
Gihwa's Analysis of the Relationship between the Worded and Wordless Teachings: The Ogahae seorui

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1. Background of the Seon-Gyo Tension

Koreans originally received Buddhism from their Chinese predecessors in a scripturally oriented context, and the Buddhism of the latter part of the Three Kingdoms period up through the Unified Silla⁽¹⁾ was wholly contained within scholarly sects. Not only were the scholarly schools the sole articulators of Buddhist soterics and philosophy — they administered all of the monasteries, and became deeply involved on an institutional level with the Silla government. These doctrinal schools functioned in this capacity for several centuries, without so much as a hint of a question of their religious or political authority.

The Chan communities in China began to develop in the seventh and eighth centuries as the result of the efforts in some circles to place greater stress on meditation practice vis-a-vis textual study. As the schools of Chan began to create an identity for themselves, they tended to foreground their lack of reliance upon scriptural study. Through the eighth and ninth centuries, this developed into a Chan anti-intellectual / anti-scholarly rhetoric that became pronounced to the extent that book-reading and intellectual knowledge were discounted as nothing but impediments to the attainment of the enlightenment experience. It is this strain of Chan that initially made its way into Korea, mainly through the efforts of Korean monks who went to the Tang to study in such lineages as that of the Mazu school.

The anti-scholarly rhetoric that had taken a few centuries to develop in China, was transferred disproportionately to the Seon schools in Korea, within a relatively condensed time frame. Therefore the early Korean Seon schools tended to characterize themselves by the most radical of the Chan labels, such as "the separate transmission outside of the sutras" and "the school that points directly to the mind." From the outset, there was tension between the older scholastic (Gyo 教) schools and the new Seon schools, and these tensions increased when the doctrinal schools were disparaged in the writings of such leading early Seon monks as Doui (道義 d. 825) and Muyeom (無染 801-888)⁽²⁾ for their lack of possession of the authentic transmission of enlightenment. The adherents of the doctrinal schools on the other hand, regarded the Seon group as radical and misguided upstarts.

Despite the antipathy toward early Seon on the part of the Silla scholastic Buddhist community, the same scholastic Buddhism contained within it principles that would end up serving as the bases for the reconciliation of the two positions. Silla scholastic Buddhism had come to develop as a distinctive blend of Hwaeom (Ch. Huayan 華嚴) "interpenetration" metaphysics, coupled with tathagatagarbha-oriented soteriological thought as seen in the essence-function (Kor. che-yong; Ch. tiyong 體用) approach of the Awakening of Mahayana Faith (Daeseung gisinnon 大乘起信論).

At the center of this trend was Weonhyo (元曉 617-686), who had utilized the complementary interpretive principles of essence-function and interpenetration (Kor. tongdal; Ch. tongda 通達)⁽³⁾ as his main hermeneutical tools in the process of his exegesis of such ecumenical texts as the Awakening of Faith,⁽⁴⁾ Sutra of Adamantine Absorption⁽⁵⁾ and Nirvana Sutra,⁽⁶⁾ arguing that Buddhist doctrines which seemed to be in mutual conflict need not be perceived as such if their differences are explained in terms of their complementary relationship as alternative ways of explaining the same fundamental reality. That is, the ineffable, inconceivable buddhadharma — the "essence," — is articulated in different forms (or different "functions") depending upon the circumstance in which it is being expressed. Both Weonhyo and Uisang (義湘 625-702) were influenced in their philosophical approach to religious matters by the accommodating tendency of Hwaeom thought, in which all of the principle and phenomena of the universe (which includes religious and philosophical teachings) were seen to be mutually containing. This distinctive approach, which took various forms of Buddhist doctrine to be mutually complementary, was termed by Weonhyo tong bulgyo (通佛教 "interpenetrated Buddhism").⁽⁷⁾

Because of the pervasive influence in Korean Buddhism of this essence-function / interpenetration based worldview, despite the opposition observable between Seon and Gyo factions at the institutional level, it did not take long before the deeply ingrained tendencies toward mutual inclusion from the philosophical core of Silla scholastic Buddhism began to show themselves, and major Gyo-based leaders in the

Goryeo (高麗朝 918-1392) began to make efforts to reconcile the two positions.⁽⁸⁾ During the early to mid-Goryeo, such influential Hwaeom scholars as Gyunyeo (均如 923-973) and Uicheon (義天 1055-1101) strove to include their positions and those of the Seon camp into a single vision. While they were not very successful in terms of bringing about lasting concrete results, their works helped to lay the groundwork for subsequent Seon thinkers. Two of these — Jinul and Gihwa — will be treated from here.

Jinul (智訥 1158-1210) is usually cited as the father of Seon-Gyo conciliation in Korea. Gihwa, while not yet widely recognized as such, should be seen as the major reviver⁽⁹⁾ of Jinul's argument against exclusivist positions taken by members of the meditative, mind-to-mind transmission oriented "Seon" school as opposed to the text-oriented, doctrinal stance of Gyo. Jinul and Gihwa were both Seon monks with a strong meditation-oriented perspective to religious cultivation. Therefore, in both of their systems, Seon meditation practice held the priority. But both men also felt that the denigration of Gyo study methods by Seon extremists was unnecessary, and even harmful. Thus, both Jinul and Gihwa wrote with the aim of re-valorizing scriptural study, arguing their positions with an essence-function based logic.

Being Buddhist (rather than Confucian or Daoist) scholars, Jinul and Gihwa in most places take the "essence" to be the innately enlightened mind of sentient beings, their buddhahood — which is their original endowment. "Function" would be the various appearances or activities of the originally enlightened mind in the phenomenal world, whether these be the enlightened activities of the sage (whose function well-reflects his essence) or the selfish and narrow-minded activities of an unenlightened person (whose function does not well-reflect his essence). Nonetheless, whatever the level of individual functioning, such function is always fully united with the essence, or, in other words, essence and function always fully include each other, as do the separate functions of all the individual sentient beings penetrate each other (if this were not the case, there would be no such thing as communication). This is the basic principle guiding the works of Jinul and Gihwa, which is prefigured in the writings of Weonhyo.

Jinul and Gihwa apply the same principle to the issue of the juxtaposition of the worded and wordless teachings. The "ineffable transmission" is the mind of enlightenment itself, or the essence. The worded teaching, on the other hand, is seen as a function of this innate, ineffable experience of enlightenment. It is, however, not something "outside" or disconnected from the wordless teaching, as those of Seon exclusivist inclination claimed (and seem to be claiming again in many modern Zen centers in the West). As the "function" of the essence, the worded teaching is intrinsically unified to, and reflecting, the ineffable buddha-mind. But the essence-function relationship, which implies intrinsic unity, or interpenetration, also has the

important characteristic of distinction within unity, and valuation — designations of priority. Therefore, the worded teaching, having more to do with function than essence, should be relegated to a secondary position of importance. Yet its secondariness does not imply dispensability. It can never be discounted, since in the essence-function relationship, primary and secondary are inseparable.

2. Jinul's Efforts Toward Seon-Gyo Harmonization

Jinul, in his quest for enlightenment, is recorded as never having been able to establish the intimate relationship with the enlightened master traditionally recommended by the Chan school. So it is especially significant in terms of the standard characterizations of this school regarding the transmission of enlightenment (i. e. "mind-to-mind transmission" and "transmission outside of words and letters") that he was able to undergo major awakening experiences on three separate occasions in connection with the reading of textual passages. After his second awakening, which occurred while reading a passage from the Huayan jing, he said:

What the Buddha said through his mouth is Gyo, whereas what the patriarchs transmitted to the mind is Seon. The mind and mouth of the Buddha and patriarchs should not be at odds. How can it be right that people do not penetrate to the very root but squander their time in futile arguments and disputes, each feeling comfortable in what he is accustomed to?⁽¹⁰⁾

Aided by the analysis of the Huayan jing provided by the Tang Huayan scholar Li Tongxuan (李通玄 635-730),⁽¹¹⁾ Jinul utilized Huayan philosophy to support Seon soteriological and epistemological views. Jinul further composed a lengthy distillation of Li's work, entitled Hwaecomnon jeoryo (華嚴論節要 "Essentials of the Huayan Treatise"). In his famous preface to this work, Jinul utilized the essence-function construction to explain the relationship of the Huayan theory of interpenetration to the Seon awakening experience, saying:

The diligent practitioner who is cultivating his mind should first, by means of the path of the patriarchs, become cognizant of the fact that the fundamental subtlety of his own mind cannot be defined in words and letters. Then, using the texts, he should discern that the essence and function of his mind are none other than the nature and characteristics of the realm of experiential reality (dharmadhatu). Then the virtuous power of [the actualization of] the interpenetration of phenomena with phenomena, and the efficacious function of the wisdom and compassion [that are gained from an awareness of] the sameness in essence [of all things] will no longer be external concerns (i. e., merely

conceptual theories). (HBJ 4.768a.)

Despite the pronounced attention he paid to the philosophical resolution of Seon-Gyo tensions, an examination of the writings of major Seon figures immediately subsequent to Jinul does not, relatively speaking, reveal any deep or sustained argumentation regarding this issue. One might say that the general influence of Jinul's Seon-Gyo thought can be seen in the overall character of the oeuvre of his leading disciple Hyesim (慧諶 1178-1234), as Hyesim compiled the largest anthology of scriptural and Seon writings collections in Korean Buddhism.⁽¹²⁾ But it is a long time — over two centuries — before we find the matter of the Seon-Gyo relationship argued again as a distinct topic in a sustained manner. This happens in the works of Gihwa, most extensively in his commentary to the Geumgang banyabaramilgyeong ogahae seorui ("Redacted Commentaries of Five Masters on the Diamond Sutra", usually referred to by the short title of Oga hae 五家解), which we will examine below. First, however, let us try to gain a basic understanding of Gihwa's background and approach.

3. Gihwa's Background and Approach to Buddhism

Gihwa (1376-1433) lived directly in the midst of one of most significant periods of social, political and religious upheaval in the history of the Korean peninsula. The Goryeo regime, which had endured for over four centuries, but had become corrupt in its latter years, was on the verge of collapse, and as the leading Buddhist figure of his generation, many of the episodes in Gihwa's career concerned his dealings with the epochal events that occurred at this time.⁽¹³⁾ Gihwa addressed in his writings a wide variety of Buddhist and non-Buddhist religious themes, but one of his favorite topics was the renewal of Jinul's argument for the essence-function connection of Seon and Gyo, which he carried out primarily within the context of the Oga hae. Besides this commentary on the Diamond Sutra, Gihwa also wrote the major Korean commentary to the Sutra of Perfect Enlightenment,⁽¹⁴⁾ a commentary on Xuanjue's Yongjia ji⁽¹⁵⁾ and an important essay on the intrinsic unity of the Three Teachings of Buddhism, Confucianism and Daoism.⁽¹⁶⁾ He also wrote a separate essay on the theme of the Diamond Sutra, entitled Geumgang banyabaramilgyeong yun gwan (金剛般若波羅蜜經綸貫 "The Penetrating Thread of the Diamond Sutra"). Gihwa also wrote a number of shorter essays and versified works on various doctrinal and meditational topics. The high literary quality and the philosophical profundity of Gihwa's works helped greatly in further establishing the deep influence in Korea of the Sutra of Perfect Enlightenment, Diamond Sutra, Yongjia ji and Awakening of Faith.

4. Gihwa's Relationship with the Oga hae

The Oga hae consists of Gihwa's own further annotation to the five separate commentaries to the Diamond Sutra. These commentators include Zongmi (宗密 780-841),⁽¹⁷⁾ Huineng (慧能 638-713),⁽¹⁸⁾ Shuanglin fu (雙林 傳),⁽¹⁹⁾ Yefu Daochuan (冶父道川)⁽²⁰⁾ and Yuzhang Zongjing (豫章宗鏡).⁽²¹⁾ Interwoven with these commentaries and the text of the sutra itself is Gihwa's own sub-commentary.

Gihwa uses the commentary of the erudite Zongmi to supply the philological details, give doctrinal background and define the technical terms of the text. Zongmi carefully compares the various extant translations of the sutra as well as the important early commentaries, analyzing the variant translations of a particular passage and their doctrinal implications. He also provides detailed definitions of original Sanskrit terms and an analysis of the traditional structure of the sutra itself. "Huineng" provides us a philosophically deeper explication of the doctrinal implications of particular passages. The other three commentators each also have their own characteristic slant on the text, which lends a high degree of complementarity to the arrangement of the five. Most distinctive among the remaining three is the writing of Yefu Daochuan, a minimalistic-poetic Chan commentator in whose exegesis Gihwa takes extreme delight, and by whom Gihwa is continually moved to response in the form of linked verses.

The style of Gihwa's commentary in the Oga hae and the Sutra of Perfect Enlightenment is quite different from that which we see in the works of the earlier systematic scholars of the Tang and Silla dynasties, such as Fazang, Zongmi and Weonhyo, in that it completely lacks philological explanation and is noticeably poetic. Gihwa never offers comment on the teaching classifications discussed by Zongmi, unless it is for the purpose of questioning their necessity by showing how the divisions are actually untenable when closely scrutinized. One of his and Daochuan's favorite lines which is repeated throughout Oga hae is "all buddhas possess the same realization: the eyes are horizontal and the nose is vertical" (a Chan metaphor for non-discrimination). Gihwa sees numberless possibilities in the same text, in the same passage, even in the same line. He says of the Diamond Sutra that it "contains the entire content of the Thirty-nine Chapter Huayan jing." He says that the Diamond Sutra (usually classified in the panjiao systems as something like "early Mahayana") "can also be called the Perfect Doctrine, and can also be called the Sudden Doctrine."⁽²²⁾ The only correct way to characterize the Diamond Sutra, he maintains, is as the "sutra of no-characteristics."⁽²³⁾

5. Essence: Seon Meditation

Gihwa was the inheritor of a Seon tradition whose practices were derived

mainly from the Chinese Linji (Korean Imje 臨濟) school, which he received through his teacher Muhak (Chach'o 無學自超 1327-1405) by way of Muhak's famous mentor Hyegeun (Naong, 慧勤懶翁; 1320-1376), both of whom traveled to Yuan China to receive direct instruction from Chinese Linji masters. Therefore, like Jinul, Gihwa sees the wordless / worded relationship in terms of essence-function, which accords with his fundamental position of being a meditation-oriented Seon monk. This means that "essence-oriented" practices, including such things as meditation and "mind-to-mind transmission" necessarily assume a position of priority in his system. Gihwa's sermons, reflecting this emphasis, are marked by the sharp, arcane gong'an flavor reminiscent of his Linji / Imje predecessors: the shout, the striking of the staff, the twirling of the incense stick, the unsettling admonishments. An example of Gihwa's direct teaching can be seen in his sermon at the event of the death of a noble named Nyeong:

... after a time the Master shouted one shout (kal!), and then said: "The adamant sword is unsheathed and thrust once! From here arise the various winds and lights! Let us make an offering to the spirit of the deceased Lord Nyeong! When there is clarity, then through the Indestructible body, every single thing is perfectly complete; through Limitless Life, each person is fulfilled." He raised some jewels in his right hand and said: "These are the True Eye of Indestructible Body." He raised some jewels in his left hand and said: "These are the compassionate luminosity of Limitless Life. In the place of the illumination from the light of compassion, the floating clouds of the Five Skandhas are dissolved. At the time of the opening of the True Eye, myriads of world-systems are disintegrated. This then, is precisely the place where the great multitude attains the Way. At what point do you receive the Indestructible Body? And at what point do you attain Limitless Life?" Squeezing the jewels together he let one drop and said: "Fully grasp this: The Indestructible Body is not gotten from someone else; Limitless Life does not come from outside. Yet even though it is like this — how do we make the Indestructible Body? And how do we create Limitless Life?" (HBJ 7.228c11-229a2.)

6. Essence-Function: The Diamond Sutra and Language

Since the Diamond Sutra is a text that deals directly with the problems of the relationship of language to reality, it is the perfect medium for Gihwa to express his understanding of this intrinsic unity as reflected in the two concurrent movements of: (1) the necessity of the practice of meditation for a proper realization of that to which the scriptures refer, and (2) the viability of scriptural study as a means towards the

attainment of the Seon goal of enlightenment. The issue of whether language is an appropriate vehicle for the transmission of the buddhadharma has re-arisen continually in the East Asian meditational schools of Buddhism. It is particularly relevant for Gihwa, since he is the descendant of the distinctly anti-textual tradition of Linji Chan, which had carried with it into Korea many of Chan's self-descriptive slogans, such as the school that "transmits directly from mind to mind," or "the special transmission outside of words and letters." The degree of the continued popularity of such slogans at the time of Gihwa is reflected in his frequent quotation of them in this commentary on the Diamond Sutra. While Gihwa is clearly in favor of an informed usage of scriptural study in Buddhist cultivation, he at the same time upholds Chan's strict admonition regarding the possible pitfalls of language — the same attitude that contributed to the birth of Chan. He says early in the Oga hae:

An ancient said: "The Three Vehicles and Twelve Divisions of the Teaching embody the principle and grasp the mystery." This being the case, what is the special significance of the ancestral teacher's coming from the West? And the separately transmitted teaching should also not be found outside of the scriptures. But since that which is contained in the worded teaching has remained hidden and undisclosed, now the patriarchs reveal and spread its truth, and not only is the meaning of the doctrine made clear, but the "separately transmitted teaching" is also fully disclosed. Since there has been something designated as "the transmission of direct pointing," how could this be something that is contained in the doctrinal teaching? If we merely reflect on the story of Caoxi of Huangmei,⁽²⁴⁾ this can readily be seen! (HBJ 7.12. c5-10.)

He means here that the Platform Sutra's "formless" teaching, which makes strict warnings about the dangers of becoming trapped in language, is something that needs to be kept foremost in one's mind. Although he first intimates that the Chan of the patriarchs and the sermons of the Buddha manifest the same reality, and that one cannot stick to an "anti-language" position, he subsequently privileges the wordless transmission. Below, he offers a view of the issue that is a bit more balanced, pointing out the usefulness of the worded teaching, while at the same time maintaining his warning against attachment to it:

The dharma that the Buddha has taught is absolute and is relative. Since it is relative, liberation is none other than written language. Since what was taught in the east and taught in the west for forty-nine years⁽²⁵⁾ is absolute, written language is none other than liberation;⁽²⁶⁾ yet in over three hundred sermons, Sakyamuni never explained a single word. If you are attached to the words,

then you see branches of the stream but miss their source. If you do away with words, you observe the source, but are ignorant of its branch streams. When you are confused about neither the source nor its streams, then you enter the ocean of the dharma-nature. Having entered the ocean of the dharma-nature, the no-thought wisdom is directly manifested. The no-thought wisdom being directly manifested, whatever is faced is no impediment, and you penetrate wherever you touch.⁽²⁷⁾

Although one should not be attached to words, words also are not to be denied. And here, the usage of the essence-function formula is prominent in the source-streams simile. Gihwa first counsels regarding the serious pitfall which has been warned against throughout the Buddhist tradition, and which became a main concern of Chan — that an imbalanced attachment to (functional) words (*yong*) can lead to an obstruction of the very essence (*che*) of Buddhist practice. Yet to forget words and become absorbed in the wordless is to forget the phenomenal world and be attached to the essence.⁽²⁸⁾ According to Gihwa and Jinul, this is not an acceptable Buddhist position. Nonetheless, this is how the Buddhist teaching is often perceived by Seon / Zen practitioners. What remains is the "middle path," which means continuous avoidance of abiding in either-or positions. This is "entering the ocean of the dharma-nature," which results in the manifestation of no-thought wisdom. No-thought wisdom penetrates everything with which it comes in contact.

Below, Gihwa makes the same point in a slightly different way. In the Diamond Sutra, the Buddha is speaking to his arhat interlocutor, Subhuti, the arhat-interlocutor:

"Subhuti, what do you think? Does the Tathagata have a dharma to be explained or not?"

Subhuti answered the Buddha, saying, "World-honored one, the Tathagata has no dharma to be explained."⁽²⁹⁾

Daochuan, the poetic commentator who is Gihwa's favorite, says: "Quietly, quietly."

Gihwa adds: "That the Buddha has nothing to explain — this is definitely true. But 'saying nothing' is also not the Buddha's original intention. That is why Daochuan says 'quietly, quietly.' One should not claim one-sidedly that there is 'nothing to be said.'" A bit further on he adds: "... therefore it is said, 'even though you do not rely on the path of verbal teaching, you should also not be attached to the position which fully rejects verbal explanation.'" (HBJ 7.56 b.24-c.10.)

Gihwa considers the Diamond Sutra to be so valuable exactly because he considers "non-abiding" to be the key to all Buddhist practices. Again relying on the essence-function framework, he says:

Non-abiding is the great essence of the myriad practices, and the myriad practices are all the great function of Non-abiding. The teaching of the compassionate saint [the Buddha] takes Non-abiding as its abode. With the great essence shining, one cannot but be aware of the great function. (HBJ 7.36. a.10-13.)

Concerning the relationship of the Diamond Sutra with the practice of non-abiding, Gihwa says:

Prajña's divine source is vast, lacking all kinds of characteristics. It is extensive, yet lacks an abode. It is empty and non-existent; it is profound and unknown. Now this single sutra takes this as its core teaching and as its essence. Although there is no awareness, there is nothing that it does not know. Although there is no abiding, there is no place where it does not abide. Although lacking characteristics, it does not obstruct any characteristics. This is the function of marvelous existence. What all Buddhas have realized is exactly the realization of this. What all the patriarchs have transmitted is exactly the transmission of this. Their means of awakening people is also exactly through this. (HBJ 7.14 a.15-22.)

In the Diamond Sutra, non-abiding is equated with the lack of attachment to any characteristic (xiang / sang 相). Therefore, the Diamond Sutra's teaching of no-marks (wuxiang / musang 無相) is synonymous with non-abiding. The Diamond Sutra's discussion, as is the case with the other texts of the prajñāparamita genre, carries out a systematic refutation of the abiding in marks, and most importantly, the abiding in marks of selfhood and thinghood. The same then, applies for abiding in either of the positions of "words" or "wordlessness."

In summary, Gihwa is opposed to exclusivist positions either for or against the role of written language in the cultivation of the dharma. But since his articulation of the polarity is through essence and function, we can say that while Gihwa accepts the validity of both approaches, it is clear that the "wordless" teaching, being the essence, has priority, and the textual approach is secondary. But once again, the secondary is just as necessary to the primary as is the primary to the secondary. You can't have one without the other.

7. On Exegesis and Editing

Regarding, as he does, scriptural teaching to be of vital importance in the overall program of Buddhist cultivation, Gihwa felt motivated to study the sutras and write his own commentaries to two of them. In the Oga hae, Gihwa offers a modicum of

commentary, which is more often attached to the writings of the other commentators than it is to the sutra itself. In contrast, his commentary on the Sutra of Perfect Enlightenment is a full-scale exegesis devoted exclusively to the sutra itself. This commentary is insightful, and because of Gihwa's excellent literary style, a very readable work.

One of the most interesting characteristics of this work is the degree to which Gihwa takes upon himself the responsibility of identifying textual errors in the canonical version of the sutra, and correcting them — basically doing a rewrite of the sutra, something almost unheard of in the East Asian Buddhist exegetical tradition. In the Sutra of Perfect Enlightenment, he explains his reasons for revision case-by-case, but does not offer a general rationale for his decision to make such an unorthodox move as scripture correction. In the *Oga hae* Gihwa directly discusses of the enterprise of editing and commentary in itself — the resolution of various problems that develop in the process of translation and commentary.

In considering his point, we may want to remind ourselves of the difficulties involved in the maintenance and dissemination of texts in ancient times before the invention and use of the printing press. Buddhist sutras written in literary Chinese (of which there were often various translated versions) needed to be continually recopied by hand for maintenance and further dissemination. Indeed, this was one of the major activities of Buddhist monks of the pre-press era. In the process of copying, the chances of error were high. This is particularly the case in the copying of intricate CJK logographs, many of which closely resemble each other and yet carry variant meanings. Furthermore, in the case of the Mahayana Buddhist sutra, the operative logic⁽³⁰⁾ is profound, and often quite opposite from that which would be seen in a secular argument. If some less-than-qualified copyist were to have a temporary lapse in understanding and / or concentration, it would be quite easy to skip words or invert their order.

Based on his considerable experience in the study of scriptural texts, Gihwa had a special sensitivity to this matter, and felt compelled to address it to an extent not seen elsewhere among East Asian scriptural exegeses. There is also a distinctive flavor to Gihwa's admonishments in this section, in the degree to which they reflect Gihwa's Seon orientation. When Gihwa encourages proper scholastic discipline in the handling of the Buddhist text, while first citing the need for proper technical and philological grounding, he subsequently places primary emphasis on the development of the commentator's meditative insight, which should be brought to the scholarly work. Hence, while we can say that Gihwa has, in other places, argued for an inclusion of "Gyo" into "Seon," he here integrates the "Seon" meditational experience into "Gyo" scholarly activity. And again, an essence-function approach can be seen here, in that the more essential requirement for someone handling canonical texts is

his meditative experience and insight, as opposed to technical acumen. The exegete needs the continual deepening of his own meditative experience, so that he will not miswrite mistaken interpretations into the text. He is required not only to read the subject text deeply enough to penetrate its key themes, but also to do meditation in order to have the necessary mental purity and "wisdom eye" to carry out the work. First, Gihwa stresses the importance of seriousness regarding the project, since, as shown earlier, words are the tools for the expression of the Dao:

Written words are the tools for the expression of the Dao and the means for guiding people. The situational and the overall themes should support each other, and this theme should penetrate the text throughout, being fully contained down to its minutest details. Only when omissions, superfluous words, inversions and errors do not confuse its points can the text awaken people's understanding and can it become a norm for a thousand generations. If this is not the case, then not only will the text not open people's eyes, it will become a instrument of confusion. (HBJ 7.13. b.3-8.)

The task of correcting an error-laden text is not to be carried out lightly, by someone who lacks the proper preparation. Therefore "if you lack the wisdom eye, you cannot but be confounded by arrogance and error." (HBJ 7.13. b.11-12.) Nevertheless, one who initially lacks the sharpness to overcome these mistakes can still treat a text well with the proper meditative preparation: "Although you may lack the wisdom eye, if you silence your discriminations in order to apprehend the point, then the disagreements between the sentences and the theme can be grasped and straightened out." (HBJ 7.13 b.16-17) The responsibility is also great, since the exegete is passing on the dharma for future generations:

If you have understood that the text's errors are like "gnarled roots and knotted bark," (a metaphor for a state of confusion) and that the meaning is obstructed and not penetrating and, wary of criticism from others, you perceive these errors but do not correct them, then how can you reflect the meaning of the compassion of the Buddha? Later generations, unavoidably receiving the transmissions of error-laden texts will in turmoil produce forced interpretations in order to make sense of the text. If it is done in this way, then the uncorrected errors become attached to the words of the Buddhas and the Patriarchs and they will unavoidably be mixed up. This is something to which the man of excellence (tarin 達人) and the thoroughgoing scholar (tongsa 通士), cannot be party. (HBJ 7.13. c.16-4.)

8. Summary

The issue of Seon-Gyo complementarity has received a distinctive amount of attention in Korean Seon. It is also the case that such attention has invariably been presented in a distinctive format, one that is especially evident in the writings of Jinul and Gihwa: that of essence-function and interpenetration. This interpretive framework however, is not something new that begins with Jinul, as it can be traced back through a long series of writers, at least to Weonhyo, in whose works this approach received its most thorough early definition. On the other hand, the essence-function / interpenetration harmonizing approach to the relationship of the worded and wordless teaching does not end with Gihwa, as the character of modern-day Jogye Buddhism remains deeply informed by it.

The Oga hae has been studied in the Korean monastic tradition from the time of Gihwa up to the present, and is an integral part of the monks' core curriculum in contemporary Korean Seon.⁽³¹⁾ The Oga hae's renown was further enhanced by the attention paid to it by the influential Yi dynasty monk Hyujeong (Seosan Daesa), who cites its profound introductory passage in the opening paragraph of his influential work, the Seon'ga Kugam (禪家龜鑑). (See HBJ 7.634c-635a.) The Oga hae is a rather large text, occupying about one hundred pages of the HBJ, which means that a full annotated translation would end up being a project of several hundred pages. But the value of such a work would no doubt be great. Access would be provided to the combined exegeses of Zongmi, Huineng and three other formidable scholars, along with Gihwa, on one of the most influential texts in the East Asian Buddhist tradition. The philosophical merits of such a study would be high, gaining even greater relevance in view of the postmodern obsession with the ontological status of language, which is a central topic of discussion in the Diamond Sutra.

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Notes

- (1) The Three Kingdoms period (三國時代) runs from about 100 BCE-668 CE. The various schools of doctrinal Buddhism began to solidify in Korea during the fifth century. The time period we are referring to here is from approximately 400 to 900 C. E.
- (2) For excerpts of the anti-scriptural treatises of these two, see Buswell, *The Korean Approach to Zen* pp. 12-13.
- (3) I have been, in fits and starts, developing a lengthy explanation of the role of essence-function and interpenetration in East Asian religious-philosophical thought in a series of articles that include: (1) "The Composition of Self-Transformation Thought in Classical East Asian Philosophy and Religion." *Bulletin of Toyo Gakuen University*, vol. 4 (1996), pp. 141-152. Also available on the Internet at <http://www.hm.tyg.jp/~acmuller/articles/indigenoushermeneutics.htm>.
 (2) "Essence-Function (t'i-yung): Early Chinese Origins and Manifestations." *Bulletin of Toyo Gakuen University*, vol. 7 (1999), p. 93-106. Also available on the Internet at <http://www.hm.tyg.jp/~acmuller/articles/tyung-earlyorigins.htm>.
 (3) "The Sacred as Secular: Tiyong and Interpenetration in the Analects of Confucius." *Bulletin of Toyo Gakuen University*, vol. 8 (2000), p. 93-106. Also available on the Internet at <http://www.hm.tyg.jp/~acmuller/articles/Analects-Kiyoi999.htm>.
 I have also discussed this topic in the introduction to my translation of *The Sutra of Perfect Enlightenment: Korean Buddhism's Guide to Meditation* (SUNY Press, 1999).
- (4) Weonhyo's commentaries on the Awakening of Faith are the *Gisinnon so* 起信論疏 and the *Daeseung gisinnon pyeolgi* 大乘起信論別記.
- (5) Sino-Korean *Jingang sanmei jing / Geumgang sammae gyeong* 金剛三昧經. Weonhyo's commentary to this work is the *Geumgang sammae gyeong non* 金剛三昧經論.
- (6) Weonhyo's commentary to the Nirvana Sutra is the *Yeolban gyeong jong'yo* 涅槃經宗要 (Doctrinal Essentials of the Nirvana Sutra)
- (7) It is important here that we grasp the extent of the influence of essence-function / interpenetration thought in Korean philosophy and religion. Of course *tiyong* and the notion of an interdependence and transparency to the world are fundamental principles in the classical Chinese Confucian, Daoist and Buddhist worldviews, but the attention paid to these principles in the commentaries and treatises of Korean Buddhism and Neo-Confucianism (for example, in the works of T'oegye (1500-1570) and Kobong (1527-1572) and their followers. See Michael Kalton's *The Four-Seven Debate*) is even more pronounced than it had been in China and certainly more so than seen in Japan.
- (8) Also, even though the early Seon transmission which began to arrive to Korea during the eighth and ninth centuries had a strong anti-textual tone attached to it, most of the monks who ended up joining the meditational camp came possessing a strong scholarly (usually Hwaem or Tat-

- hagatagarbha / Yogacara) background.
- (9) Most surveys of Korean Buddhism, both in and outside of Korea, tend to credit Hyujeong (休靜 1520-1604) as being the most important heir of Jinul's seon-gyo unification project, completely jumping past Gihwa. However, Gihwa, who lived almost exactly in the middle time between these two, wrote in far greater quantity, and much more directly on the topic than did Hyujeong. Furthermore, we can see in Hyujeong's writings an obvious reliance on Gihwa's works. We can only guess that Hyujeong's prominent stature as a cultural hero has led scholars to pay greater attention to his role.
 - (10) Keel, Chinul p. 31. From Jinul's preface to the Hwaecomnon cheoryo. See HBJ 4.768a.6-9.
 - (11) Li wrote a famous commentary to the Huayan jing entitled Xin Huayan jing lun 新華嚴經論
 - (12) The Seonmun yeomsongjip 禪門拈頌集 (Compilation of Examinations of and Verses on Ancient Precedents), which occupies the entire fifth volume of the HBJ.
 - (13) For details regarding Gihwa's life and works, please see my Ph. D. dissertation "Hamho Kihwa: A Study of his Major Works."
 - (14) My translation of this commentary, along with the sutra, has been published by SUNY Press (1999).
 - (15) The Seonjong yeonggajip gwaju seorui 禪宗永嘉集科註說誼
 - (16) The Hyeonjeong non 顯正論.
 - (17) Zongmi's commentary to the Diamond Sutra is called the Jingang jing shulun zuanyao 金剛經疏論纂要. T 1701.33.154-169.
 - (18) Hui-neng's commentary to the Diamond Sutra is called the Jingang jing jieyi 金剛經解義, Z 459.24.517-535.
 - (19) Fu Dashi 傅大士 (497-569) From Tongyang in Qi. Also known as Shanhui and Tongyang. He is named as the preceptor in the Buddhist conversion of Emperor Wu of Liang. He established the Shuanglin Temple and made one of the earlier collections of the Chinese canon. His commentary to the Diamond Sutra is called the Liangzhao Fu da-shih song jingang jing 梁朝傅大師頌金剛經.
 - (20) This commentator lived in Song China, but I have not as yet been able to locate any biographical information about him. His commentary to the Diamond Sutra is the 金剛經註, which is contained separately in Z 461.24.536-565.
 - (21) According to the Bussho kaisetsu daijiten (vol. 3, p. 460c), Zongjing was also from the Song. I have not been able to locate this commentary in any other source besides the Oga hae.
 - (22) HBJ 7.118a.
 - (23) HBJ 7.118b21.
 - (24) More commonly known as Huineng, the Sixth Patriarch. Thus Gihwa is referring to the content of the Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch.
 - (25) The length of Sakyamuni's teaching career.
 - (26) In the above two sentences Gihwa is alluding to the famous dictum from the Heart Sutra, "form is emptiness, emptiness is form."
 - (27) HBJ 7.42c21-43a5.
 - (28) We can be reminded here of the admonition in Chapter 28 of the Daodejing: "Know the white (function, phenomena), but cleave to the black (essence, mystery)."
 - (29) T 235.8.750a.15-16.
 - (30) That is, a logic that is based on an understanding of emptiness, which often produces semantic relationships which are opposite from ordinary logic.
 - (31) For a description of the modern Jogye curriculum, see Buswell, The Zen Monastic Experience, p. 99, and Keel, Jinul, 175-178.