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The Fundamental Ideals of Human Rights in the Thought of Wonhyo

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Introduction

Wonhyo (617-686) was one of the greatest of Korea's Buddhist monks. He is valued as a creative thinker with a unique perspective on understanding Buddhism. He was not just a master of Buddhism; he was well versed in Confucianism and Taoism as well. Furthermore, he is famous for an open life, not bound by the thought and customs of others. Although he **broke a precept**, he is held in high esteem in Korea because his **breaking of a precept** has been understood in the context of *mae*, a life of liberty and compassion.

On the one hand, Wonhyo as a Buddhist thinker established a creative and practical thought system by synthesizing and reconciling Buddhist doctrines that appeared to be contradictory. On the another hand, as a practitioner of Buddhism, Wonhyo lived in accordance with his thought. His philosophical creativity, intellectual accessibility, and depth influenced Chinese Buddhism, and his life of practice is still alive in popular Korean stories. His thought and life have been a paradigmatic model in the Korean Buddhist tradition.

Wonhyo's distinguished scholastic and monastic life has garnered much attention from Korean Buddhist scholars. There are many studies on his thought and his life.¹⁾ New approaches have recently appeared as his thought and life have

been re-interpreted from modern perspectives, such as pluralism. Following this trend, I approach his thought and life from the perspective of human rights. In this paper, I attempt to reveal and clarify his fundamental ideals of human rights by examining the core concepts of his thoughts and life.

"Human rights," understood as "rights that fundamentally belong to all persons just because they are human," have changed throughout history and vary between cultures. The modern concept of human rights arose with the appearance of modern states and the development of capitalism; its major aspects were legal and political. As legal and political rights were achieved, social and economic rights became to be emphasized. This tells us that the bases of human rights have developed according to different periods and contexts. However, the fundamental ideals of human rights remain the same.

What then are the fundamental ideals of human rights? I take them to be liberty, equality, and brotherhood, as articulated in the modern era and later firmly established in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The first article declares, "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood." Based on this ideal of liberty and equality, specific rights were defined in the subsequent articles. However, brotherhood is neither mentioned nor emphasized in the later articles, perhaps because it cannot be claimed as an individual right. Although brotherhood is not a right, but rather a virtuous duty, it is necessary for us in pursuing human rights as we should complement individuality and exclusiveness, which are the negative aspects of the modern concept of human rights. The three fundamental ideals of liberty, equality, and brotherhood are all equally important.

Now let us look at the core concepts of Wonhyo's thought and life from the perspective of the three fundamental ideals. Wonhyo's three concepts — *ilsim*, *hwajaeng*, and *muae* — can be understood in terms of the three fundamental ideals of human rights. In this paper, I focus on two out of the three, *ilsim* and *muae*²⁾ Second, I demonstrate that *ilsim* requires compassion/brotherhood. Third, interpreting *ilsim* as the repository of Buddha-nature, I show that it is also the basis of equality. Fourth, I explore the ideal of compassion and liberty by examining the notion of *muae*. In this examination of *ilsim* and *muae*, I argue that the three fundamental ideals of human rights are present in Wonhyo's thought as

liberty, equality, and compassion.

The Three Main Concepts of Wonhyo: *Ilsim*, *Hwajaeng* and *Muae*

The representative concepts of the thought and life of Wonhyo are *ilsim*, *hwajaeng*, and *muae*. Although it is difficult to define these three concepts, I shall attempt to do so. *Ilsim*, literally “one-mind,” is an inclusive concept explaining all beings and their interconnection in a single system. *Ilsim* indicates both human subjectivity of mind and the world reflected through it. *Hwajaeng*, “reconciliation of disputes,” is a method to reconcile different views. *Muae*, “not being bound,” indicates the state and act of liberty not bound by any fixed thought or convention.

Ilsim, *hwajaeng*, and *muae* are interconnected. *Ilsim*, representing the total system of Wonhyo's thought is the foundation of *hwajaeng* and *muae*. *Hwajaeng*, as a philosophical method and the practice of *ilsim*, is an expression of *muae*. *Muae*, based on *ilsim*, is a specific act of *hwajaeng* in a way. *Ilsim* requires *hwajaeng* and *muae*, *hwajaeng* as a consequence of *ilsim* is a precondition of *muae*, and *muae* is the embodiment of *ilsim* and *hwajaeng*.

In relation to *ilsim*, *hwajaeng* is not only a requirement of *ilsim* but also a method of presenting *ilsim*. In relation to *muae*, however, *hwajaeng* is not only a requirement of *muae* but also a method of realizing *muae*. Thus, *hwajaeng* is not just a philosophical method; as an ethical act, it is also a practice of *ilsim* and *muae*.

The higher concept that connects *ilsim*, *hwajaeng*, and *muae* is compassion. *Ilsim*, requiring compassion, is meaningless if it does not bring compassion. *Hwajaeng* presupposes compassion, and it itself is an expression of compassion especially as a philosophical method to reconcile doctrinal disputes. *Hwajaeng* accepts the significance of human beings unconditionally and leads them to take the right path out of compassion. Finally, *muae* can be justified as an example of Buddhist liberty only through compassion, and furthermore the acts of *muae* are compassionate actions.

***Ilsim* Requiring Compassion**

Ilsim requires compassion and provides a basis for equality. According to Wonhyo, the entire significance of *ilsim* is compassion. The *ilsim* is addressed in order to evoke compassion from within us and also the basis of human equality. All human beings are equal because they are endowed with *ilsim*, called the "repository of Buddha-nature."

Wonhyo clearly addresses *ilsim* as essential to all Buddhist dharma. He points out that the whole point of *Daeseunggisinron* (*Wakening of Faith in Mahāyāna*) and *Geumgang sammae gyeongron* (*Vajra-samādhi-sūtra-sastra*) is to return to the source of *ilsim* (*gwilsimwon*). By nature, everything exists in *ilsim*, including all humans, but we have forgotten this and so we need to return to the source of *ilsim*.

To know how to return to the source of *ilsim*, we need to know the mechanism of *ilsim*. Its function is explained by two doors: the door of mind-suchness (*simjinyeomun*) of mind-suchness (*simjinyeo*) and the door of arising-ceasing (*saengmyeolmun*) of mind-arising-ceasing (*simsaengmyeol*). Unenlightened beings, possessing a pure mind (*cheongjeongsim*) by nature, are under the function of the mind-suchness of *ilsim*. But presently they are under the function of mind-arising-ceasing of *ilsim*, called the repository of Buddha-nature. Although they are under the function of mind-arising-ceasing, they are not disconnected from mind-suchness because the two minds are not separable just as the two doors are not separable.

When Wonhyo commented that "the door of mind-suchness and of mind-arising-ceasing each include all dharma, so the two doors are not separate,"³⁾ he made clear the relationship between *ilsim* and the repository of Buddha-nature. "All dharma has no arising-ceasing and is completely calm (*jeokjeong*). What exists is only *ilsim*. We call this mind-suchness. Thus "complete cessation" is *ilsim*. Although the essence of this *ilsim* is "enlightened by its very nature" (*bon-gak*), it continues transmigration of arising and ceasing due to ignorance (*mumyeong*). We call this the real Buddha-nature hidden in this door of arising-ceasing."⁴⁾ Notice here that the last sentence indicates the repository of Buddha-nature.

As we see here, Wonhyo explained the repository of Buddha-nature by the door of arising-ceasing of *ilsim*. As the mind of arising-ceasing includes enlightenment (*gak*) and non-enlightenment (*bulgak*) and the door of arising-ceasing is not separate from the door of suchness, so a repository of Buddha-nature having the characteristic of mind-arising-ceasing

has also the characteristic of mind-suchness. When mind-arising-ceasing is dominant, the mind is called a repository of Buddha-nature. When mind-suchness is dominant, the mind is called *ilsim*. When unenlightened beings forget (the true nature of) *ilsim* due to ignorance and continuation of the transmigration cycle under its influence, we call *ilsim* a repository of Buddha-nature. In this case, *ilsim* does not function. It is lost. So what is necessary for unenlightened beings having the repository of Buddha-nature is to return to the source of *ilsim*, which means that we come under the influence of mind-suchness.

We can express "to return to the source of *ilsim*" in various ways. For example, it can be seen as recovering mind-suchness, which is hidden in the repository of Buddha-nature, transforming the repository of Buddha-nature into *ilsim*, destroying ignorance, or returning to the source of *ilsim*. Wonhyo liked to say "returning to the source of *ilsim*." Here, an important point is that once *ilsim* returns to its source functions of absolutely calm mind-suchness, it does not leave mind-arising-ceasing. For, as we have seen, the doors of suchness and of arising-ceasing are not separable.

Wonhyo explained the inseparability of the two doors, meaning that all beings have the two doors, as follows. Each door includes the other.⁵⁾ As the door of suchness contains defilement and purity as a whole (*yeomjeongtongsang*), so it contains all dharma of defilement and purity. The door of arising-ceasing presents defilement and purity separately, yet it contains all dharma of defilement and purity. Although "containing as a whole" and "containing separately" are different, neither can be abandoned (*jemusogeon*).⁶⁾

As the doors of suchness and of arising-ceasing, the two aspects of *ilsim*, contain each other, so both unenlightened beings and buddhas have these two doors. The only difference between them is that. Unenlightened beings presently remain in the door of arising-ceasing and yet do not leave the door of suchness, while buddhas remain in the door of suchness and yet do not leave the door of arising-ceasing. Unenlightened beings and buddhas always keep a channel to communicate with each other through the two doors. They never exclude each other. This lets *nirvana* (enlightenment) and *samsara* (transmigration cycle) communicate with each other. This relationship between the two doors opens a channel for unenlightened beings and buddhas to communicate. Here *nirvana* and *samsara* are not different from each other although they are not

the same. The same is true for unenlightened beings and buddhas.

Then, what is an unenlightened beings supposed to do in order to return to the source of *ilsim*? One answer is “to relinquish all objects or the external world” (*sikmangyeong*). Wonhyo says “to relinquish objects everlastingly and to return to the source of *ilsim*.” In order to understand what “to relinquish objects” means, we should first look at how objects arise.

A standard explanation for the arising of objects is this. When the original pure mind raises a discerned mind (*bunbyeolsim*) due to beginningless ignorance, objects arise. Just as the wind raises the waves on the ocean, the mind reacts on objects due to ignorance and the four characteristics of rising-staying-changing-ceasing (*sasang*) or objects (the external world, *gyeong*) arise. Although objects arise due to ignorance in the present mind, the activity of ignorance and so objects can be ceased because the mind is pure by nature. “There are no other objects in the mind of unenlightened because the mind is bright by nature and there are no defilements.... If falsity (*mang*) in the mind disappears, soon other objects disappear because objects appear through a change in the false mind (*mangsim*).”⁷⁾ In other words, “the arising of objects” is caused by the false mind, and the activity of the false mind is caused by the activity of an ignorant mind. This whole process is based on ignorance of the emptiness of objects when the mind contacts such objects. The false mind is thus bound by objects. In this process, unenlightened beings cannot realize an emptiness of mind.

From the perspective of Buddhism, there is no "before-after" between the mind and objects. The mind and objects arise dependently. “If the mind does not raise objects, objects do not raise the mind” (*simbulsaeenggyeong gyeongbulsaeengsim*).⁸⁾ In other words, the mind and objects arise dependently. Both are empty. If one of them ceases, so does the other. If one recognizes the nature of the mind and objects to be emptiness, they cannot arise.

To see independence or emptiness of the mind and objects means to know their non-duality epistemologically as well as ontologically. Finally, it requires us to live while perceiving that neither the mind and objects, nor I and you are dual. So “to relinquish objects” ultimately means to overcome the duality based on the I-centered mind, and live in oneness with all beings. Here a great compassion of oneness (*dongchedaebi*), the heart of Buddhism, is obtained.

From this understanding, we can say that to relinquish objects or to return

to the source of *ilsim* is nothing other than to live in oneness, namely, to live in a compassionate life of oneness. This is why Wonhyo clearly identified the reason for establishing the dharma of *ilsim* (*ilsimbeop*) as “a great compassion of oneness.” This aspect of Wonhyo's thought is clarified by his appeal to “let unenlightened beings relinquish their doubts and attachments, and consequently gain faith and realize their Buddha-nature.”⁹⁾

To doubt dharma means to doubt in this way. Is the essence of the dharma of Mahāyāna the one or the many? If it is one, there is no other dharma and so there are no unenlightened beings. So for whom does a bodhisattva make a great vow? If the dharma is many, it is not one. So I and others are separated. If one has such a doubt, then one cannot have a great compassion of oneness. For the dharma of Mahāyāna, we establish the dharma of *ilsim* in order to rid ourselves of this doubt. Thus in the dharma of Mahāyāna there is only dharma of *ilsim* and there is no other dharma.”¹⁰⁾

We cannot say that the essence of the dharma of Mahāyāna is one. Neither can we say that it is many, for then we cannot generate a great compassion of oneness. So we can only establish the dharma of *ilsim* to generate a great compassion of oneness. Wonhyo finds the reason for establishing the dharma of *ilsim* in this way. Thus, *ilsim* can neither be established nor have meaning when it leaves a great compassion of oneness. This understanding is creative and yet emphasizes the essential teaching of the Buddha to be compassion.

Wonhyo's understanding that the only reason for establishing the dharma of *ilsim* is to let unenlightened beings generate great compassion of oneness, is reflected in his commentary on the two doors. He thought that the doctrine of the two doors is stated for the purpose of abandoning any doubt about the dharma of *ilsim*, of generating great compassion of oneness, and having people practice samatha (concentration meditation, *ji*) and vipasyanā (insight meditation, *gwan*).¹¹⁾ Furthermore, he thought that the door of suchness is related to practice of samatha to cease objects and the door of rising-ceasing to practice of vipasyanā to see reality of arising and ceasing.¹²⁾

The heart of practicing samatha is to know "one characteristic of dharma dhātu" (*beopgyeilsang*). This means to obtain samatha of suchness and of the everyday. It means to know that all buddha-bodies (*beopsin*) are equal to all

unenlightened beings, or that they are not dual.¹³⁾ In belief, the essence of practicing samatha is to perceive the oneness of all beings. But, according to *Awakening of Great Faith in Mahāyāna*, if one practices only this samatha, one leaves vipasyanā. So one needs to practice vipasyanā to see the suffering of unenlightened beings.¹⁴⁾ In the practice of vipasyanā, one makes a vow to save them from their suffering:

Let my mind leave discernments. Let me do good things in all directions to save all beings suffering through boundless [save all beings from their suffering through infinite skill-in-means](#). And finally let them have the supreme happiness of nirvāṇa.”¹⁵⁾

Samatha brings an awareness of the oneness of all beings while vipasyanā establishes the vow of a bodhisattva. Samatha is awareness of reality while vipasyanā is a vow for compassion for unenlightened beings. Practicing both is related to the two doors in Wonhyo’s thought. Samatha is related to the door of suchness and vipasyanā to the door of arising-ceasing. As the two doors are inseparable, samatha and vipasyanā are inseparable. Wonhyo compared the practice of samatha and vipasyanā to the two wings of a bird or the two wheels of a vehicle.¹⁶⁾ He equally emphasized these two methods of practice.

In brief, being consisting of the two doors, requires compassion. Through practicing samatha and vipasyanā related to the two doors, one should practice a great compassion of oneness. Thus everyone is capable of practicing a great compassion of oneness through samatha and vipasyanā, and finally of returning to the source of *ilsim*. Although unenlightened beings transmigrate through six realms due to ignorance, they are not leaving the ocean of *ilsim*. That is why they can generate a great compassion of oneness.¹⁷⁾

Here, as we have seen above, “to return to the source of *ilsim*,” or “to relinquish objects” means to perceive oneness/non-duality and to live in a compassionate way. In other words, the sole meaning of *ilsim* is a great compassion of oneness. So it was natural for Wonhyo to find not only the reason for establishing the dharma of *ilsim* but also the reason for practicing samatha and vipasyanā *only in compassion*. What *ilsim* pursues and requires is a great compassion of oneness.

Ilsim as the Basis of Equality

Ilsim provides us with the basis for equality. *ilsim* explains why we are equal.¹⁸⁾ Wonhyo thought that all human beings are absolutely equal on the basis of *ilsim*, also called the repository of Buddha-nature (*tathāgatagarbha*).

It is important to note that *ilsim* is called a repository of Buddha-nature when it is the basis of human equality. A "repository of Buddha-nature" means the seed or the possibility of becoming a buddha. Here "possibility" means the possibility of transforming *saṃsāra* into *nirvāṇa* or of transforming a self-centered life into an egoless life. It is about the moral capability of following the path of the Buddha. As a seed is transformed into a fruit or a tree through conditions such as water and light, unenlightened people transform themselves into buddhas through the conditions of practice such as the eight noble paths, *śamatha* and *vipaśyanā*, or the six *pāramitā*. This moral capability always remains the same regardless of sex, age, culture, and so on. It remains the same no matter how situations change and whatever individuals undergo. So we say "possibility" because it is to be realized eventually.

To have a repository of Buddha-nature means that we can have the same enlightenment as achieved by the Buddha and we cannot avoid this supreme goal of life because it is our nature. Wonhyo asserted that "the way of bodhi is an equal truth. It is not an unequal truth" as follows.

The enlightenment of the Buddha that is pure by nature is pervasive and great. So it is called the "way." All sentient beings have this nature and there is no one who can abandon it. So it says "an equal truth and not an unequal truth."¹⁹⁾

As we see here, Wonhyo had a firm belief in human beings as shown in his view of Buddha-nature. He introduced six arguments on Buddha-nature.²⁰⁾

- 1) All beings have a Buddha-nature in the sense that there is future for them to recover it although presently disconnected from their innate good nature.

2) Presently unenlightened people become the essential part (*bonche*) of Buddha-nature.

3) The mind of unenlightened beings becomes the essential part of enlightenment because it is their nature to dislike suffering and to like happiness and, practicing all, finally to reach the bliss of the supreme bodhi.

4) In the mind, it is our nature not to lose the spirituality that becomes an essential part of enlightenment.

5) A seed that exists in ālaya-vijñāna becomes the essential part of Buddha-nature by nature.

6) *Amala-vijñāna* (pure consciousness) that knows suchness becomes the essential part of Buddha-nature.

Wonhyo thought that unenlightened beings could become buddhas through their present (2) universal mind, the mind of avoiding suffering and pursuing happiness (3). This mind, as a seed that exists in ālaya-vijñāna, is the essential part of Buddha-nature by nature (5), and as nature of knowing suchness, it is the essential part of Buddha-nature from the perspective of amala-vijñāna (6). Although a good nature discontinues or one does not seem capable of being a buddha, Buddha-nature cannot be lost because it exists in the future (1). In other words, a mind never loses its spirituality, and this spirituality becomes the spirituality of enlightenment.

The most important point is that even an evil person cannot destroy the repository of Buddha-nature. The indestructibility of the Buddha-nature provides us with an absolute human equality. We are absolutely equal because a repository of Buddha-nature as "a possibility of realizing the supreme value" never disappears. We are equal due to the possibility of perfection through moral transformation.

When this notion of equality on the basis of a repository of Buddha-nature is applied to all human beings, to buddhas and unenlightened beings, its uniqueness is evident. We can say buddhas and unenlightened beings are equal, but they are not the same. They are both the same and different. In other words, "being equal" of buddhas and unenlightened beings includes both sameness and difference between them.

Unenlightened beings and buddhas are the same in the sense that both of them have a repository of Buddha-nature. But both are different in the sense that buddhas have "realized" it while unenlightened beings have the "potential." So we can

say that both are the same and different by the same token, namely, "the repository of Buddha-nature." Regarding the difference between buddhas and unenlightened beings, Wonhyo stated that unenlightened beings have "original enlightenment" (*bon-gak*) but have not reached their own original enlightenment due to "a thorn of selfish desire," or "externally obtained defilement" (*gaekjin*).²¹ On the other hand, buddhas and unenlightened beings are both enlightened by nature and are always in "one enlightenment" (*ilgak*).²² Regarding this sameness and difference, we can say that unenlightened beings and the Buddha-nature neither the same nor different (*jungsaengbulseong bulilbuli*).²³ Or we can say that buddhas and unenlightened beings are the same and different.²⁴ So we assume that there is difference between them when we refer to their sameness, while we assume that there is sameness when we refer to their difference.

This nature of sameness and difference is doctrinally grounded in the nature of the two doors of *ilsim*, particularly, the nature of "inclusiveness" including all dharma (*chongseopseong*) and "inseparability" (*bulsangriseong*) of the two doors.

Recall that *ilsim* has a dual meaning. It has the pure mind (*jeongsim*) and the defiled mind (*yeomsim*). The pure mind is the characteristic of the door of suchness and the defiled mind is that of rising-ceasing. The door of suchness is mainly characterized as "being-pure" and yet it does not leave "being-defiled" (*bulyeomiyeom*) while the door of rising and ceasing is mainly characterized as "being-defiled" and yet it does not leave "being-pure" (*yeomibulyeom*).²⁵ Here the characteristics of *ilsim*, "the compatibility of being-defiled and being-pure," is not possible if the two doors are neither "inclusive" nor "inseparable."

Again, we see the sameness and difference between the buddhas and unenlightened beings due to the inclusiveness and inseparability of the two doors. Although the mind of an unenlightened beings takes the mind of arising-ceasing as the main characteristic, it does not leave the mind of suchness. This is why she/he is not defiled and yet defiled. **Although the mind of the buddha takes the mind of suchness as its nature, he/she does not leave the mind of arising-ceasing and purposely transmigrates between the six realms out of compassion.** This is why he/she is defiled and yet not defiled. This co-existence in the mind of not-being-defiled and being-defiled, or the mind of buddhas and the mind of unenlightened beings is based on the inclusiveness and inseparability of the

two doors indicating two aspects of the mind.

the sameness and difference of buddhas and unenlightened beings based on the inclusiveness and the inseparability of the two doors, is illustrated by a famous aphorism. Due to ignorance without beginning, Buddha-nature is hidden. This is similar to the wave that arises from the calm ocean due to the wind, where the ocean is Buddha-nature and the wave is ignorance. The Buddha-nature, the pure mind, loses its calmness by nature due to ignorance. When the wind of ignorance blows, the waves of the defiled mind arise on the ocean of the pure mind. But this state is not the state of the pure mind being lost but that of the pure mind pausing. The state of the pure mind, a calm state by nature, is recovered when the wave of the defiled mind or the wind of ignorance stops. “The fact that self-nature is pure by nature but there is a defiled mind due to ignorance makes this clear; it is pure but always defiled. The fact that there is a defiled mind but self-nature is never changed makes this clear; it is moving but always calm.”²⁶⁾ In this simile, the water or the suchness of the ocean is the sameness of buddhas and unenlightened beings, and presence or absence of the wind of ignorance is the difference between them. In other words, the original purity of the repository of Buddha-nature is their sameness, and the concealment or manifestation of it is their difference.

Although equality in the repository of Buddha-nature assumes sameness and difference between buddhas and unenlightened beings, we should be aware that the emphasis is on their sameness because the significance of a repository of Buddha-nature is not difference but sameness. In other words, its significance is the firm belief that unenlightened beings can transform their mind into the mind of a buddha, or the belief that unenlightened beings are already buddhas. This view of equality emphasizing sameness rather than difference is founded on an absolute belief that no single person can avoid the path to the goal and all beings without exception will eventually reach the path. That is why we can neither abandon nor discriminate against any person.

***Muae* as Liberty and Compassion**

In a word, the life of Wonhyo can be called a life of *muae*, which literally means “not being bound.” *Muae* is the completion of his thought. Through *muae* he realized fully what he wrote, resolving all oppositions and realizing reconciliation

out of compassion. *Muae* comes out of compassion and realizes liberty.

The life of *muae* of Wonhyo has been highlighted from the perspective of liberty unbound, but *muae* is more than this. If we understand it as no more than liberty, we leave out its essence, namely, compassion. In *muae*, compassion is prior to liberty. Its identity cannot be maintained without compassion. *Muae* without compassion is not liberty but license. Let me elaborate.

The records referring to Wonhyo's life of *muae* are *Songgoseungjeon* (The Biographies of the Great Monks of Song) and *Samgukyusa* (Memorabilia of the Three Kingdoms).²⁷⁾ According to the former, Wonhyo lived the life of not being bound by the distinction between lay person and monk. It is said that his actions were not predictable. He practiced meditation and gave sermons. He also drank, played a musical instrument, and spent time with lay people. The scope of his life was somewhere between the life of a monk and that of a lay person. According to *Samgukyusa*, there are two songs that show his life of *muae*: one about a pillar without a handle, and the Song of *muae*.

Before his breaking of a precept, it is said that Wonhyo sang; "I will make a pillar to hold the heavens if someone gives me an ax without a handle."²⁸⁾ The king noticed that Wonhyo was looking for a widow and sent an messenger to invite him to the palace. He introduced Wonhyo to his widowed daughter. Consequently, Wonhyo became a father. Seolchong, who grew up to be a famous scholar, was born. For Wonhyo it was the breaking of a precept, but he seemed to be respected even from his time. Breaking a precept was thought to be a turning point for him as he took on the life of a bodhisattva. At any rate, disrobed and called himself an "ill-natured lay person" (*soseonggeosa*). In this way, he started the life of *muae* living with and among people.

Wonhyo's life of *muae* beginning with the song of an ax without a handle shows that he did not care about all conventional distinctions. He intentionally took that action. He broke a precept publicly and spoke openly about it. It is worth noting that his breaking of a precept was goal-oriented toward the goal of making a pillar to holding the heavens. Here, we see his good intentions and honesty. The series of actions related to the song of an ax have been commonly interpreted as Wonhyo's efforts to resolve his conflict or suffering over social position. If we see his actions in this way, breaking a precept was not for a way of fulfilling his personal desire; rather, it was the vow of a bodhisattva. He lived in accordance

with what he wrote; an enlightened being should not stay in nirvāna out of compassion. His intentions and life as told by the song of an ax were for the benefit of others.

Another song showing Wonhyo's *muae*, the "Muaega" (Song of *Muae*), not only reveals the philosophical foundation of *muae* but also specifies his actions of *muae*. After carving a Buddhist tool imitating the gourd of a clown, he started to sing "One who is not bound (*muae*) by any thing goes beyond life and death through the one way (*ildo*)."²⁹⁾ This song, quoted from *Huayen Sutra* reveals both his thought and his life as a bodhisattva.

The "one way," leading us beyond life and death, appears to have the same meaning as the Buddhist dharma, one dharma, one dharma kāya, or *ilsim* in the *Huayen Sutra*.³⁰⁾ The term "one way" appears together with one door, one mind, one thought, one truth, one action, one yāna, one enlightenment, and one taste in other texts.³¹⁾ Although "one way," as a method to reach to enlightenment, can be called various things, it is the same as *ilsim*. Through the "Song of *muae*", Wonhyo showed people where they should return to. Furthermore, he showed what "returning to the source of *ilsim*" means a life of great compassion or "benefitting people" (*yoikjungsaeng*).

The actions of *muae* connected with the two songs show Wonhyo's life of compassion and liberty. As seen earlier, according to *ilsim* and the two doors, one who reaches nirvāṇa of the door of suchness willingly chooses the world of transmigration (*saṃsāra* or life-and-death) of the door of arising-ceasing out of compassion. Consequently, he/she is to be defiled and not to be defiled. He/she does not stay in nirvāṇa (*mujuyeolban*) out of great compassion. He/she stays in nirvāṇa for eternity but generates the mind of transmigration out of a great compassion of oneness (*dongchedaebi*) and leaves nirvāṇa."³²⁾ For him/her all unenlightened beings are equally considered just as his/her only child.³³⁾

Remaining outside of nirvāṇa is not just for unenlightened beings. It is not only for them but also for oneself. In other words, it benefits both others and one self. This is because staying in nirvāṇa is not true nirvāṇa. Wonhyo thought that staying in nirvāṇa was more like being bound by nirvāṇa. He wrote "Staying in nirvāṇa is to be bound by attachment. Staying in nirvāṇa everlastingly is not liberation. Not staying in nirvāṇa, one can obtain liberation. Staying in nirvāṇa, one cannot leave its bind. Therefore, there is no place for the mind to stay."³⁴⁾

The actions of *muae* can be understood in terms of compassion and liberty. The actions of *muae* as liberty presupposes compassion. *Muae* is liberty benefitting self and others. It is neither liberty out of ignorance, nor license. It is liberty realized by achieving nirvāna but not staying in it out of compassion. It is liberty by returning to unenlightened beings. Finally, it is the realization of the heart of Buddhism addressed by Wonhyo “returning to the source of *ilsim* and benefitting unenlightened beings.”

Liberty appearing in *muae* is different from the modern notion of liberty that we pursue today. Wonhyo’s liberty is not individual liberty but is based on the oneness of self and others. It is the liberty of compassion. This liberty is not an expression of individual desires but it is rooted in a purified character free from ignorance. Considering that the modern liberty we pursue, whether it positive or negative, solely focuses on realizing each individual’s desires and aims at benefitting only the self. Contrary to this, the liberty of *muae* presupposes purified desires and compassion for others beyond the boundary of you and I. It aims at benefitting both you and I. Liberty and compassion are inseparable in *muae*.

Wonhyo's The acts of *muae* exemplify Buddhist liberty and compassion. The most distinguished characteristic of these two concepts is their inseparability. This inseparability echoes the heart of Buddhism: a great compassion of oneness. From the perspective of Buddhism, liberty without compassion is a self-centered, false liberty. Compassion without liberty is a passive, false compassion. So realizing one of the two necessitates realizing the other.

The inseparability of compassion and liberty illustrates how the Buddhist notion of liberty differs from that underpinning modern human rights. Modern liberty of human rights is based on an atomistic and possessive individualism as it was established on a strict opposition between you and I. The Buddhist notion of liberty, however, cannot be based on this opposition. For Buddhism, this kind of liberty is the very origin of being bound..

Conclusion

In this paper, I examined the three fundamental ideals of human rights (liberty,

equality and brotherhood) in Wonhyo's thoughts and life. The three main concepts of Wonhyo, *ilsim*, *muae*, and *hwajaeng*, are equivalent to the three fundamental ideals of human rights declared in the first article of the Declaration of Human Rights. In this paper, I focused on only *ilsim* and *muae*. I have argue that *ilsim* requires compassion and provides the grounds of equality, and *muae* is the realization of compassion and liberty. In other words, *ilsim* and *muae* embody liberty, equality and compassion.

According to Wonhyo, human beings should return to the source of *ilsim* (*gwiilsimwon*). The two doors of *ilsim*, specifically, their inclusiveness and inseparability, are a logical basis for "returning to the source of *ilsim*" or for "transforming unenlightened beings into buddhas." I have argued that "returning to the source of *ilsim*" means "to cease all objects or the external world" (*sikman-gyeong*). "Ceasing objects" is to perceive the oneness of objects and the mind or others and the self, and to live in accordance with this perception. In other words, it is to be not bound by objects or the duality of others and self, and to live a compassionate life. So "returning to the source of *ilsim*" eventually means to live in a great compassion of oneness (*dongchejabi*). Consequently, what *ilsim* requires is only compassion. This is proved by the fact that the reason for establishing the dharma of *ilsim* is compassion, and that the purpose of practicing of samatha and vipasyanā is to cultivate compassion.

Ilsim as a foundation of human equality is interpreted in terms of a repository of Buddha-nature (*yeoraejang*). A repository of Buddha-nature, as "the possibility of becoming a buddha" or "the moral capability of self-perfection," is endowed on all human beings. It is the absolute grounds for human equality because it is not destructible under any conditions for any person. When this notion of Buddha-nature is applied to unenlightened beings and buddhas, it explains their sameness and difference. They are the same in the sense that they are both endowed with a repository of Buddha-nature. But they are different in the sense that unenlightened beings are endowed with it as "potentiality" and buddhas are endowed with it as "realization." The inclusiveness and the inseparability of the two doors is the logical basis for this sameness and difference. It is also a basis for the characteristic of "not-being-defiled and being-defiled" and of "being-defiled and not-being-defiled." However, the emphasis on a repository of Buddha-nature is to be found not in difference but in sameness because the notion of Buddha-nature requires the same

respect for all people as is given to buddhas.

Muae is the completion of Wonhyo's thought in action. *Muae* stands for liberty not bound by any dualistic oppositions and fixed conventional thoughts. However, it is not just about liberty. In *muae*, what is prior to liberty is compassion. More precisely, liberty and compassion are inseparable in *muae*. We cannot think of one of them without the other. Wonhyo's notion of liberty is different from that used in modern thought. It is not based on atomistic and possessive individualism, but is rooted in the oneness of you and I. It is precisely this that touches on the heart of Buddhism.

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Glossary

beopgyeilsang 法界一相

beopsin 法身

bonche 本體

bon-gak 本覺

bulgak 不覺

bulsangriseong 不相離性

bulyeomiyeom 不染而染

bunbyeolsim 分別心

cheongjeongsim 清淨心

chongseopseong 總攝性

Daeseunggisinron 大乘起信論

dongchedaebi 同體大悲

dongchejabi 同體慈悲

gaekjin 客塵

gak 覺

Geumgang sammae gyeongron (*Vajra-samādhi-sūtra-sastra*) 金剛三昧經論

gwan 觀

gwilsimwon 歸一心源

gyeong 境

hwajaeng 和諍

ilbeopgye 一法界

ildo 一道

ilgak 一覺

ilsim 一心

ilsimbeop 一心法

jemusogeon 齊無所遣

jeokjeong 寂靜

jeongsim 淨心

ji 止

jinyeomun 眞如門

jungsaengbulseong bulilbuli 衆生佛性 不一不異

mang 妄

mangsim 妄心

muae 無碍
mujuyeolban 無住涅槃
mumyeong 無明
saengmyeolmun 生滅門 --?
Samgukyusa 三國遺事
sasang 四相
sikmangyeong 息萬境
simbulsaeonggyeong gyeongbulsaeungsim 心不生境 境不生心
simjinyeo 心眞如
simsaengmyeol 心生滅 --?
Songgoseungjeon 宋高僧傳
soseonggeosa 小性居士
tathāgatagarbha (Skt.) 如來藏
Wonhyo 元曉
yeomibulyeom 染而不染
yeomjeongtongsang 染淨通相
yeomsim 染心
yeoraejang 如來藏
yoikjungsaeung 饒益衆生

- 1) According to a recent study, about 850 studies including 700 articles on Wonhyo have been done. Ko, Yeong-seop, "Wonhyo yeon-gu-ui gwageo-wa hyeonjae" (The Past and Present of Wonhyo Research), *Wonhyo: hanguk-ui sasangga 10 in (Wonhyo: Ten Korean Philosophers)* (Seoul: Ye Mun Seo Won, 2002), p. 15.
- 2) I left out "*hwajaeng*" not because it is unrelated to the three fundamental ideals but because it requires another paper to discuss fully.
- 3) *Daeseunggisinron* (Wakening of Faith in Mahāyāna), Hanguk bulgyo jeonseo (Korean Buddhist Collection), vol. 1, p. 679 b. Wakening of Faith in Mahāyāna of Āśvaghosha and works of Wonhyo cited in this paper are from Korean Buddhist Collection.
- 4) *Daeseunggisinronso* (Commentaries on Wakening of Faith in Mahāyāna), Korean Buddhist Collection, vol. 1, p. 679 b.
- 5) *Ibid.*
- 6) *Ibid.*, p. 705 a-c.
- 7) *Geumgang sammae gyeong* (Vajra-samādhi-sūtra-sastra), Korean Buddhist Collection, vol. 1, p. 641 a.
- 8) *Ibid.*, p. 341 b.
- 9) *Daeseunggisinron*, *Ibid.*, p. 736 b.
- 10) *Daeseunggisinronso*, *Ibid.*, p. 736 c.
- 11) *Ibid.*
- 12) 大乘起信論疏, 韓 1, p.781 b.

- 13) 大乘起信論, 韓 1, p.783 c.
 14) 大乘起信論, 韓 1, p.787 c.
 15) 大乘起信論疏, 韓 1, p.788 a.
 16) 大乘起信論疏, 韓 1, p.788 a.
 17) 大乘起信論疏, 韓 1, p.736 c.
 18) In this paper, the scope of equality is limited to the only human realm, eventhough Wonhyo's notion of equality encompasses all beings. When it is applied to all beings, it is called "one dharma dhātu"(ilbeopgye). One dharma dhātu is the basis for the equality of all beings. All beings consist of one dharma dhātu and they take their own unique roles in it. So all beings are equal in one living system with their own differences and uniqueness. They have their own rights to exist. Living things, plants, and even non-living beings have their own rights because they are part of it.
- 19) 金剛三昧經論, 韓 1, p.673 a.
 20) 涅槃經宗要, 韓 1, pp.583 a-539 a.
 21) 金剛三昧經論, 韓 1, p.633 c.
 22) 金剛三昧經, 韓 1, p.630 c.
 23) 金剛三昧經, 韓 1, p.643 c.
 24) Buddhas and unenlightened beings are the same and different because difference is included when we say that they are the same, and the sameness is included when we say they are different. 金剛三昧經, 韓 1, p.626 a.
 25) 涅槃經宗要, 韓 1, p.538 c.
 26) 大乘起信論疏, 韓 1, p.762 a.
 27) I recite the records of Wonhyo of 宋高僧傳 from Ko's book(Yeong-Seob Ko, *A Study of Wonhyo*, Seoul, Yongisa, 2001, p.126). I use a translation of 三國遺事(trans. by Dong-hwan Lee, *Sanggukyusa* Seoul, Jangrak, 1994), pp.290-294.
 28) *Sanggukyusa*, p.292.
 29) *Sanggukyusa*, p.293.
 30) 大方廣佛華嚴經 菩薩明難品 第6, 晉經5, 第20幅(*Koryo Taejangkyong* C.D., Seoul: The Research Institute of Tripitaka Koreana, 2000)
 31) 金剛三昧經論, 韓 1, p.605 a.
 32) 金剛三昧經論, 韓 1, p.666 c.
 33) 金剛三昧經, 韓 1, p.674 c.
 34) 金剛三昧經論, 韓 1, p.634 b.