



W&nhyo on the Muryangsugy*ngchongyo and the Yusimallakto

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출처 (Source)	International Journal of Buddhist Thought and Culture 2, 2003.06, 121-130(10 pages)
발행처 (Publisher)	동국대학교 불교학술원 Academy of Buddhist Studies, Dongguk University
URL	http://www.dbpia.co.kr/journal/articleDetail?nodeId=NODE07087219
APA Style	Richard D. McBride (2003). W&nhyo on the Muryangsugy*ngchongyo and the Yusimallakto. International Journal of Buddhist Thought and Culture , 2, 121-130
이용정보 (Accessed)	삼성현역사문화관 183.106.106.*** 2021/08/07 10:56 (KST)

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W&nhyo on the Muryangsugy*ngchongyo and the Yusimallakto

Richard D. McBride

*I feel a great sense of satisfaction as I write this brief report on the progress of my small portion of the W*nhyo 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 Muryangsugy*ngchongyo (無量壽經宗要, Thematic Essentials of the Larger Sukh2vat6vy^ha-s^tra [Wuliangshou-jing]), as well as complete drafts of the scholarly introductions that will precede them. I have learned much about W*nhyo'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 Muryangsugy*ngchongyo, which was executed for the most part this year.*

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International Journal of Buddhist Thought & Culture February 2003, Vol. 2, pp. 121~130.

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I . Philological Issues

W&nhyo uses several strata of technical terms in the Muryangsugy*ngchongyo. Although he employs terms borrowed from s^tras, commentaries, and earlier Sinitic exegetes such as Tanluan (曇鸞, ca. 488-554), Jingying-Huiyuan(淨影慧遠, 523-592), and Tiantai Zhiyi(天台智顗, 538-597), he also incorporates contemporary terms from Xuanzang's (玄奘, ca. 600-664) technical translations of seminal Yog2c2ra 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 W&nhyo know Sanskrit? From my reading of the Muryangsugy*ngchongyo, W&nhyo does not show a concern for Sanskrit issues. He was certainly familiar and well read in the prolix debates and difficult terminology of Sinitic Yog2c2ra, 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 W&nhyo uses is a transliteration of a Sanskrit or Prakrit term, except for the common words and phrases Tath2gata"for y*rae(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.

W&nhyo often uses terms that are difficult to translate because W&nhyo 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. &ibo, Ch. yibao 依報) and direct reward"(Kor. ch*ngbo, 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 Yog2c2ra terms in paraphrastic translations, such as the compound term Kor. hy*nhaeng, Ch. xianxing

(現行), as “the production of an object made manifest in the phenomenal world from among the seeds of the 2laya consciousness.¹

Another tentative translation of a Yog2c2ra technical term, which I would appreciate helpful comments regarding, is the compound Kor. kan'g&k, 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 Sukh2vat6. 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 *Muryangsu-gyong-chongyo* 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 W&nhyo's difficult exegesis that discusses salient doctrinal issues of the *Wuliangshou-jing*(無量壽經) from a Yog2c2ra (She-lun攝論 and Di-lun地論) perspective in large part eliminated and his interpretations from a *Tath2gatagarbha* (Qixin-lun, 起信論 and *Huayan-jing*, 華嚴經) standpoint and are whittled somewhat.

1 See Yuqie-shidi-lun(瑜伽十地論)57, Taishō-shinsh[^]-dai-zōkyō(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 *Muryangsu-gyong-chongyo*(無量壽經宗要), Han'guk-Pulgyo-ch*ns*(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 W&nhyo 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]."

Although the Yusimallakto is attributed to W&nhyo he could not have composed it. The second half of the essay is particularly sloppy in parts and does not reflect W&nhyo'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 Muryangsugy*ngchongyo, which is a more challenging text intellectually.

There are a number of textual issues that are intriguing to consider regarding the Muryangsugy*ngchongyo: 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, &iso, 義疏) genre? 4) If the Yusimallakto narrative does not display the real W&nhyo, what then is W&nhyo'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 Muryangsugy*ngchongyo. I think it displays W&nhyo'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 W&nhyo's narrative is to place Pure Land issues in the larger Sinitic Buddhist intellectual context, which in W&nhyo's day was Yog2c2ra (She-lun and Di-lun), but also to explicate it from the new dimension presented by the Qixin lun (and the Huayan jing). W&nhyo's ideas of hwajaeng and t'ong, along with his clarion call to arouse the bodhicitta, are in harmonious accord with the Qixin-lun.

W&nhyo's audience is most certainly the intellectual monastic audience of his day in the Silla capital, present-day Ky&ngju, as well as beyond in similar government-sponsored centers in China Japan. The Muryangsugy*ngchongyo 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 W&nhyo.³ What kind of intellectual

3 This includes Buddhist intellectuals who both accept and reject W&nhyo's ideas. See Etani Ry^kai, *Jōdokyō 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

community existed and where it was located are interesting and important issues that require further investigation, though I would suggest (following Etani Ry[^]kai) that it is obvious that the main intellectual center was at Hwangnyong-sa(黃龍寺/皇龍寺) in the Silla capital. The *Muryangsu-gyong-chongyo* 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 W&nhyo's more famous writings.

W&nhyo's contribution to the study of the *Wuliangshou-jing* in the Sinitic Buddhist tradition is a direct product of the narrative style he selected. W&nhyo'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 s[^]tra 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. W&nhyo 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 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

Pure Land Buddhism), *Indogaku Bukkyōgaku kenkyū* 24/2 (March, 1976): 519-529; Jung Hee-Soo, *Ky&ngh*ng's Commentary on the 'Larger Sukh2vat6vy^ha S^tra' 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.

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 W&nhyo 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. W&nhyo has bones to pick in his Muryangsugy*ngchongyo, but his main bone seems to be: stop picking bones.” This lies within the context of what I would suggest is W&nhyo’s greater project of trying to express the ultimate harmony and integrity between all approaches to the Buddhadharma, both intellectual and practical.

W&nhyo’s narrative in the Muryangsugy*ngchongyo 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 Sukh2vat6 we can see W&nhyo’s unique approach to doctrinal classification.⁴ In contradistinction to his Chinese forebears and contemporaries, W&nhyo refuses to promote any hard and fast interpretations. Instead, he suggests a handful of varying interpretations based on different intellectual approaches to the Buddhadharma. W&nhyo’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. W&nhyo’s views on Pure Lands and the nature of Sukh2vat6 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 W&nhyo’s interpretation of the concept of Buddha lands see Kakehashi Nobuaki, *Gangyō no Butto-ron ni tsuite* (On W&nhyo’s view of Buddha lands), *Indogaku Bukkyōgaku kenkyū* 40/1 (December, 1991): 126-129.

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 Sūtra* (Albany: State University of New York[SUNY]Press, 1990), 105-106, 181-103.

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* (眞, true) and *ying* (應, response). Even though there were three bodies (Ch. *fashen* 法身, Skt. *dharmak2ya*, "dharma body" [=Ch. *zhenshen* 眞身, Eng. true body]; Ch. *baoshen* 報身, Skt. **sa8bhogak2ya*, "reward body"; and Ch. *huashen* 化身, Skt. *nirm2!ak2ya*, "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. *Amit2bha's* *Sukh2vat6* 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 *bh^mi* on to buddhahood resided, and certainly from above the seventh *bh^mi* since bodhisattvas had achieved the stage of non-backsliding.

Daochuo(道綽, 562-645), by contrast, maintained that *Amit2bha's* body was a reward body, not an apparitional body, and that *Sukh2vat6* 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 *Amit2bha* manifest all three bodies: a true body, a transformation body, and a reward body; and he believed that *Amit2bha's* reward body was eternal and that *Sukh2vat6* was neither pure nor defiled. Daochuo's interpretation of *Sukh2vat6* became the view held by his successor Shandao and other proponents of the *Amit2bha's* Pure Land.⁶

W&nhyo approached the problem of classifying *Sukh2vat6* more like

6 See Julian Pas, *Visions of Sukh2vat6*, Shan-Tao's Commentary on the Kuan-Wu-Liang-SHou-Fo-Ching (Albany: State University of New York[SUNY]Press, 1995), 150-157.

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. W&nhyo'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 Buddhadharma.

(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 (bh[^]mis), 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) W&nhyo 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 *Mahāyāna-saṃgraha* (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 2ndaya consciousness that may cause states of mind that are not consistently pure; hence, the possibility of backsliding.⁸

(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 (*Śrāvaka*s and *pratyekabuddha*s) cannot dwell in a type of pure land he calls realms of cleanliness and purity” (Kor.

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

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

ch'ngj*ng-segye, Ch. qingjing-shijie 清淨世界). He first cites a passage from the Yog2c2rabh^mi (Di-lun) that says that even though the number of realms is immeasurable, there are essentially two kinds: pure and impure. W&nhyo 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. prabh2kar6-bh^mi), 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. \$uddh2\$aya-bh^mi); and the third of the thirteen stations is the “station of joy” (Skt. pramudit2-vih2ra). Two-Vehicle adherents, by contrast, dwell in pollution.⁹

(4) W&nhyo'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. W&nhyo affirms that the Wuliangshou-jing uses this fourth approach¹⁰.

The significance of W&nhyo'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 the spiritual capacity of the practitioner or aspirant. It may be above the ten bh^mis as in the Huayan scheme, or above the eighth *bhūmi* in the She-lun scheme, or above the third bh^mi 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 W&nhyo.

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

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

III. Philosophical Issues

W&nhyo writes the Muryangsugy*ngchongyo 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 Mah2y2na philosophy, represented by the ceaseless dialectic dialogue between Madhyamaka and Yog2c2ra, 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 Tath2gatagarbha. 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, translated”by Kumārajīva between 402 and 406 C.E (but attributed to N2g2rjuna, 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 Param2rtha IN 553 C.E. (but attributed to A\$ovagho4a, ca. second century C.E.). In some measure, however small it may be, W&nhyo is responsible for this shift along with the Qixin lun's other great commentators Jingying Huiyuan and Fazang 法藏 (643-712). The Muryangsugy*ngchongyo displays this shift toward the Qixin lun in effect because W&nhyo 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 Muryangsugy*ngchongyo is not a Pure Land work in the received sense of the term (from a Japanese sectarian point of view) since W&nhyo'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 Yog2c2ra.