

Contents

February 2006, Volume 6

Articles

- | | | |
|--|----------------------------|-----|
| On the Religiosity
of <i>Hwadu</i> Meditation | <i>Sung-bae Park</i> | 7 |
| Cross-Cultural Consensus
Between Buddhist Reality
and Modern Science | <i>Joon Lee</i> | 25 |
| Wŏnhyo's Essentials
of the <i>Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra</i> :
Translation of Chapters 1-2
with Annotated Notes | <i>Yong-pyo Kim</i> | 53 |
| <i>Theravāda</i> Methods
of Interpretation
on Buddhist Scriptures | <i>Veerachart Nimanong</i> | 77 |
| An English Translation of the
<i>Banya paramilda simgyeong chan</i> :
Wonch'uk's Commentary
on the <i>Heart Sūtra</i>
(<i>Prajñāpāramitā-hṛdaya-sūtra</i>) | <i>B. Hyun Choo</i> | 121 |

Han Yongun's Buddhist Socialism in the 1920s-1930s	<i>Vladimir Tikhonov</i> (<i>Pak Noja</i>)	207
The Origin and Practice System of <i>Ganhwa Seon</i>	<i>Hyewon Kang</i>	229
An Analysis of the Buddha's Paradoxical Silence: Neither the Positive nor Nihilistic View	<i>Kwangsoo Park</i>	243
Yulgok's Perspective on Buddhism	<i>Heejae Yi</i>	265
A Crisis of Biodiversity and the Buddhist Precepts of Not Killing	<i>Sunghyun Shin</i>	291
The Body and Practice In Western Philosophy and Buddhism	<i>Hye-jung Jung</i>	313

On the Religiosity of *Hwadu* Meditation

Sung-bae Park

People's opinions about the Hwadu fall into two distinct categories: "pro" and "con." Those in the former category feel that the Hwadu is the only means by which enlightenment can be achieved, whereas those in the latter category feel that Hwadu is ineffective. However, from my observation, both sides are experiencing a sense of crisis regarding the proper use of Hwadu meditation.

Hwadu is nothing but returning to the Buddha. The Hwadu, in and of itself, does not promise us anything. It merely points to what already is, to what exists right in front of us. The Hwadu means to return to our ordinary, everyday life as it is. There is no mystery about it; therefore, we should not try to add anything extra. What is important is that we return to the Buddha. The Hwadu shows us who we are. It is enlightenment itself. Let's wake up and celebrate our true identity.

Key Words: Hwadu, Jinul, Mom-momjit, Ti-yung, Rinzai.

Prologue

Sung-bae Park is a Professor of Buddhist Studies at State University of New York, Stony Brook, U.S.A.

International Journal of Buddhist Thought & Culture February 2006, Vol.6, pp.7-24.

© 2006 International Association for Buddhist Thought & Culture

Cross-Cultural Consensus Between Buddhist Reality and Modern Science

Joon Lee

Even though Buddhism and modern science are disparate in function, it is highly likely that the tenets of Buddhism have stirred interest among scientists at various stages, because some of the ideas spoken of in Buddhist sūtras can be compared with sophisticated scientific principles. The first evidence of scientific interest in Buddhist doctrines was in the latter part of the 19th century, gradually increasing until the present day and today there are many evidences of significant cross-cultural consensus between Buddhist reality and modern science.

In this essay we will look at why these two seemingly incompatible disciplines are able to reach some consensus. We will approach the topic first from the standpoint of a fundamental Buddhist doctrine, dependent origination. From there we will move on to look at the pathway of major contacts and examples of consensus which have taken place between science and Buddhism over the past forty years. Finally, we will conclude with a review of dialogues on diverse scientific issues, which were initiated in the 1980s, and have continued on an annual basis, between the Tibetan Buddhist community and various groups of Western scientists.

Joon Lee is a Professor Emeritus at Konkuk University, Korea.

International Journal of Buddhist Thought & Culture February 2006, Vol.6, pp.25-51.

© 2006 International Association for Buddhist Thought & Culture

Key Words: Cross-cultural consensus, Buddhism, Modern science, Reality, Mind and life.

I. Introduction

Buddhism originated around 2,500 years ago in India, with the teachings of Śākyamuni Buddha, and since then, has become one of the world's major religions. For the greater part of 2,500 years its influence has been solely in the East, and it differs intrinsically from the scientific approach developed in the West. In the Buddhist philosophical and religious system perfect enlightenment is the ultimate goal, whereas, in Western science, a principle or a theory is acquired through the process of scientific research. Such research usually proceeds in several stages including, gathering common phenomena experimentally, analyzing phenomena, organizing results, simulating an equivalent mathematical model, and formulating an hypothesis. If the hypothesis is confirmed to be correct by a series of precision experiments, the final mathematical equation is formulated as a principle and explained in plain language.

Even though in modern times religion and science are mutually disparate, as mentioned previously, it is certain that scientific interest has been aroused from time-to-time to take a closer look at the tenets of Buddhism. Western scientists reading Buddhist *sūtras* are sometimes greatly inspired by a simple passage, because the profound meaning of certain passages is comparable to a sophisticated scientific principle which has been obtained through a long period of successive experiments and verifications. Such passages are frequently located in *prajñāpāramitā* texts. For example, short expressions such as, “all things are impermanent”, “all things have no self”, “form does not differ from emptiness”, and so on, are very meaningful as they have application also in contemporary chemistry, physics and other sciences.

Paul Dahlke, a German physician, was born in the late 19th century and lived until early in the 20th century. Dahlke described his

Wŏnhyo's Essentials of the *Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra*: Translation of Chapters 1-2 with Annotated Notes

Yong-pyo Kim

This article is an English translation of the Essentials of the Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra, Chapters 1-2 with Annotated Notes. The Taehyedogyongchongyo (TDC) is a thematic essentials on the Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra. In the TDC, Wŏnhyo deals with the most essential and important content of the Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra. Wŏnhyo often uses the two hermeneutical conception to explicate the text: explications based on "analysis" and "synthesis." Wŏnhyo explores the text's main themes though this multi-approach. Judging from the content of the Taehyedogyongchongyo, it is certain that its original text was Hsüan-tsang's version of the Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra.

Key Words: Wŏnhyo, Prajñā, Paramitā, Taehyedogyongchongyo, Three kinds of prajñā.

Yong-pyo Kim is a Professor of Buddhist Studies at Dongguk University and the President of the Korean Association of Religious Education, Korea.

International Journal of Buddhist Thought & Culture February 2006, Vol.6, pp.53-75.

© 2006 International Association for Buddhist Thought & Culture

Theravāda Methods of Interpretation on Buddhist Scriptures

Veerachart Nimanong

Therefore Hermeneutic theory is indispensable for Buddhism because many texts contain controversial stories. The main idea of Theravāda Hermeneutics is to understand all conditioned things as impermanence, un-satisfactoriness and non-self. Particularly, non-attachment is regarded as the 'gradual path' and 'skillful means' to cultivate the conventional self and to realize the non-self. Traditionally, Buddhist hermeneutics accepts 2 levels of truth, the conventional and ultimate truths. By these concepts, Buddhist hermeneutics can accommodate both Schleiermacher's theory of the author's intention and Gadamer's theory of fusion of horizon, because the former and the latter correspond to 'gradual path' of Theravāda and 'skillful means' of Mahāyāna, respectively. From the similar aspect, it can be said that Buddhism accepts both social self and social non-self. The former and the latter can be interpreted as 'everyday ritual' and 'beyond everyday ritual.' Self-identity in the light of right understanding through the self awareness or heedfulness must be cultivated to solve the problem of conflict occurring all over the world.

Veerachart Nimanong is a Professor of Philosophy Department at Assumption University, Thailand..

This paper is presented as part of the seminar on the theme: *Korean Civilization and Buddhism in the Age of Global Dialogue*.

International Journal of Buddhist Thought & Culture February 2006, Vol.6, pp.77-120.

© 2006 International Association for Buddhist Thought & Culture

Key Words: Hermeneutics, Interpretative methods, Gradual path to Nibbana, Critical thinking, Interfaith dialogue.

Introduction

An attempt is made in this paper to investigate the *Theravāda* methods of Interpretation on the Buddhist scriptures. My thesis is that there is Hermeneutics in Buddhism. This Hermeneutics is called “Gradual Path” as is well known in *Theravāda* Buddhism. The main idea of *Theravāda* Hermeneutics is to understand all conditioned things as impermanence, un-satisfactoriness and non-self. The terms ‘non-attachment’, ‘non-self’ and ‘the middle way as the way beyond’ will be intentionally discussed in here to characterize the Buddhist context. In other words, non-attachment is regarded as the ‘gradual path’ (*anupubbamagga*) and ‘skillful means’ (*upayakosala*) to cultivate the conventional self and to realize the non-self. The non-self theory is a dialogue of doctrine and religious experience, which will eventually lead to cooperation, freedom, maximal cooperation, understanding and harmony, respectively.

I. Buddhist Hermeneutics in *Tiṭṭaka* and Commentaries

Hermeneutics is derived from the Greek term “Hermes”, meaning a Greek messenger God who brings messages from superior Gods to other Gods and men. In other words, a study of the theories of interpretation is known as hermeneutics, which is the effort to squeeze out the meaning of the religious scriptures. It is a type of knowledge about the theories of meaning of meaning, which emphasizes very much on a characteristics of understanding the texts. In ancient Greek, hermeneutics is known as Philology, which is nowadays called “linguistics.” During the medieval period, the study of the Bible is made possible by using the method of exegesis. Modern hermeneutics arises

An English Translation
of the *Banya paramilda
simgyeong chan*:
Wonch'uk's Commentary
on the Heart Sūtra
(*Prajñāpāramitā-hṛdaya-sūtra*)

B. Hyun Choo

This paper has attempted to present an English translation of Wonch'uk's Banya paramilda simgyeong chan (般若波羅蜜多心經贊) or Commentary on the Heart Sūtra which was written in classical Chinese in the 7th century. As an example of the intellectual analysis of a sūtra, Wonch'uk's Commentary is an important text that has exerted a significant influence on East Asian Buddhist thought. A prominent Korean Yogācāra scholar, Wonch'uk authored twenty-three works during his lifetime; unfortunately, all but three have been lost. The Commentary on the Heart Sūtra is the shortest among his extant writings, yet it clearly reflects his incomparable erudition. It is a unique commentarial work to examine the Buddhist meaning of emptiness (sūnyatā) as it reflects the Mādhyamika doctrine of Emptiness from the Yogācāra perspective.

B. Hyun Choo is a Lecturer of Department of Asian and Asian-American Studies at State University of New York at Stony Brook, U.S.A.

International Journal of Buddhist Thought & Culture February 2006, Vol.6, pp.121-205.

© 2006 International Association for Buddhist Thought & Culture

The English translation of Wonch'uk's original Chinese text may offer the contemporary readers in the West an opportunity to reveal the distinctive features of Wonch'uk's Commentary as well as an East Asian scriptural exegesis.

Key Words: Wonch'uk, *Banya paramilda simgyeong chan*, Essence, Doctrine, Three Wheels of Dharma, Three natures of existence, The nature of Emptiness.

I. Introduction

The *Banya paramilda simgyeong chan* (般若波羅蜜多心經贊)¹ is a commentary on the *Heart Sūtra* written in classical Chinese by the 7th century Buddhist exegete Wonch'uk. An excellent example of the intellectual analysis of a *sūtra*, it is an important text that has exerted a significant influence in the history of East Asian Buddhist thought.

Wonch'uk (圓測, 613-696 C.E.), also known as Reverend Moon-A of His-ming Monastery (西明寺) in China, was originally from Silla, Korea.² (Koh, 1999:13-14) An eminent disciple of Hsüan-tsang (玄奘),³ and an older contemporary of K'uei-chi (窺基) of the Chinese *Fa-hsiang* School (法相宗), he is considered one of the most prominent *Yogācāra* scholars.⁴ According to his biographical source, Wonch'uk authored

1 According to Dr. Nguyen, the Chinese term “chan (贊)” means “eulogy” rather than “commentary,” so this work should be titled as “*Eulogy on the Heart Sūtra*”; yet it in no way resembles the *sūtra* style in Indian Buddhist literature, but is rather merely a commentary. Nguyen notes that this has significant implications on how Wonch'uk views the status of the *Heart Sūtra* (Nguyen, 2001:24-25).

2 Wonch'uk moved to T'ang China at the age of fifteen and never returned to Korea (Kim & Wu, 1976:70).

3 Chang-geun Hwang, in his dissertation, investigates the relationship between Hsüan-tsang and Wonch'uk. According to Hwang, *The Encyclopedic Biographies of Hsüan-tsang and His Disciples* (玄奘三藏師資傳叢書) Wonch'uk is mentioned as the disciple of Hsüan-tsang, whereas other records state that Hsüan-tsang studied old *Yogācāra* from both Fa-ch'ang and Seng-pien as did Wonch'uk and, therefore, the relationship between the two could be defined as peers or fellow students of the two masters rather than as master and disciple (Hwang, 2000:41).

4 According to Sung-fu (宋復), Wonch'uk was highly respected by Empress Wu (測天武后, c.684-705) of T'ang China, so that even though the King of Silla, Korea, Sin Moon (神文王, c.681

Han Yongun's Buddhist Socialism in the 1920s-1930s

Vladimir Tikhonov (Pak Noja)

The paper deals with Han Yongun's (1879-1944) attitude towards the radical movements of socialist (Communist or anarchist) persuasion in 1920-30s' Korea. Socialism had strong appeal for a large sector of the educated youth at that period: some of the younger monks or lay Buddhists are known to have become radical activists, while larger number had sympathies towards the "new currents of thought", as radical views were euphemistically called. But both dogmatically stiff negative attitudes of the orthodox Communists towards all religions, Buddhism included, and low level of the understanding of Marxists theory among the monks and lay Buddhists hindered deeper contacts between Buddhists and socialism. Han Yongun attempted to overcome these hindrances, putting forward his theory of "Buddhist socialism."

Key Words: Han Yongun, Buddhist Socialism, Communism, Anti-religious movement, Seno'o Girō.

I. The first encounters between Buddhism and socialism

Vladimir Tikhonov is an Associate Professor of Department of Culture Studies and Oriental Languages at Oslo University, Norway.

International Journal of Buddhist Thought & Culture February 2006, Vol.6, pp.207-228.

© 2006 International Association for Buddhist Thought & Culture

The Origin and Practice System of *Ganhwa Seon*

Hyewon Kang

Ever since national master Do-ui brought the method of Seon practice from China in the Silla Danasty, the Nine Schools of Korean Seon arose and fell, finally integrating into the Jogye Order.

The lineage of Korean Seon initiated by national master Bojo and Taego in the Goryeo Dyanasty originated from the Southern Chan of China. It is generally considered that the Korean Seon method succeeded Da-hui who belonged to the Yang-qi branch of the Lin-ji school. Da-hui Chan penetrated intellectuals after the Yuan and Ming Dynasty in China and became the driving force of the Chan movement. Likewise, Taego Seon was the engine of integration for all the Buddhist sects into Seon-centered Korean Buddhism. Taego introduced the Lin-ji school to later stagnant Goryeo Buddhism through the cultivation of One Mind. Thus, Ganhwa Seon played a key role in transmitting the lamp of the patriarchs and became a significant energy of the Jogye Order's tradition.

The practice of Ganhwa Seon as an initial enlightenment, which has faith in 'the original purity of mind' is a kind of short-cut practice that returns to the original sources of innate enlightenment. Ganhwa Seon regards 'a big faith' and 'a big doubt' as it's essence and is a vital mainspring of

Hyewon Kang is a Professor of Buddhist Studies at Dongguk University, Korea.

International Journal of Buddhist Thought & Culture February 2006, Vol.6, pp.229-241.

© 2006 International Association for Buddhist Thought & Culture

Korean Seon.

Key Words: Ganhwa, Seon, Gong-an, Hwadu, Bojo, Taego.

I. Introduction

According to the constitution of the Jogye Order, the Korean Buddhist Jogye Order originated from the *Gajisan* school, established under the influence of the national master of Do-ui in the Silla (57 B.C.E.-936 C.E.) Dynasty and was reorganized later by Master Bojo (1158-1210). Finally, later it was officially named the Jogye Order, integrating all other Buddhist denominations by Master Taego (1301-1382).

The basic idea of the Jogye Order is based on the fundamental philosophy of *Seon* Buddhism of 'enlightening both self and other', seeking 'a direct pointing to one's mind' and 'seeing one's own nature and directly accomplishing buddhahood.'¹ Especially, 'seeing one's own nature and directly accomplishing buddhahood' means to realize one's original nature with no delusion and no doubt. This original nature cannot be seen through an objective perspective solely, but through one where the subjective and the objective are united as a whole. Thus, we ultimately accomplish buddhahood. In terms of its name and idea, the Jogye Order belongs to the *Seon* School and it is a denomination which aims to see one's own nature and accomplish buddhahood on the basis of *Seon* practice.

Ever since national master Do-ui brought the method of *Chan* practice from China, the nine schools of Korean *Seon* arose and fell, finally integrating into the Jogye Order. Especially, as is commonly known, national master Taego and Bojo's *Seon* method in the Goryeo (918-1392) Dynasty was *Ganhwa Seon*. In the Joseon (1392-1910) Dynasty, the books titled "*Seon-ga Gwigam*" and "*Seon-gyo-seok*"² emphasized

¹ *Seon* is a Korean pronunciation of *Chan*. Its corresponding Sanskrit and Japanese terms are *dhyana* and *Zen*, respectively. In this article, *Seon* and *Chan* were used compatibly.

An Analysis of the Buddha's Paradoxical Silence: Neither the Positive nor Nihilistic View

Kwangsoo Park

The ineffable realm is one of the most widely debated topics in the distinctive religious traditions including Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Christianity, Muslim Mysticism, and other religious traditions. All words, metaphors, and symbols in Buddhist literature as well as in other religious literature are the symbolic and metaphoric illustrations that point to what the ineffable reality is.

The Buddha kept silent when asked some metaphysical questions. The Buddha's silence becomes the fundamental tradition of Buddhism, and it is a hot issue in Buddhist Studies. The Buddha's silence would be a way to avoid either the positive or nihilistic approaches. The Buddha's silent approach influenced Mādhyamika, Yogācāra and in particular, Ch'an Buddhism.

The paradoxical expression ignores the principle of non-contradiction. It remains as a paradox illustrating the ineffable reality. The paradoxical view follows some logical procedure: (1) either A or B; (2) neither A nor B; (3)

Kwangsoo Park is a Professor of Department of Won-Buddhism at Wonkwang University, Korea. This paper was supported by Wonkwang University in 2006.

International Journal of Buddhist Thought & Culture February 2006, Vol.6, pp.243-264.

© 2006 International Association for Buddhist Thought & Culture

not neither A nor B. In the positive way, the paradoxical view admits some validity of the words and metaphors to illustrate the ineffable reality. In contrast, the paradoxical view admits that words, metaphors, and symbols are not the perfect tools for illustrating the ineffable realm. Finally, it rejects the previous formulas and uses the paradoxical logic: not neither A nor B. In this sense, the paradoxical view is neither the positive view nor the nihilistic view. It uses some progressive negations of the preceding syllogism in different perspectives. The Buddha's silence is an example of the paradoxical expression of the Buddha without relying on words to avoid either Nihilism or Eternalism.

Key Words: Buddha's silence, Ineffable realm, Paradoxical logic, Ch'an Buddhism, Nihilism.

I. Preface

The ineffable realm is one of the most widely debated topics in the distinctive religious traditions including Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Christianity, Muslim Mysticism, and other religious traditions. In the Vedic literature, *Brahman* is described in many different ways.¹ The qualities of *Brahman* is illustrated with the terms *nirguna* and *saguna* in the *bhakti* worship. *Nirguna* worship to the Hindu deity ascribes no form or attributes. On the other hand, *saguna* worship ascribes qualities to the Hindu deity (Embree, 1988:371). *Nirguna* implies the invaluable qualities of *Brahman* beyond conceptualization. The state of non-duality, in the *Upanishads*, is the ineffable aspect of the ultimate reality (*Brahman* or *ātman*) which is expressed with a short passage 'neti neti' or 'not this, not that'. In the *Upanishads*, *mokṣa* is the state of infinity that is attained when one comes to know the identity of *ātman* and *Brahman* and the state of the elimination of all duality.

¹ *Brahman* is illustrated in many ways in the early Hindu literatures as God, Creator, Universal Being, or Universal Principle: (1) 'The Lord of Creation' in the *Prasna Upanishad*; (2) the source of all creation without having any human form (Mascaró, 75); (3) In the *Katha Upanishads*, the Creator of the Universe, Pure Spirit, and the Truth itself (Mascaró, 65).

Yulgok's Perspective on Buddhism

Heejae Yi

Yulgok Yiyi was the most popular of the Song Confucian scholars in Korea. During the Joseon Dynasty, Confucianism was accepted as the dominant ideology, while Buddhism was scorned as heretical religion. Yet, even though Yulgok was the great Song Confucianist, he had read Confucian classics on Buddhism while in his teens and had also lived for a year on Mount Geumgang, where he engaged in ascetic practice. A year in Mount Guemgang undertaking mountain ascetic practice, he returned to society and successfully led his life.

He did not just accept the Confucian doctrine without criticism, but through in-depth analysis and introspection, he realized the world of truth and endeavored to practice it in his own world. Although he did not gain a certainty from his Zen experience while practicing on Mount Geumgang, nevertheless, he did come to firmly realize that ordinary human nature is just the same as that of Buddha, Yao and Shun. In this manner, Yulgok was not a blind Confucian, merely adopting the prevailing trend of criticizing Buddhism as with other fanatics of the time, rather, he was sincere in his determination to develop his mind and to search within himself for truth.

It would be misleading to say that Yulgok was a Buddhist ascetic although he studied Buddhism and Taoism without prejudice, but he never

Heejae Yi is a Professor of College of Humanities and Social Science at Gwangju University, Korea.

International Journal of Buddhist Thought & Culture February 2006, Vol.6, pp.265-289.

© 2006 International Association for Buddhist Thought & Culture

remained dependent on these teachings, instead, he became even more critical. And through his ability and commitment to seek deeper truths both by examining other doctrines and through his own practical experience, he was able to broaden the world of Confucianism.

Key Words: Mountain asceticism, Zen practice, Human nature, Bowo, Song Confucianism, Yi-Qi.

I. Introduction

Yulgok Yiyi (1536-1584) was the most popular of the *Song* Confucian scholars. He enjoyed a high social position and was greatly respected by Korean people of his time. During the Joseon Dynasty (1392-1910), Confucianism was accepted as the dominant ideology, while Buddhism was scorned as heretical religion. Buddhist monks were greatly oppressed and were banned from the cities, leaving no choice but to take refuge in the mountains.

Song Confucian values were applied as national ethics throughout the Joseon period in Korea; Buddhism was not even studied by Confucian scholars at this time. Yet, even though Yulgok was the great *Song* Confucianist, he had read Confucian classics on Buddhism while in his teens and had also lived for a year on Mount Geumgang, where he engaged in ascetic practice. This kind of practice was actually prohibited for civil servants at the time, or for anyone who was seeking to become a civil servant, but Yulgok did not concern himself about this. There is quite a lot of speculation today about whether Yulgok actually shaved his head or not during his period of mountain retreat, and whether he entered the Buddhist priesthood at that time, as both Yulgok and his apprentices skillfully evaded making comment on the matter; but it is generally presumed that he took tonsure by a Buddhist order. This belief is mainly based on the fact that the Korean word *ipsan*, which is loosely translated as ascetic, has the same meaning as the word for entering the Buddhist priesthood. A contemporary Korean historian

A Crisis of Biodiversity and the Buddhist Precepts of Not Killing

Sunghyun Shin

The historical period of civilization coincides with the period in the history of the planet when nature has been artificially controlled and manipulated to a great degree. However, the current ecological crisis caused by human civilization paradoxically also threatens human beings.

The teaching of mutual causality shows us the need to recognize our interconnectedness and the necessity to adopt a lifestyle compatible with all living things. Buddhism teaches us that human ignorance is the primary cause of the reduction of biodiversity on the planet, destruction of the natural ecosystem, and the disruption of human habitats.

Observance of the precept to not kill is a practical and compassionate life choice which can support and secure biodiversity. Such a life choice represents the path of an active practitioner rather than one who makes speech but fails to follow through with action.

Key Words: Biodiversity, Precept of “Do not kill”, Extinction, Anthropocentrism, Ecosystem.

Sunghyun Shin is a Professor of Buddhist Studies at Dongguk University, Korea.

International Journal of Buddhist Thought & Culture February 2006, Vol.6, pp.291-311.

© 2006 International Association for Buddhist Thought & Culture

The Body and Practice In Western Philosophy and Buddhism

Hye-Jung Jung

Enlightenment comes from body-mind. The concept of truth is not disembodied, as modern philosophy has largely upheld instead it arises from the nature of our bodies, and bodily experience. The body is not an instrument for thinking. In modern Western philosophy, mind is separated from body. Descartes defines the human subject solely as a "thinking substance", thus separating the human subject from the body. Locke's statements also fit well into the dualism model, and this model seeming to be well suited to addressing both mind and matter, the individual and the world. But in phenomenology the human body is really a body-mind, rather than a mere body, or a body to which a mind is somehow attached.

From long time ago Buddhists also deny the spirit separated from the lived body. The very concept of truth itself comes from the details of our embodiment as while the truth is not, in any way, a transcendent feature of the universe or of disembodied mind. Rather, it is crucially shaped by the peculiarities of our human bodies and by the specifics of our everyday functioning in the world.

Enlightenment itself is also not simply a mental achievement. When a person is enlightened, the entire mind-body complex is enlightened. One

Hye-Jung Jung is a Research Professor of Chungang University, Korea.

International Journal of Buddhist Thought & Culture February 2006, Vol.6, pp.313-327.

© 2006 International Association for Buddhist Thought & Culture

becomes a Buddha in and through this very body. Enlightenment is the immersion of the individual's mind-body complex into the Buddha mind-body complex. So Seonmudo, Korean Zen Martial Art, is a Buddhist training method which has been as one of many paths to enlightenment. Diligent training leads to harmonious integration of mind, body and spirit. The practice and study of Seonmudo focuses on integration of body and mind by breathing and training.

Key Words: Buddhism, Seonmudo, Modern Western philosophy, Phenomenology, Body-mind, Body schema.

I. The Body in Modern Western Philosophy

The traditional concept of mind and body in Western Philosophy is based on dualism. This idea originates with the universal rationalist views of Plato and Aristotle who considered that the Unity of the human soul is complete only insofar as one comes to know the source of this world's order - which for Plato was the realm of Ideas and for Aristotle was pure thought in thinking itself. Ultimate Being is a universal concept, in that it characterizes the objective categories of the world. Human reason is the capacity of the human mind to use some portion of Universal Reason. Reasoning can be performed by the human spirit but its structure is defined by Universal Reason, independent of the human body, human reason is therefore disembodied reason. Since human reason is disembodied, it is separate from, and independent of, all bodily capacities: perception, bodily movement, feelings, emotions, and so on (Lakoff and Johnson, 1999:553). An understanding of Being is already included in conceiving anything which one apprehends in entities.

But, according to M. Heidegger, the universality of Being is not that of a class or genus. The term 'Being' does not define that realm of entities which is uppermost when these are articulated conceptually according to genus and species. The universality of Being transcends