The Common Orientation of Community Psychology and Wonhyo’s Thought: ‘One Mind’, ‘Harmonizing Disputes’ and ‘Non-hindrance’ in Focus

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Abstract: This study aims to relate the emerging field of community psychology with the philosophical thoughts of Wonhyo, a prominent figure in Korean Buddhism, from the aspect of their common orientation, to explore the development of both Buddhist philosophy and psychological research. The integration of modern psychology and Buddhist theory has only recently begun. In community psychology, there is a continuous need for the complementation of theory and case studies, and within Buddhism, there is a need to academically and popularly expand the advantages of Buddhist teachings. Furthermore, this research is believed to significantly contribute to the theory and practice of community problem-solving, which modern society demands. The characteristics of community psychology that differ from previous psychological research are twofold. First, it conducts a balanced examination of individuals and structures, moving away from the individual-centric focus of traditional psychology. Second, it emphasizes practice beyond theory, diverging from the theory-heavy focus of prior studies. Wonhyo’s philosophy is particularly well-suited to these characteristics. In the discussion, the theoretical contributions of Buddhism to community psychology are examined, based on Wonhyo’s philosophy, with a focus on the two main features mentioned above. This includes discussions on Buddhist introspection and the pursuit of enlightenment, grounded in a Mahāyāna perspective of the interdependent nature of the One Dharma world and the Bodhisattva path. The study further explores Wonhyo’s philosophy and practical examples pertinent to community psychology. Specifically, this examination focuses on Wonhyo’s concepts of ‘One Mind’, ‘Harmonizing Disputes (Hwajaeng)’, and ‘Non-hindrance’, categorizing them into individual and community aspects. Through this research, it is confirmed that the personal cultivation and community contributions of Buddhism are vividly present in Wonhyo’s theory and deeds. Particularly, Wonhyo’s philosophy and actions, embodying the benefits of humanistic and relational Buddhism, are expected to contribute significantly to the problem-solving of modern society and the academic advancement in community psychology.

Keywords: community psychology; Wonhyo’s Thought; Korean Buddhism; One Mind (one-flavor); Hwajaeng (Harmonizing Disputes); harmony of theory and practice; structure (context); individuals; Dharma-realm

1. Introduction

Psychology studies human thoughts and behaviors. Among its branches, social psychology, which began with the publication of an introductory text by psychologist McDougall and sociologist Ross in 1908, scientifically investigates how people’s thoughts, feelings, and behaviors are influenced by social contexts, namely the interplay between individuals and society or between individuals themselves. This field of study continues
to evolve and branch out, including into areas such as community psychology. Community psychology was first discussed at a conference held in Swampscott, Massachusetts, USA, in 1965 and is currently a subject of active discussion. Unlike traditional psychology, community psychology emphasizes ‘community’ over the individual and ‘practice’ over theory, responding to the criticism of modern academia being fragmented and overly theoretical.

In this context, the study of community psychology and Buddhism has significant academic contributions to make, particularly in two aspects. First, it offers an understanding and academic expansion of human psychology. Buddhism is generally associated with personal cultivation and has profound connections with human psychology, providing significant insights and assistance. Second, it contributes to the community in various aspects. Buddhism, focusing on enlightenment, may seem to maintain a distance from social communities due to its hermit-like tendencies. However, Buddhism also sustains communities through the establishment of temples and religious orders, contributing significantly to social communities as it does not exist in isolation from society. Buddhism acts as a bridge between the sacred and the secular, the temporal and the eternal, and between society and religion. Like other religions, Buddhism transcends its individualistic, transcendent focus on personal cultivation to make a clear contribution to the community as a religion.

Particularly, Korean Buddhism has historically not existed in isolation from the realities of community life. Therefore, the theories and practices of community engagement in Korean Buddhism could provide significant theoretical foundations and practical examples for community psychology. Until now, research that simultaneously addresses Korean Buddhism, community, and social psychology has been virtually nonexistent. One reason for this may be the perception of Buddhism as primarily focused on individual ascetic practices or as an inclination towards seclusion and detachment from worldly affairs. However, both the field of community psychology and the objectives pursued within Korean Buddhism share a common goal: the establishment of healthy communities. This paper seeks to explore this intersection, particularly focusing on the philosophy of Wonhyo (元曉, 617–686), to sustain communities through the long-standing practices and profound theories of Korean Buddhism and to theoretically advance the study of community psychology.

Wonhyo is one of the most renowned and influential monks in Korean Buddhism and East Asian Buddhist history. He is a critical figure who united two different sources of thinking: dharma nature (dharmatā 法性) and the characteristics of all phenomena (lakṣaṇa 法相) while playing a vital role in reconciling ‘conflicting doctrines’ into an embracing understanding, which came to be known as ‘Hwajaeng’ (和諍). Through this philosophy, Wonhyo demonstrates how conflicting ideas are not actually in conflict as the conflicts gain reconciliation from within the problem itself, often postulated as ‘One Mind’ (il-sim 一心). Then, he attempts to resolve the dilemma with an ideal of Bodhisattva practice, where one returns to the conventional without residing in the ultimate. Likewise, while connecting his idea of One Mind as the ground of Hwajaeng with Bodhisattva practice for the people within a community, he embarks upon an exemplary community therapeutic action based on his idea of ‘Non-hindrance’ (muae 無礙). Through this exploration, this paper aims to shed new light on the contributions of Korean Buddhism, centered around Wonhyo; to community building; and to expand the scope of community psychology.

This paper will primarily employ descriptive methodologies among the major research methods of community psychology, including natural observation, case studies, archival research, surveys, and psychological testing, with a particular focus on archival research, specifically a literature review. This selection is influenced by the nature of Buddhism, especially that associated with Wonhyo, as the subject of study. Although experimental methods and descriptive studies based on surveys and case studies are viable within the context of Buddhism, this paper will focus on the theoretical and practical aspects surrounding Wonhyo’s writings. It will elucidate the relevance between Buddhism
in general and community psychology, and subsequently concentrate on the points of connection with community psychology, particularly through Wonhyo’s philosophy of the ‘One Mind’, ‘Harmonizing Disputes’, and ‘Non-hindrance’.

2. The Common Aims of Community Psychology and Buddhism

Given the relatively short history of modern psychology research and the challenges in integrating Western academic disciplines and theories with Asian Buddhist thought, the theoretical study of Buddhism within the realm of community psychology remains underdeveloped. Given the research characteristics of community psychology, we can define it as follows: ‘A discipline that strives to understand and enhance the quality of life for individuals, communities, and society through the concurrent implementation of research and practical action’. Interestingly, these characteristics resonate with, and present a unique opportunity for Korean Buddhism, with its extensive historical background, to significantly contribute to the field of community psychology. This paper aims to explore the potential intersections between Korean Buddhism and community psychology, particularly focusing on the concepts of ‘problem-solving within the community through a balanced contemplation of the individual and structure’ and ‘pursuing community change through practice’, which are central to both Korean Buddhism, especially in the context of Wonhyo’s thought and community psychology.

Given the relatively short history of contemporary psychological research and the challenges in integrating Western academic and theoretical frameworks with Asian Buddhist thought, the theoretical examination of Buddhism within the realm of community psychology remains underdeveloped. In this regard, Korean Buddhism, with its long history, has significant contributions to make to community psychology. Among these, the exploration of Korean Buddhism in relation to community psychology begins with a focus on the key characteristics that define community psychology and are a feature of Korean Buddhism and Wonhyo’s thought: ‘problem-solving within communities through a balanced consideration of individuals and structures’ and ‘pursuing community transformation through practice’. In this respect, community psychology can be applicable to the study of Korean Buddhism in the context that this discipline ‘endeavors to understand and improve the quality of life for individuals, communities, and society by conducting both research and practical action’. This characteristic is also found in the Korean Mahāyāna tradition, especially with the emergence of Wonhyo, who emphasized the concepts of One Mind, Harmonizing Disputes, and Non-hindrance in relation to the interdependent nature of reality and the Bodhisattva practice for the benefit of people and the world. Furthermore, just as community psychology recognizes the value of opposing viewpoints and divergent reasoning (Kloos et al. 2012, pp. 58–59), this paper aims to elucidate the significance of Wonhyo’s approach of One Mind, two aspects of enlightenment and harmonizing opposing views. This approach can be applied to various contemporary issues, such as equality, social justice, equity, and individual and collective well-being, not only in Korea but also in a global context.

While this paper has discussed several examples and possibilities from Buddhist and community psychology perspectives, such an approach serves as an exemplar for academic disciplines and religions that might otherwise tend towards excessive abstraction. Furthermore, it prompts individuals in contemporary society, often preoccupied with self-interest, to recognize the intrinsic connection between self and community. Through this understanding, humanity may be better equipped to address current global challenges such as the environmental problem and the potentially destructive implications of scientific and technological advancements, including weapons of mass destruction and artificial intelligence. Consequently, this approach not only fosters individual well-being but also promotes and sustains communal values and collective existence.
2.1. Approaching Community Problems through a Balanced Consideration of Individuals and Structures

While community psychology places emphasis on context, structure, and other such elements, it does not overlook the individual. Rather, it focuses on the influence of the community on the individual based on physical environments and interpersonal relationships, which are key concepts in community psychology. Community psychologists, emphasizing community, use the term ‘context’ instead of ‘situation’, commonly used by social psychologists. The meaning of ‘context’ in community psychology is as follows:

Context compresses all structural influences that affect an individual’s life into a single expression, including family and social relationships, neighborhood, school, religion and community organizations, cultural norms, gender roles, socioeconomic status, etc. Without adequately describing these structural influences, research and practice will not succeed, and this is referred to as the error of minimal context (Kloos et al. 2023, p. 35).

As explained above, the meaning of context encompasses the character of the community, cultural atmosphere, social norms, and regulations discussed in terms of external forces in a more comprehensive aspect than merely ‘situations’. In short, it ‘refers to all aspects of the relevant setting, including cultural traditions and norms; the skills, goals, and concerns of the individuals; historical issues in that setting (e.g., prior experiences with similar innovations); and all the elements of community capacity’ (Kloos et al. 2012, p. 334). Conversely, ‘ignoring or discounting the importance of contexts in an individual’s life is referred to as the error of minimal context’ (Kloos et al. 2012, p. 10). Hence, community psychology focuses on the interplay between the individual and the situation, considering both aspects together in understanding the causes of certain events. Specifically, community psychologists aim to grasp the mutual influence between people and their context. Unlike traditional psychology, which concentrates on the individual’s issues, this approach advocates for a comprehensive perspective.

Indeed, this is closely related to the changes in modern society. That is, after the modern era, there has been a shift from a subject-centered perspective to one that goes beyond the subject. In this process, academic terms such as ‘context’ in community psychology and ‘situation’, ‘structure’, ‘atmosphere’, and ‘field’ in philosophy or sociology have emerged and been emphasized in contrast to the ‘subject’. Although this trend focuses more on what surrounds the subject rather than the subject itself, it does not imply a disregard for the acting individual. Instead, it moves away from discussions that were solely focused on the individual, emphasizing a balanced consideration of ‘individual’ and ‘structure’. (Kim 2022, pp. 46–57).

Historically, it can be observed that communities have changed in accordance with situations and contexts that justify their actions. This implies that if situations and contexts are intentionally manipulated, communities and societies can be moved accordingly. In fact, the direction of change, whether right or wrong, and issues of justice and injustice are not of primary importance here. Anything is possible if it can be regulated by the situation and justified by the context, a fact that is often found in tragic events throughout history. Milgram’s experiments starkly reveal this, showcasing a passive attitude where no one questions or resists in wrongful circumstances.

Situations and contexts not only affect the community but also individuals. Once humans are convinced of something, it becomes challenging for them to change their minds. Festinger, who introduced the concept of cognitive dissonance, suggested that inconsistency among beliefs or behaviors leads to psychological tension, making it difficult for convinced individuals to change. In a similar vein, Aronson’s research into self-justification shows that when people act in ways that conflict with their beliefs, leading them to feel foolish, they tend to justify their actions to reduce dissonance. These observations highlight a common human
tendency to insist on their viewpoint, regardless of its correctness, once their stance is established (Kloos et al. 2023, p. 35).

This applies to the stance of community psychologists who theoretically study and academically practice community psychology. However, community psychology has yet to address these issues with the necessary attention. Consequently, within the field of community psychology, the following critique has emerged.

Community psychologists believe that there is no value-neutral research. Research is always influenced by the researcher’s values, biases, and the context in which the research is conducted. Therefore, when describing the results of research, one should not rely solely on the analyzed data but pay attention to values and context (Tebes 2017, pp. 21–40; Kloos et al. 2023, p. 59).

Therefore, community psychologists need to continually ‘reflect’ on whether their research and activities align with their own and the community’s values and whether they are objective. Thus, it can be summarized that an ‘essential reflection’ on the situation and context serves as a control mechanism to prevent community psychologists, as well as communities and individuals, from going astray.

In this context, Wonhyo’s Buddhist theory and praxis can contribute in the following ways: Firstly, Wonhyo seeks enlightenment through various ascetic practices such as śamatha, vipaśyanā, early Seon (Chan, 禪), and recitation. Enlightenment in Wonhyo ultimately connects with the verification of the impermanence of life. Buddhist practice in Wonhyo is an act of reflecting on oneself and the surrounding situation and context in a world characterized by impermanence. There have been practical applications of ‘critical reflection (liberating insight)’ in Wonhyo to real-world problems, finding certain solutions within the problem itself. For instance, through contemplating the origins of pain or dissatisfaction in everyday life, practitioners can find the actual problem lies in one’s own greed, anger, or avidya (ignorance) caused by certain causes and conditions, i.e., internal or external contexts. Thereby, through contemplating the cohabiting characteristics of the problem in a certain context itself, one can return to one’s One Mind, realizing that one’s original enlightenment is not different from non-enlightenment in the midst of the arising and ceasing of everyday affairs.

In this regard, we can also note the experience of community psychologists who introduced ‘mindfulness’, or ‘essential reflection’, a specific meditation technique developed from Buddhist critical reflection, to American police officers resulted in notable changes. Essential reflection delves deeper by enhancing the theoretical approach to reflection itself. Scientists like Crick and Tononi viewed human emotions, memories, ambitions, consciousness, and free will as merely the result of vast networks of neuronal activity. Wonhyo and most Buddhists also see human emotions as phenomena arising from the combination of the five aggregates under dependent origination. However, modern neuroscience struggles to find clear distinctions between consciousness and unconsciousness.

In contrast, Wonhyo frequently draws upon Yogācāra Buddhism, which emerged from the 3rd century onwards, equating consciousness (vijñāna) with the mind (citta) and mentation (manas), and adheres to the classification of eight consciousnesses. This system culminates in the concept of ālaya-consciousness (ālayavijñāna, or storehouse consciousness), which is understood as the subliminal yet foundational form of consciousness. Wonhyo follows the explanation of how seeds (potentialities) stored in the ālaya-consciousness manifest under certain conditions, influencing future seeds and conditions, thus interpreting specific phenomena or events within a community as the collective karma of individuals who performed similar actions in past lives. From this perspective, individuals and communities are seen as interconnected over time and space, influenced by de-
pendent origination or mutual perfuming, offering a macroscopic and diachronic view of their interrelation.

Naturally, this perspective is linked to Wonhyo’s altruistic and sentient-being-oriented characteristics of bodhisattva practice, both in its theory and practice. Wonhyo aims to enlighten all sentient beings, in cooperation with individuals and communities, just like community psychologists aim to promote human equality and wellness, using institutional or self-aid community action. In this regard, Wonhyo manifests significant emphasis on the teaching and enlightenment of human beings with a humanistic orientation, which could be termed ‘Humanistic Buddhism’. From the standpoint of Mahāyāna spirit, Wonhyo’s Humanistic Buddhism focuses on the individual practitioner’s path to enlightenment. However, such characteristics are not limited to the individual practitioner alone. Within the Korean Buddhist community, an individual practitioner bears Buddhist attributes or Mahāyāna bodhisattva precepts, being a follower of the community’s discipline. From this viewpoint, Humanistic Buddhism, following the spirit of the Bodhisattva path, does not neglect the role and duties of the individual towards the community. Thus, the influence of Mahāyāna’s humanistic spirit on the community is directly connected to the individual’s cultivation, and this cultivation brings benefits and changes to the community. Practices such as contemplation, Seon meditation, or samādhi and vipaśyanā, enable ‘critical reflection’ on oneself and the world. Through personal practice, it aids in the purification of oneself and the community, thereby securing a vision to perceive reality.

These humanistic, Mahāyāna Buddhist characteristics are well exemplified in Wonhyo’s Buddhist theory and practice. Amidst turmoil, Wonhyo championed the fundamental practice of returning to the source of One Mind (歸一心源) for the benefit of all sentient beings (饒益衆生), aiming to bring true happiness to the people. As such, this personal practice of returning to one’s origin is inseparable from the Bodhisattva practice (benefiting sentient beings) for the people. These characteristics, as demonstrated in Wonhyo’s thoughts and practices, extend to the later features of Korean Buddhist practice, such as practicing together in one spirit. Unlike the Buddhist practices in China, Taiwan, or the West, Korean Buddhism often involves communal practice in the same space, whether it be Seon practice, meditation, gongan (koan公案) and hwadu (話頭) practice, or temple stays. Activities such as temple maintenance, prayers, and almsgiving are also often conducted collectively. In this respect, the theory and practice of enlightenment in Korean Buddhism, initiated and propelled by Wonhyo contribute significantly to the balanced development of community psychology and offer potential solutions to community issues through a balanced examination of individuals and structures.

2.2. Seeking Community Change through the ‘Harmony of Theory and Practice’

Community psychology has previously been mentioned as ‘a discipline that seeks to understand and enhance the quality of life of individuals, communities, and society by integrating research and practical action’. From the phrase ‘a discipline that seeks to enhance’, it is evident that, unlike other fields, there is a clear intention to utilize theoretical foundations for practical application. Community psychology demands direct changes within communities. Thus, it focuses on observing contexts (structures; fields) rather than individuals alone, considers changes within communities beyond theoretical confines, and concentrates on communities as concrete fields of practice. Community psychology emphasizes practices that change relationships, environments, and structures of communities through individual changes. In pursuing community change through the ‘harmony of theory and practice’, community psychology shares many similarities with Buddhism, ep. with Wonhyo. The specifics are as follows:

Firstly, it emphasizes practice based on the analysis of certain events or contexts. Community psychologists, who prioritize contexts and the relationships between individuals and communities, then have a participatory and practical orientation, resonating with the relational characteristics emphasized in ‘Hwajaeng’ based on the traditional Buddhist con-
ception of dependent origination. Wonhyo viewed Hwajaeng as a process of reconciling and facilitating communication between conflicting viewpoints through several steps:

1. Identifying the conditions under which each perspective is established and understanding the causal relationships between these conditions.
2. Reflecting on the validity of the established conditions and their causal relationships.
3. Contemplating the ‘partial validity and value’ (一理, il-ri) inherent in each condition and its causal relationships.
4. Generating common meaning through the acceptance of these partial validities.

This approach allowed Wonhyo to synthesize seemingly contradictory views by recognizing the contextual validity of each perspective and integrating them into a more comprehensive understanding of the context.

A similar approach can be found in community psychology.

1. Social issues involve opposing viewpoints which can both be true (at least, both hold some important truth).
2. Recognizing important truths in opposing perspectives forces us to hold both in mind, thinking in terms of ‘both/and’ rather than ‘either/or’ (Kloos et al. 2012, p. 58).
3. On this line of reasoning, Rappaport advocated divergent reasoning for community psychology: identifying multiple truths in the opposing perspectives; recognizing that conflicting viewpoints may usefully coexist; and resisting easy answers; The best thinking about social issues takes into account multiple perspectives and avoids one-sided answers.
4. Dialogue that respects both positions, rather than debate that creates winners and losers—can promote divergent reasoning (Kloos et al. 2012, p. 58).

Likewise, by locating the conditions under which each truth is established and drawing validity through understanding the causal relationships between these conditions, Hwajaeng theorists and community psychologists do not flaunt their theoretical knowledge in this analytical and practice-oriented stance. That is, ‘when conducting research, community psychologists do not consider themselves superior to or more knowledgeable than the community members. As experts, they provide knowledge but play a role in enabling the expression of the members’ resources, strengths, and knowledge to be integrated into the programs’ (Perkins et al. 2004, pp. 321–40).

Secondly, the importance of context is emphasized. When someone falls while walking, people are more likely to first consider whether the individual was intoxicated or had a physical issue, rather than thinking about the road being uneven. However, community psychologists focus on the context in which behaviors occur. They go further to explore methods that can effectively prevent problems before they arise, rather than after. Through this approach, community psychologists are interested in alleviating human suffering and advancing social justice (Kloos et al. 2023, p. 27). This aligns with the Bodhisattva spirit in Mahāyāna Buddhism and Wonhyo, which seeks to break the cycle of individual and collective karma. Following this spirit, Wonhyo’s philosophy sought to reconcile differences in perspective according to context, creating a common understanding that is accessible and beneficial to all, resonating with the Bodhisattva spirit. The positive impact of Buddhist values on Korean communities is grounded in such relational and humanistic thinking traditions, emphasizing context, as exemplified by Wonhyo’s philosophy of the One Mind Dharma-realm (Dharmadhātu).

However, these traditions have not completely resolved real-world problems. In response to this demand, the emergence of relational Buddhism in contemporary Western countries (Kwee 2010, pp. 433–34) is well in tune with the approach of community psychology, respecting relations and contexts. Both relational Buddhism and community psychology assert that ‘individuals are not isolated beings but should be understood within their relationships’ or contexts (Kloos et al. 2023, p. 28). Practitioners engaging in both practice and Bodhisattva actions strive to ‘understand and enhance the quality of life of individu-
als, communities, and society by integrating research and practical action concerning the relationships among individuals, communities, and society’ (Kloos et al. 2023, pp. 27–28).

In community psychology, there is an emphasis on social explanations for human subjects within the frameworks of relational humanism and social constructionism. This also corresponds with Wonhyo’s humanistic and relational Buddhist orientation, emphasizing the realization that individuals within the Dharma-realm are in a non-dual relationship with it, and stressing cooperative engagement between oneself and others, as well as between individuals and the community. Relational Buddhism focuses not just on the category of the individual, but on the life shared within the community and society at large. Humanistic thought also focuses on elevating the mundane life of individuals within the community to a life of enlightenment. Particularly, the relational Buddhist orientation characteristic of Korean Buddhism has significantly impacted communities through the harmony of theory and practice. This feature is evident in Wonhyo’s philosophy of harmonizing disputes, the reformative monastic movements of the Goryeo (高麗) era, the righteous army movements during periods of war in the Joseon period, the independence movements against Japanese occupation, and the Buddhist modernism of Manhae Han Yong-un (韓龍雲, 1879–1944), among others. Especially, as seen in the secular precepts of Silla’s Wonguang (圓光, 542–640) and the monk-soldiers and righteous armies of the Joseon dynasty, the Korean Buddhist community has been characterized by its active participation in addressing threats to its community, moving in tandem with society.

Likewise, the common goals of Buddhism and community psychology have been explored through the dual aspects of ‘individual and structure’ and ‘theory and practice’ aimed at the development of communities. However, the influence of these two fields is not limited to these aspects alone. As Zimbardo pointed out, many people remain silent even when witnessing events within the community. Buddhism’s pursuit of enlightenment questions the situation and context, and through the essential exploration of life, it can exert a controlling function over the domination and control by situation and context. Buddhism, through insights into situations and contexts characterized by interdependence or relationality, enables the maintenance and improvement of a desirable relationship with oneself and the surrounding environment. Particularly, the characteristics of humanistic and relational Buddhist orientation in Korean Buddhism, based on Wonhyo’s philosophy of One Mind and harmonizing disputes, share the balanced view of community psychology, premised on the respect for relative, pluralistic values rather than absolute, authoritarian truths.

3. Shared Orientations and the Philosophy of Wonhyo

As outlined above, the philosophical characteristics of Wonhyo, a seminal figure in Korean Buddhism, are generally encapsulated by the concepts of ‘One Mind’, ‘harmonizing disputes or conflicts’, and ‘Non-hindrance’. ‘One Mind’ is presented as the fundamental nature of the human mind according to the Awakening of Faith in line with the concept of Tathāgatagarbha (Buddha-nature) and ālaya-consciousness. ‘Harmonizing disputes’ refers to the effort to reconcile the differences and contradictions among the diverse Buddhist doctrines that were introduced to Silla (新羅) in the 7th century. ‘Non-hindrance’ reflects the egalitarian perspective evident in Wonhyo’s Bodhisattva practice for the people and community.

Diverse interpretations highlight the richness of Wonhyo’s One Mind, Hwajaeng, and Non-hindrance thought, demonstrating its potential for multiple philosophical and practical applications in addressing conflicts and harmonizing disparate viewpoints. As most of the previous studies suggest, Wonhyo’s approach of ‘returning to the source of the One Mind’ became a dynamic force that could excellently dissolve and unite various conflicting arguments of those times within the single taste of enlightenment. With this enlightenment, he propagated to the people that the only real recourse to enter the domain of non-conceptual enlightenment and wisdom is none other than the experience of deep faith in Mahāyāna. In this way, Wŏnhyo’s Hwajaeng surely turned out to purport
not just for theory but also for practice and experience in the One Mind in everyday life, represented by Buddha-nature that even commoners and men of base share. To be sure, his harmonizing concern is on elevating the conventional level to the religio-experiential dimension at the ultimate level, realizing the state of deep faith where there is no difference between the Buddha and the ordinary, and the noble and the commoners. In this sense, One Mind hermeneutics are not confined to the individual dimension of words and thoughts, but extends to their shared meanings in particular and social contexts, encompassing both conventional (community) practice and ultimate enlightenment, represented by two forms: initial and original enlightenment.

In this context, Byung-hak Lee has evaluated that the concept of ‘Integration of Two Enlightenments’ (二覺圓通) in the Treatise of Vajrasamādhi Sūtra represents a logic of integrating initial enlightenment through the equality of original enlightenment. This idea was proposed by emerging Buddhist forces such as Daean (大安), Hyesuk (惠宿), and Hyegong (惠空), who focused on public propagation in opposition to the conservative monastic order centered on social status and precepts. Building on this perspective, the ‘Integration of Two Enlightenments’ concept in the Treatise of Vajrasamādhi Sūtra expresses the structure of the Awakening of Faith, where the Tathāgatagarbha covered by ignorance returns to the One Mind, through the concepts of ‘one-flavor practice (一味觀行)’ and ‘ten-fold dharma gate (十重法門)’. This implies that while all sentient beings possess the same buddha-nature as ‘one-flavor’, they must practice various cultivation methods appropriate to their stage from the perspective of the ‘ten-fold dharma gate’. In the Awakening of Faith, original enlightenment, signifying the equality of awakening, corresponds to ‘one-flavor practice’, while initial enlightenment, meaning the beginning of cultivation, corresponds to the ‘ten-fold dharma gate’, which presents suitable practices for the common people through various methods (Lee 2006, pp. 196–208). Thus, the bodhisattva practice emphasized in both the Awakening of Faith and the Treatise of Vajrasamādhi Sūtra stresses public propagation as an altruistic act based on the power of original enlightenment that everyone possesses. This emphasizes practical cultivation and communal healing suitable for the common people exhausted by the wars of the Three Kingdoms and successive wars with the Tang in the 7th century.

Taesoo Kim and Dugsam Kim also note that in Wonhyo’s Essentials of the Sūtra of Immeasurable Life, the scope of rebirth in the Pure Land gradually expands as the sections or stages progress. Particularly in the fourth stage of the Land of Immeasurable Life, women, the disabled, Hinayana practitioners, and ordinary people are included as candidates for rebirth. This emphasizes the characteristic of equality, suggesting that all beings have the potential for rebirth as buddhas and thus speak with one unique voice, being free from discrimination (Kim and Kim 2023, p. 24). Vermeersch also suggests that the usage of ‘integrating the three and returning to the one’ (hoesam kwii) in works such as the Commentary on the Lotus Sūtra, similar to the situation of Zhiyi of the Tiantai school, stems from an interest in integrating opposing communities amidst the unification wars of the Three Kingdoms (Vermeersch 2015, pp. 95, 114).

During the early Silla dynasty, the ruling class consisted of the ‘sacred bone’ (seong-gol) lineage of the ‘copper wheel’ (dongryun-gye 銅輪界) rank, who viewed themselves as universal monarchs (cakravartin) and descendants of the Śākya clan (Kim 1987, pp. 33–35). However, by the time of King Taejong Muyeol (太宗武烈王, 603–661), contemporary to Wonhyo, the ruling system had shifted to the ‘true bone’ (jingol) royal family of the ‘chariot wheel’ (saryun-gye 舍輪界) rank, which was regarded as one level below the sacred bone. Unlike the aristocratic Buddhist tradition closely associated with the early dynasty, as exemplified by monks like Jajang (慈藏, 632–647) and Wongwang (圓光, 542–640), Wonhyo came from the sixth-rank (yukdu-pum) class and dedicated himself to popularizing Buddhism among the masses, collaborating with other monks of lower social status such as Daean, Hyeong, Hyesuk, and Sabok.

Furthermore, Wonhyo’s egalitarian interpretation of Buddhist doctrine, as reflected in his commentaries on texts like the Awakening of Faith and the Vajrasamādhi Sūtra, empha-
sizes the fundamental equality of all beings and the universal potential for enlightenment. This perspective aligns with the aspirations of community psychology, which advocates for equality, equity, fair shares, and liberation (Kloos et al. 2012, pp. 55–57, 236–37). His approach to Buddhist philosophy, particularly his concept of ‘Integration of Two Enlightenments’ (二覺圓通) and the structure of ‘One Mind, Two Aspects’ in his interpretation of the Awakening of Faith, provided a theoretical framework for reconciling apparent contradictions and promoting inclusivity in Buddhist practice. This inclusive and egalitarian approach to Buddhist thought and practice can be seen as a response to the changing social and political dynamics of Silla society as well as an attempt to make Buddhist teachings more accessible and relevant to a broader audience.

Specifically, Wonhyo’s philosophy of the middle played a vital role in healing the wounded hearts of the Silla people, who were enduring the hardships of the unification wars with Goguryeo (高句麗) and Baekje (百濟), followed by the wars with Tang China, by offering hope through the practice of chanting the name of Amitabha Buddha, suggesting that anyone could be reborn in the Western Pure Land through this practice. Particularly noteworthy are Wonhyo’s teachings on ‘One Mind’, ‘harmonizing disputes’, Maitreya beliefs, Hwaem (華嚴) and Pure Land Thought, which are not confined to theory but developed into community practices emphasizing equal participation. These teachings had a significant influence on his descendants. For instance, Uicheon (義天, 1055–1101), a National Preceptor (Daeguk Guksa 大覺國師) as well as a prince monk of the Goryeo (高麗) dynasty, emphasized Wonhyo’s ‘harmonizing disputes’ in an attempt to reconcile the divisions among the doctrinal schools and to promote the unity of Seon and the doctrinal teachings. In light of these objectives, Wonhyo is posthumously honored with the title ‘National Preceptor of Doctrinal Reconciliation’ (Hwajang Guksa). This designation reflects Wonhyo’s significant contributions not only to Buddhist thought, but also to community integration, particularly his influences on harmonizing and integrating various doctrinal positions and communities.

Further, this posthumous title underscores Wonhyo’s enduring legacy as a synthesizer of Buddhist thought and his role in making complex Buddhist ideas more accessible to a broader audience. It also highlights the continued relevance of his inclusive and harmonizing approach to doctrinal and ideological differences in the Korean Buddhist community. According to Vermeersch, ‘the fact that Uicheon was granted a title in 1101, which strongly resembles that of master of pacifying the disputes further confirms that this aspect of his work continued to hold appeal long after he passed away’. Yet, it can also be noted that ‘Wonhyo’s title was likely conferred at the instigation of Uicheon, who wanted to use Wonhyo as a springboard for his own project of integration through founding the Chontae (天台) school’ (Vermeersch 2015, p. 106).

Another example would be Jinul (知訥, 1158–1210) who led Buddhist reform movements in the middle of the Goryeo era. The legacy of Wonhyo’s approach can be seen in Jinul’s efforts to harmonize concentration (samādhi) and wisdom (prajñā) (定慧雙修), and doctrinal teachings and Seon traditions (禪敎一致), particularly in his establishment of the Suseonsa (修禪社) Seon practice community. Jinul’s approach to Buddhist reform and practice was characterized by several key elements that reflect Wonhyo’s influence:

1. **Integration of different traditions:** Like Wonhyo, Jinul sought to harmonize seemingly disparate Buddhist teachings and practices. He particularly focused on integrating Seon meditation with doctrinal study.
2. **Emphasis on non-duality:** Wonhyo’s philosophy emphasized the underlying unity of various Buddhist doctrines. Similarly, Jinul stressed the non-dual nature of sudden enlightenment and gradual cultivation, as well as the dual cultivation of concentration and wisdom.
3. **Accessibility of Buddhist practice:** Wonhyo aimed to make Buddhist teachings more accessible to a broader audience. Jinul continued this tradition by establishing the Suseonsa community, which provided a structured environment for both monastic and lay practitioners to engage in serious Buddhist practice.
Holistic approach to practice: Jinul’s emphasis on the simultaneous cultivation of concentration and wisdom reflects Wonhyo’s holistic view of Buddhist practice and community. This approach sought to balance intellectual understanding with experiential realization in everyday practice.

Reform of monastic institutions: While Wonhyo worked outside the established monastic system, his ideas influenced later reformers like Jinul who sought to revitalize Buddhist communities from within.

Emphasis on original enlightenment: Wonhyo’s interpretation of the *Awakening of Faith*, which emphasized the concept of original enlightenment, influenced Jinul’s understanding of sudden enlightenment and gradual cultivation.

Likewise, Jinul’s establishment of the *Suseonsa* community can be seen as a practical implementation of Wonhyo’s harmonizing philosophy. By creating a space where different aspects of Buddhist practice could be integrated, Jinul sought to overcome sectarian divisions and promote a more holistic approach to Buddhist cultivation. In essence, Wonhyo’s *Hwajaeng* legacy provided a philosophical and methodological foundation for Jinul’s reform. Thus, by emphasizing harmony, integration, and accessibility, Wonhyo’s idea and community practice contributed to the development of a distinctly Korean approach to Buddhism, epitomizing the harmony between community practice and awakened living that continues to influence Korean Buddhist thought and practice to his descendants.

Another notable example of Wonhyo’s later influence could be found in the faith-based movements like the White Lotus Society (白蓮結社) during the latter period of the Goryeo dynasty under military rule. This movement advocated for the secularization and practical applications of Buddhist community practices. Within this context, the monk Mugi (無奇, 14th century) of the White Lotus lineage played a comforting role for people suffering under the late Goryeo military regime by emphasizing salvation through the chanting of Amitabha Buddha’s name and integrating teachings from the Tiantai, Pure Land, and Amitabha doctrines. Further to this, the communal participatory spirit of Korean Buddhism was also demonstrated through the activities of warrior monks during the Japanese invasions of Korea (*Imjin War* 甲申倭亂) led by Hyujeong (1520–1604) and Yujeong (惟政, 1544–1610), and the national defense efforts by Seonsu (善修, 1543–1615) following the Manchu invasions (1636–1637). This spirit can also be found in the theory and practice of the Buddhist Reformation during the Japanese Colonization period and modern era, such as the reformist movements of Han Yongwoon, Paek Yongsung (白龍城, 1864–1940), and Kim Iryeop (金一葉, 1896–1971) and participation in the March 1st Independence movement of 1919 as well as Tanheo (吞虛, 1913–1983)’s Popular Buddhist movements and Seongcheol (性徹, 1912–1993)’s Buddhist cleanup movements in contemporary Korea (*Kim 1998*, pp. 191–205; *Buswell 2014*, pp. 1–320; *Nelson 2016*, pp. 1049–51; *Ko 2012*, pp. 41–79; *Hwang 2015*, pp. 7–25; *Park 2010*, pp. 1–15; 2020, pp. 155–82).

In this tradition, Wonhyo’s legacy of *Hwajaeng*, Non-hindrance, and equal potential for enlightenment free from discrimination, oppression, injustice, deep-rooted societal prejudices, and rigid monastic precepts aligns with various aspects of community psychology. These parallels include the following:


These concepts encompass various dimensions of human diversity, including race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, social class, ability/disability, and spirituality (*Kloos et al. 2012*, p. 245). They share similarities with Wonhyo’s legacy in Korean Buddhism, particularly when approached from liberation or community perspectives aimed at promoting community mental health and welfare (*Levine and Perkins 1997*, pp. 3–6, 48–49,
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430–31). Thus, we can see that Wonhyo’s philosophy and his legacy of One Mind and Hwajaeng align with community practice and equal humanity in a modern context.

Based on these common orientations in the psychology of the Korean Buddhist community since Wonhyo, this discussion will examine the philosophical roots and practices of Wonhyo’s thought from two perspectives: first, the individual within the community, and second, the individual’s orientation towards the community. To this end, the discussion will focus on ‘One Mind’ and the distinction between enlightenment and non-enlightenment from the perspective of ‘the individual within the community’, and on the meditation practice of ‘One-flavor’ (一味観行) and Bodhisattva practice from the perspective of ‘the individual’s orientation towards the greater community’. Finally, by summarizing the above discussion, this paper will explore how Wonhyo’s thought, through his relational thinking of ‘harmonizing disputes’, can contribute to solving psychological issues of individuals and communities.

3.1. Aspects of the Individual within the Community: One Mind and Two Gates, Enlightenment and Unenlightenment

Wonhyo describes the foundational and ultimate goal of his philosophy, the One Mind, not in apophatic (negative) but in kataphatic (affirmative) language. The concept of the One Mind transcends the dialectic of negation, representing the point where thought ceases; thus, it is inevitably referred to as the One Mind. In the Commentary on the Awakening of Faith, a representative description of Wonhyo’s epistemological ontology appears as follows:

What is meant by ‘One Mind’? It refers to the non-dual nature of all dharmas, both defiled and pure. The two gates of truth and delusion cannot be different; hence they are called ‘one’. This non-dual locus is the reality within all dharmas. Unlike empty space, its nature is inherently numinous and aware, thus it is called ‘mind’.

As demonstrated in the aforementioned passage, Wonhyo, in his Commentary and drawing from the Lankāvatāra Sūtra, elucidates the concept of One Mind from two perspectives. From the standpoint of non-duality, he characterizes it as ‘the name of quiescence’, emphasizing its inexpressible and indiscernible nature. Conversely, from the perspective of language and thought, he equates it with ‘Tathāgatagarbha’.

Subsequently, Wonhyo explicates One Mind in terms of its two aspects: the gate of suchness (真如門, tathatā) and the gate of arising and ceasing (生滅門, utpāda-nirodha):

To elucidate the gate of suchness, it encompasses the common characteristics of both defilement and purity. Beyond these common characteristics, there are no separate defilement and purity. Therefore, it comprehensively subsumes all dharmas of defilement and purity. As for the gate of arising and ceasing: It distinctly manifests defilement and purity. The dharmas of defilement and purity are all-encompassing, thus they also subsume all dharmas in their totality.

As cited above, within the One Mind, there are two aspects or gates (二門): the aspect of Suchness based on emptiness, and the aspect of arising and ceasing that engages with the mundane world. In Wonhyo’s structure of the One Mind’s Dharma-realm, the former represents the transcendental realm akin to the dimension of emptiness (śūnyatā) where all differences dissolve, everything becomes interconnected, and all boundaries disappear. In short, it is a realm where no distinctions or demarcations can be established. However, the latter represents the mundane world in which sentient beings coexist. Yet, as all phenomena of the six realms arise due to the One Mind, it also serves as the ground for everyday activities of individuals in society based on linguistic discourse and understanding. That is, because of the One Mind, all phenomena of the six paths occur, thus also forming the
basis of the mundane world where sentient beings live together. Accordingly, we can see that not only individuals but also the communal society itself manifests the One Mind as a one dharma world.

Regarding Wonhyo’s interpretation of the One Mind and the two gates that ‘there is no other Dharma outside the One Mind’, Hyung-hyo Kim names the two gates of the One Mind, the gate of arising and ceasing, and the gate of Suchness, as the experiential world and the transcendental world, respectively. According to him, the experiential world is the world represented by consciousness through the perception of sensory conditions and the integration of perceived differences. In terms of Yogācāra terminology favored by Wonhyo, experience is the cognition where the world of the five senses, drawn by the individual differences in the functioning of the first five consciousnesses and the sixth consciousness, is represented (Kim 2006, pp. 287–88).

In this regard, Wonhyo’s explanation of the One Mind and two gates can be interpreted through the lens of Yogācāra’s three natures theory.13 This unfolds on the epistemological premise of classical Yogācāra thought, which posits that ‘what is characterized by non-discrimination within the dependent nature is Suchness’.16 Building on this premise, Wonhyo draws from the ‘Chapter on the objective aspect of cognitive objects’ from the Mahāyānasamgraha to elucidate the concept of ‘illusory discrimination (abhūtaparikalpa)’ or other-dependent nature within the context of psychological differentiation.17 Particularly, by quoting the Mahāyānasamgraha, it advances and develops the schematic of the Yogācāra school, positioning the pivotal role of other-dependent nature as relationality.18 Therefore, the structure of transformation between defilement and purity in other-dependent nature establishes the dual ontology of Suchness, and the arising and ceasing aspect through a positive relation achieved by negating the negation. Furthermore, the epistemological ontology concerning the two truths, the ultimate and the conventional, along with the three natures—pervasively conceptualized nature, other-dependent nature, and perfectly accomplished nature of reality—aligns perfectly with the ultimate truth and associates the conceptualized reality as the conventional truth through the mediation of other-dependent nature. To this end, Wonhyo correlates the gate of Suchness within the One Mind with the Tathāgatagarbha, encompassing both emptiness and non-emptiness and the cyclic existence as corresponding to the ālaya-consciousness, where birth and death are in harmony, being neither one nor different.

As it is said, ‘arising and ceasing depends on the Tathāgatagarbha, thus there is a mind of arising and ceasing’, this does not mean abandoning the Tathāgata-garbha to adopt the mind of birth and death as the gate of arising and ceasing. This should be understood as ‘this consciousness has two meanings’, both of which reside within the gate of arising and ceasing. The so-called non-arising and non-ceasing harmonize with arising and ceasing, being neither identical nor different. This is called the ālayavijñāna… Therefore, it is said that this consciousness possesses two aspects. What are these two? First, the aspect of enlightenment, and second, the aspect of non-enlightenment.

As the quote indicates, Wonhyo explains the problem of the arising and ceasing of the mind through the concept of Tathāgatagarbha. He also sees Tathāgatagarbha as a basis for explaining the relationship between arising and ceasing, and non-arising and non-ceasing. Moreover, he elucidates how all phenomena of arising and ceasing relate to the world of Suchness, interpreting Tathāgatagarbha in terms of enlightenment and non-enlightenment.

Regarding the arising and ceasing of mind: Due to the Tathāgatagarbha, there is a mind of arising and ceasing. That is to say, the non-arising and non-ceasing combines with arising and ceasing, being neither identical nor different. This is called the ālayavijñāna... Therefore, it is said that this consciousness possesses two aspects. What are these two? First, the aspect of enlightenment, and second, the aspect of non-enlightenment.
In terms of enlightenment, the world of Suchness is a realm of enlightenment, while the world of arising and ceasing is one of non-enlightenment. The meaning of enlightenment refers to the Dharma-realm that transcends thought and the marks of thought, pointing to the Tathāgata’s Dharma-body (dharmakāya) of equality. However, enlightenment and non-enlightenment are not absolute and unchanging states. Non-enlightenment is established by original enlightenment, and original enlightenment also awaits non-enlightenment—an interaction of enlightenment and non-enlightenment. This means that non-enlightenment and original enlightenment coexist within the same mind. Furthermore, original enlightenment generates the initial enlightenment through the mysterious perfuming of virtuous habits, which then returns to the original enlightenment.\textsuperscript{22} Wonhyo argues that the essence of original enlightenment denotes the Tathāgata’s Dharma-body of equality but also contends that original enlightenment interacts with both non-enlightenment and initial enlightenment, thus lacking self-nature. Since it lacks self-nature, there is not a fixed state of enlightenment; however, meaning is created through mutual relationships, which is why it can be termed enlightenment.

Wonhyo presents a dualistic theory of interaction, where the contradictory properties of original enlightenment and non-enlightenment coexist within the same mind, allowing for a return to original enlightenment through initial enlightenment or a fall into non-enlightenment. Moreover, he emphasizes that when original enlightenment, non-enlightenment, and initial enlightenment reach the state of One Mind, one must redirect their enlightenment for the benefit of the community. In this context, enlightenment serves as a practical basis for breaking through the limits of individual and communal perception, allowing all beings to realize they share one enlightenment (original enlightenment) and Buddha-nature.\textsuperscript{23}

All sentient beings share the same original enlightenment, hence the term ‘one enlightenment’ (一覺)…. The statement ‘all sentient beings are originally enlightened’ expresses the meaning of original enlightenment. ‘Realizing that all sensory consciousnesses are quiescent and without arising’ expresses the meaning of initial enlightenment. This reveals that initial enlightenment is identical to original enlightenment.\textsuperscript{24}

As elucidated above, the realization that enlightenment itself does not possess an inherent nature leads one to a state of neither sameness nor difference, that is, to a singular enlightenment about ‘neither identity, nor difference’. Due to the absence of inherent nature, perception, and true understanding are neither the same nor different. This is also why the reality of existence is seen in a state of neither identity nor difference. From the perspective of singular enlightenment, the coexistence of differences in perception and true understanding reveals the inherent wisdom and compassionate power of the mind, enabling the practice of infinitely meritorious deeds. In this context, Wonhyo’s quest encompasses the realms represented by Tathāgatagarbha and ālaya-consciousness, covering the aspects of Thusness and arising and ceasing, enlightenment, non-enlightenment, and initial enlightenment without deviating from the state of One Mind and one enlightenment.\textsuperscript{25}

Wonhyo, following the Lankāvatāra Sūtra, states, ‘The name for cessation is called One Mind, and One Mind is referred to as Tathāgatagarbha’.\textsuperscript{26} The aspect of Thusness is a realm beyond experience, containing only the essence of emptiness, its nature invisible, while the aspect of arising and ceasing encompasses both the essence of Thusness and its phenomenal, sensory existence, including the acts that transform the mind through virtuous deeds (Kim \textit{2006}, pp. 288–89). In this regard, Suzuki also takes note of the non-dual approach of Lankāvatāra Sūtra that Wonhyo follows:

As a man clings to his own false assumptions, he erroneously discriminates between truth and falsehood, and on account of this false discrimination, he fails to go beyond the dualism of opposites, indeed he cherishes falsity and cannot attain tranquility. By tranquility is meant singleness of purpose (or oneness of things), and by singleness of purpose is meant the entrance into the most excellent samādhi, whereby is produced the state of noble
understanding of self-realization, which is the receptacle of Tathāgatagarbha (Suzuki 1961, p. 91).

As evidenced by these quotations, the essence of self-realization proposed by the Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra is a non-dual understanding of the oneness of phenomena, transcending dualistic discrimination of opposites. Wonhyo arrives at a similar conclusion, yet offers a unique explanation involving the cohabitation of differences that encompasses both the transcendental and worldly realms, ultimately leading to the dharma of One Mind. The transcendental aspect of Thusness is a realm of immutable principles, yet these principles also enter into the realm of worldly phenomena, and the phenomena of arising and ceasing are not separate from the essence of Thusness. Therefore, Thusness and arising and ceasing, principles and worldly phenomena, transcendence and experience, individual and community are neither dichotomously divided nor monistically integrated, hence described as a dharma of One Mind with two aspects that merge without making them neither one nor two.

According to Wonhyo, although Thusness possesses limitless virtues, it is devoid of differentiation, being equal in nature, a singular Thusness. However, differentiation appears through the manifesting and ceasing aspects of karma. That is, all dharmas are solely mind, truly devoid of delusive thoughts, but sentient beings, possessing delusive minds, fail to realize this and perceive all realms, because the wisdom and illumination concerning Thusness prevent delusive thoughts from arising in the nature of the mind, and the intent to illuminate the Dharma-realm fully prevents the mind from adhering to erroneous views (見, dṛṣṭi), thus revealing a multitude of pure virtues greater than the sands of the Ganges.27

In this context, as the embodiment of One Mind, Thusness is non-arising, non-ceasing, equal without discrimination, and vast without limits, thus referred to as the ‘Great essence’. Moreover, because Thusness exhibits limitless virtues, it is also referred to as the ‘Great characteristic’. Thus, the ‘Two Greats’ of essence and characteristic express One Mind in terms of essence and virtuous qualities. The ‘Great function’ is clarified in the Sūtra as generating all good causes and effects in both the mundane and supramundane realms.28 The explanation further elucidates as follows.

Furthermore, regarding the function of true suchness (tathatā): It refers to all Buddhas and Tathāgatas who, while still in the causal stage, generated great compassion, cultivated various perfections (pāramitās), embraced and transformed sentient beings, and established great vows. They aspired to liberate all realms of sentient beings without limitation of time, extending into the infinite future. They regarded all sentient beings as their own bodies, yet did not grasp at the characteristics of sentient beings. What does this mean? It means they truly understood that all sentient beings and their own bodies are equal in true suchness, without distinction. Possessing such great expedient wisdom, they eliminated ignorance and perceived the original dharmakāya. Naturally, there arose inconceivable karmic functions of various kinds, which were identical with true suchness in all places.... They merely appear to function in accordance with sentient beings’ perceptions and attainment of benefits. Hence, this is expounded as the functional aspect.29

From these quotations, we can discern how all mundane activities in Mahāyāna Buddhism relate to supramundane realms such that the actions of sentient beings transcend mere acts of giving. These actions are instead referred to as ‘function’ because they benefit other sentient beings and worlds based on insight into ultimate reality. When one bases one’s wisdom solely on the indiscriminate principle of the ‘One Mind’, the distinctions between Thusness, and the arising and ceasing of mind become neither entirely different nor identical. Consequently, all actions tend to benefit others out of compassion.

In this regard, the song of Bodhisattva Mahamāti in the Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra concisely explains the essentials of this Mahāyāna spirit.
When thou reviewest the world with thy wisdom and compassion, it is to thee like the ethereal flower, and of which we cannot say whether it is created or vanishing, as the categories of being and non-being are inapplicable to it. When thou reviewest all things with thy wisdom and compassion, they are like visions they are beyond the reach of mind and consciousness, as the categories of being and non-being are inapplicable to them.... In the Dharmakāya whose self-nature is a vision and a dream, what is there to praise? Real existence is where rises no thought of nature and no-nature.... With thy wisdom and compassion, which really defy all qualifications, thou comprehendest the ego-less nature of things and persons and art eternally clean of the evil passions and of the hindrance of knowledge. Thou does not vanish in Nirvāṇa, nor does Nirvāṇa abide in thee; for it transcends the dualism of the enlightened and enlightenment as well as the alternatives of being and non-being (Suzuki 1961, p. 89).

As can be seen in the above passage, we can observe that in this egoless self-penetrating insight of Dharma-body based on wisdom and compassion, dualisms such as enlightenment and non-enlightenment, as well as the demarcation between existence and non-existence, are transcended. With this enlightenment, every activity can be performed in a way that benefits others and the entire community as part of one Dharma-realm.

In this tradition, Wonhyo proposes that essence, characteristic, and function ultimately reveal themselves as different aspects of the One Mind. From the enlightened perspective of the Dharma-body, whether individual or community, all are merely different facets of the One Mind, distinguished only in terms of worldly phenomena. On the other hand, delusion, ignorance, or discrimination represents a misunderstanding of the mode of existence of things. Dividing subject and object is a processual act of finite cognition and not an absolute one. To overcome this, the enlightenment of One Mind should involve both the will and the intellect. It is an act of intuition born of the will. This will seek to know itself as it truly is (yathābhūtam dassana), free from all its cognitive conditions (Suzuki 1961, p. 126).

Likewise, Wonhyo’s concept of One Mind enlightenment, akin to the holistic perspective in community psychology, transcends individual discrimination. In this view, the actor, objects, and moral values exist in relation to the whole as it is. Thus, enlightenment is not confined to one’s individual realm but extends to the entire Dharma world, aligning with the true nature of the One Mind. This perspective resonates with community psychology’s emphasis on understanding individuals within their broader social and environmental contexts. In this regard, the content and orientation of Wonhyo’s enlightenment share several points of convergence with the assertions and perspectives of community psychology:

1. While grounding his approach in the enlightenment of One Mind, Wonhyo does not confine himself to individual liberation but considers the entire society as a unified Dharma-realm in which the individual is embedded.
2. Wonhyo guides potentially abstract enlightenment theory and its associated practices towards concrete action and implementation. This parallels how psychology, initially focused on individual physiopsychological issues, expanded its scope through community psychology. Similarly, Buddhist thought, originally centered on personal enlightenment, broadened its purview through Wonhyo’s philosophy. Both share an emphasis on practical application and problem-solving.
3. Like Wonhyo, community psychology emphasizes ‘research through reflexivity’ (Kloos et al. 2012, p. 106). This approach naturally fosters mutual respect for human values and stresses ‘attending to unheard voices’ (Kloos et al. 2012, p. 78), aligning with Wonhyo’s emphasis on returning to One Mind and benefiting all sentient beings. Consequently, community psychologists ‘seriously contemplate whether to identify themselves as researchers or practitioners (Kloos et al. 2023, p. 122).
4. In Wonhyo’s view, identity and difference form a relational understanding where one exists in relation with others, and altruism interconnects with self-identity. This epistemological insight allows for the fusion of identity and difference into a non-duality based...
on perspective within a community, where individuality and community action coexist in a non-synchronous synchronicity. This represents a dialectic of harmony in differences, housing diversities in One Mind, or common values and assumptions.

Hence, Wonhyo’s view of enlightenment shares aspects of community psychology, as both embrace a dialectic of harmony in differences. This approach interprets distinctions between identity and difference, individual and community, and reflection and action not as contradictions, but rather as interdependent relations within a broader context.

3.2. The Aspect of Individual Orientation towards the Community (the Greater Self): The Practice of One-Flavor and the Bodhisattva Path

As outlined earlier, One Mind explicates the manner in which the minds of sentient beings can transform into the dimension of the Buddha-mind, thereby enabling the dharmas of Hwajaeng. That is, One Mind does not imply abandoning the cycle of arising and ceasing to directly enter the realm of Thusness. Given that the wandering mind of sentient beings and the Buddha-mind, which enjoys bliss in the gate of Thusness, are not separate but coexist within the same dharma of One Mind, the moment individuals grasp the reality of truth at the conventional level by realizing that Hwajaeng (solution) can be drawn from the One Mind (problem) itself, such individuals are likely to embark on the Bodhisattva path of Mahāyāna. In this context, the ontological contemplation of the One Mind intersects with the community psychology of practice. Specifically, the One Mind in Mahāyāna integrates the minds of individuals and communities into a practice of One-flavor. This integration forms a significant interrelationship, bridging the duality of the gate of Thusness and the cycle of arising and ceasing, and one (problem) as a potentiality and the many (solution) as an actuality. It manifests the interplay between enlightenment and ignorance, Bodhisattva and sentient beings, and meditation and the Bodhisattva path. Moreover, it highlights the interconnected character of individuality and community, emphasizing the dual aspects of neither identity nor difference within the interpenetrated reality of One Mind (Kim 2006, pp. 284–85).

Wonhyo viewed the minds of sentient beings and Bodhisattvas as two aspects of the same mind, in that both seek and practice enlightenment according to Buddha’s teachings of dependent origination. When covered by primal ignorance and the ensuing greed, hatred, and delusion, one is a sentient being in a state of ignorance on the causes and conditions of dependent origination, as well as the interpenetrated reality of the one Dharma world. However, when one realizes the inherent perfection known as Buddha-nature or Tathāgatagarbha, one becomes a Bodhisattva in a state of original enlightenment. Reaching the ultimate enlightenment of One Mind, truth transcends sensory perception and concepts, allowing for equal and non-discriminatory insight into the perceiver’s cognition and the world. In turn, this foundation of miraculous Bodhisattva activity transforms cognition itself into action, without the distinction between subject and object, self and others.

In this context of unhindered realization and action, Wonhyo wandered, spreading the practice of Non-Obstruction after illuminating the principles and methods of enlightenment, using the great gourd as a symbol of unhindered Bodhisattva practice to enlighten the community’s beings suffering from turmoil.31 Within the context of these unimpeded practices, the Treatise on the Vajrasamādhi Sūtra teaches samādhi and chanting as practices of enlightenment that return to the source of One Mind. The samādhi of One-flavor is psychological healing through contemplation of the interdependent relation between oneself and others, cognition and object, realizing that neither self nor others inherently exist alone, and thus transcending the dichotomy of truth and convention by training in the dharma that both are inherently empty.

Regarding the essence of the teaching (宗體) in the ‘samādhi of One-flavor’ section of the Treatise on the Vajrasamādhi-sūtra, Wonhyo elucidates that the Sūtra transcends the dichotomy between truth and convention based on the wisdom of the two enlightenments: original and initial enlightenment. Both are indestructible and unrisen, presenting the object and wisdom as inherently non-arising and empty. The wisdom of original enlight-
enment and initial enlightenment is also unrisen. Therefore, original enlightenment and initial enlightenment, subject and object, and wisdom and compassion form a relationship that is neither one nor two but also not merging into one.

Since the object enters into cognition and others into one’s being, others are not separate entities from oneself. This realization allows for a middle way that does not lean towards extremes in the perspectives of self and others, the individual and the community, recognizing the interconnectedness of oneself and others, and the individual within the community. This relational thinking posits that all distinct entities are equally interconnected, allowing for a common solution through a single enlightenment (one enlightenment). The One-flavor practice of the Vajrasamādhi Sūtra thus elevates oneself and others to a common meaning or One-flavor, further practicing the Bodhisattva path of non-duality and the integration of the individual and community through conciliatory thinking based on the one enlightenment.

In the Commentary on the Awakening of Faith in the Mahāyāna, Wonhyo connects the practice of single-minded attention, or the One Mind, with the Bodhisattva path based on the principle of the One Mind. He states, ‘It is because the One Mind gives rise to the activities of the six realms (六道) that one is able to generate the vow of vast salvation’ to widely save sentient beings.

The six realms of existence do not transcend the One Mind, thus enabling the arising of great compassion rooted in the understanding of shared identity. This elucidation dispels doubt and facilitates the generation of the great aspiration...It elucidates that although the various teachings are numerous, the initial stages of practice do not extend beyond two gates: cultivating cessation (śamatha) in accordance with the gate of suchness, and developing insight (vipaśyanā) in alignment with the gate of arising and ceasing. The simultaneous operation of cessation and insight encompasses myriad practices. By entering these two gates, one gains access to all gates. This clarification dispels doubt and enables the initiation of practice.

As evident from the above passage, Wonhyo’s argument is that practitioners who have trained themselves in cessation and insight will arouse great compassion, recognizing the shared identity of individuals and community, based on the understanding that the six realms are not separate from the One Mind. Just as community psychology emphasizes the connection and context between individuals and communities (Kloos et al. 2012, pp. 10–11), Wonhyo underscores the connection and context between the practitioner’s One Mind and the whole community as a single Dharma-realm. In this context, embodying this Bodhisattva spirit and aiming to encourage people to embark on the path to One Mind, Wonhyo emphasizes that the practices of cessation and insight are indispensable to each other for entering the path to enlightenment, likening them to the two wings of a bird or the two wheels of a cart.

Wonhyo’s interconnected practice spirit of unity between internal practice (returning to the source of One Mind) and external practice (benefiting sentient beings) is also evident in the Treatise on the Vajrasamādhi Sūtra. This spirit is highlighted in his teachings on the Bodhisattva path and ethical conduct for practitioners in the Commentary on the Chapter of the Bodhisattva Precepts in the Brahmā’s Net Sūtra, and the Essentials of Observing and Violating the Bodhisattva Pratimokṣa. He advocates for a profound understanding that karma and retribution can vary in different contexts, urging a deep insight into the varied circumstances of sentient beings.

For instance, in his work Essentials of Observing and Violating the Bodhisattva Pratimokṣa, Wonhyo comprehensively examines what actions (karma) lead to positive outcomes (retribution) by considering various aspects such as the actor’s intentions and context. Through this analysis, Wonhyo’s nuanced approach to Buddhist ethics extends beyond individual considerations to encompass broader contexts and the interplay between individuals and their communities. Especially, in evaluating the moral quality of actions and their consequences, Wonhyo’s methodology aligns with community psychology’s emphasis on ‘con-
text', which encapsulates all structural influences affecting an individual’s life (Kloos et al. 2012, pp. 10–11). Both approaches consider the wider structural framework in which ethical behavior occurs, focusing on the relationships of persons and contexts (Kloos et al. 2012, p. 11), demonstrating a holistic perspective on moral evaluation. Wonhyo does not judge based on absolute standards or distinctions between self and others.

In this way, Wonhyo introduces an ideal community ethic that gently guides sentient beings based on their unique circumstances. Following this logic, all beings possess Buddha-nature and, in an interconnected one Dharma-realm, have the potential to rediscover their original mind, the One Mind, ensuring not only their salvation but also that of other sentient beings. This humanistic and relational spirit is foundational to his teachings, sharing similarities with community psychology’s emphasis on the connection between individuals and the community based on open recognition and communication of values and assumptions as well as participatory community action in research.

Furthermore, Wonhyo unfolded an egalitarian communal practice of Non-obstruction with the enlightenment that anyone can achieve Buddhahood through uncovering the Tathāgatagarbha, or Buddha-nature. This egalitarian orientation towards individuals and community as the greater self is also found in community psychology’s emphasis on equality. Community psychologists’ egalitarian consciousness is emphasized through their approach to problem-solving from a structural or relational, rather than an individual perspective, and is implemented through respect for diversity (Kloos et al. 2012, pp. 55–56).

In conducting research, community psychologists maintain equality in their relationships with research participants. Like Wonhyo, they eschew the sense of superiority or posture that researchers may easily fall into, as well as involvement through admonition and education, instead maintaining an equal relationship while exploring. Thus, they emphasize that ‘your attitude of respect and willingness to listen to the observational subjects may be more important than what you do’ (Kloos et al. 2012, pp. 55–57, 91–93; 2023, p. 149).

This attitude connects with the practice of One-flavor and the Bodhisattva path in that it links self-benefit and benefiting others in a non-dualistic manner. Likewise, Wonhyo’s egalitarian views on the Bodhisattva path of practical humanism and relational Buddhist psychology find a similar spirit of liberty and equality in community psychologists’ participatory approach to community action and research that offers respect for all individuals and healing for the collective psyche. In both schemes, the researcher–community, or practitioner–community relationship can be compared to that of guest and host (Kloos et al. 2012, p. 80), partner, or collaborator (Kloos et al. 2012, pp. 80–83).

3.3. The Relational Thinking of Hwajaeng and Community Psychology

Up to this point, we have examined the community’s psychological characteristics based on Wonhyo’s One Mind practice view of One-flavor, which forms the foundation for Hwajaeng’s relational thinking aimed at leading many to liberation. For this purpose, this study has looked into the dual relationship between enlightenment and non-enlightenment connected to the One Mind as an aspect of individuals within the community and discussed One-flavor Bodhisattva practices as aspects oriented towards the community (the greater self). Viewed through the lens of core concepts of community psychology such as ‘connection’ and ‘relationship’, a major characteristic of Wonhyo’s theory and practice is his emphasis on arousing practitioners to recognize the interconnected relationship between various aspects of enlightenment and Bodhisattva practice within the structure of the Dharma-realm, as positioned in One-flavor practice.

With reference to this, this study aimed to demonstrate that the humanistic and relational characteristics of the One Mind and Hwajaeng thought not only form the basis for a healthy community among human communities but also extend to all living beings and the entire Dharma world. Furthermore, this study examined the community psychological linkages of Bodhisattva practices spread through social practice without hindrance by Wonhyo, based on such theoretical foundations.
Wonhyo is renowned for his life of Non-hindrance, which transcended both the monastic and secular lives. He authored over 200 works and, after breaking the monastic precepts, embraced the role of a lay practitioner (小性居士). In this capacity, he disseminated his teachings to the public by singing the song of Non-hindrance in marketplaces. This act was a manifestation of his enlightenment through the concept of the One Mind, which subsequently informed his practice of Mahāyāna Bodhisattvahood and the ideals of Hwa-jang. Central to his philosophy is the notion of Dharma interdependence, articulating that individuals, individuals within communities, and communities themselves are interconnected through the One Mind. This interconnectedness enables the resolution of seemingly conflicting ideas or perspectives by finding common solutions, a scheme Wonhyo termed ‘Hwajaeng’. In essence, the One Mind as both potential and problem, underpins the spirit of Hwajaeng, through interconnected communication between various aspects of relational Buddhist practice, facilitating the discovery of solutions within the problems inherent in doctrines or communities themselves.

In relation to Wonhyo’s spirit of Hwajaeng, Kim (2006), in his interpretation of Wonhyo’s Commentary on the Awakening of Faith in Mahāyāna, observes that the One Mind encompasses the dual concept of opening/sealing (開合). This concept unveils infinite meanings as the dharma of two gates when opened, and upon sealing, it surpasses the binary distinction between doctrine and essentials (宗要). Furthermore, in the Treatise on the Vajrasamādhi Sūtra, the origin of the One Mind is compared to the truth of the sealing (合) and essentials (要) of Mahāyāna, and the sea of three emptinesses to the truth of opening (開) and doctrine (宗) that Mahāyāna unfolds, where opening/sealing, doctrine/essentials (宗要), and proposition/refutation (立破) circulate and support each other like mutual dependence. Borrowing the concept of ‘différence’ from Derrida, Kim interprets this as symbolizing the ‘cohabitation of differences’ as a duality where difference coexists (Kim 2006, pp. 262–63).

In this scheme of ‘cohabitation of differences’, everything exists in connection while maintaining differences. Seen from the ontological perspective, this can be interpreted in the context of existential logic that generously acknowledges the existing world as ‘opening without complexity, uniting without narrowness, establishing without gain, and breaking without loss’, contrasting entity (existence/nonexistence)-oriented thought with being-like thought, as seen from Heidegger’s two schemes on Western philosophy. According to this scheme, traditional metaphysical thought, grounded in Cartesian rationality, is characterized as entity-like thought. In contrast, naturalistic, unconscious, and dynamic thought—which emphasizes relations or processes in various contexts—is conceptualized as ‘being’, ‘difference’, or creative process-like thought, employing terms from Heidegger, Deleuze, or Bergson, respectively. In many cases, traditional Western metaphysics, i.e., the former, is presupposed as an egocentric and possessive ontic worldview. That is, rather than recognizing the appearance of all things as they are (seinlassen), it adheres to a Cartesian paradigm that distinguishes between subject and object according to the perception of the subject.

This essentialist perspective fundamentally isolates differences under the notion of an inherent identity with a shared essence. Consequently, it views the relationships between differences in terms of ‘exclusion and conquest’, and considers ‘difference, discord, and incompatibility’ as fundamental attributes. In contrast, Wonhyo’s perspective and the non-essentialist view in contemporary philosophy, which acknowledges differences in themselves and seeks the cohabitation and harmony of differences, align with the aims of community psychology. This alignment is evident in their emphasis on respecting opposing viewpoints and divergent reasoning based on dialogue (Kloos et al. 2012, pp. 58–59), and on ‘reconciliation and communication of dissonances’ or opposing viewpoints. This approach recognizes the inherent value of diversity and strives for a harmonious integration of disparate elements, rather than attempting to reduce them to a single, underlying essence.

In this regard, Deleuze’s thought aligns significantly with Wonhyo’s view. Deleuze critiques the structure that oppresses the phenomenal world by fixating on a foundation
of identity. However, he defines the identity underlying the diverse phenomenal world as a principle that continuously revolves around the differences in the phenomenal world. In this respect, he argues that ‘difference is the only origin, and it makes the different coexist independently of any resemblance, relating the different to the different’ (Deleuze 1993, pp. 163–64) and further argues that ‘The task of life is to make all repetitions coexist in a space where difference is distributed’ (Deleuze 1993, p. 2). Here, if the difference is compared to the ‘being’ in Heideggerian epistemological ontology rather than Cartesian substantialism, repetition can be compared to ‘movement-nature qua nothingness’ as intrinsic dynamism. Just as the One Mind is divided into true Suchness and arising and ceasing but remains interconnected to form a ground, difference and repetition also reveal different but interconnected aspects, unfolding at the extremity of becoming. According to Deleuze, ‘To repeat is to behave, but in relation to something unique or singular, which has no similar or equivalent. And this repetition as external conduct echoes, for its own part, a more secret vibration, a more profound interior repetition within the singular that animates it’ (Deleuze 1993, pp. 7–8).

Based on this premise, Deleuze criticizes the dichotomous notion that simply defines the various afflicted dharmas (染法; desires akin to those in Pandora’s box) manifested in the phenomenal realm of sensory perception as evil. Instead, he explains that all desires or afflicted dharmas that have ascended from the ground (fond) are also related to this ascending ground, expressing this through the mutually dependent concepts of difference and repetition (Deleuze 1994, p. 10; Kim 2018, pp. 201, 214, 219).

Furthermore, through his interpretation of a new dialectic, Deleuze critiques the four modes of being that create representation in the realm of afflicted dharmas, seeking answers beyond these four modes (Deleuze 1993, pp. 386–87). In this process, Deleuze, like Wonhyo’s Awakening of Faith-based thought, clarifies that his dialectic is structured such that the solution exists within the problem. It is a structure of opening and sealing where various differentiations occur from the problem field, but ultimately the solution exists within that problem. This is analogous to how the two aspects of tathātā and samsāra appear within One Mind, but the solution (Hwajaeng) derived from the interconnection of each aspect again opens and seals (unfolds and returns) with One Mind.

From Deleuze’s perspective, this is similar to the synthesis method that can be concretized as an actuality of solution within the potential One Mind, which is the problem field. In this sense, individuals can recover their original source through mutual connection and interpenetration among various series, thereby benefiting sentient beings from the origin of One Mind. Just as Wonhyo pursued Hwajaeng through interconnected dialogue between different aspects, Deleuze also developed a mode of thought that produces actuality (solution) through mutual connection and interpenetration among various series differentiated from potentiality (problem). Through this process, the potential (or ground) is elevated to actuality, emphasizing the relative generative relationship between actuality and potential in the form of univocity, or a single meaning (Kim 2024, p. 102; Deleuze 1994, p. 253). Furthermore, as Wonhyo cautioned against attachment to substantiality through tetralemma negation or affirmation—existence, non-existence, both, or neither—Deleuze similarly critiqued the four shackles that create representation: identity (egalite; A = A), similarity (resemblance; A#B), opposition (opposition; A ̸= non-A), and analogy (analogie; A/non−A(B) = C/non−C(D)) (Deleuze 1993, p. 386; Kim 2018, pp. 212–13).

Moreover, both Wonhyo and Deleuze acknowledged the role and significance of any logical form or content if it aided in the enlightenment where the masses become the masters (Kim 2024, p. 104). This view of expedient truth also corresponds with the approach of community psychology. Like Deleuze, community psychology considers all perspectives to be valuable within the given systems, requiring proper problem definition (Problem), methodological equivalence considering various levels of analysis (Implementation: Interpenetration between various aspects), and research collaborations in which everyone wins (Solution) (Kloos et al. 2012, pp. 86, 91–96). This point also shares the spirit, process, and orientation of Hwajaeng, converging different views into a harmonious synthesis.
through meticulous deliberation and communication. All three approaches emphasize the shared aspects of diverse approaches and collaborations, particularly their inclusive and non-dogmatic stances towards different perspectives and modes of thought.

Likewise, Wonhyo’s view of ‘cohabitation of differences’ and community psychology’s emphasis on ‘cooperative partnership in which everyone wins’ can be situated within the context of the epistemological ontology of modern and contemporary philosophy, sharing a path from Bergson’s ‘élan vital’ and Heidegger’s ‘Sein’ to Deleuze and Derrida’s philosophy of ‘difference’, rather than the substance-centric, rational thought of the West. It is precisely from this mode of thought that the affinity with community psychology becomes apparent. While entity-based metaphysics of reason relies on differentiation that captures substantial beings through artificial reasoning, Wonhyo’s and community psychology’s relational thought represents a schema of epistemological ontology that affirms beings as they are, situated within their context. In this regard, it is evident that Wonhyo’s philosophy aligns with the principles of community psychology, emphasizing the interplay between individuals and their communities, and identities and differences. This alignment mirrors Wonhyo’s conceptualization of a faith community and the Dharma-realm as collective manifestations of lived experiences.

In a similar vein, community psychology does not presuppose a static opposition of moral good and evil. The relationship between good and evil can change according to the situation and context. Community psychologists have shifted their focus from the previously prevalent individualistic perspective to emphasizing a structural perspective. For instance, this shift in perspective is applied to seek solutions for homelessness. Here, the focus is placed on the structure or ecology in which homeless individuals are situated, rather than on the homeless individuals themselves. This approach draws an analogy to the game of musical chairs, where a limited number of chairs are available. It warns that many societal problems, like this game, begin with the premise that someone will inevitably be left without a chair (Kloos et al. 2012, p. 6; 2023, p. 31). According to community psychologists, this perspective prompts a reconsideration of the often-unnoticed inequalities between individuals in our society. By mitigating inequalities that arise from an individualistic perspective, discussions can proceed from an egalitarian standpoint, deliberating on practical solutions within the socio-structural contexts in which individuals are embedded.

Likewise, in Wonhyo’s relational thought of Hwajaeng, the emphasis is on manifesting harmonization through conflict resolution, highlighting the correlative difference of coexistence within a given structure. Therefore, we can observe that both systems of thought are not based on fundamentalism or principled dogmatism grounded in individualism or absolute authority. Instead, these perspectives evolve into relational thoughts that aim to resolve conflicts between the individual and others, as well as between the individual and the world, based on contextual factors or causal chains within a given structural or environmental framework (setting).

In the context of a community or in relationships with other communities, adhering to a single viewpoint precludes Hwajaeng. Often, Wonhyo presents absolute affirmation through double negation or double affirmation to achieve One Mind. To this end, he advocates for a return to the universal source of One Mind, employing dynamic concepts like the Two Truths, Three Natures, and the Middle Way. These concepts bridge differences across contexts and perspectives, culminating in a unified resolution known as Hwajaeng. In other words, Hwajaeng links various differentiated sections from the problems presented within One Mind to produce a common solution. Notably, texts such as the Commentary on the Awakening of Faith, Special Exposition of the Awakening of Faith, and Treatise on the Vajrasamādhi Sūtra exhibit these characteristics of relational ontology and community psychology in a systematic and practical way. The core of the Hwajaeng ideology presented in Commentary on the Awakening of Faith and Special Exposition of the Awakening of Faith explains the coexistence of the differences between being and non-being within the horizon of the One Mind through a relational theory between the two aspects of the One Mind. Furthermore, Wonhyo describes this in terms of the relationship between enlighten-
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The Treatise on the Vajrasamādhi Sūtra explains the relational theory unfolding from the One Mind by encompassing both the beginning and end of meditation practice (觀行). This practice involves abandoning appearances and returning to the original mind for personal inner cultivation, while relying on original enlightenment to benefit sentient beings through social edification, thus achieving the path of compassion and non-attachment through myriad practices.

The Commentary on the Awakening of Faith and Special Exposition of the Awakening of Faith explain this dualism of life and death, good and evil, right and wrong, and purity and impurity, from the perspective of the Dharma-realm, presenting a multi-layered view of individual and social enlightenment in practice. That is, from the enlightened state, the Dharma-body of the Tathāgata is described as the equal dharmakāya with ‘one appearance’, and our minds are said to ‘fully possess the original enlightenment’. Similarly, the concept of the One Mind in these texts is explained from two aspects (gates), both ontologically and phenomenologically. These teachings encompass all dharmas but manifest from the Tathāgatagarbha (interconnected with ālaya-consciousness), harmonizing without being either one or different.

Thus, all individual differences in dualism are presented within the structure of the One Mind Dharma-realm, according to context, as the preaching of the dharmakāya Buddha, the manifestation of the saṃbhogakāya Buddha, or the edifying activity of the nir-mānakāya Buddha. Within this multi-layered structure, Bodhisattva carry out practices that resolve all disagreements and foster community engagement. In this respect, the relational thought of Hwajaeng, moving beyond a fixation on all distinctions and disputes, meets community psychology as the embodiment of the Mahāyāna spirit, aiming to liberate a great multitude. The foundation of liberation, the One Mind, situates every individual existence within a common context. The practice of One-flavor and Hwajaeng, which connects all aspects, becomes the path to freedom by liberating each individual within the structure (context) of the Dharma world. From this perspective, the relational thinking of harmonization through the practice of Hwajaeng provides a rich foundation and depth to community psychology.

Specifically, Wonhyo’s One Mind Dharma world and Hwajaeng approach, inclusive of all individuals and communities, proposes a comprehensive and healing methodology for community psychology in several ways:

1. It can be conducive to the constructivist approach, which emphasizes the connection between researcher and participant, the particular setting, and understanding participants’ experiences and their meaning to participants, rather than just causes and effects (Kloos et al. 2012, pp. 99–100).

2. It can contribute to critical views that emphasize how social forces and belief systems influence researchers and participants as well as the researcher’s responsibility for integrating research with social action.

3. It can promote participatory, collaborative community research processes before beginning research and making research decisions as well as on the products of research. In this process, Hwajaeng can serve as an example of developing a community research panel to address social issues.

4. It can help psychopolitical validity by examining whether the research process empowers citizens to become involved in liberating social change that benefits their communities. Specifically, Wonhyo’s emphasis on equal and just footing for Hwajaeng can be applied to the attitude of participatory research in the researcher–community partnerships. This approach allows for optimal involvement with a broader understanding of cultural, social, and multiple ecological levels of analysis in given community contexts for well-being and social support networks (Kloos et al. 2012, p. 100).

Regarding practical problem-solving, community psychologists demonstrate how shifting from an individualistic perspective to a structural or ecological perspective alters the way problems are defined and the interventions that can be considered, as exemplified in the case of homelessness in their research action (Kloos et al. 2023, p. 34). The em-
phasis on connection, context, respect for research subjects, and an attentive attitude in community psychology aligns closely with the core principles of Wonhyo’s discourse on interdependence in a One Mind Dharma world and his discourse on interconnectedness in Bodhisattva practice. Within this framework of interconnection, karmic affinity, and mutual causality, individuals and communities, as well as humans and nature, can pursue harmonious coexistence.

4. Conclusions

In this discussion, we explored the direction and practice of community psychology through the lens of Wonhyo’s philosophy of the One Mind, Hwajaeng thought, and Bodhisattva practice within Korean Buddhist philosophy. Among these, the emphasis was placed on the practice of One-flavor based on the One Mind as a fundamental basis for contextual actions proposed in community psychology.

The methods suggested by Korean Buddhism and Wonhyo can significantly contribute not only to resolving internal community issues but also to addressing conflicts between communities. For instance, one may wonder how peaceful a community destined to co-exist can be in the face of conflicts with other communities. Communities are, in essence, exclusive collectives bound by certain factors. Similarly, national communities tend to be insular with an inward orientation for the sake of national interests. This remains a prevailing issue amidst the ongoing conflicts between nations and groups. Thus, reflecting on the essence of life through the One Mind, Hwajaeng, Non-hindrance, and One-flavor practice offers insights into overcoming such issues, potentially leading to a paradigm shift towards recognizing mutual benefits.

As discussed, the hidden driving force for realizing an ideal community can be found in Buddhism, particularly through Wonhyo’s interdependent origination thought and its practical applications. Community psychology also demands an approach that allows seeing ‘you and I’ in a broader context by applying the concept of interconnectedness to reality and presenting a larger loop of connection. It is hoped that through such practical processes of connection, the fundamental issues that community psychologists grapple with can be addressed. Specifically, Wonhyo’s theory and practice enable the respect for the motives, personalities, and actions of other members as an extended self, sharing both self and karma, because individuals and communities are interconnected within one Dharma-realm, transcending mutual benefits. Furthermore, through difficult consensus processes, the practice of Hwajaeng aiming at One-flavor, could facilitate the establishment of an environment where a community can exist and listen properly to its members’ voices as an awakened community, seeking moral awareness and maturity of personal and collective personality. This approach is also expected to contribute to harmonizing the individual and the community, the ultimate and the conventional, spiritual practice and social development, as pursued in community psychology, thereby elevating the sociality of ethics.

Korean culture is often likened to a **bibimbap** (mixed rice dish) or a patchwork, symbolizing a fusion or amalgamation of diverse elements. Similarly, Korean Buddhism aspires to realize an ideal Pure Land or the Land of Utmost Bliss, where diversity is preserved while the harmony of the community is emphasized. This aspiration for an ideal community, amidst a world rife with conflict and difficulty, has led Korean Buddhism to underscore virtues rooted in the non-duality of self and others, such as concession and empathy (putting oneself in another’s shoes), highlighting the importance of understanding diverse perspectives.

Within this context of problem awareness, this paper argues that Wonhyo’s relational thinking, as demonstrated in his practice of One Mind, Hwajaeng, and Non-hindrance, offers valuable insights into the concept of connection in community psychology. Wonhyo’s method of Hwajaeng, characterized by comprehensive or selective synthesis based on differences, involves a meticulous consideration of each series of causes and conditions, or the context of the relevant argument while acknowledging both commonalities and differences. This approach transcends mere acknowledgment of differences, promoting a shared
basis and harmony, just as community psychologists attempt to do by applying relevant levels of analysis to the conditions of certain results within the whole structure or context. Essentially, the aim of this approach, shared by Hwajaeng philosophy and community psychology, represents a form of horizontal and open convergence, where seemingly contradictory doctrines are examined closely to reveal their underlying compatibility. Likewise, despite its challenges, Wonhyo’s doctrinal interpretations and insights prove to be applicable in addressing issues within community psychology. In today’s context, adopting Wonhyo’s methods to reconcile modern societal contradictions and conflicts is not only beneficial but essential.

In summary, the discussions above suggest that Wonhyo’s Hwajaeng-centric philosophy, characterized by a humanistic approach and a relational Buddhist nature, offers valuable lessons for community psychology. Although each doctrine that Wonhyo harmonized belongs to specific schools, they not only maintain their independence but also amalgamate into a harmonious whole in a One Mind Dharma world. In this respect, his philosophy remains relevant in our interconnected nature of modern society, where independence is still necessary along with harmony. By harmonizing disputes and conflicts, Wonhyo connected Buddhist teachings with the cycles of *samsāra* and *nirvāṇa*, enlightenment and ignorance, deriving a common solution, utilizing various interconnected levels of analysis.

Especially Wonhyo’s One Mind Dharma world model, when applied developmentally in theory and practice, could lead to the gradual elimination of prejudices and misunderstandings, potentially rooted in individual and collective karmic consciousness. Furthermore, this model suggests, in some respects, an inclusive consideration of the Earth and other life forms in our Dharma world, based on compassion and mutual respect.

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**Abbreviations**

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<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>HBJ</td>
<td>韓國佛教全書 (The Collected Works of Korean Buddhism)</td>
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<td>T</td>
<td>大正新修大藏經 (Taisho Tripitaka)</td>
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<td>Trbh</td>
<td><em>Trimśikā-vijñaptibhāṣya</em></td>
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**Notes**

1. Community is broadly defined as (i) a group sharing life, actions, or goals; (ii) a spontaneous social relationship; (iii) an organic social unity (e.g., family, village) (iv); and an organization with shared objectives in an organic structure (Kim 2022, p. 17). This term in this paper encompasses both society and group concepts.

2. This definition is based on the works of Kloos et al. (2012) and Kloos et al. (2023), Levine and Perkins (1997), and papers from the Society for Community Research and Action. Research and trends in community psychology can be found on the Society for Community Research and Action (SCRA) website ([https://scra22.org/](https://scra22.org/)) (accessed on 14 February 2024). The following articles can be referred to for further insights: Linney (1990, pp. 1–17); Lorion (2022).
This can include multiple locations and be applicable to microsystems and larger organizations as well. It also encompasses environment, situation, scene, community, place, and location (Kloos et al., pp. 45, 200).

Community psychologists strive to understand individuals within the social context.

Such attitudes ultimately lead to the destruction of the community, necessitating vigilance and proactive measures within the community. ‘Even if the character formed in a democratic society is righteous, if those citizens come under the rule of wrongful authority, could they too not be free from humanity’s barbarism and inhumane attitudes?’ (Kim 2013, p. 151).

Before community psychology could demonstrate its influence, Lewin articulated the following position regarding social psychology: “that social psychology better demonstrates what is needed than either psychology or sociology alone. Thus, it is necessary to overcome challenges and strive for continuous development. In this process, science should be dealt with in the realm of problems rather than the realm of data, and different problem domains require the language world of different entities and principles, with these disciplines being related in the universality of the same data (Lewin 1987, p. 173).”

Yet, the practice of mindfulness led to significant changes. One example is the police department in Bend, Oregon, where Taesoo Kim also analyzes Wonhyo’s unique Hwajaeng method using complex tetralemma and explores its applicability to con-doctrinal theories that manifest in reality; Tae-won Park views the nature of Hwajaeng theory as ‘harmonization through coming and sealing’ and ‘hindrance, and harmonizing disputes.

Buddhist monks showed that meditation could improve the capacity to consider and care for the inner experiences of others. Moreover, compared to 2012, the number of times force was used in relation to all reported calls also decreased by 40% in 2019. Since mindfulness initially focused on personal benefits without exploring its implications for interpersonal relationships or social practice, there is a need for active utilization in community psychology moving forward.

Neuroscientist Kang’s research demonstrates these characteristics of Buddhist meditation through experiments. Her work with Buddhist monks showed that meditation could improve the capacity to consider and care for the inner experiences of others (Nordell 2022, pp. 196–97); Regarding this issue, we can also refer to the following sources: (Kang et al. 2013, pp. 1–8); (Kang 2018, pp. 115–19); (Kang and Falk 2020, pp. 1378–89).

This term, however, does not refer to the specific ‘Humanistic Buddhism’ (人間佛教 developed by Masters Ren Shun (印順, 1906–2005) and Hsing Yun (星雲, 1927–2023), based on Taixu (太虛, 1889–1947)’s ‘Life Buddhism’ (人生佛教). Instead, it denotes a broader, general Buddhism, with a humanistic focus, particularly within the Mahāyāna tradition.

This does not mean to label Wonhyo’s philosophy as relational or humanistic Buddhism per se, but it indicates that such modern Buddhist characteristics are already present in Wonhyo’s thoughts and practices, represented by the concepts of One Mind, Non-hindrance, and harmonizing disputes.

Various scholars have interpreted Wonhyo’s concept of One Mind and its relation to Hwajaeng in different ways: Jong-hong Park posit that ‘gac-hap’ (開合 opening and sealing) and ‘jong-yo (宗要, doctrine and essentials) serve as the logical foundation for Wonhyo’s thought, representing the middle way between extremes; Il-jin Ko employs a dialectical approach, associating Madhyamaka with the gate of Suchness and Yogācāra with the gate of arising and ceasing, suggesting that the Awakening of Faith synthesizes both; Gil-am Seok views One Mind from a Huayan perspective, focusing on its non-dualistic stance that transcends the relative true-false amalgamation of Tathāgatagarbha; Yeon-shik Choi interprets One Mind as the foundation and goal of Hwajaeng, emphasizing the essential sameness of all beings; Shigeki Sato aligns ‘returning to the source of One Mind’ and ‘benefiting sentient beings’ with Wonhyo’s discourse, emphasizing the non-dualistic perspective; Sung-bae Park emphasizes the practical implications of Wonhyo’s philosophy, suggesting that it offers valuable insights for contemporary conflict resolution and intercultural dialogue; Ki-young Lee emphasizes the comprehensive nature of One Mind and explains Hwajaeng in relation to emptiness and tathāgatagarbha theory; Young-seop Ko understands Hwajaeng as a skillful means or integrative logic premised on returning to One Mind, One-flavor (il-mi, 一味), and One enlightenment (il-gak, 一覺); Yu-jin Choi characterizes Wonhyo’s approach as developing theories based on One Mind with the clear purpose of returning to its source while harmonizing various doctrinal theories that manifest in reality; Tae-won Park views the nature of Hwajaeng theory as ‘harmonization through comprehensive inclusion’ rather than ‘syncretism as a reconciliation theory’, emphasizing the characteristics of the causal series that establish perspectives; Jae-hyun Park views Hwajaeng as an approach to resolve the lack of communication between different sectors, finding clues to resolve contradictions in the ‘comprehensive inclusion’ based on the sentient beings’ mind of arising and ceasing; Young-geun Jeong also considers One Mind as the theoretical foundation for educating and saving sentient beings, noting Wonhyo’s presentation of Pure Land faith suitable for the capacities of ordinary people; Seong-cheol Kim, referencing the Critique of Inference, emphasizes that Wonhyo was not a logical absolutist who believed all Buddhist doctrines could be understood through inferential reasoning (Kim 2018, pp. 7–12); Byung-Wook Lee, and JongWook Kim focus on Wonhyo’s Mind-only Pure Land thought (Lee 2015, pp. 29–58; Kim 2015, pp. 37–62); Taesoo Kim and Deok-sam Kim examine the characteristics and potential real-world applications of Wonhyo’s method of harmonizing the four gates of Pure Land (Kim and Kim 2023, pp. 7–39); Taesoo Kim also analyzes Wonhyo’s unique Hwajaeng method using complex tetralemma and explores its applicability to contemporary issues, synthesizing various methodologies including Deleuze’s open dialectics (Kim 2018, pp. 1–283); Hyung-hyo Kim focuses on the ‘method explained as the theory of sameness and difference (同異論) in the Treatise on the Vajrasamādhi Sūtra...
and the theory of identity and difference (異同論) in the Commentary of Awakening of Faith' (Kim 2006, pp. 264–74); Charles Muller focuses on Wonhyo’s horizontal commentary approach, which reverses all Mahāyāna Sūtras without belonging to a specific sect (Muller 2015, pp. 9–44); Robert Buswell emphasizes Wonhyo’s hermeneutical approach, which seeks to harmonize doctrinal disputes by revealing their underlying unity (Buswell 2017, pp. 131–60); Eun-su Cho highlights Wonhyo’s unique interpretative strategies, particularly his use of the essence-function (體用) paradigm to reconcile seemingly conflicting doctrines (Cho 2013, pp. 39–54); Sumi Lee investigates the alayavijñana concept in Wonhyo’s Commentary on the Awakening of Faith, as well as his middle way interpretation of buddha-nature and ichantika in the Mahāyāna Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra from the perspective of Buddhist ethics (Lee 2019a, p. 536; 2019b, pp. 231–48); Byung-hak Lee focuses on the social implications of Wonhyo’s ‘one-flavor practice’ and ‘enlightenment of others’ concepts in his Treatise on the Vajrasamādhi Sūtra, examining Wonhyo’s egalitarian popular Buddhist movement in opposition to aristocratic Buddhism (Lee 2006, pp. 195–228); Sem Vermeersch suggests that Wonhyo and his contemporaries’ preoccupation with ‘three in one’ concepts was likely inspired, at least in part, by a concern for integrating opposing communities in the temporal world (Vermeersch 2015, pp. 95–117).

Thus, the relationship between the nature of discrimination and Tathātā is a matter of how other-dependent nature, as a relative (nature) nor the same as the dependent (nature), this should be understood].

In a defiled state, other-dependent nature transforms into the nature of discrimination, and in a purified state, it becomes Tathātā. This other-dependent nature serves as the foundation for both the conceptualized and the originally pure reality. The conceptualized aspects view other-dependent nature from the standpoint of conceptual construction, while the original purity perspective reveals the implicit departure of other-dependent nature from its conceptualized constructs (Ahn 2005, pp. 61–90).

In a defiled state, other-dependent nature transforms into the nature of discrimination, and in a purified state, it becomes Tathātā. Thus, the relationship between the nature of discrimination and Tathātā is a matter of how other-dependent nature, as a relationality, manifests itself (Yoo 2010, pp. 268–70).

This concept significantly contributes to a wellness approach in psychotherapy, integrating spiritual well-being and health. Gonsiorek et al. (2009) discuss the ethical challenges and opportunities at the edge of incorporating spirituality and religion into psychotherapy, highlighting the importance of such integration. Gonsiorek et al. (2009, p. 387).

This appears to be influenced by the Lankāvatāra Sūtra. 

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The concept of unhinderedness comes from the *Buddhāvatamsaka Sūtra*’s notion of ‘All beings are unobstructed, a single path out of birth and death (一切無礙人一生出死)’. In the *Memorabilia of the Three Kingdoms* (三國遺事), it is recorded that ‘By singing and dancing through numerous villages and hamlets, and wandering while teaching and singing, even the naive children living in humble dwellings came to know the name of the Buddha and were led to recite the Buddhist chants’ (Park 1999, p. 128).

This means six kinds of rebirth or six destinies in saṃsāra undergone by sentient beings in accord with their good or evil actions in cyclic existence. These includes hell (naraka-gati 地獄道), hungry ghost (preta-gati 饑鬼道), animal (tiryagyoni-gati 畜生道), asura (asura-gati 修羅道), human (manusya-gati 人間道) and god (deva-gati 天道). Digital dictionary of Buddhism. http://buddhism-dict.net/ddb/ (accessed on 4 February 2024).

Kim’s concept of ‘existence’ refers to the actual, mutable reality of coexisting elements in their natural order, rather than an unchanging, ideal realm beyond tangible reality that can be grasped conceptually.

Kim (2006) metaphorically compares this to a mother’s heart that feels her own noble existence with her entire being.

While begging and vagrancy are problematic, focusing change efforts solely on individual-level analysis is unlikely to reduce homelessness (Kloos et al. 2012, pp. 412–13; 2023, p. 51).

References

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