

Wŏnhyo on the *Muryangsugyŏngchongyo* and the *Yusimallakto*

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*I feel a great sense of satisfaction as I write this brief report on the progress of my small portion of the Wŏnhyo translation project. I am pleased to report that I have completed the translations of the *Yusimallakto* (遊心安樂道, *Traveling the Path to Mental Peace and Bliss*) and the *Muryangsugyŏngchongyo* (無量壽經宗要, *Thematic Essentials of the Larger Sukhāvātīvyūha-sūtra* [Wuliangshou-jing]), as well as complete drafts of the scholarly introductions that will precede them. I have learned much about Wŏnhyo's complex thought and the difficulties of translation through the liberal commission of errors and the struggle to correct them. I owe a deep debt of gratitude to my mentor Dr. Robert Buswell whose profound knowledge of the Buddha-dharma and keen eye for editorial work made the process of translation a great learning experience and an important part of my training both prior and subsequent to my earning of a graduate degree in Buddhist studies. In the brief report that follows I will touch upon a few philological issues, textual issues, and philosophical issues associated with my translations. The report that follows is based mainly on my translation of the *Muryangsugyŏngchongyo*, which was executed for the most part this year.*

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I . Philological Issues

Wŏnhyo uses several strata of technical terms in the *Muryangsugyŏngchongyo*. Although he employs terms borrowed from sūtras, commentaries, and earlier Sinitic exegetes such as Tanluan (曇鸞, ca. 488-554), Jingying-Huiyuan (淨影慧遠, 523-592), and Tiantai Zhiyi (天台智顛, 538-597), he also incorporates contemporary terms from Xuanzang's (玄奘, ca. 600-664) technical translations of seminal *Yogācāra* texts. When present-day scholars translate Buddhist literature we often pepper it with Sanskrit terms. This has merit in that Sanskrit is the accepted lingua franca of Buddhist studies. But an equally important question to ask is: Did Wŏnhyo know Sanskrit? From my reading of the *Muryangsugyŏngchongyo*, Wŏnhyo does not show a concern for Sanskrit issues. He was certainly familiar and well read in the prolix debates and difficult terminology of Sinitic *Yogācāra*, the so-called *She-lun* (攝論) and *Di-lun* (地論) schools. For this reason, I have employed Sanskrit terms only if the term Wŏnhyo uses is a transliteration of a Sanskrit or Prakrit term, except for the common words and phrases *Tathāgata* for *yōrae* (如來) and arouse the *bodhicitta* for *palsim* (發心), which is literally arouse the mind but carries the implied meaning of the *bodhicitta*. Following standard convention I have also peppered the translation with Sanskrit in parentheses after an English translation and in the notes as an added help to the reader.

Wŏnhyo often uses terms that are difficult to translate because Wŏnhyo intends them more for heuristic or comparative purposes than for direct meaning. Nevertheless, whenever possible I have tried to remain faithful to the meaning of the Sino-Korean characters. For example, the terms "dependent reward" (Kor. *ūibo*, Ch. *yibao* 依報) and direct reward" (Kor. *chŏngbo*, Ch. *zhengbao* 正報) appear repeatedly throughout this exegesis. "Dependent reward" refers to the environmental surroundings, or physical surroundings, one receives at rebirth. One's direct reward refers to one's ornamentation or, in other words, the type of body a practitioner receives at rebirth. In addition, I have had to render some technical *Yogācāra* terms in paraphrastic

translations, such as the compound term Kor. *hyŏnhaeng*, Ch. *xianxing* (現行), as “the production of an object made manifest in the phenomenal world from among the seeds of the *ālaya* consciousness.”¹

Another tentative translation of a *Yogācāra* technical term, which I would appreciate helpful comments regarding, is the compound Kor. *kan'gŭk*, Ch. *jianxi* (間隙), which I have translated as interval.² In this case it seems to refer to the type of purgatory-from a conventional point of view-that exists for individuals reborn in the lowest category of rebirth in the *Sukhāvātī*. Although all suppliants who are born in the Pure Land are reborn in the calyx of a lotus flower, those born in the lowest class must remain in the calyx for several eons purifying themselves of false views and other defilements before the lotus flower opens.

II. Textual Issues

The relationship between the *Muryangsugyŏngchongyo* and the *Yusimallakto* may be characterized simply as follows: the latter is a cut-and-paste job based upon the former (at least for the first half of the work), with much of Wŏnhyo's difficult exegesis that discusses salient doctrinal issues of the *Wuliangshou-jing* (無量壽經) from a *Yogācāra* (*She-lun*攝論 and *Di-lun*地論) perspective in large part eliminated and his interpretations from a *Tathāgatagarbha* (*Qixin-lun*, 起

1 See *Yuqie-shidi-lun* (瑜伽十地論)57, *Taishi-shinshu-dai-zikyū* (大正新修大藏經, Taishō edition of the Buddhist canon), ed. Takakasu-Junjirō (高楠順次郎), et al., 100 vols. (Tokyo: Taishō-Issaikyō-Kankōkai, 1924-1932[-1935]) (hereafter T) 30, no. 1579: 615a27-c4.

2 See *Muryangsugyŏngchongyo* (無量壽經宗要), *Han'guk-Pulgyo-chŏnsŏ* (韓國佛教全書, Complete works of Korean Buddhism), 12 vols. (Seoul: Dongguk University Ch'ulpansa, 1979[-2000])(hereafter HPC) 1-559c24-560a4. It appears twice in the passage Wŏnhyo quotes from the *Yuqie shidi lun* 21, T.30, 1579, 401b15-20: "If those who have entered [the path] abide peacefully among those with wholesome roots of the lower class, you should know that [they are reborn in] the lower class, which is said to be an interval [560a], which is neither free from intervals nor wholesome, clean and pure. If those who have entered [the path] abide peacefully among those who have wholesome roots of the middle class, you should know that [they are reborn in] the middle class. If those who have entered [the path] abide peacefully among those who have wholesome roots of the higher class [of rebirth in the Pure Land], you should know that they [are reborn in] the higher class, which is said to be free from intervals. They are already able to be free from intervals and are already wholesome, clean and pure. Such are the marks of those who have already entered [the path]."

信論 and *Huayan-jing*, 華嚴經) standpoint and are whittled somewhat. Although the *Yusimallakto* is attributed to Wŏnhyo he could not have composed it. The second half of the essay is particularly sloppy in parts and does not reflect Wŏnhyo's usual writing style. Since the *Yusimallakto* treats several issues important to the later sectarian Japanese tradition, however, it has garnered the most scholarly interest in recent years. Unfortunately, this has caused many to overlook the *Muryangsugyŏngchongyo*, which is a more challenging text intellectually.

There are a number of textual issues that are intriguing to consider regarding the *Muryangsugyŏngchongyo*: 1) What is the purpose of this narrative? 2) Who is the audience? 3) What benefit comes from this narrative's being in the "thematic essentials" (*chongyo*, 宗要) genre as opposed to the more respected and established "commentary (*so*, 疏, *ŭiso*, 義疏) genre? 4) If the *Yusimallakto* narrative does not display the real Wŏnhyo, what then is Wŏnhyo's real contribution to the study of the Pure Land?

I have drawn some of the material that follows from my draft introduction to the *Muryangsugyŏngchongyo*. I think it displays Wŏnhyo's typical approach to the Buddhadharma, described through the terms *hwajaeng*(和諍, reconciliation of disputes) and *t'ong*(通, comprehensiveness or thoroughness; although I prefer the "integration" in this context). The purpose of Wŏnhyo's narrative is to place Pure Land issues in the larger Sinitic Buddhist intellectual context, which in Wŏnhyo's day was *Yogācāra* (*She-lun* and *Di-lun*), but also to explicate it from the new dimension presented by the *Qixin lun* (and the *Huayan jing*). Wŏnhyo's ideas of *hwajaeng* and *t'ong*, along with his clarion call to arouse the *bodhicitta*, are in harmonious accord with the *Qixin-lun*.

Wŏnhyo's audience is most certainly the intellectual monastic audience of his day in the Silla capital, present-day Kyŏngju, as well as beyond in similar government-sponsored centers in China Japan. The *Muryangsugyŏngchongyo* was known to the monastic intellectuals of Silla during the succeeding generation, at least until ca. 765, since most of the commentators treat issues introduced to the discourse surrounding the *Wuliangshou-jing* in Silla by Wŏnhyo.³ What kind of intellectual

community existed and where it was located are interesting and important issues that require further investigation, though I would suggest (following Etani Ryūkai) that it is obvious that the main intellectual center was at Hwangnyong-sa(黃龍寺/皇龍寺) in the Silla capital. The *Muryangsugyŏngchongyo* was transmitted to Japan where it probably served as the basis for the creation of the *Yusimallakto* in Tendai(天台) intellectual circles in the ninth or tenth-century (my introduction to this text presents my full argument). The essay appears not to have traveled to China as did other of Wŏnhyo's more famous writings.

Wŏnhyo's contribution to the study of the *Wuliangshou-jing* in the Sinitic Buddhist tradition is a direct product of the narrative style he selected. Wŏnhyo's longer works were categorized into three genres: commentary (*so*, 疏), exposition (*non*, 論), and thematic essentials" (*chongyo*, 宗要). The "commentary" genre is the most wooden. The writer is expected display his mastery of the scripture through a narrative form that deals directly with linguistic issues, usually beginning with the meaning of the title and discussing the meaning of every significant word and doctrine to appear in the scripture. To many commentators this would often take the form of glossing the actual words of the sūtra in a diachronic manner, as they appear. The "exposition" or "treatise" (*non*, 論) genre was usually reserved for translations of the writings of the seminal Indian Buddhist thinkers, but commentaries of decisive intellectual importance deserving merit in the Sinitic Buddhist tradition were honored with their canonical status raised to this exalted state. Wŏnhyo is one of the few East Asian exegetes to have a few of his commentarial writings honored in this manner. The thematic essentials genre, by contrast, allows for the

3 This includes Buddhist intellectuals who both accept and reject Wŏnhyo's ideas. See Etani Ryūkai, *Jidokyi no shin kenkyū* (New research on Pure Land Buddhism) (Tokyo: Sankibōbutsu Shōrin, 1976), 55-118; and his "Kankoku Jōdokyō no tokushō" (The characteristics of Korean Pure Land Buddhism), *Indogaku Bukkyōgaku kenkyū* 24/2 (March, 1976): 519-529; Jung Hee-Soo, Kyōnghūng's Commentary on the 'Larger Sukhāvativyūha Sūtra' and the Formation of Pure Land Buddhism in Silla, (Ph.D. diss., University of Wisconsin, Madison, 1994); and Richard D. McBride, II, "Buddhist Cults in Silla Korea in Their Northeast Asian Context" (Ph.D. diss., UCLA, 2001), 442-463.

greatest freedom of intellectual expression. The writer is free to deal with the cardinal doctrines of the scripture in a manner that supports their intellectual agenda. Writers in the tradition usually had some proverbial bone to pick”in any particular exegesis, though the significance of the issue may be lost within the narrative structure and the various hermeneutical devices employed to both encode and decode meaning. Although Wōnhyo uses complex hermeneutical strategies in all of his works, the “thematic essentials” genre allowed for more a more direct approach to the issues at hand. Wōnhyo has bones to pick in his *Muryangsugyōngchongyo*, but his main bone seems to be: stop picking bones.” This lies within the context of what I would suggest is Wōnhyo's greater project of trying to express the ultimate harmony and integrity between all approaches to the Buddhadharma, both intellectual and practical.

Wōnhyo's narrative in the *Muryangsugyōngchongyo* seems to express his intellectual agenda through a layered and comprehensive approach to difficult and controversial doctrinal issues. For example, in his treatment of the doctrine of Pure Lands and the nature of Sukhāvati we can see Wōnhyo's unique approach to doctrinal classification.⁴ In contradistinction to his Chinese forebears and contemporaries, Wōnhyo refuses to promote any hard and fast interpretations. Instead, he suggests a handful of varying interpretations based on different intellectual approaches to the Buddhadharma. Wōnhyo's refusal to assume a firm standpoint on certain highly debated issues, while frustrating to present-day historians of Buddhist thought who desire to make straightforward comparisons between the ideas of different thinkers, displays his commitment to his greater project of demonstrating that all forms of Buddhist thought could be integrated. Wōnhyo's views on Pure Lands and the nature of Sukhāvati were shaped by an exegetical debate in China that had lasted more than two hundred years. Since the views of the important contributors have been studied in detail by David Chappell, I will merely summarize here.⁵

4 For a general overview of Wōnhyo's interpretation of the concept of Buddha lands see Kakehashi Nobuaki, *Gangyō no Butto-ron ni tsuite* (On Wōnhyo's view of Buddha lands), *Indogaku Bukkyigaku kenkyū* 40/1 (December, 1991): 126-129.

Prior to the codification of the doctrine of the three bodies of the Buddha, most Buddhist thinkers in China held to views inspired by the concept of the two truths, and the ultimate non-duality of these truths, which were reinforced by the standard Chinese heuristic of *ti* (體, essence) and *yong* (用, function) and the *Huayan jing's* concepts *li* (理, principle) and *shi* (事, phenomena). Thus, they conceived of buddha lands and bodies as basically of two types: *zhen* (真, true) and *ying* (應, response). Even though there were three bodies (Ch. *fashen* 法身, Skt. dharmakāya, "dharma body" [=Ch. *zhenshen* 眞身, Eng. true body]; Ch. *baoshen* 報身, Skt. **sambhogakaya*, "reward body"; and Ch. *huashen* 化身, Skt. *nirmanakaya*, "transformation body" [= Ch. *yingshen* 應身, "response body"]), the latter two were seen as merely apparitions or responses generated from the first that vanished when a person becomes enlightened. Sengzhao (僧肇, 375-414), Jingying Huiyuan, and Tiantai Zhiyi held these essential views and described hierarchical tiers of lands that may be (mis)taken as pure lands by aspirants. Amitābha's Sukhāvati was always viewed as an inferior apparitional land because unenlightened people were able to access it. Huiyuan and Zhiyi did accept, however, that there was an aspect of purity in lands where bodhisattvas from the first *bhūmi* on to buddhahood resided, and certainly from above the seventh *bhūmi* since bodhisattvas had achieved the stage of non-backsliding.

Daochuo(道綽, 562-645), by contrast, maintained that Amitābha's body was a reward body, not an apparitional body, and that Sukhāvati was a reward land. He invoked the concept of non-duality to bolster his view that there is ultimately no difference between defiled and pure lands. Furthermore, he held that Amitābha manifest all three bodies: a true body, a transformation body, and a reward body; and he believed that Amitābha's reward body was eternal and that Sukhāvati was neither pure nor defiled. Daochuo's interpretation of Sukhāvati became

5 See David W. Chappell, "Chinese Buddhist Interpretations of the Pure Lands," in *Buddhist and Taoist Studies I*, Asian Studies at Hawaii 18, ed. by Michael Saso and David W. Chappell (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1977), 23-53; see also, Kenneth K. Tanaka, *The Dawn of Chinese Pure Land Buddhism: Ching-ying Hui-yūan's Commentary on the Visualization Sutra*(Albany: State University of New York[SUNY]Press, 1990), 105-106, 181-103.

the view held by his successor Shandao and other proponents of the Amitabha's Pure Land.⁶

Wōnhyo approached the problem of classifying Sukhāvati more like Huiyuan and Zhiyi. However, rather than establishing a hierarchical scheme, he addresses the issue using the vocabulary found in different scriptures or commentaries in order to facilitate, it seems, a dialogue between the various Buddhist intellectual traditions. Wōnhyo's approach to the material shows a willingness to accept interpretations of doctrinal ideas at descending levels, which brings a sort of harmony to the Buddhadharmā.

(1) He begins with the supreme standpoint of Huayan thought, using the distinction between seed and fruit. Using the *Renwang jing* (仁王經, Book of Benevolent Kings) as his scriptural authority he confirms the interpretations of Huiyuan and Zhiyi with his view that only buddhas who have acquired the fruit, the adamant samādhi (Kor. *kumgang [sammae]*, Ch. *jingang [sanmei]* 金剛三昧), dwell in Pure Lands. All other bodhisattvas, be they in the ten stages (*bhūmis*), the ten transferences, the ten practices, or the ten abidings, are reborn temporarily in what he calls "fruition reward lands" (Kor. *kwabo-t'o*, Ch. *guobao tu* 果報土), apparently waiting for the seeds of buddhahood to mature.⁷

(2) Wōnhyo then approaches this issue from the slightly lower standpoint of his interpretation of *She-lun* thought, using the concepts of consistency and inconsistency as his heuristic device. Supported by a passage from the *Mahayanasangraha* (*She-lun*), he suggests that bodhisattvas from the eighth stage (the immoveable stage from which there is no backsliding) on up may be viewed as being reborn in Pure Lands because they are in a stage of consistent purity that is not found in stages one through seven, due to the quality of seeds in the *ālaya* consciousness that may cause states of mind that are not consistently pure; hence, the possibility of backsliding.⁸

6 See Julian Pas, *Visions of Sukhāvati, Shan-Tao's Commentary on the Kuan-Wu-Liang-SHou-Fo-Ching* (Albany: State University of New York[SUNY]Press, 1995), 150-157.

7 See the *Muryangsugyōngchongyo*, HPC, 1-554a24-b9; T.37, no.1747, 37.126a3-10.

8 See the *Muryangsugyōngchongyo*, HPC 1-554b9-24; T.37, no. 1747, 126a11-24.

(3) He follows his interpretation of *She-lun* thought with a view from the standpoint of *Di-lun* thought, using the concepts of purity and pollution as his guide. He suggests that ordinary people and adherents of the Two Vehicles (*śrāvakas* and *pratyekabuddhas*) cannot dwell in a type of pure land he calls realms of cleanliness and purity” (Kor. *ch'ōngjōng-segye*, Ch. *qingjing-shijie* 清淨世界). He first cites a passage from the *Yogācārabhūmi* (*Di-lun*) that says that even though the number of realms is immeasurable, there are essentially two kinds: pure and impure. Wŏnhyo then presents an interpretation that this dividing line between pure and impure: that it lies at the third stage of the ten stages of the bodhisattva path. Calling this the “great stage,” he alludes to how the third stage in three different schemes of the path is firmly associated with cleanliness, purity, and joy: the third in the ten-stage scheme is called the “light-giving stage” (Skt. *prabhākārī-bhūmi*), where one’s thoughts are pure and constant; the third in the seven stages scheme is called the stage of “pure intention or thought” (Skt. *suddhāśaya-bhūmi*); and the third of the thirteen stations is the “station of joy” (Skt. *pramuditā-vihāra*). Two-Vehicle adherents, by contrast, dwell in pollution.⁹

(4) Wŏnhyo's final classification uses the distinction between those assured of certain success [in attaining rebirth in the Pure Land] and those not assured of certain success. Those assured of certain success may be reborn in pure lands, while those not assured of certain success and those who are completely lost, which includes Two-Vehicle adherents, women, and those with deficient senses, dwell in defiled lands. However, these types of people can escape rebirth the defiled lands by arousing the *bodhicitta* and desiring rebirth in the Pure Land, which places them on the bodhisattva path. Wŏnhyo affirms that the *Wuliangshou-jing* uses this fourth approach¹⁰.

The significance of Wŏnhyo's views on Pure Lands is that he is able to hold and affirm the validity multiple views simultaneously. How he classifies a pure land” is wholly dependent on the standpoint or

⁹ See the *Muryangsugyōngchongyo*, HPC, 1-554b29-c12; T.37, 1747, 126a24-b6.

¹⁰ See the *Muryangsugyōngchongyo*, HPC, 1-554c13-555a15; T.37, no. 1747, 126b6-27.

the spiritual capacity of the practitioner or aspirant. It may be above the ten *bhūmis* as in the Huayan scheme, or above the eighth *bhūmi* in the *She-lun* scheme, or above the third *bhūmi* in the *Di-lun* scheme, or merely a division between people who have aroused the *bodhicitta* and wholeheartedly desire rebirth in the Pure Land according to the *Wuliangshou-jing*. All are equally valid in their own right to Wōnhyo.

III. Philosophical Issues

Wōnhyo writes the *Muryangsugyōngchongyo* during a significant turning point in Sinitic Buddhism in East Asia: the seventh century is a watershed in Sinitic Buddhism between it seems to mark the turning point away from Indian Mahāyāna philosophy, represented by the ceaseless dialectic dialogue between Madhyamaka and *Yogācāra*, and the adoption of a Sinitic practice-oriented Buddhist philosophy. From an exegetical standpoint, it can be seen as the incorporation of the insights of the *Qixin-lun* as solutions to the perennial problems of the understanding of Buddha nature and the concept of *Tathāgatagarbha*. In early medieval China prior to the founding of Tang, the encyclopedic *Dazhidu-lun*(大智度論), the compendium of Indian Buddhist approaches to thought and practice, translated⁷by Kumārajīva between 402 and 406 C.E (but attributed to Nāgārjuna, ca. second century C.E.), was probably (and is usually acknowledged as) the most important source for Buddhist intellectuals in East Asia. All the great thinkers of the fifth and sixth centuries relied upon it. However, during the seventh century, there seems to have been a shift toward the widespread use of the *Qixin lun*, “translated”by Paramārtha IN 553 C.E. (but attributed to Aśvaghoṣa, ca. second century C.E.). In some measure, however small it may be, Wōnhyo is responsible for this shift along with the *Qixin lun*'s other great commentators Jingying Huiyuan and Fazang 法藏 (643-712). The *Muryangsugyōngchongyo* displays this shift toward the *Qixin lun* in effect because Wōnhyo often employs it as his source of final appeal. Medieval Sinitic Buddhism, from the seventh to tenth centuries and beyond, is characterized by the application of the views

of the *Qixin lun*. Early Chan Buddhism in China and Korea can be explained to a certain extent as the application of its principles to practice.

Thus, the *Muryangsugyŏngchongyo* is not a Pure Land work in the received sense of the term (from a Japanese sectarian point of view) since Wŏnhyo's purpose in writing it is to place the *Wuliangshou jing* in the larger intellectual context of the *Qixin lun* (and *Huayan jing*) and Sinitic *Yogācāra*.