# Ching-ying Hui-yüan's Position on Devotion and Visualization: Reevaluation of Causal Practices for Rebirth in Chinese Pure Land Buddhism

by Kenneth K. Tanaka Institute of Buddhist Studies

## 1. Hui-yüan's Status in the Pure Land Tradition

Among the ten surviving works attributed to Ching-ying Hui-yüan 净影慧遠 (523–592), two are commentaries on the Pure Land sutras, the *Kuan wu-liang-shou ching i-shu* 觀無量寿経義疏 (henceforth, *kuan-ching i-shu* 觀経義疏 ) and the *Wu-liang-shou ching i-shu* 無量寿経義疏. Both are the earliest extant Chinese commentaries on the respective sutras, *Kuan wu-liang-shou ching* (henceforth, *Kuan-ching* 觀経 ) and *Wu-liang-shou ching*. The *Kuan-ching i-shu*, in particular, became precedent and has served as model for many subsequent commentaries on the same sutra.

Despite this acknowledged importance of Hui-yüan's *Kuan-ching i-shu* in the early development of Pure Land Buddhism, this work has not been seriously studied on its own terms. The little discussion that exists on it invariably occurs in the context of comparison with Shan-tao's commentary on the same sutra, the *Kuan wu-liang-shou ching shu* 觀無量寿経疏. Hui-yuan's *Kuan-ching i-shu* has not escaped playing its polemic role as 'straw man' in Japanese orthodox Pure Land scholarship, which has produced massive studies extolling the virtues of Shantao's interpretation while debunking the vices attributed to Hui-yüan and others.

The primary reason for the focused criticism of Hui-yūan by the Pure Land Buddhists can be traced to the severe critism by Shan-tao leveled at a doctrinal position which resembles one found in Hui-yūan's *Kuan-ching i-shu*. Shan-tao's main point of contention dealt with the ranking of the nine grades of rebirth (chiu-p' in wang-sheng 九品往生) which appears in the sutra, *Kuan-ching*. In Keeping with his fundamental advocacy of the Pure Land teaching's availability to

<sup>\*</sup>Prof. Kenneth K Tanaka is Assistant Dean of Institute of Buddhist Studies, Berkeley, California.

the ordinary beings (fan-fu 凡夫, prthagjana), Shan-tao ranked the nine grades much lower on the Buddhist path system. In contrast, Hui-yüan ranked them much higher so that even bodhisattvas of the  $bh\bar{u}mis$  or the saintly beings ( $sh\hat{e}ng-j\hat{e}n$  聖人,  $\bar{a}ryajana$ ) were included among those reborn in the Pure Land.

It turns out, however, that despite Hui-yüan's heretical stature he made major contributions to the development of Pure Land Buddhist doctrine in China as well as in Korea. The impact of his *Kuan-ching i-shu* on another influential commentary to the same sutra attributed to T'ien-t'ai Chih-i 天台智顗 has been well documented. Also, in Hui-yüan's writings we find the earliest usage of the abbreviated titles, "*Ta-ching*"大経 and "*Wang-shêng lun*"往生論 for two of the major Pure Land scriptures; these have been since used as standard titles even among orthodox Pure Land Buddhists. Further, many of Hui-yüan's doctrinal and exegetical terms and categories became paradigmatic in subsequent Pure Land writings.

## 2. Background

This article aims to examine Hui-yūan's position on the two main forms of causal practices for rebirth in the Pure Land, namely, devotion (kuci-hsiang 帰向) and visualization (kuan 観). Moreover, modern scholars generally believed that recitation (ch'eng 称), as one form of devotional practice, played a vital role in the popularity and emergence of Pure Land Buddhism. In their view, recitation made Buddhism more accessible to a large number of lay people than did the more inhibiting less appealing practice of visualization.

In the section on causes for rebirth, Hui-yüan enumerates the views of the Larger Prajñāpāramitā Sutra, Nirvāna-sūtra, Vimalakīrtinirdeśa-sūtra and Vasubandhu's Wang-shêng lun. The causes are "wisdom based on emptiness" for the Larger Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra, precepts, wisdom and protecting the Dharma in the Nirvāṇa-sūtra, the "eight doctrines" for the Vimalakīrtinirdeśa-sūtra, and the "five gates," of worship, praise, vow, visualization and transference of merit in the Wang-shêng lun. (182c23–183a26)

He then follows with a list of four causes which, in his view, are taught in the *Kuan-ching*, namely, 1) the cultivation of visualization (*hsiu-kuan* 修観), 2) the cultivation of acts (*hsiu-yeh* 修業), 3) the cultivation of mind (*hsiu-hsin* 修心) and 4) devotion (*kuei-hsiang* 帰向). The first cause is the sixteen visualizations to which the *Kuan-ching* is primarily devoted, while the second refers to the three purified acts that were taught to Lady Vaidehī at the beginning of the *Kuan-ching* is

ching. The third cause, the cultivation of the mind, involves the three minds discussed among the highest grade of rebirth, the sincere mind, the deep mind, and the mind aspiring for rebirth by transfering merit. The fourth refers to the following devotional forms, contemplation (nien 念), worship (li 礼), praise (t'an 數) and recitation of his (Amitābha Buddha's) name (ch'eng-ch'i-ming 称 其 名). (183a26-b9)

Even though he deemed visualization the main import of the *Kuan-ching*, his teaching about the four causes reveals Hui-yüan's recognition of a range of other practices. That he did give space to a variety of teachings calls into question Yuki Reimon's statement:

The masters (Hui-yuan, Chi-tsang 吉蔵, etc.) interpreted all forms of Buddha-contemplation. . . in the *Kuan-ching* as the visualization (as opposed to recitative) type of contemplation; and in determining that this sutra did not advocate the oral recitative [type of contemplation], they, as previously stated, deemed Buddha-visualization as the main import of this sutra.

### 3. Devotional

In light of Yuki's statement above, Hui-yüan's recognition of devotional acts as a legitimate cause for rebirth is of interest, particularly since another modern scholar fails to mention devotion in a description of Hui-yüan's position on the causes for rebirth:

In Ching-ying [Hui-yüan's] explanation found in his *Kuan-ching i-shu*, he sets forth *three* kinds of methods for rebirth in the Pure Land: 1) rebirth by cultivating visualization, 2) rebirth by cultivating [purified] acts and 3) rebirth by cultivating the mind.

The failure to mention the fourth cause, devotion, is inexplicable and distorts the real nature of Hui-yuan's work. The causes are explicitly delineated as a set of four in the *Kuan-ching i-shu*, and the Japanese Pure Land tradition was aware of the four, for Genshin (942–1017) specifically cites them as a set in his  $\bar{O}_{j\bar{o}y\bar{o}sh\bar{u}}$  往生要集.

Further, Hui-yüan's understanding of devotional acts does not differ drastically from that of the orthodox Pure Land proponents. In regards to the lowest three grades of rebirth, Hui-yüan states:

Despite the fact that those of the lowest grades have created evil karma in this life, they will gain rebirth [in the Pure Land] through the power of devotion (*kuei-hsiang chih li* 帰向之力) with the virtuous teacher guiding them. (183c 16-17)

The power derived from carrying out devotional acts with the guidance of the teacher destroys the accumulated evil karma of past transgressions, which the aspirants themselves are unable to overcome on their own.

Moreover, among the four causes, devotion is the only one that Hui-yuan does not regard as an object of cultivation (hsiu 16). This suggests that, for Hui-yuan, actualization of devotion relied less on the efforts of the devotee than on the other three causal practices. Rather, the virtuous teacher plays a greater role than the devotee himself in initiating the devotional acts of the aspiring devotee. The virtuous teacher may either discourse on the three treasures or praise the virtuous qualities of Amitābha Buddha, Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara, Bodhisattva Mahāsthāmaprāpta and the exquisite features of the Pure Land. Only as a response to these initiatives can an aspirant for the Pure Land engage in single-minded devotion, in the form of contemplation, worship, praise or the recitation of the name. (Kuan-ching i-shu, p. 183b5-9)

Modern writers contend that the orthodox Pure Land proponents popularized and legitimized recitation as one of the central causal practices. As the first and earliest of these proponents prior to Hui-yuan, T'an-luan 曇鸞 discussed the efficacy of recitation in the following passage from his Wang-shêng lun-chu:

Although those of the lowest grades [of rebirth] cannot comprehend that *dharmatā* is unproduced, simply by the power derived from reciting the Buddha's name they produce the resolve to be reborn and aspire to be reborn in that land.

T'an-luan here acknowledges recitation as a practice for rebirth. However, the recitation generated the resolve and the aspiration but was not in itself, sufficient for rebirth in the Pure Land.

In another reference to recitation, T'an-luan explains, 'To recite the name of that Tathāgata' means to recite the name of the Tathāgata of Unhindered Light." This provides a straightforward exegesis of a passage from Vasubandhu's treatise but does not disclose his own understanding of recitation. Several lines later, T'an-luan responds to a question concerning recitation:

Question: A name indicates a thing, just as a finger indicates a moon. If, by reciting the name of the Buddha, our aspiration [for rebirth] is fully actualized, then a finger indicating the moon should be able to destroy darkness. But if the finger indicating the moon cannot destroy

Shin Buddhist Comprehensive Research Institute Annual Memoirs 6 darkness, then how can reciting the name actualize the aspiraction [for rebirth]?

Answer: All things are different and can not be treated as the same. There are names that are the same as the things [which they indicate], while there are names that are different from the things [they purport to indicate]. The names of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, Prajñāpāramitā [-sūtra] and its dhāranī section, incantations and such sound phrases are 'names that are the same as the things [they indicate]."

There is another major reference to recitation as a causal practice for rebirth. However, this is simply a direct quotation from the section on people of the lowest of the low grade and, thus, does not reveal T'an-luan's own position on the subject.

Besides the above three major references to recitation, there is another in his treatise, the Lüeh-lun an-lo ching-t'u chi 略論安楽浄土義:

> Also several like-minded companions should join together in an agreement so that when the end of life [of one of the companions] approaches, they will take turns until dawn reciting the name of the Buddha Amitabha and wish for the rebirth [of the dying companion] in Sukhāvatī. Voice follows upon voice until the ten-contemplations are accomplished.

Like the first example, this again reaffirms that recitation still remains the attainment of a proper state, which in this case is that of the ten-contemplations.

In sum, three of T'an-luan's own discussions on oral recitation do not indicate that oral recitation was for him either a direct causal practice or a sufficient cause in itself for rebirth. Moreover, he does not express a concerted advocacy of this practice. Thus it would be difficult to accept the view that T'an-luan advocated oral recitation to the same degree as the modern writers alluded to earlier. Therefore, coming as it does prior to Tao-ch'o and Shan-tao (though after T'an-luan), Hui-yüan's position on oral recitation takes on greater significance for understanding the historical development of this vital form of practice in Chinese Pure Land Buddhism.

Among those surviving Chinese commentarial texts discussed, Hui-yuan's Kuan-ching i-shu is the earliest to include recitation as a formal, comprehensive category of causal practice for rebirth comparable to the acclaimed Five Contemplative Gates (wu-nien men 正念門) in Vasubandhu's Wang-sheng lun. It is one thing to recognize a particular form of practice as T'an-luan did, but it is quite another to incorporate it as a formal category of practice as did Hui-yuan.

I contend that the Kuan-ching i-shu's formal categoric scheme internalizes to a higher degree an interpretive framework than does a mere incidental reference. A formal category such as Hui-yuan's "four causes" reflects a basic position on a given subject. Moreover, Hui-yüan espouses the "four causes" in the same context as those previously enumerated major Mahayana sutras, namely, Larger Pra-jñāpāramitā, Vimalakīrti, Nirvāṇa and the Five Contemplative Gates of the Wang-shêng lun. (182c23-183b9) That Hui-yüan placed the practice of recitation in the same context as the causal practices expounded in these authoritative scriptures indicates the high degree of legitimacy Hui-yüan accorded to recitation.

Orthodox Japanese Pure Land scholarship, beginning with Hōnen, has made much of Shan-tao's "five correct practices" (wu chêng-hsing 五正行) which are believed to represent his basic position on the means of rebirth. They entail single-minded concentration in carrying out, 1) chanting [of sutras], 2) visualization, 3) worship, 4) recitation and 5) praise and offering. Orthodox Pure Land writers often take Shan-tao's distinction between the "main action" (chêng-ting-yeh 正定業) of recitation and the four "supportive action" (chu-yeh 助業) as evidence for his emphasis on recitation.

However, the term "five correct practices" do not appear in the Shan-tao's *Kuan-ching shu* but appears for the first time in Hōnen's *Senchakushū* 選択集. The five are, thus, a reformulation by Hōnen of Shan-tao's position, one which Shantao explained as follows:

What are the [correct] practices? They are to chant (tu-sung 読誦) with singleminded concentration (i-hsin chuan-chu 一心專注) this Kuanching, the A-mi-t'o ching 阿弥陀経, the Wu-liang-shou ching 無量寿経, etc.; to formulate in the mind, inspect and recollect (szǔ-hsiang kuan-ch'a i-nien 思想觀察憶念) with singleminded concentration two-fold rewarded adornments (the animate and the inanimate objects) of that land (Sukhā-vatī); when worshipping, one should worship (li 礼) with singleminded concentration Buddha Amitābha; when orally reciting, one should recite (ch'èng 称) with singleminded concentration the [name of] that Buddha; when praising and making offerings, one should praise and make offerings (san-t'an kung-yang 讃歎供養) with singleminded concentration [to the Buddha]. These are called the "correct [practices]".

Of these correct [practices, ] there are again two kinds. One is to contemplate with singleminded concentration the name of Buddha Ami-

Shin Buddhist Comprehensive Research Institute Annual Memoirs 6 tābha, whether walking, standing, sitting or lying, without concern for

the length of time, at every moment without abandoning [the practice]. This is called the "main action," as it is in accord with the Buddha's vows. [The practices that] rely on worship, chanting, etc., are called "supportive action."

It is interesting to point out the similarity between Shan-tao's five correct practices and Hui-yüan's four causal practices, since all the elements of the five correct practices can be found in Hui-yüan's earlier category of four causal practices. More importantly, the practices retain the same meaning in both lists. Although there exists a possibility that Shan-tao may have in part based the five correct practices on Hui-yuan's category, no conclusive evidence can yet be cited. But Shan-tao's famous list evinces a suggestive comparison with Huiyüan's little known precedent. Therefore, the allegedly anti-Pure Land Hui-yüan had already recognized recitation as a legitimate cause for rebirth approximately seventy-five years earlier than Shan-tao.

#### 4. Visualization

According to Hui-yüan, "cultivation of visualization" (hsiu-kuan 修観) refers to the sixteen visualizations enumerated in the Kuan-ching. Hui-yüan's estimation of the 'samādhi of visualization of the Buddha' (kuan-fo san-mei 観仏三昧 ) as the main import of the Kuan-ching testifies to the high value he placed on visualization. (Kuan-ching i-shu, p. 173a15) For Hui-yüan the visualization of the Buddha represents all sixteen forms of visualization, including visualizations of the features of the Pure Land and of Bodhisattvas. (174c28) In the examination of Huiyuan's understanding of visualization in general, the focus will be on the "visualization of the Buddha" (henceforth, "Buddha-visualization").

Orthodox backers of Pure Land have portrayed visualization as an extremely difficult form of meditation, hopelessly beyond the capability of the pṛthag janas, for whom they felt the Pure Land sutras were written. They deemed those of the "gate of the aryajana path" as the only practitioners capable of visualization. This alleged inaccessibility of visualization to the prthajanas (the perceived righful audience of Pure Land teaching) in part accounts for the virtual absence of serious study on visualization related to the Kuan-ching. But as seen above, Hui-yüan clearly states that the main import of the Kuan-ching is Buddha-visualization and, more importantly, that the Kuan-ching is taught for the prthagjanas. (173a12-14)

In elucidating the meaning of the title of the *Kuan-ching*, Hui-yüan defines "kuan-fo 観仏" (Buddha-visualization):

There are two kinds of Buddha-visualization: the true-body visualization (chên-shên kuan 真身観) and the response-body visualization (ying-shên kuan 応身観). Visualization of the Buddha's body of universal Dharma-gate is called the "true-body visualization," while visualization of the Buddha, the Tatathāgata's worldly body is called the "response-body visualization." (173b19-21)

Of the two visualizations, Hui-yuan regards the response-body visualization as the one taught by the *Kuan-ching*. (173c10-11) The true-body visualization is expounded in the "Chapter on Visualizing Buddha Akṣobhya" of the *Vimalakīrtisūtra*. (173b21-22) According to the latter sutra, one visualizes the real form (*shih hsiang* 実相) of the body that "neither comes from the past, departs for the future, nor dwells in the present." (173b22-23)

In contrast, the response-body visualization is said to be taught in the Kuan-fo san-mei ching 觀仏三昧経 (The Sūtra on the Samādhi of Visualization of the Buddha). This form of visualization calls for the practice of "beholding the Buddha's features and restraining thoughts [in order] to examine [them]". (173c2—3) Hui-yüan, then, enumerates two types of response-body visualization, specific (pieh 别) and general (t'ung 通). He goes on to claim that the Kuan-ching expounds the first form, while the above-mentioned Kuan-fo san-mei ching explains the latter. (173c11—14)

Hui-yūan further divides this specific form of response-body visualization into the "vision of unrefined pure-faith" (chū ching-hsin chien 魚净信見) and the "vision of true reality" (chen-shih chien 真実見), also referred to as the "beginning" (shih 始) and "end" (chung 終) respectively. It the former case, the practitioner listens to the teachings of the Bodhisattva Pitaka and learns that there are an infinite number of Buddhas in the ten directions. He then restrains his thoughts and examines [the object], thereby, clearing the mind. In the vision of true reality, the practitioner has direct audience through supernatural powers or is reborn in a Buddha-land and is able to make offerings to the Buddha in person. (173c4-8)

Since Hui-yüan does not elaborate these points in the *Kuan-ching i-shu*, we must look to other texts for a more precise understanding of his "vision of unrefined pure-faith" as one of the two forms of "response-body visualization." One such text is the *Kuan fo san-mei ching*, which Hui-yuan regards as a scriptural

basis for his understanding of the response-body visualization. Unfortunately, this sutra has not survived, and no extant texts quote passages from it that would be pertinent to our present discussion. It is quite possible that this refers to another sutra with a similar title, the *Kuan fo san-mei hai ching* 観仏三昧海経 Hui-yuan could very well have omitted the character "hai" 海 from the title. But even in this text there is no quotation from the lost *Kuan-fo san-mei ching*.

A passage in the *P'u-sa ti-ch'ih ching* 菩薩地持経 (*Bodhisattvabhūmi*) throws light on this visualization:

[For Bodhisattva] in this Stage [of Rejoice] (first bhūmi) there are two causes for gaining vision of the immeasurable number of Buddhas. [As the first cause, ] by hearing the discourses of the Bodhisattva Piṭaka, he comes to firmly believe and to know about the numerous Buddhas of the immeasurable number of world-realms in the ten quarters. This is called the "vision of unrefined pure-faith," [whose attainment] then enables him to attain the "vision of true reality". This is the first [of two] causes. (The italicized indicate passages which are the same as those in Kuan-ching ishu.)

This passage bears striking resemblance to that of the *Kuan-ching i-shu* under discussion. Since he wrote a commentary on this work and cites it on numerous occasions throughout his writings, it is quite safe to assume that Hui-yüan adopted this passage as basis for the *Kuan-ching i-shu* passages under discussion.

While the meaning of this passage is not wholly clear, a somewhat better understanding of the key terms does emerge. The "vision of unrefined pure-faith" together with "vision of true reality" constitutes the first of two causes for gaining a vision of the Buddhas. The second consists in making a vow, as the *P'u-sa ti-ch'ih ching* explains:

One also makes the vow, saying "Because the Buddha appeared in the world, I will be reborn there [in that world]." According to such a vow, he will be reborn in the same way as in the vision of unrefined pure-trust, namely by the power of the vow.

Since he uses them interchangeably in the *Kuan-ching i-shu*, the "vision of unrefined pure-faith" discussed here would be, for Hui-yüan, none other than the "visualization of unrefined pure-faith." Also since Hui-yüan would regard the "visualization of unrefined pure-faith" as the same visualization advocated in the *Kuan-ching*, the "vision of unrefined pure-faith" holds the key to unlocking Hui-yüan's understanding of the visualization in the *Kuan-ching*.

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The above passage from the *P'u-sa ti-ch'ih ching* does not clarify the vision's relationship to unrefined pure-faith. It is not certain if the vision is the object or the result of unrefined pure-faith. A later recension of the *Yogacārabhūmi-śāstra*, the *Yu-chia-shih ti-lun* 瑜伽師地論 translated by Hsüan-tsang, includes a less ambiguous and more detailed explanation of the same section than did the earlier-translated *P'u-sa ti-ch'ih ching*:

For the Bodhisattvas dwelling in this Stage [of Joy] there are two causes by which they can envision the Buddhas.

By listening to the discourses of the Bodhisattva *Piṭaka* or by generating conviction in the mind, they come to believe that there exist numerous Buddha, Tathāgatas of varying names in the numerous world-realms of varying names in the ten directions. On account of the mind accompanied by unrefined pure-faith, they seek and desire to manifest the vision [of the Buddhas]. Having completed seeking in this way, true reality is actualized. This is to be known as the first cause. . . .

Accordingly, the Bodhisattvas gain vision of the Buddhas based on the unrefined trust and the power of the correct vow.

A corresponding section from the Sanskrit text of Bodhisattvabhūmi reveal virtually the same idea as the above Chinese text. The underscored passage clearly explicates that vision (chien 見; darśana) is the outcome of unrefined purefaith or of the "mind of unrefined pure-faith" (audārikā-prasāda-sahāgatena cetasā). If this agrees with Hui-yūan's understanding of the terms, it follows that he understood the term to mean "vision derived from unrefined pure-faith." In other words, the realization of unrefined pure-faith leads to the vision of the Buddhas.

This is the initial level of visualization, which finally culminates in the "vision of true reality." But this "vision of true reality" is not the kind advocated in the *Kuan-ching*. Hence, for Hui-yüan, the visualization that the *Kuan-ching* advocates is only the third of the three types of visualization which he mentions, 1) visualization of the true-body, 2) visualization of true reality as one form of visualization of the response-body and 3) visualization of unrefined pure-faith within visualization of the response-body. This suggests that Hui-yüan ranked these three in the order of difficulty with the first being the most difficult to perform and attain. As Hui-yüan referred to them as "end" and "beginning" for the second and third types, respectively, the precise relationship for the latter two is clearly stated.

Chih-kuan 止観 (śamatha-vipaśyanā) is the best known meditation technique of

Chinese Buddhism. A comparison of visualization with that meditative form should be helpful in clarifying Hui-yüan's understanding of visualization. Chih-i defines *chih-kuan* in the *Mo-ho chih-kuan* 摩訶止観:

Chih 止 and kuan 観 each have three meanings, which [in the case of chih] are: 1) ceasing 息, 2) stopping 止 and 3) combating non-chih 対不止.

... Kuan also has three meanings: 1) the piercing 貫穿, 2) the penetration of kuan 観 and 3) the combating non-kuan 対不観.

Even a cursory glance discloses how much closer the visualization of Hui-yüan is to *chih* (śamatha) than to *kuan* (*vipaśyanā*). "To behold the Buddha's features and restrain one's thoughts to examine them" (173c2-3) describes Hui-yüan's visualization, which accords closely with Chih-i's definition of ceasing and stopping. According to Chih-i, "ceasing" encompasses the quieting and ceasing of deluded thoughts and concepts, while "stopping" involves the "restraining of present thoughts so that they stay stationary and not move."

In contrast, kuan for Chih-i takes on an element of wisdom which Hui-yüan's understanding of visualization lacks. One of the meanings of kuan, "piercing," is described by Chih-i as "wisdom which through its incisive usage pierces through and destroys blind passion." Another meaning of kuan, "penetration," also takes on a quality of wisdom as it characterizes, "the penetration of the wisdom of kuan which leads one to merge with suchness." The following statement in his kuan-ching i-shu further demonstrates that Hui-yüan's emphasis on visualization finally rested on concentration and calming the mind (i. e. śamatha) rather than vipaśyanā: "The samādhi of Buddha-visualization is called 'ting'定 (concentration or meditation)." (184c5) Elsewhere, Hui-yüan employs a term "meditative good act" (ting-shan 定善) which refers to the sixteen visualizations as over against the "non-meditative good act" (san-shan 散善) which demarcates the ethically-based three pure acts. The Ta-ch'èng i-chang 大乘義章 sets forth "concentration" as follows:

Because the mind dwells on one object and does not scatter or move, it is called "concentration."

Again, the element of wisdom found in Chih-i's definition of "kuan" is conspicously absent.

The next question concerns the stage in the path system (mārga) at which this form of visualization is practiced. A definitive answer to this question would be crucial for challenging the traditional claim which denied to the pṛṭhagjanas the capacity to cultivate visualization.

As seen above, Hui-yüan regarded the Kuan-ching to be for pṛthagjanas and the import of the Kuan-ching to be the 'samadhi of Buddha-visualization.' Thus clearly Hui-yuan did not regard the aryajanas as the prime practitioner in the context of the Kuan-ching. Another statement in the Kuan-ching i-shu further supports this:

> Also, the coarse [Buddha] countries generally have prthagjanas of various capabilities who are reborn there, while the subtle lands only have the spontaneous rebirth of *āryajanas*. The Pure Land of Amitābha Buddha's country belongs to the coarse country. . . . This Kuan-ching is concerned with the coarse [country] (182c6-7,12)

Hui-yüan does not elaborate in the Kuan-ching i-shu on the exact pṛthagjana stages at which the visualization is practiced. But a clue to this appears in Huiyuan's understanding of "unrefined pure-faith." Though not exactly "unrefined pure-faith," we find a statement in Hui-yüan's Ta-ch'eng i-changon on "pure-faith":

> [The Buddhist path] is sometimes divided into five [categories]. That of the Good Destinies (shan-ch'ü 善趣 ) is the first. Because one understands and cultivates pure-faith, this [category] is called [the stage of] Ten-Faiths in the Ying-lo [ching] 瓔珞経.

In another statement from the same text, Hui-yuan explains:

At the rank of Good Destinies, one cultivates pure-faith to separate oneself from the actions of the Icchantikas (one destitute of Buddha nature). The [pure-faith] is then established at the stages of Lineage (gotrabhū) (chung-hsing 種性) and Practice of Resolution (adhimukticaryā) (chieh-hsing 解行).

One shall, thereby, be eternally separated from the three kinds of evil actions [of the Icchantikas]: the vilification of the Dharma, the four grave transgressions and the five grave offenses.

In the Kuan-ching i-shu, Hui-yüan regards the thirteenth visualization in the Kuan-ching to be meant for even those below the prthagjana ranks:

> What follows next is a gate (thirteenth visualization) that repeats the descriptions of the visualization of the Buddha and [two] Bodhisattvas (previously discussed as the eighth visualization). Why was it necessary to repeat? It was because the visualization of the Buddha and the Bodhisattvas discussed earlier could not be fathomed by those below [the rank of] prthagjanas; hence, it is being repeated to instruct [those below the rank of] pṛṭhagjanas to visualize and inspect. (181c14

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Based on these passages, a practitioner begins the cultivation of pure-faith quite early in the path, at that of the Good Destinies. They then realize their goals in the two higher *pṛthagjana* stages of Lineage and of the Practice of Resolution. As we saw above in the *Yogacārabhūmi-śāstra*, because pure-faith constituted the basis for the attainment of visualization, it is safely concluded that Hui-yūan believed visualization to be cultivated by practitioners in the stages of Lineage or the Practice of Resolution. Moreover, according to the last passage, he recognized one of the sixteen visualizations to be meant specifically for inferior beings as low on the path system as those below the *pṛthagjanas* rank.

The Yogacārabhūmi-śāstra construes the stages of Good Destinies, Lineage and Practice of Resolution as the pṛṭhagjana stages, which constitute one of the traditional Buddhist path systems. These correspond to ranks belonging to another well-known path system: Good Destinies correspond to Ten-Faiths (shih-hsin 十信) and below, Lineage to Ten-Dwellings (shih-chu 十住) and Ten-Practices (shih-hsing 十行), and Practice of Resolution to Ten-Transferences (shih-hui-hsiang 十廻向). In addition the pṛṭhagjanas are divided into two categories of the Inner (nei-fan 內凡) and the Outer (wai-fan 外凡). This can be illustrated as follow:

bhūmis	bhūmis	āryajanas
Practice of Cultivation	Ten-Transferences	Inner pṛthagjanas
Lineage	Ten-Practices Ten-Dwellings (or	
	Ten-Understandings) Ten-Faiths	Outer pṛthagjanas
Good Destinies		

The accessibility of visualization practice accorded to the *pṛthagjanas* by Hui-yüan markedly differs from the inavailability of the same practice to them which orthodox Pure Land writers admantly maintained. The following statement summarizes the orthodox position on the "visualization" formulated by Hui-yüan and other masters of the Path of the Sages:

First, both the visualization on the Buddha and visualization on the pure lands are visualizations based on the wisdom of *śunyatā*, which is not in keeping [with the capability of] *pṛthagjanas*.

Difference arise in the interpretation of the term "fan-fu" (pṛṭhagjana; Jpn. bonpu) and "shêng-jên" (āryajanas; Jpn. shōnin) between Hui-yüan and the orthodox

Pure Land school. First, as the following three passages from the *Ta-ch'eng i-chang* indicate, Hui-yuan understood *fan-fu* to mean 'those in the stages below the first  $bh\bar{u}mi$ '

- 1) How do we know they are prior to the *bhūmis*?
- The sutra (Nirvāna-sūtra) itself calls those below the bhūmis, "fan-fu."
- 2) Those below the *bhūmis* are called "fan [-fu]," while those in the *bhūmis* are called "shêng [-jēn]."
- 3) Because the term "shêng" is used in a restricted sense, those prior to the Path of Insight (darśana-mārga) are called "fan-fu" and those with the truth of [the Path of] Insight and above are called shêng.

However, the orthodox Japanese Pure Land position as represented by Rei'ō has maintained "fan-fus" to mean those below the Ten-Faith stages. Ohara Shojitsu, for example, has adopted the same position as he argues that Hui-yüan ranked all nine grades as āryajanas (shêng-jên), simply because, in his eyes, Hui-yüan ranked even the lower three grades as Outer prthagjanas or as those of Ten-Faith stages. For the orthodox position, therefore, the "prthagjanas" (fan-fu) are those below the Ten-Faith stages, while the "āryajanas" refer to those of the Ten-Faith or Outer prthagjanas and above. Thus, this reveals a difference in the definition of "fan-fu". But modern writers either do not make this distinction or are not precise in their usage of the term fan-fu. Consequently, they assume Hui-yüan agreed with their own definition of the term.

Hui-yüan meant *shêng-jên* to include those in the *bhūmi* stages as stated in the following *Ta-ch'êng i-chang* passage:

In dividing the [path system] into two, one is fan and the second is  $sh\hat{e}ng$ . . . . Those of the  $bh\bar{u}mis$  are called  $sh\hat{e}ng$ .

The orthodox Pure Land view lowers the limit to admit those of the Ten-Faiths stages, as discussed above in Ohara's assessment of Hui-yüan's ranking. The orthodox position assumes more ranks on the path under the category of shêng-jên or āryajanas than does Hui-yüan's. Thus, the point of contention narrows to interpreting the forty stages below the bhūmis, i. e. the Ten-Transferences, the Ten-Practices, the Ten-Dewellings (or Ten-Understandings) and the Ten-Faiths. Hui-yüan calls them "fan-fu", while the orthodox writers refer to them as "shêng-jên".

This practice of modern Japanese writers harkens back to the Chinese master Shan-tao. In the *Kuan-ching shu*, Shan-tao describes the upper three rankings

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of the nine grades of rebirth by the so-called "masters":

The highest of the high grade refers to the Bodhisattvas from the fourth *bhūmi* up to the seventh *bhūmi*. The middle of the high grade refers to Bodhisattvas from the first *bhūmi* up to the fourth *bhūmi*... The lowest of the high grade refers to Bodhisattvas from the Lineage stages up to the first *bhūmi*... All these people of the three grades constitute the ranks wherein the *āryajanas* of Mahayana are reborn.

The Bodhisattvas of Lineage and above (the lowest of the high grade) listed here are equal to the Inner *pṛthagjanas* discussed above. But Shan-tao clearly includes them in the category which he calls the "āryajanas of Mahayana." This ranking of "masters," which will be discussed in greater detail in the next section, is clearly Hui-yüan's. While Shan-tao's description remains, by in large, faithful to Hui-yüan's, the reference to those at the levels of Lineage and above as "āryajanas" departs from Hui-yüan's *Kuan-ching i-shu*. Chia-ts'ai, a contemporary of Shan-tao and a proponent of Pure Land teaching, also regarded the Inner and Outer *pṛthagjanas* as āryajanas in his *Ching-t'u lun*. It appears that the other Chinese Buddhists of this period were divided on this subject.

Hence, the apparent differences in the two rankings of the visualization practitioners are largely rooted in the diverse understanding of the term fan-fu (pṛṭhagjanas). When the orthodox writers exclude visualization as a practice for the fan-fu, they are really dismissing the pṛṭhagjanas below the Ten-Faiths level. On the one hand, they fall into agreement with Hui-yūan who similarly withholds cultivation of visualization from pṛṭhagjanas of such low rankings. On the other hand, when orthodox writers extend visualization to only the āṛyajanas, they intend only those at the stage of Ten-Faiths and above. However, for Hui-yūan, the same group is not composed of āṛyajanas but of pṛṭhagjanas. Both sides concur that the bhūmi stages are for āṛyajana, but the difference of opinion applies to the stages from the Ten-Faiths up to the Ten-Transferences.

Aside from semantics, another possible reason surfaces for the difference of opinion surrounding the *pṛthagjanas*' ability to cultivate visualization. This arises from orthodoxy's assertion that Hui-yüan regarded Lady Vaidehī, the main interlocutor and the cultivator of visualization in the *Kuan-ching*, as a *shōnin* (*ārya-jana*). Thus, the visualizations espoused in the *Kuan-ching* were evidently meant for *āryajanas* such as Lady Vaidehi. As primary evidence for their argument, the orthodox writers have traditionally cited the following statement from Hui-yüan's *Kuan-ching i-shu*:

[When the Buddha said in the *Kuan-ching*] "You are unable to visualize far," this describes what [Vaidehi] could not accomplish. Lady Vaidehī is in reality a great Bodhisattva; at this setting [in the *Kuan-ching*] "she immediately attained the Insight of Non-production of dharmas," describes how [the Buddha] knew that she was not a Hinayanist but that she was disguised as a [Mahayana] *pṛthagjana*] (179a17—18)

Apparently, it seems appropriate to infer that Hui-yūan applies the term "great Bodhisattva" to an āryajana. In this term's single occurrence in the Kuanching i-shu, Hui-yūan regarded Vaidehi as having attained to the "Insight into the Non-arising of dharmas" (anutpattika-dharma-kṣānti), attained by Bodhisattvas of the seventh, eighth and ninth bhūmis. (179a13–15) These bhūmi stages belonged to the āryajanas and not to the pṛthagjanas.

However, even if she were in reality a great Bodhisattva, this would not directly bear on the immediate issue of visualization as a practice for the *pṛṭhag-janas*. Based on Hui-yüan's above statement, Lady Vaidehī embodies a great Bodhisattva only in the ultimate sense of reality. But in actual existence she remains a *pṛṭhagjana*. Ultimately, she is a great Bodhisattva, but in the penultimate context of performing the visualization, still a *pṛṭhagjana* who had to receive instructions from the Buddha on the sixteen visualizations. By receiving instruction, she becomes not a great Bodhisattva but an enfeebled *pṛṭhagjana*, as the Buddha expressly stated in the *Kuan-ching*:

You are but a *pṛṭhagjana*, and your mental faculties are feeble and inferior. Since you have yet to attain divine perception, you are unable to see far. But the Buddha, Tathāgatas possess various provisional means to enable you to see [that land].

Orthodox writers have failed to correctly locate the *context* in which Hui-yüan identified Vaidehī as a "great Bodhisattva." His description in no way should be construed, as they do, to argue that Hui-yüan regarded visualization as practice meant for the *āryajanas* and not for the *pṛthagjanas*.

#### NOTES

- [1] Taishō 1749. 37 and 1745. 37, respectively.
- [2] Cf. Fujiwara Ryosetsu, Nenbutsu no kenkyū (Kyoto: Nagata bunshodo, 1957), p. 215; Etani Ryukai, "Zui-tō jidai no kangyō kenkyū shikan," Tsukamoto Hakushi shō-ju kinen: Bukkyō shigaku ronshū (Kyoto: Tsukamoto Hakushi shoju kinen kai, 1961), p. 125.
- [3] Taishō 1753. 37.

- [4] See Rei'ō, Bussetsu kanmuryōjukyō kōki in Shinshū zensho Vol. 5, pp. 1-298. This has served as basis for many modern discussions, such as the above article by Etani Ryukai (note # 2).
- [5] Taishō 1749. 37. 182a13-c22 and 1753. 37. 247c22-249b8.
- [6] See note 2 above; on Korean influence, see Etani Ryukai, *Jōdokyō no shin kenkyū* (Tokyo: Sankibo busshoten, 1976), pp. 55-61.
- [7] See Sato Tetsuei, Tendai daishi no kenkyū (Kyoto: Hyakkaen, 1961), pp. 570-594.
- [8] Kenneth Tanaka, "Earliest Usage of 'Ta-ching' (Daikyo) and 'Wang-sheng lun' (Ojoron) by a Non-Orthodox Pure Land Buddhist: Its Implication for Chinese Pure Land Buddhism," The Pacific World new series no. 2 (1986): 63-74; also appeared in Shinran to Jödokyö. Kyoto: Nagata bunshodo, 1986, pp. 89-109.
- [9] For example, "Meditative good acts" (ting-shan) and "non-meditative good acts (san-shan) (Taishō 1749. 37. 178a 19-21, b9-11, c4);" classifying of the Pure Lands into three levels (Taishō 1851. 44. 834a24ff and 836a21ff).
- [10] Fujiwara Ryosetsu, *Nenbutsu shisō no kenkyū*, p. 153; Yuki Reimon, "Kangyōsho ni okeru zendō shakugi," pp. 908-909; Nogami Shunjo, *Chūgoku jōdokyō-shi*, pp. 224-227.
- [11] Yuki Reimon, "Kangyōsho ni okeru Zendō shakugi," p. 920.
- [12] Ohara Shojitsu, Zendō kyōgaku, p. 87. The same fourth cause is omitted in, Masaki Haruhiko, "Kangyōsho ni okeru kubon no mondai," p. 263. Fujiwara Ryosetsu, however, acknowledges this point in his Nenbutsu shisō no kenkyū, p. 157.
- [13] T 2682. 84. 78c2-6.
- [14] Yuki, "Kangyōsho ni okeru zendō shakugi," pp. 908-909. For a more detailed discussion of Yuki's view, see Chapter Six. Nogami, Chūgoku jōdokyō-shi, pp. 224-227.
- [15] T 1819. 40. 839b4-6.
- [16] T 1819. 40. 835c2-8.
- [17] T 1819. 40. 833c27-834a12.
- [18] For the original Kuan-ching passage, see T 366. 12. 346a12-26.
- [19] T 1957. 47. 3c26-28. The authenticity of T'an-luan's authorship of this work was questioned quite early by Japanese Tendai scholar-monk, Shōshin (ca. mid-12th century to early 13th). For textual background information and English translation of this treatise, see Leo Pruden, "A Short Essay on the Pure Land," pp. 74-95.
- [20] T 1524. 26. 231b11-13. The five are worship, praise, vow, visualization and transference of merit. Hui-yüan was aware of the Five Contemplative Gates as he cites them immediately prior to the enumeration of his four causal practices.
- [21] T 1753. 37. 272a28-b10
- [22] Ohara, Zendō kyōgaku no kenkyū, pp. 186–187; Kosho Yamamoto, Shinshū Seiten, p. 167; Morimitsu Junzaburo, "Chu-gokushisōshi-jo ni okeru zendō no ichi," p. 18.
- [23] T 1753. 37. 272b1-9.
- [24] Shan-tao's "chanting" corresponds to Hui-yüan's "reciting of Mahayana sutras" under "cultivation of pure acts" (second cause, p. 183a28, 176b28-c4); "visualiza-

- tion" to "visualization" (first cause, p. 183a27); "worship" to "worship" under "devotion" (fourth cause, p. 183b8); "oral recitation" to "recitation" under the same "devotion" (p. 183b8); "praise and offering" to "praise" under "devotion" (p. 183b8). Only the "offering" has no counterpart in Hui-yuan's list.
- [25] This modern Japanese sectarian understanding was already clearly expressed by Tokugawa sectarian scholars such as Rei'ō (1775–1851). Rei'ō in his commentary on the Sutra, the Bussetsu kan Muryōju-kyō koki, delineated twenty-two points of differences between Shan-tao's position and those of the 'heretical' previous masters, of whom Hui—yüan is the primary target. As the seventh of the twenty-two points, Rei'ō criticizes Hui-yüan for 'incorrectly' understanding the 'Buddha-visualization samādhi' and 'the Buddha-contemplation samādhi' as being synonymous. For Rei'ō, the two are different, as the latter meant 'samādhi of oral recitation.' See Shinshū Zensho Vol. 5, p. 16. For example of modern sectarian scholars who have perpetuated this view, see Ohara, Zendō kyōgaku, pp. 141 and 184, and Fujiwara, Nenbutsu shišo, pp. 215–221.
- [26] Allan Andrews, "Nembutsu in the Chinese Pure Land trdition," The Eastern Buddhist new series 3:2 (Oct., 1970): 20-45. This article addresses a broader question of the "nien-fo" practice in a much larger context; Minoru Kiyota, "Buddhist Devotional Meditation: A Study of the Sukhāvatīvyūhopadeśa," in Mahayana Buddhist Meditation: Theory and Practice, edited by Minoru Kiyota (Honolulu: Univ. of Hawaii, 1978), 249-296. This is study primarily on Vasubandhu's treatise, the Sukhāvatīvyūhopadeśa; Fukushima Koya, "Jyoyōji eon no shikan shisō," Tohōgaku 36 (1968): 15-28. While this article alludes to the subject of visualization, its main concern is to elucidate on the subject of chih-kuan in the context of its development within Chinese Buddhism.
- [27] T 475. 14. 554c29-555a2. The original passage in the *Vimalakīrti-sūtra*, translated by Kumārajīva, is exactly as quoted by Hui-yüan.
- [28] See note # 37 below.
- [29] See Bussho Kaisetsu daijiten Vol. 2, p. 180b. According to this entry, this sutra was in one chian and translated by Kumārajīva; the sutra is listed in the K'ai-yüan lu chian 14 and in the Tei-yüan lu chuan 24.
- [30] T 643. 15. 645-697. Translated by Buddhabhadra (359-442), it has been argued by modern scholars that it served as one of the models based on which the *Kuan-ching* was compiled in China. See Fujita kotatsu, *Genshi jōdo-shisō*, pp. 126-130. The *Bussho kaisetsu daijiten* (Vol. 2, p. 180b), however, does not list *Kuan fo san-mei ching* as a variant title of this sutra.
- [31] T 1581. 30. 941b26-29. The "Stage [of Rejoice]" is the first bhumi.
- [32] For the commentary on this sutra, see Zokuzōkyō 1. 71. 2 & 3. As to why Huiyuan did not cite scriptural source in this case, no answer can be given without further research.
- [33] T 1581. 30. 941b29-c1.
- [34] Hui-yuan uses "vision" 見 and "visualization" 観 interchangeably. See T 1749. 37. 173c6, 11.

- [35] Hui-yuan's position is evinced in the statement, "Here, what this [sutra] is advocating is the 'visualization of unrefined pure-trust' as one [of the two forms] of the [visualization of] response-body." (173c10-11)
- [36] T 1579. 30. 555c27-556a6.
- [37] Wogihara, Unrai, ed. Bodhisattvabhūmi: A Statement of Whole Course of the Bodhisattva (Tokyo: Sankibo Buddhist Book Store, 1971), pp. 330:14-331:2.
- [38] T 1911. 46. 21b15-c6.
- [39] Ibid., 21b16-17, 19-20.
- [40] Ibid., 21c6-7.
- [41] Ibid., 21c10.
- [42] T1851. 44. 716a14-15.
- [43] T 1753. 37. 261b1, 270b8.
- [44] T 1851. 44. 811c25-26.
- [45] T 1851. 44. 811b13-15.
- [46] In its Chinese translation, see T 1579. 30. 552c28ff; T 1581. 30. 929c19.
- [47] Ohara, Zendō kyōgaku, p. 141.
- [48] T 1851. 44. 677a5-6; c17-18; 788c2-3.
- [49] Rei'ō, Bussetsu kanmuryōjukyō kōki, p. 22.
- [50] Ohara, Zendō kyōgaku, p. 232.
- [51] Ibid., p. 232; Masaki, "Kangyōsho ni okeru kubon no mondai," pp. 266–267; Hirose, Kangyōsho ni manabu-Gengi-bun 2, p. 389.
- [52] T 1851. 44. 677c17-18.
- [53] T 1753. 37. 247c22-28.
- [54] This was, then, an insertion by Sha-tao as an attempt, in our view, to accentuate Hui-yuan's high ranking of the nine grades in contrast to his own low assignment of ranks.
- [55] This is deduced from his statements that, 1) both fan-fu and shêng-jên are reborn in the Pure Land (T 1963. 47. 88b15) and 2) the highest of the high grade is ranked the initial mind of the Ten-Transferences (Inner pṛṭhagjanas) and the middle of the high grade ranked the initial mind of the Ten-Trusts (Outer pṛṭhagjana) (87b23, 87b27-28). Since these two grades are the highest of the nine grades, and if shêng-jên (āryajanas) are reborn, then Chia-ts'ai must have considered beings of these grades as āryajanas.
- [56] For example, Hui-kan (fl. second half of seventh century) does not share this position. In his Shih ching-t'u ch'un-i lun, he expresses a position that agrees with Hui-yuan's rather than his teacher, Shan-tao. Also, according to, Kogatsuin Jinrei, the Fa-hsiang Schools that developed based on two of the translations of the Mahāyāna-samgraha differed on this issue. The followers of the earlier Paramartha version regarded beings of the Ten-Understandings and above to be āryajanas, but expounders of the Hsüan-tsang translations treated all stages below the bhūmis as pṛthagjanas. Kogatsuin Jinrei, Jōdoronchū kōgi, p. 97.
- [57] Hui-yüan cites from the *Jên-wang ching* five kinds of wisdom of non-production, which are attained in the five different stages: 1) gotrabhū and adhimukticaryā, 2)

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  - second and third  $bh\bar{u}mis$ , 3) fourth, fifth and sixth  $bh\bar{u}mis$ , 4) seventh, eighth and ninth  $bh\bar{u}mis$  and 5) tenth  $bh\bar{u}mi$  and above. (179a8-15)
  - [58] The *Kuan-ching* states, "Then the Buddha said to Vaidehī, 'You and all sentient beings ought to single-mindedly restrain your thoughts on one place and perceive the western quarter." (T 365. 12. 341c28-29)
  - [59] T 365. 12. 341c23-24.