, above, Wōnhyo's points out that any philosophical or religious terms such as "great" or "infinitesimal," "being" or "non-being," dialectically include and imply their opposites and thereby suggest the meaning of Mah2y2na. In line 9, Wōnhyo makes clear the fact that the term "Mah2y2na" is only a designation.

Here Wōnhyo's logic is clear and his style is powerful but, ironically, he uses his intellectual and literary abilities to show that while the essence of Mah2y2na is always present, at the same time it cannot be grasped through language or thought. Wōnhyo uses the via negative: he attacks the direction of our understanding. Yet, it is clear that his purpose is to overcome any possible attachment on our part and to free us from intellectual imprisonment. Therefore, Wōnhyo immediately clarifies his understanding of Aśvagosa's purpose in writing the treatise:

Aśvagosa wished to cause scholars who open this small treatise even for a moment to extract completely the message of the tripitaka. Further, he wished to cause practitioners to stop permanently the myriad illusory phenomena and in so doing finally to return to the source if One-Mind(Ibid., lines 6-10.)

Now, let us see if there are unique features that can only be found in Wōnhyo's commentaries by first comparing them to his predecessors. Hui-yūan's commentary⁶, which was written just before Wōnhyo's, does not have a discussion that in any way resembles what we see in Wōnhyo. However, T'

⁶ The commentary on the AMF by Hui-yū an(523-592) entitled Ta-ch' eng ch' I-hsin-luni-su is included in the Taishō . Vol. 44, No. 1843, 175-201.

an-yen's commentary⁷, the oldest extant commentary on AMF, has some lines very similar to Wōnhyo's and so merits consideration here. T'an-yen's commentary begins with a passage in which he discusses the absolute limitation of an ordinary way of thinking and the impossibility in perceiving through the senses Chih-yün, or "total movement," and Hsüan-t'ung, or "mysterious penetration." T'an-yen uses these two terms as dialectical counterparts to each other much in the same way that Wōnhyo uses "completely empty" and "very mysterious."

In T'an-yen "total movement" must imply constant change which can only occur when everything is empty. "Mysterious penetration" refers to the arising of phenomena, to the participation of the essence of Mahāyāna in the world, to use Wōnhyo's terms. Because of this similarity in their views, it is not surprising to find some Japanese scholars such as Ui Hakuju saying that Wōnhyo's commentaries were influenced by T'an-yen's⁸. However, we should not fail to notice several unmistakable differences between the two, especially in how they reason that it is impossible to know "total movement" and "mysterious penetration." So long as we depend upon our senses and ordinary way of thinking, but it is possible to know them by means of the Suchness aspect of Mind. Here, Wōnhyo clearly opposes T'an-yen. According to Wōnhyo, the impossibility exists not only because of the means by which we try to perceive them, but also because of the nature of "total movement" and "mysterious penetration" themselves, which are indescribable and imperceptible (4 above). T'an-yen draws our attention to Chen-ju, or "Suchness," as the goal to be pursued, whereas, Wōnhyo denies an ultimate goal, even Suchness, or any term such as Mahāyāna, Tao, etc., which denotes something outside itself. As a result, T'an-yen's readers are encouraged to pursue the attainment of a goal, whereas, Wōnhyo's readers are asked to re-examine their goal before pursuing it. Therefore, although it is true Wōnhyo discussed the issues that T'an-yen raised, it is apparent that Wōnhyo was not satisfied with T'an-yen's interpretation and developed one of his own.

Wōnhyo is generally very critical of this treatise which is so profound that interpreters hitherto have seldom presented its doctrine completely.

⁷ T'an-yen(516-588) wrote his commentary entitled Ta-ch' eng ch'i-hsin-lun su (Zoku-zōkyō , Part 1, Case 71, Vol.3, 264b-280b) probably between 581-587. See Walter Liebenthal, "the Oldest Commentary of the Mahāyāna sūtra," Bukkyō Bunka kenkō, Nos. 6,7(Kyoto, 1958), 7.

⁸ Ui Hakuju, Daijō kishin ron(Tokyo: Iwanami Bunko, 1936), 139.

Indeed this is because all of them were attached to what they had learned and therefore distorted the meaning of the sentences. Not able to abandon their preconceptions, they still sought the meaning. Therefore, their interpretations do not come close to the author's intent. Some hoped to reach the source but got lost in the streams; some grasped the leaves but forgot the trunk; some cut the collar and patched it to the sleeves; some broke the branches and grafted them to the roots.(Taishō . Vol. 44, 202b, lines 23-27.)

At with T'an-yen, Fa-tsang also dealt with the question of the essence of the doctrine of the AMF. Fa-tsang's concern, however, was different from Wōnhyo's: While Wōnhyo focused on the nature of the essence(t'i) of Mahāyāna, Fa-tsang discussed Chen-hsin, or " True-Mind." How, then, is Fa-tsang's " True-Mind" different from Wōnhyo's " Essence of Mahāyāna? "

At the beginning of section II, we saw that Wōnhyo used the term "Mah2y2na" to define the essence of AMF. He did not, however, discuss Mahāyāna itself, but rather the t'i, or essence of Mah2y2na. In concluding his discussion of that topic, he confesses his inability to describe it; therefore, he is compelled to call it Mah2y2na. Here we can discern some Taoist tendencies in Wōnhyo, for his conclusion is reminiscent of the theory of the nameless in the Lao-tzu Tao-teching.⁹ Actually, in Wōnhyo's earlier commentary, called the Pyōlgi,¹⁰ or " Expository Notes," Wōnhyo did not use the term " Mahāyāna, " but " Tao." Although the term "Mahāyāna" replaces the term " Tao" in the Haedongso, the point at issues is what is the t' i, or essence of Mahāyāna .

Therefore, we can say that Wōnhyo was not concerned with the names "Suchness of Mind," or Dharma, or " Mahāyāna," but rather with the t'i of those names. So far as the t'i of those names is concerned, Wōnhyo criticizes the use of terms with positive connotations, such as Hsin chen-ju and Dharma.

It is true that both "Suchness of Mind" and Dharma are used in the AMF as more specific terms for explaining Mahāyāna. In the AMF the term Dharma is contrasted with artha, or "significance" and "Suchness of Mind" is contrasted with " arising and ceasing of Mind."(Taishō. Vol. 32, No. 1666, 575c, lines 20-24.) However, by Wōnhyo's time, these terms had become too technical with a whole complexity of meaning, developed by previous commentators, who clouded true understanding. Once one uses special terms with particular connotations in specific, limited systems, as T' an-yen and Hui-yūan do, then one must belong to some special school, Wōnhyo

⁹ Especially Chapter 1 of *the Tao Te Ching*, translated by Chang Chung-yuan, *Tao: A New Way of Thinking*(New York: Harper Colphon Books, 1975), 3-6.

¹⁰ The full title is Taesūng kishillon pyōlgi, which os included in *Taisho*. Vol. 44, No.1845, 226a-240c.

apparently was not interested in belonging to some special school, yet as any great thinker, he developed his own way of understanding, which was expressed in the interaction of t'i-yung that pervades all his writing. Therefore, Fa-tsang's use of the term Chen-hsin, or "True-Mind", may be interpreted as his turning from Wōnhyo, his immediate predecessor, to the older writers, T'an-yen and Hui-yüan.

One further difference may be seen in Wōnhyo's and Fa-tsang's evaluation of the AMF. Wōnhyo states:

(1) Only this treatise penetrates the essence of all Mahāyāna texts, (Taishō . Vol. 44, 202b, lines 12-16) (2) when opened, immeasurable and limitless meanings are found in the doctrine of this treatise; when sealed, the principle of two aspects in One-Mind; are completely unified by it in the same way that the lights of various candles can blend and become one light. Therefore, One-Mind opens and seals freely; it establishes and refutes without restriction. Unfolding but not complicating; sealing but not narrowing; establishing but gaining nothing; refuting but losing nothing - this is Aśvaghosa's wonderful skill and the essence of On Awakening Faith. (Ibid., lines 18-23.)

In contrast to Wōnhyo, who emphasizes what the treatise has in common with other texts, Fa-tsang emphasizes the differences. He classified all Buddhist scriptures into four categories: (Ibid., No. 1846, 243b, line 22. 243c, line 6.) (1) Theravāda Buddhist texts, which are characterized as accepting phenomenal differences, attaching to the characteristics of these differences, and upholding the concept of dharmas; (2) Mādhyamika Buddhist texts, like the Prajñāpāramitā sūtras and the Mādhyamika śāstras, which were emphasized by Nāgārjuna and Āryadeva, neither of whom accepted any phenomenal marks. According to Fa-tsang, they hoped to reveal the noumenon by emphasizing "Complete Emptiness;" (3) Yogācāra Buddhist texts, like the Saṃdhirnirmocana-sūtra and the Yogācārabhūmi-śāstra, which were emphasized by Asaṅga and Vasubandhu, both of whom went beyond "Complete Emptiness" and reintroduced phenomenal differences with their doctrine of "Consciousness-Only;" (4) Tathāgata-garbha, or "Embryo of Buddha" texts like the Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra and the Treatise on Awakening Mahāyāna Faith, which were emphasized by Aśvaghosha and Sāramati, both of whom insisted on the complete interpenetration of the universal and the particular. Fa-tsang called this fourth school the Ju-lai-tsang yüan-ch'i tsung, or the Tathāgatagarbha pratītyasamutpāda school." According to Fa-tsang, this school had the unique teaching in which the Tathāgatagarbha appeared as ālaya vijñāna or storehouse

consciousness, because tath2gatagarbha also changes according to conditions. This is, Fa-tsang continued, the aspect of the universal penetrating the particular. Further, the particular penetrates the universal because paratantra, or dependent nature, is also identical to Suchness. Although Fa-tsang uses here all the fancy technical terms popular in seventh century Chinese Buddhism, what he is trying to say is obvious; the AMF has a unique and most profound teaching which cannot be found in previous Buddhist texts.

Fa-tsang tried to explain this uniqueness by inventing the new term ju-lai-tsang yüan-ch'i, which had not been used before, not even by Wōnhyo or Hui-yüan. However, if one carefully examines Fa-tsang's explanation, it is easy to see that the term ju-lai-tsang yüan-ch'i, or "dependent origination of tath2gatagarbha," is another way of explaining his famous theory of Chen-ju sui-yüan pu-pien, or "Suchness functions always without itself changing." Fa-tsang uses the term tath2gatagarbha for the unchanging aspect. He also takes the term tath2gatagarbha as representing the universal aspect, and "dependent origination" as representing the particular aspect. The key point of Fa-tsang's theory of the dependent origination of the tath2gatagarbha is that the universal and the particular interpenetrate each other without interference. Therefore, one can say that so far as their characterization of the AMF and its issues are concerned, both Wōnhyo and Fa-tsang agree with each other. However, one should not fail to perceive the differences between the two in the reasons they give for their assertions. Wōnhyo's focus is on understanding the basic message of the text. He is concerned with his readers' realizing that message in their daily life. Fa-tsang, on the other hand, tries to locate the doctrinal position of the text within his Hua-yen oriented hierarchical system of Buddhist studies. We have seen that Wōnhyo disliked labeling and always avoided characterizing texts. Rather, he emphasized that his readers should be able to understand any texts as being harmonious with previous texts so long as they grasped the key message of the text in question. This is in marked contrast to Fa-tsang's approach.

I have stated that Wōnhyo and Fa-tsang agree with each other in selecting the key issue of the AMF. But there is no evidence that Wōnhyo would agree with Fa-tsang's way of justifying his position, which is quite different from Wōnhyo's. Wōnhyo was concerned that Buddhist teachings be realized through practice. In quoting freely from various sources, he uses as his criterion their relative effectiveness as a tool for realization rather than some sectarian bias. Since he desired to promote true understanding rather than

advance the doctrines of a particular school or establish some hierarchy, both Wōnhyo's praise and criticism are usually directed towards targets he does not actually identify. He probably thought that his attribute would help put an end to meaningless struggles among religious people. But he was never silent about the need for halting undesirable tendencies in interpreting the message of Buddhist scriptures.

III. Faith as Yung

In the East Asian Hermeneutic tradition, it is crucial that in beginning to study a text a Buddhist commentator grasp the correct meaning of title. Therefore, many famous Buddhist commentaries such as Chih-i's¹¹ and Fa-tsang's, started with an explanation of the title. So does Wōnhyo's Haedongso.

From the doctrinal perspective, two basic questions must be raised in order to understand the title of the AMF: (1) What is the relationship of the term ch'i-hsin, or "Awakening Faith," with ta-ch'eng, or "Mahāyāna;" and (2) what is meant by ch'i-hsin, or "Awakening Faith" here? We will see that these two questions must be pursued simultaneously.

If one translates Ta-ch'eng ch'i-hsin lun as "Treatise on the Awakening of Faith in the Mahāyāna," as previous translations have done, one question immediately presents itself: Can ta-ch'eng, or "Mahāyāna," really be the object of ch'i-hsin, or "awakening faith," as the English translations imply?

The most likely relationship between Ta-ch'eng and ch'i-hsin is not the usual one of a verbal phrase (ch'i-hsin) and its object (Ta-ch'eng), but rather that of a qualifier (Ta-ch'eng) and that which it qualifies (ch'i-hsin). According to this understanding of the title, the English translation would be Treatise on Awakening of Mahāyāna Faith. The invocation with which the treatise begins immediately supports this understanding as its last line reads ch'i ta-ch'eng cheng-hsin, or "awakening right Mahāyāna Faith." (Taishō. Vol. 32, No. 1666, 575b, line 15.) This line is again immediately followed by one like it, namely, "yu-fa neng-ch'i mo-ho-yen hsin-ken, or "there is something which can arouse the root of Mahāyāna Faith." (Ibid., line 16.) In these two lines the term "Mahāyāna" grammatically functions simply to qualify "faith;" there is not the slightest chance that "Mahāyāna" is to be taken as the object of "faith." Yet, all English translations,

¹¹ The Chinese *T'ien-t'ai* master Chih-i's brilliant exegetical works amply demonstrate the importance of the title in Buddhist scriptures. See *Taishō*. Vol. 33, No. 1716, 687-814.

from D.T. Suzuki's¹² to Yoshito Hakeda's,¹³ have "Mah2y2na" as the object of "faith." But neither here nor anywhere else in the text is "Mah2y2na" in fact the object of "faith." Therefore, one must investigate why all of the previous translations render the passage so as to violate classical Chinese grammar and make "Mah2y2na" the object of "faith."

In his English translation of AMF, the famous pioneering Buddhist scholar, D. T. Suzuki was the first to render "Mah2y2na" as the object of "faith." Apparently Suzuki had difficulty in trying to introduce the Buddhist notion of faith to English readers. Even though there can be no doubt about the depth of Suzuki's understanding of Buddhist faith, as evidenced throughout his many works on Buddhism, yet when he translated "ta-ch'eng ch'i-hsin" into English he compromised too much with the Western notion of faith. In Western theism, faith requires an object, as instanced in the formula "I believe in God," When Suzuki translated the title of the poem Hsin-hsin ming as "On Believing in Mind,"¹⁴ he persisted in making "faith" (here "believing") have an object. In the Hsin-hsin ming the term hsin-hsin appears three times, (Taishō. Vol. 48, No. 2010, 377a, line 9.) once in the title and twice at the end. Suzuki shows surprising ambivalence in translating hsin-hsin. In the title, as we have seen, he renders it "believing in mind," whereas at the end of the text he uses "Mind and each believing mind" and (reversing the terms) "each believing mind and Mind."

To take hsin-hsin as Suzuki does is to miss completely the point of the author Seng-ts'an's teaching. Throughout the poem Seng-ts'an constantly abolishes the One as some sort of entity on the basis of which two exist. Seng-ts'an never allows that two have become one because two never existed originally. He gives no support to a dualistic interpretation. Unfortunately, throughout Suzuki's translation, this point is never made clearly enough. I think that the term hsin-hsin here simply means "believing mind" or "faith" (as a technical term), and that the components of the term, hsin, or "believing," and hsin, or "mind," should never be translated independently as Suzuki translated them, but rather as "Song of Faith." If Seng-ts'an had wanted to imply what Suzuki meant, he would have chosen a different title for his poem such as, perhaps, pu-hsin pu-hsin ming, or "song of neither Faith nor Mind."

¹² D. T. Suzuki, *Aśvaghosha's Discourse on the Awakening of Faith in the Mah2y2na*, Chicago: The Open Court Publishing Company, 1930.

¹³ Yoshito Hakeda, *The Awakening of Faith*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1967.

¹⁴ D. T. Suzuki's translation, "On Believing in Mind," (Shinjin-no-Mei) in *Manual of Zen Buddhism*, (New York: Grove Press, 1960), 76-82.

It seems to me that in Suzuki's way of depicting Buddhist faith, the formula "I believe in God" is maintained and the object of faith (corresponding to God) is variously replaced, sometimes by Mahāyāna, sometimes by Mind. However, neither in AMF nor in Hsin-hsin ming, does hsin, or "faith" have an object. Anyone whose faith is aroused to the depth required by AMF cannot accept the "faith in____" construction as suitable for expressing his or her faith, because by its very nature the "faith in____" construction cannot avoid the neng-so, or "subject-object" dichotomy. I would like to argue that on matter what replaces "God" in the formula, so long as the "faith in____" construction is maintained, there is no possibility of perceiving the nature of faith in AMF as being ch'i-hsin, or "arousing faith."

Further, if one takes Mahāyāna to mean the Absolute, as Yoshito Hakeda does, (Hakeda, *The Awakening of Faith*, 28.) it is difficult to see how one can handle the other absolute, that is, the absolute aspect, which operates in conjunction with the phenomenal aspect. Frankly, it is doubtful whether any notion of an absolute plays a role in the AMF. One runs the grave risk of misleading the English reader as to what Buddhist faith really is if one takes ta-cheng as the object of ch'i-hsin. In other words, by taking Mahāyāna as the object of Buddhist faith, one posits both a duality and an absolute that AMF consistently rejects.

At the beginning of the *Haedongso Wōnhyo*, unlike other commentators, addresses the question of the nature of Mahāyāna. In answering he made a famous confession: "I do not know how to describe it; [therefore,] I am compelled to call it "Mahāyāna." However, in the second section, when he explains the title, Wōnhyo takes Mahāyāna as the t'i (or essence) of the treatise and ch'i-hsin as its yung (or function). (Taishō. Vol. 44, 203b, lines 6-7.) In other words, Wōnhyo tries to overcome the subject-object dichotomy found in the "faith in____" construction by taking the treatise as a living being, so to speak, in which the t'i and yung aspects work as one, neither functioning as an absolute. In that case, the meaning of the title becomes "Mahāyāna arouses faith." More freely construed, it might mean "the Great Carrier (great vehicle, i.e., Mahāyāna) has started to move forward." If the Great Carrier means "the mind of sentient beings," as the treatise says, then the title means nothing but that "our mind functions properly."

In Wōnhyo's understanding of Mahāyāna, the image of a vehicle is always presented as a symbol of motion and actually represents all the various Buddhist practices. It is not a compendium of established doctrines or an object of faith. Therefore, when Wōnhyo explains the meaning of

Mah2y2na, or "Great Vehicle," he gives the simile of space for "Mah2" and twenty phrases for "y2na" describing various Buddhist practices quoted from the 0k2sagarbha-s^tra. Space is compared to the human mind, which lacks substantiality, i.e., it is completely empty. The twenty phrases from "the Right Abiding in the Fourfold Comprehensive Practice of Accepting All Sentient Beings," to "the Four Noble Truths of Total-Interpenetration," represent the daily life of the practitioner of Buddhism. (Ibid., Vol. 44, 202c, lines 5-16.) Here again one can discern Wōnhyo's favorite way of thinking, namely, seeing everything from the t'i-yung perspective. In this case, it is quite obvious that Mah2 is t'i, and y2na is yung. When, then, does this great vehicle start to move?

The Buddhist notion of faith belongs here. Buddhist faith is like the ignition key of a car. The term "faith" in Wōnhyo's system is not an "essential" term, pertaining to t'i, but a "functional" term pertaining to yung. Faith them is a function of the coming together of three factors: (1) Mah2y2na as an existential reality; (2) the treatise as an aid from an enlightened guide; and (3) the readiness of the reader, the sign of the mature and serious student. When these three factors come together, the fire of faith ignites. The unique structure of Buddhist faith is to be seen in the inseparability of these factors, which are equally necessary and interdependent, just as for there to be a fire, there must exist simultaneously fuel, air, and flame. Because of its having such a structure, Buddhist faith can be contrasted to Western notions of faith which stress the separation between the believer and the object of his or her belief. Christian faith, at least as theistically conceived, appears to have a double function, i.e., it connects two different things, namely, the believer and the object of belief, while at the same time stressing the separation between the two. However, a Buddhist would disagree with this notion of faith. For a Buddhist, separation between two things means that they are not connected. If a Christian were to argue that there is no separation between the two, that the two are completely connected, the Buddhist would still disagree, because the Buddhist would say that the two did not exist originally. As we saw in the discussion of Seng-ts'an above, there is absolutely no basis for the existence of a duality. How, then, can they be connected? Buddhism warns us against the illusion of duality. In the Haedongso, while explaining the term ch'i-hsin, Wōnhyo says:

This treatise causes people's faith to be awakened, hence the words "Awakening Faith." Faith is a term which indicates being certain. What is called faith means faith that the principle really exists, faith that practice

can get results, faith that when practice does get results there will be boundless merit. Of these, faith that the principle really exists is faith in the greatness of the essence of Suchness. Because we believe that all dharmas are unobtainable, consequently, we believe that there really is the Dharma –world of equality. Faith that practice can get results is faith in the greatness of the attributes of Suchness. Because Suchness completely possesses the merits of the essence which permeates all sentient beings, consequently we believe that because of the permeation of the attributes we are bound to return to the Source. Faith in the function of boundless merit is belief in the greatness of the influence of Suchness, because there is nothing that Suchness does not do. If one can awaken these three faiths, one can enter the world of Buddha-dharma, produce all merits, be free from all devilish states, and attain the Peerless Way. (Ibid., Vol. 44, 203a, lines 20-28.)

That Wōnhyo's discussion is sometimes misunderstood is the result of holding to a Western framework. We must see clearly what Wōnhyo is proposing by referring to the three faiths in the above quotation. In his system, the three faiths means faith in the three greatneses of Mahāyāna:¹⁵ the greatness of its essence, the greatness of its attributes, and greatness of its function, respectively. Wōnhyo continues that to awaken these three faiths is nothing but to enter the world of Buddha. Thus a crucial aspect of Buddhist faith is that as soon as some faith arises, the distinction between the believer and the object of his or her belief is removed.

Both T'an-yen and Hui-yüan did not discuss the relationship between the terms ta-ch'eng and ch'i-hsin in the same way as Wōnhyo. But T'an-yen stated that people arouse faith due to the meaning of Mahāyāna. Hui-yüan urged people to have faith in Mahāyāna teaching and warned against slandering it. These statements from the two commentators may be construed as supporting Suzuki's way of rendering the title. However, since the two commentators do not interpret Buddhist faith differently than Wōnhyo, what they have said about the title cannot be taken as confirmation of the "faith in_____" construction.

Actually, Hui-yüan made it clear that he only encouraged people to have faith; he did not discuss the nature of Buddhist faith itself. Fa-tsang, too,

¹⁵ It may sound contradictory that we see the "faith in" construction in Wōnhyo. We have to remember the fact that Wōnhyo as well as Chinese commentators like Hui-yüan and Fa-tsang used the term *hsin*, or "faith" in two ways. *Ch'üan-hsin*, or "recommending faith," was explicated as an encouragement for the unbeliever; it is provisional until we reach Cheng-hsin, or "faith as ultimate enlightenment," which is the faith appearing in the title of *AMF*. Here, I use the "faith in_____" construction for the first kind of faith.

shared Wōnhyo's interpretation of the nature of Buddhist faith, but when he discussed the relationship between ta-ch'eng and ch'i-hsin, he returns, surprisingly, to the neng-so construction which Wōnhyo abandoned for the t'i-yung construction. According to Fa-tsang's commentary, I-chi, ta-ch'eng is the objective state to be believed in, ch'i-hsin is the subjective mind to be purified. Fa-tsang also confessed that he was not here discussing the fundamental nature of Buddhist faith. In this regard, Fa-tsang follows Hui-yūan. However, in his Pieh chi, or " Expository Notes," Fa-tsang accepts Wōnhyo's t'i-yung analysis of the title.(Taishō. Vol. 44, No. 1847, 288a, line 8.) If Fa-tsang wrote the Pieh chi later than the I-chi, that may be taken as indicating his turning from Hui-yūan to Wōnhyo.

In conclusion, we can see that according to Wōnhyo, the AMF was originally a non-sectarian text, revealing a principle by which all doctrinal disputes could be resolved. We have seen that this principle is that of t'i-yung, or " essence-function." Provisionally speaking, t'i refers to the universal, internal and invisible, while yung points to the particular, external and perceivable. In reality, however, essence-function(wisdom-acts, unimpeded-omnipotent, Suchness- arising and ceasing, etc.) are not two and occur simultaneously. Through practice one is able to realize this truth and thereby harmonize seeming contradictions without positing an absolute or a duality.

As instances of Wōnhyo' s use of t'i-yung in the AMF, we first looked at his discussion of the term " Mahāyāna." He calls it a designation for the essence of Mahāyāna, which is the realization of the dynamic interrelating of t'i and yung. Further, in the section of faith as yung, we saw that Wōnhyo scrupulously avoided any dualism of a subject - object or " faith in _____ " construction. Faith arises as the simultaneous occurrence of Mahāyāna as an existential reality, the treatise, and a mature student; thereby, one enters the world of the Buddha. Therefore, when true faith arises, the distinction of the faithful and faith disappears.

Wōnhyo investigated the meaning of Mahāyāna faith in the AMF with the spirit of harmony and the intent of overcoming sectarian disputes. He did not belong to or found any sect. If Korean Buddhism can be characterized as T'ong Pulgyo, or "Buddhism of Total Interpenetration," then Wōnhyo could certainly be considered its primary exemplar and promulgator. This paper has focused on t'i-yung as Wōnhyo's basic mode of thinking in analyzing the AMF. Further application of this basic formula to his other works awaits our investigation.

Glossary of Chinese Terms

- Ta-ch'eng ch'i-hsin lun 大乘起論
Ta-ch'eng ch'i-hsin lun i-chi 大乘起論義記
Taesŭng Kishillonso ; Ta-ch'eng ch'i-hsin lun su 大乘起論疏
Fa-tsang 法藏
Hua-yen school 華嚴宗
Ch'eng-kuan 澄觀
Haedongso 海東疏
Wŏnhyo 元曉
Hui-yüan 慧遠
Paramārtha 真諦
Śikshānanda 實叉難陀
T'an-yen 坦然
t'i and yung 體用
chen-ju 真如
sheng-mieh 生滅
Pyŏlgi 別記
Hsüan-t'ung 玄同
ch'i ta-ch'eng cheng-hsin 起大乘精神
yu-fa neng-ch'i mo-ho-yen hsin-ken 如去銷徒起善可消言根
ch'i-hsin 起言
T'ien-t'ai 天台
ju-lai-tsang yüan-ch'i 如來藏緣起
Chen-ju sui-yüan pu-pien 真如常用不變
Sent-ts'an 僧粲
Cheng-hsin 精神
T'ong Pulgyo 通佛教
Tao Te Ching 道德經
Lao-tzu 老子

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