

# A Study on the Buddha's Names (*Amituo/Wuliang qingjing*) in the Early Recension of the Larger *Sukhāvativyūha-sūtra*\*

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## Abstract

This study focuses on the genesis and characteristics of the names of the Buddha, *Āmítuó* 阿彌陀 and *Wúliàng qīngjìng* 無量清淨, in the two oldest versions of the Larger *Sukhāvativyūha-sūtra*, the *Dà āmítuó jīng* 大阿彌陀經 (T. 362) and the *Wúliàng qīngjìng píngděngjié jīng* 無量清淨平等覺經 (T. 361). The study includes three parts. First of all, a discussion on the problem of the original form of the Buddha's name, *Āmítuó* 阿彌陀, in the *Dà āmítuó jīng*; especially on the meaning of this Buddha's name and its characteristics showing in this sūtra. Secondly, focusing on the reasons why the name of the Buddha was changed to *Wúliàng qīngjìng* 無量清淨 in the *Wúliàng qīngjìng píngděngjié jīng* and giving concrete evidence that *qīngjìng* 清淨 is similar in meaning to *ānlè* 安樂 in Chinese traditional culture. Finally, a discussion on the influence of the Buddha's name, *Wúliàng qīngjìng*, to the early Chinese Pure Land Buddhism.

(Keywords: 1. *Amituo* 阿彌陀; 2. *Wuliang qingjing* 無量清淨; 3. the *Da amituo jing* 大阿彌陀經; 4. the *Pingdengjie jing* 平等覺經; 5. *jingtu* 淨土)

## Introduction

The names of the Buddha, known in Sanskrit as Amitābha 'limitless light' or Amitāyus 'limitless life', and in Chinese as *Āmítuó-fó*<sup>1)</sup> 阿彌陀佛 or

*Wúliàngshòu-fó* 無量壽佛 or *Wúliàng qīngjìng* 無量清淨, are something of a paradox in the Pure Land Buddhist scene. One thinks one knows him very well. For nearly one thousand and five hundred years or more, millions of people have spent their lives devoted to the thought of being reborn in *Amida*'s <sup>2)</sup> realm, *Sukhāvātī*, by reciting his name, <sup>3)</sup> in Chinese, *Nāmó Āmítuō-fó* 南無阿彌陀佛 (in Japanese as *Namu Amida-butsu*). This has been distinguished as the easy practice way, <sup>4)</sup> as it aims at rebirth in the Pure Land, *Sukhāvātī*, or in Chinese *Jìngtǔ* 淨土, by simply chanting *Amida*'s name, a practical method which can be followed by anyone who desires to be reborn in *Sukhāvātī*. This practice is considered to have derived from another Pure Land sūtra, the *Guānwúliàngshòufó-jīng* 觀無量壽佛經 (T. 365), which it introduces the easiest practical way of overcoming Samsara by reciting his name, so-called *niānfó* 念佛, to rebirth to *Amituo*'s realm. Since no Sanskrit counterpart of this sūtra has yet been found, the real evolution of this practice is not fully understood. <sup>5)</sup> For these reasons, the Buddha's name has exerted a strong fascination upon Buddhists and scholars.

The more easily to reach an advanced stage and the more difficult it is to be understood, the more highly it is regarded with fascination. Both educated lay Buddhists and ordained monks have spared no effort in promoting the thought of rebirth in *Amida*'s realm, the so-called Pure Land, by the power of *Amida* Buddha's original vows. On the other hand, scholars are inclined to be devoted to discovering the origin of Pure Land thought by comparing and analyzing the different versions of the texts preserved in various languages and manuscripts. At present, chanting the Buddha's name, *Nāmó āmítuō-fó*, is one of the basic practices in almost all Chinese Buddhists scene, as well as followers in other East Asian countries. Moreover, this is the only praxis for followers of Japanese Pure Land Buddhism (*Jōdoshū* and *Jōdoshinshū*). Since many scholars have discussed this topic, it might seem unnecessary to discuss it further.

Yet the fact is that we knew very little about *Amida*'s name until recently, through the work of a few scholars,<sup>6)</sup> and more work remains to be done. This study aims to make some progress towards this goal: first, through a brief introduction to the versions of the Larger *Sukhāvativyūha-sūtra* in chronological order and their authorship; and secondly, by examining the origin of the *Amida* Buddha's name found in the *Fó shūo āmítuó sānyēsānfó sàlófótán guōdù réndào jīng* (佛說阿彌陀三耶三佛薩樓佛檀過度人道經 (T. 362, hereafter the *Dà āmítuó jīng*), *Amituo*, and its characteristics. Thirdly, focusing on the reasons why the name of the Buddha has been changed to *Wúliàng qīngjìng* 無量清淨 in the *Wúliàng qīngjìng píngděng jué jīng* (T. 361, hereafter the *Píngděng jué jīng*). Finally, a discussion on the influence of the Buddha's name, *Wuliang qingjing* 無量清淨, in the early Chinese Pure Land Buddhist scene.

## ***Two Recensions and Their Chronological Order***

### ***Two Major Recensions of the Larger Sukhāvati-vyūha-sūtra***

One of the pivotal problems is to understand correctly the relationships among the seven extant versions, Chinese, Sanskrit, and Tibetan. Some Japanese scholars<sup>7)</sup> have made it possible for us to distinguish two major recensions in the transmission of this text. Depending on their characteristics, the seven versions can be divided into two recensions: the Early Recension includes the *Da amituo jing* and the *Píngděng jué jīng*, and the Later Recension includes the remaining texts of the Larger *Sukhāvativyūha-sūtra*<sup>8)</sup> (hereafter *LSukh*).

### ***The Chronological Order and Their Translators***

The next important problem is the chronological order in each recension and their translators. Although their chronological sequence and their

authorship have been stated clearly in Taishō Tripitaka<sup>9)</sup> on the basis of the *Kāiyuán shǐjiào lù* 開元釋教錄, attributed to *Zhìshēng* 智昇 (T. 55; 486c), this problem is not so simple. In fact, it presents a gargantuan academic task, and that is certainly not what I propose here. Instead of discussing this theme in detail, I would like to give a brief introduction to this important problem. The following arrangement is based on their probable chronological order, and is reproduced from Harrison, Hartmann and Matsuda 2002: 179–180.

- (1) “T. 362, *Fó shūo āmítuó sānyēsānfó sàlōufótán guōdù réndào jīng* (佛說阿彌陀三耶三佛薩樓佛檀過度人道經, attributed to the Wu Dynasty translator Zhī Qiān 支謙 (fl. c. 220-257), but almost certainly by the Han Dynasty translator Zhī Lóujiāchèn 支婁迦讖 or Lokakṣema (fl. c. 170-190 C. E.)<sup>10)</sup>. *Siglum*: 讖 or the *Da amituo jing*.
- (2) T. 361, *Fó shūo wúliàng qīngjìng píngděngjué jīng* 佛說無量清淨平等覺經, attributed to Lokakṣema, but in all probability a revised edition of No. 1 (T.362) made by Zhi Qian, and therefore dating from the period 220-250 C. E. *Siglum*: 覺 or the *Pingdeng jue jing*.
- (3) T. 360, *Fó shūo wúliàngshòu jīng* 佛說無量壽經, attributed to Wei Dynasty (220-265) translator Kāng Sēngkǎi 康僧鎧 or Saṃghavarman, but most probably the joint work of Buddhahadra (359-429) and Bǎoyún 寶雲 and therefore dating from 421.<sup>11)</sup> *Siglum*: 壽 or *Wuliang shou jing*.
- (4) T. 310.5, *Wúliàngshòu rúlái huì* 無量壽如來會 (part of the Chinese Mahāratnakūṭasūtra), produced during the period 706-713 by Bodhiruci (fl. 693-713). *Siglum*: 菩 or *Rulai hui*.
- (5) T. 363, *Fó shūo dàshèng wúliàngshòu zhuāngyán jīng* 佛說大乘無量壽莊嚴經, dated 991 and attributed to the Song Dynasty translator Fǎxián 法賢 or Dharmabhadra, otherwise known as Tiānxīzāi 天息災 (fl. 980-1000). *Siglum*: 法 or *Zhuanyan jing*.”

Nos. 4 and 5 above in our list, *Rulaihui* and *Zhuangyan jing*, are relatively unproblematic. Two problems have been noticed by scholars. First, the chronological sequence and the authorship of the two sūtras in the Early Recension, this has been studied notably by Fujita, Kagawa,<sup>12)</sup> Yinshun, and Harrison. Second, the authorship of the above (3), *Wuliangshou jing*, this has been studied by Fujita and Kagawa.<sup>13)</sup>

The *Wuliangshou jing* (no. 3 above) was regarded as the standard text in both the Chinese and the Japanese Pure Land Schools.<sup>14)</sup> In the past, scholars in Europe, North America and Japan have given precedence to the Sanskrit edition.<sup>15)</sup> Almost all of the scholars consider that the *Wuliangshou jing* was not translated by Kang Sengkai 康僧鑑 or Saṅghavarman; it was probably the product of a collaboration between Buddhahadra (359–429) and Baoyun 寶雲.<sup>16)</sup>

The first two Chinese versions are regarded as more problematic. Fujita, Kagawa, Yinshun, and Harrison have all pointed out that the oldest version is not the *Pingdengjue jing* as given in the *Kaiyuan shijiao lu*, but is should be the *Da amituo jing*. They presented, however, different ideas on the authorship of the two versions. In general, their suggestions on this problem can be distinguished into three categories.

First, Fujita pointed out that oldest version, the *Da amituo jing* (T. 362), was probably by Zhi Qian, and the translation of the *Pingdengjiue jing* (T. 361) was done by Bó Yán 帛延 or Bái Yán 白延 of the Wei Dynasty (Fujita 1970: 35–62).

On the other hand, Kagawa's idea is that *Da amituo jing* was translated by Zhi Loujiachen, or Lokakṣema, the translation of the *Pingdeng jue jing* was probably done by ZhūFàhù 竺法護 or Dharmarakṣa in Tiānshuǐ 天水 which is in the west of Chángān 長安 in 308 (Kagawa 1993: 30–51).

In addition, Yinshun speculates that the authorship of the *Da amituo jing* is probably by Zhi Loujiachen and the *Pingdeng jue jing* is the work of

Zhi Qian (Yinshun 1986: 759–763). About one decade later, Harrison presented the same suggestion with Yinshun (Harrison 1998: 556–557) and then gave a further discussion setting out the chronological order and authorship of *LSukh* in 1999, and plans to publish a more complete study in the future. Harrison presented the same suggestions as Yinshun’s view that the *Da amituo jing* is probably the work of Zhi Loujiachen and the *Pingdengjue jing* is just a revision, most possibly by Zhi Qian, not only referring to the *Da amituo jing* but also appending some articles here and there. He pointed out: “Zhi Qian is in fact well known for reworking older translations, most notably Lokakṣema’s renditions of the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā-prajñā-pāramitā-sūtra* and the *Śūraṅgama-samādhi-sūtra*, and the *Pingdengjue jing* could well have been the product of this sort of labour (Harrison 1998: 557).<sup>17)</sup>

Even though I have stated that I agree with Harrison’s suggestion in my previous study (2007, 2008), recently I have noticed this is one of the most pivotal problems which deserve more discussion than can be given here. For example, as Nattier suggested, Kagawa argued very well in his study that the term *pingdeng jue* 平等覺 or the *Pingdeng zhengjue* 平等正覺 almost can be seen only in *Zhufahu*’s translations. Furthermore, Harrison’s studies do not include the famous five evils paragraph, but the problem on who made five evils paragraph may be where the rub is to judge the authorship of the two oldest version of *LSukh*. I think this problem deserves more discussion.

## ***The Names of the Buddha in the Early Recension***

### ***The Origin of the Buddha’s Name in the Da amituo jing/ Amituo***

The oldest version of the *LSukh* represents the earliest form of *Amida*’s religion presently known to us. The name of *Amida* is first translated as *Amituo* 阿彌陀 in both the *Da amituo jing* and Lokakṣema’s other translation *Bōzōu sānmèi jing* 般舟三昧經<sup>18)</sup> (T. 418). On the original linguistics of

the *Amituo*, Fujita pointed out that the origin of *Amituo* should be both Amitāyus, “limitless life”, and Amitābha, “limitless light”.

Recently Jan Nattier presented a distinguished study on Amitābha/Amitāyus in the Early Chinese Buddhist translations<sup>19)</sup> on the basis of philology studies. It shows that the origin of *Amituo* corresponds to Sanskrit Amitābha, “infinite light”. Nattier’s conclusion corresponds to what Karashima suggested depending on philological considerations in 1999. I agree with Karashima and Nattier’s suggestion that the original meaning of *Amituo*, in the *Da amituo jing*, is measureless light, however, in addition, I observed that there is another characteristic regarding *Amituo* that should be given more attention.

### ***The Connection of Measureless Light with Wisdom***

In addition to the characteristics of “infinite light”, I also noticed that *Amituo*’s name, measureless light 無量光明, always shows a very close connection with *Zhīhuì* 智慧 “wisdom”, which is probably a pivotal function that should be discussed,<sup>20)</sup> on the basis of the contexts of the *Da amituo jing*. My discussion includes two stages here. First of all, a consideration on the connection of light with wisdom. Further more, a discussion on the term *zhīhuì yōngmēng* 智慧勇猛 “great powerful wisdom and bravery”.

We can find frequent praising of *Amida*’s measureless wisdom in the text in connection with his limitless light, the following text is an example:

(識) 白佛言。我欲求佛為菩薩道。令我後作佛時。於八方上下諸無央數佛中。最尊智慧勇猛。頭中光明如佛光明所照無極。所居國土。自然七寶極自軟好。令我後作佛時。教授名字。皆聞八方上下無央數佛國。莫不聞知我名字者。諸無央數天人民。及蜎飛蠕動之類。諸來生我國者。悉皆令作菩薩。阿羅漢無央數都勝諸佛國。如是者寧可得。不。<sup>21)</sup> (T. 12, No. 362, pp. 300c23-301a2)

This text epitomizes the original vows of the Bodhisattva Dharmākara,

*Amituo*'s preexistence in the presence of the Lokeśvararāja Buddha. This part is the core of the Dharmākara's twenty-four<sup>22)</sup> vows. Three sections from the above are particularly important. Above all, "I have awakened the aspiration for attaining Buddhahood, practicing the Bodhisattva path". And then, "I will be the most respected and wise one among all of the incalculable Buddhas of the eight quarters, the effulgence from my head, like the Buddha (Lokeśvararāja), will illuminate everywhere in the innumerable Buddha-lands. Further more, "all (sentient beings) in the Buddha-lands of the eight quarters above and below will be able to hear my name and attain rebirth in my land".<sup>23)</sup> In the above text, the Buddha's measureless effulgence is connected with Buddha's wisdom, which is probably one of the pivotal characteristics of *Amituo*, measureless light, in the *Da amituo jing*. That is to say, the name of *Amituo* in the *Da amituo jing* not only means measureless light but means *Amituo*'s powerful wisdom. In fact, this characteristic can be read of frequently here and there in the *Da amituo jing*.<sup>24)</sup> It is probably a primary characteristic of *Amituo*'s name in the *Da amituo jing* by means of *Amituo*'s name, measureless light.

It is interesting that the same function, the connection of measure light and wisdom, appears neither in the corresponding section of the *Pingdeng jue jing* (T. 12, No. 361, p. 280c14—20), nor in all the versions of the Later Recension, especially in Sanskrit version. This is a unique context and is very important to an understanding of the characteristics of the oldest version of the Larger *Sukhāvativyūha-sūtra*. No matter how accordant the two sūtras, it appears that the connection of measureless light and wisdom in the *Da amituo jing* might not have been fully emphasized in the *Pingdeng jue jing*. The counterpart of the above context in the *Pingdeng jue jing* (T. 12, No. 361, pp. 280c14—20) is the best example to verify this suggestion.

The following contexts, which occur only both in the *Da amituo jing* and in the *Pingdeng jue jing*, show the connection of Amida's Name with his



powerful wisdom.

(識) 其曇摩迦菩薩至其然後。自致得作佛。名阿彌陀佛。最尊智慧勇猛光明無比。(T 12, No. 362, p301a) (The bodhisattva Dharmākara later attained the Buddha stage, and was called *Amituo* Buddha. He is the most worshipful with great powerful wisdom and bravery as well as inimitable light.)

(謙) 其法寶藏菩薩。至其然後。自致得作佛。名無量清淨覺最尊。智慧勇猛光明無比。(T12, No. 361, p381a)

This text explains that Dharmākara attained Buddhahood after a long career of bodhisattva practice; because of his great wisdom and miraculous light, he is the most revered in of all the Buddhas. Here, *Amituo's* light is also connected with his wisdom. Although we can also find the characteristics of 智慧 “wisdom” and 光明 “light” in the parallel paragraph in the *Pingdengjue jing*, these counterparts are apparently derived from the older version, the *Da amituo jing*. Except for the names of the Buddha and Bodhisattva, one is based on transliteration and the another is a free translation in order to let the Chinese audience understand his characteristics more easily. On the other hand, the connection of light and wisdom has been changed to the connection of *qingjing* 清淨 “purity” and wisdom in that the Buddha's name was changed to *Wuliang qingjing* 無量清淨 “measureless purity”.

Additionally, in the above context, the Bodhisattva Dharmākara is translated as *tānmōjiā* 曇摩迦 in the *Da amituo jing*, but in the *Pingdeng jue jing* it has been become *fàbǎozàng* 法寶藏, which is a free translation deriving from Sanskrit Dharmākara. Meanwhile, the Buddha's name is changed to *Wuliang qingjing jue* 無量清淨覺.<sup>25)</sup> Is this also derived from a certain Sanskrit term? Many scholars, including me, tried to find what is the origin of the term of the Buddha name *Wuliang qingjing*, however, there is not a certain Sanskrit counterpart has been truly found yet. This is another

thesis I am going to do in this study (see below).

Furthermore, among the twenty-four vows in the *Da amituo jing*, there are four vows (No. 7, 18, 22, 23)<sup>26)</sup> connected with wisdom or light in the *Da amituo jing*. One of them, the eighteenth vow, is talking only on *Amituo*'s wisdom; the other three are on the Bodhisattvas and Arhats in *Sukhāvātī*. None of the vows with this feature, however, emphasizing wisdom can be found in the *Pingdengjue jing*, these are strong evidence for that emphasizing wisdom is one of the most important characteristics in the *Da amituo jing*.

According to my previous survey, the term 智慧勇猛 frequently occurs in the *Da amituo jing*, totally seventeen times.<sup>27)</sup> This term, 智慧勇猛, is rendered as “wisdom and bravery” (智慧と勇敢さ) in Karashima's Japanese translation on the basis of its counterpart in the Sanskrit version. However, as a matter of fact, only one time among them has a counterpart in the Sanskrit version, others are probably appended consciously by the author(s) of the *Da amituo jing*. Thereby it is of suspicious that all the seventeen renderings of this term in the *Da amituo jing* are based on the Sanskrit term,<sup>28)</sup> *prajñāvān adhimāiraṃ vīryavān*, which possibly only occurs once in the Sanskrit version. The term 智慧勇猛 is probably rather to be considered as one of the special characteristics of *the Da amituo jing*. Among the four vows, No. 7, 18, 22, 23, mentioned above, three vows, No. 7, 22, 23, include this term to present Bodhisattvas and Arhats in *Sukhāvātī*. All of these lack a counterpart in the other versions of the *LSukh*. Especially, the seventh<sup>29)</sup> vow is the most important vow for rebirth in *Sukhāvātī* in the *Da amituo jing*.

Instead of expressing braving, the term 智慧勇猛 is most likely intended to consciously stress the importance of the attainment of the wisdom like Buddha's by the author(s) of the *Da amituo jing*. The intention to do so is none other than, recognition of wisdom especially for the intention to attain

birth in *Sukhāvātī*. This suggestion is also proved by the paragraph on the three stages of rebirth. This characteristic is first seen in *Da amituo jing*, and the counterpart in the *Pingdengjue jing* is only a revision. Because this term does not occur in the Sanskrit version and the *Rulaihui* and *Zhuanyanjing*, the counterparts in the *Wuliangshou jing*<sup>30)</sup> must be derived from the counterpart either in the *Da amituo jing* or in the *Pingdeng jue jing*.

In sum, the original meaning of *Amituo* is measureless light expressing measureless wisdom. The intention of the *Da amituo jing*'s translator(s) or compiler(s) is/are to emphasize that to be reborn in *Sukhāvātī* is to attain measureless wisdom like *Amituo* Buddha. And because *Amituo*'s origin is *Amitābha* “measureless light”, it is not difficult to understand that the author(s) of the *Da amituo jing* probably intended to express measureless wisdom by means of *Amituo*'s name.

However, this connection of measureless light with measureless wisdom in the *Da amituo jing* was changed in the *Pingdeng jue jing* in that the name of the Buddha has been changed to *Wuliang qingjing* 無量清淨 “measureless purity”. What is the origin of the term *Wuliang qingjing* and why was the name of the Buddha changed to *Wuliang qingjing*? This is one of the most significant problems in Pure Land Buddhism. I discuss it below.

### ***Wuliang qingjing in the Pingdengjue jing***

On the origin of *Wuliang qingjing* 無量清淨<sup>31)</sup> “Measureless Purity”, Nattier gave a suggestion in 2007, “The Names of *Amitābha/Amitāyus* in Early Chinese Buddhist Translations(2).” In the conclusion, Nattier points out that Zhi Qian is the author of the *Pingdeng jue jing*, *Wuliang qingjing* 無量清淨 may be derived from Zhi Qian's misunderstanding of the Sanskrit term, \**Amidā'a-visūha* < *Amitābhavyūba*.<sup>32)</sup> Recently, Karashima addresses that he agrees with Nattier's suggestion.<sup>33)</sup>

I agree with Nattier's conclusion that Zhi Qian has a tendency to

misunderstand Sanskrit term *vyūha* to mean the Chinese *qingjin* 清淨, “purity.” When I investigated what Nattier suggests, however, I noticed that she overstates this tendency of Zhi Qian, and consciously overlooks Zhi Qian’s strong Chinese in spite of the fact that she admits that Zhi Qian was a native speaker of Chinese (Nattier 2007, p. 367). Her suggestion must be true depending on two conditions at the same time: first, that there is an original Sanskrit term, *Amitābha-vyūha*, in the Sanskrit manuscript of which the *Pingdeng jue jing* is a translation; secondly, that the *Pingdeng jue jing*’s authorship is to be attributed to Zhi Qian as only Zhi Qian has a tendency to misunderstand *vyūha* to mean the Chinese *qingjing*.<sup>34)</sup>

I agree with Nattier’s statement insofar as there might be a Sanskrit term *Amitābha-vyūha*, but only in the Tibetan version, for the Tibetan version’s Sanskrit title might be speculated to be *Ārya-amitābha-vyūha-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra* depending on its Tibetan title (*Hphags pa ḥod dpag med kyi bkod pa shes bya ba theg pa chen poḥi mdo*).<sup>35)</sup> Consider the formation of the Tibetan version. The Tibetan version’s Sanskrit title is simply rewritten from the Tibetan title, but we cannot confirm whether the original Sanskrit version’s title was also the same. Moreover, the formation of the Tibetan version was at the beginning of the ninth century (Fujita 1970, p. 22), but the *Pingdeng jue jing* must be no later than 220–250 C.E., and the contexts of the *Pingdeng jue jing* are almost accordant to the *Da amituo jing* and are very different from the Tibetan version. If one must investigate the title of the *Pingdeng jue jing*, 無量清淨平等覺經 *Wuliang qingjing pingdeng jue jing*, it is impossible to think that the title was translated from a Sanskrit or Tibetan title, it is rather an annotation of the *Da amituo jing*’s title, *Fo shuo amituo sanyesanfotan guodu rendao jing* 阿彌陀三耶三佛薩樓佛檀過度人道經.<sup>36)</sup> One reason for my conclusion is that the Chinese term *pingdeng jue* 平等覺 occurs only three times in the *Pingdeng jue jing*, but all of their counterparts in the *Da amituo jing* are similar. One

is in the title of the *Pingdeng jue jing*, which corresponds to *sānyēsānfo sālōu fōtān gùodùrēndào* 三耶三佛薩樓佛檀 (過度人道), and the others are in the same paragraph (T12: 298c), in which the counterparts in the *Da amituo jing* are both *sānyēsānfōtān* 三耶三佛檀 (T12: 316b23). Obviously, instead of a translation from a Sanskrit title, the title of the *Pingdeng jue jing* must be a revision of the *Da amituo jing*'s title. Another reason for my conclusion is that the *Pingdeng jue jing* is so consistent with the *Da amituo jing* except for a few places, such as the vows articles, that we have to consider that the *Pingdeng jue jing* must have been compiled under the author's strong Chinese cultural background. Furthermore, even in the vows articles, a seldom translated part of the *Pingdeng jue jing*, the author's strong Chinese cultural trace remains. Thereby, the author of the *Pingdeng jue jing* re-translated the vow articles, but he retained the number of the vows articles<sup>37)</sup> occurring in the *Da amituo jing*, twenty-four, in order that this number can correspond with Chinese Taoist culture, *ziran* 自然, *wuwei* 無爲, and *qingjing* 清淨, frequently occurring in the *Pingdeng jue jing*.

Regarding the authorship of the *Pingdeng jue jing*, admittedly, it is probably the work of Zhi Qian as was suggested by Yinshun and Harrison, but some problems remain. For example, as Nattier herself admitted (2007: 364, no. 23), Kagawa had a good argument that the term 平等覺 is a typical characteristic of Dharmarakṣa's translations (Kagawa1984: 22). But I observed that this term also occurs, only one time, in the *Dà míngdù jīng* 大明度經 (T.8, No. 225: 489a), which is attributed to Zhi Qian. So this problem deserves more discussion. I accept Nattier's contribution to Zhi Qian's translation—considered apart from the particularity of the *Pingdeng jue jing*. But what if Zhi Qian's tendency involves the *Pingdeng jue jing*? Or what if *Wuliang qingjing* 無量清淨 as *Amida*'s name cannot be found in the great bulk of Zhi Qian's translations if there is a Sanskrit term? On a social level a second generation who is born in a foreign country and educated

there has not a strong background on his native language, but why do we ignore that his foreign language is as excellent as the native speakers with whom he is living? Zhi Qian is just this case in that he had an excellent talent in Chinese traditional culture as we read of in the his bulk of translations.

Or consider the meaning of *ānlè* 安樂 and *qīngjìng* 清淨, what if there is a certain relationship between these two terms, both in terms of Chinese traditional culture and in terms of early Chinese Buddhist translations, even in the Larger *Sukhāvativyūha*? First, the following context is in the *Huānān-zǐ* 淮南子：

清淨恬愉人之性也 (purity and happiness is human nature.)

A related pair of Chinese terms, *qīngjìng* 清淨 and *tiānyú* 恬愉, “happiness”, are parallel in structure, but this structure might be formed by two synonyms in accord with Chinese rhythm. Meanwhile, the term *tianyu* is similar in meaning to *anle*, “happiness”, therefore, *qīngjìng* is similar in meaning to *anle*. It is easy to find examples in Chinese literature, in which a parallel structure is formed by two expressions of similar meaning. The following example is in the *zhuāngzǐ* 莊子：

夫虛淨恬淡，寂寞無爲者，天地之平而道德之至也。

There are two parallel structures in the context, 虛淨 :: 恬淡 = 寂寞 :: 無爲. Because *jimo* 寂寞 is a synonym of *wuwei* 無爲, “no-ado”, *xūjìng* 虛靜, which is similar in meaning to *qīngjìng*, is a synonym of *tiāndan* 恬淡 (*Tiandan* is a synonym of *qīngjìng*, see HD7: 520). Secondly, we can find some examples in which the terms 清淨 and 安樂 are used in combination such as 安樂清淨 and 清淨安樂 in the early Chinese Buddhist translations. It is of interest that the following text is in the *Púsà běnyuán jīng* 菩薩本緣經 which is attributed to Zhi Qian:

今得此處清淨安樂 (T12, No. 153, p 55c).

Thirdly, even in the Larger *sukhāvativyūha*, 安樂清淨 also occurs. For example, 清淨之安定 (T. 12: 311c) cf. 清淨定安 (T. 12: 293c) cf. 安樂清淨若此 (T. 12:

274b).

Or consider Nattier's evidence, *Hōuchū āmituófó jì* 後出阿彌陀佛偈 (T. 12. 364b12-17), I cannot agree with what Nattier suggests that this verse was a translation from an Indian text. Even though Nattier refers to Saito's study, obviously she misunderstands what Saito suggests that this verse must have been written by someone who was familiar with the *Pingdeng jue jing* in China. I strongly support what Saito suggests. In addition to Saito's evidence, there is no better evidence of this than the context of "誓二十四章" occurring in the first two sentences. This might be tentatively translated as follows:<sup>38)</sup>

惟念法比丘/乃從世饒王；發願喻諸佛/誓二十四章。(Only thinking about bsiksu Dharmākara, following Lokeśvararāja Buddha; he made twenty-four vows to attain the Buddhahood like the Buddhas).

Obviously, both the *Da amituo jing* and the *Pingdeng jue jing* are twenty-four vows, as I pointed out above, the vows numbers, twenty-four, must be compiled in China depending on Chinese traditional solar terms, *jieqi* 節氣. Moreover, in the verse there is another important context, as follows:

世界名清淨，得佛號無量。

(The name of his world is *Qingjing*, he attained buddhood named *Wuliang*.)

As I pointed out in another study (2009), instead of a translation from a Indian text which Nattier suggested, *Qingjing* is an abbreviation of *Wuliang qingjing fo guo* 無量清淨佛國, *Wuliang* is an abbreviation of *Wuliang qingjing* 無量清淨, which is the name of the Buddha occurring in the *Pingdeng jue jing* (also see Saito). Thereby, *Qingjing* and *Wuliang* are paronymous word of *Wuliang qingjing*. Because in addition to *Wuliang qingjing fo guo* 無量清淨佛國, the realm of *Sukhāvati* was also translated as *ānlē* 安樂 "at ease and happiness" in the *Pingdeng jue jing*, it is one of the best evidence to verify that the author(s) of *Hochu amituofo jì* and the

*Pingdeng jue jing* (possibly the same people) thought that *anle* is similar in meaning to *qingjing* 清淨.

In addition to above discussion, the following points which I suggested in my previous studies help us make this problem more clearly (see Xiao2008).

### (1) *The View of Human in the Han*

According to Tsukamoto's study, the view of human in the Han Dynasty can be summarized as follows.

Although Confucianism was adopted by the Han government, the doctrines of various masters, *zhūzǐ bǎijiā* 諸子百家, which flourished in the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods almost died out in the Han Dynasty. Alongside Confucianism, Daoism, taught by *Lǎozǐ* 老子, became a powerful school throughout both Han dynasties. In the early times of the Former Han, emperors, such as Emperor *Huì* 惠 (r. 194-188 B.C.) and Emperor *Wén* 文 (r. 179-157 B.C.), worshiped *Huángdì* 黃帝 and *Laozi*, so-called *Huáng-lǎo* 黃老, as supernatural beings and many *Fāngshì* 方士 “specialists on Taoism” were employed in their governments. It has been said that Emperor Wen's wife was interested in Taoism and not interested in the theories of the Confucianists at all. In addition to these examples, *Zhāngliáng* 張良, the greatest contributor to the Han Dynasty, abdicated his position later in life and became a Taoist. His intention in doing so was to attain the *wúwéi* 無爲 “no-ado” state so as to achieve longevity and to escape death. Another such person is *Cáo cān* 曹參, who was active together with Zhanglang. Chaocan contributed to his government and was appointed prime minister of *Qí* 齊 by his government. He successfully governed *Qi* for nine years based on the thought of *Huangdi* and *Laozi*, which was taught “If you respect purity, your people shall maintain good order.” In addition to government circles, the thought of *Huangdi* and *Laozi* was widely followed



by intellectuals and ordinary people in the outlying areas. Another example is *Liūān* 劉安, who was the grandson of the dynasty's founder, *Gāozǔ* 高祖. He was fond of reading, it has been said that *Liūan* assembled more than one thousand scholars to discuss Chinese culture and *Laozi*. The *Huainanzi* <sup>39)</sup>, attributed to *Liūan*, was compiled by *Liūan* with scholars based on the thought of *Laozi* 老子, *wuwei* 無爲 “no-ado”, and *Zhuāngzǐ* 莊子.

The goal of Taoism is to attain the no-ado state, in Chinese *wuwei*, and a person who attains this state is called “Sage”, in Chinese *Sèngrén* 聖人, in the *Dàodé jīng* 道德經, and is known as “Ultimate Being”, in Chinese *Zhìrén* 至人 or “Supernatural Being”, in Chinese *shēnrén* 神人, or “True Being”, in Chinese *Zhēnrén* 真人.<sup>40)</sup>

## (2) *What was the Meaning of the Buddha in the Han Dynasty?*

According to the *Hòuhàn jì* 後漢紀,<sup>41)</sup> Buddha, in modern Chinese *Fó* 佛, was written *fūtū* 浮屠 in Chinese at that time. In the Western Regions where is the land of India, there is the Way of *Fo*, Buddhism. *Fo*, Buddha, was similar in meaning to *jué* 覺 “awakened”. It means one who enlightens all of the sentient beings. The most important aspect of his teaching is the thought of compassion, not killing sentient beings, only striving for purity 清淨. The followers of Buddhism were called *Sha-men* 沙門, “śramaṇa” in Sanskrit, “calming down the mind”, In summary, the intention of the followers was to calm down their minds, wipe off desire, and return to no-ado, *wuwei* 無爲.<sup>42)</sup> That is to say, Buddhism was considered a doctrine of morality, in Chinese *Dàodé* 道德, and its founder, Buddha, was considered as one who led all living beings to enlightenment and attained the state of *wuwei* 無爲. All things considered, Buddha and Buddhism were understood through Chinese culture, Taoism.

### (3) *Why was the Da amituo jing Revised?*

According to Harrison, “Zhi Qian is in fact well known for reworking older translations, most notably Lokakṣema’s renditions of the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā-prajñā-pāramitā-sūtra* and the *Śūraṅgama-samādhi-sūtra*”.<sup>43)</sup> Regarding Lokakṣema and Zhi Qian’s biography, which can help us approach the reason the *Da mituo jing* was revised, we can refer to Tsukamoto and Zürcher’s study.<sup>44)</sup> One of the characteristics of Lokakṣema’s translations is that he was always transliterating Buddhist technical terms instead of translating them into Chinese, and also because of his limited Chinese, it is almost impossible for Chinese people to understand Lokakṣema’s translations. The Larger *Sukhāvativyūha-sūtra* is akin to this case. Even though one version of the Larger *Sukhāvativyūha-sūtra*, the *Da amituo jing*, had been translated in advance, of course very few people could understand it. For instance, the name of the Buddha, *Amituo*, is now familiar not only with Buddhists, but also with ordinary Chinese people. However, that might not be this case in Han Dynasty.<sup>45)</sup> The aim of the *Pingdeng jue jing*’s author is to make more people understand *Amida*’s religion by means of this new version of the Larger *Sukhāvativyūha-sūtra*. This is the reason the *Da amituo jing* was revised.

Concerning the connection of the Larger *Sukhāvativyūha-sūtra* with Chinese culture, we can refer to FUJITA and KAGAWA’s study. According to Fujita, there is no counterpart to the Chinese term *dàojiào* 道教 in the Sanskrit version. This term is apparently borrowed from Taoism, which used it to express a Buddhist meaning. In addition to this term, some typical Taoist phrases appear here and there in the the *LSukh*, such as *zìrán* 自然,<sup>46)</sup> *xūwú* 虛無, *wújí* 無極 and so on. These terms are considered also to derive from the works of Taoism, such as *Laozi* 老子, *Zhuangzi*, and *Huainanzi*. Some of these terms or sentences, which are considered to refer to Taoism, occur only in the two sutras of the Early Recension. So they must derive

from Chinese culture.<sup>47)</sup>

#### (4) *The Origin of the Wuliang qingjing* 無量清淨

Another point which I discuss here is why the Buddha's name, in the *Pingdengjuejing*, was almost changed to *Wuliangqingjing* 無量清淨 from *Amituo*.<sup>48)</sup> *Wulingqingjing* is found only in *Pingdengjuejing* as the name of the Buddha in this era,<sup>49)</sup> even though there are seven sūtras, which are connected to the *Amida* belief, are considered to be translated by Zhi Qian (Hirakawa1969: 85-93, Fujita1970: 141, Asayama1996: 384). Instead of misunderstanding the origin of a Sanskrit term, which was suggested by Nattier,<sup>50)</sup> I suggest that 清淨 is probably derived from the *Pingdeng jue jing's* author's own idea, he consciously changed the Buddha's name by a Taoist term, so that it could be more easily approved of by his government and accepted by the Chinese people, corresponding to the Taoist thought, *wuweiziran* 無爲自然, which occurs in the *Da amituo jing*. The following points support this idea:

(a) In Chinese traditional culture, *ziranwuwei* 自然無爲 is similar in meaning to *qingjingxuwu* 清靜虛無<sup>51)</sup> (pure and non-existent) in Taoism, and is equivalent to nature 自然<sup>52)</sup> (HD7: 138). The following text, found in the *Pingdeng jue jing*, might be the best evidence to verify this.

(謙) 無量清淨佛國中之都自然之無爲, 無量清淨佛國, 為最快明好, 甚樂之無極也。The translation is probably as follows: Everything in the Land of *Wuliang qingjing* Buddha is nature (and) like no-ado, and is the best one, it is extremely pleasurable to live there.

The above context addresses that all in the *Wuliang qingjing* Buddha's Land is nature and pleasure. 自然無爲 is similar in meaning to 清淨無爲 in Chinese traditional culture,<sup>53)</sup> which first appears in the *Da amituo jing*. On the other hand, *Wuliang qingjing* Buddha's Land is renamed *Wuliang qingjing fo guo* 無量清淨佛國, and also translated as 安樂. This is because

*qingjing* is a synonym of *anle* in Chinese culture, as discussed above.

(b) According to *Dao'an's* 道安 (312-385) interpretation of the *Prajñāpāramitā*, the *dharmakāya* is the One (the principle of Unity, 一). It is eternally pure 清淨. (In it) being and non-being are together purified and it is never (touched by) “what has names” 命名 (*Daode jing* 1 道德經). Therefore, in observing the rules there is neither rule nor transgression; in practicing mental concentration (定, *samādhi*) there is neither wisdom nor foolishness. Deeply immersed, it has forgotten all (distinctions), and (in its unity) all “two” and “three” have been brought to rest. As it is brilliant, without any dark (spot), it is said to be “pure” 清淨. It is “the eternal Way” 常道 (*Daode jing* 1 道德經) (Zürcher 1972: 192<sup>54</sup>).

(c) According to Zürcher, a characteristic of the earliest Chinese versions of the Buddhist scriptures is a kind of “matching of meanings”, *geyi* 格義, of Buddhist and secular scriptures, such as *bodhi* = *tao* 道, *arhat* = *zhēnrén* 真人, *nirvāṇa* = *wuwei* 無爲 (Zürcher 1972: 184<sup>55</sup>). Thereby, *qingjing* 清淨 has two kinds of meaning in the early Chinese translations. One represents the highest stage in the Taoism, *wuwei* 無爲; the other represents the highest stage in the Buddhist practice, *nirvāṇa* and Buddha's *dharmakāya*.

Taking into account all these factors, we may safely reach the conclusion that *Wuliang qingjing* as Amituo's name was consciously created by the author of the *Pingdeng jue jing*. *Qingjing* is a synonym of *anle* and is a synonym of *zìrān*, *wúwéi*, and *nirvāṇa*, which means the highest level in Buddhist practice. This is because the name of the Buddha was changed to *Wuliang qingjing* in the *Pingdeng jue jing*.

### ***The Origin of the Chinese Translation Term Jingtū***

Another important point which has a close connection with Buddha's name, *Wuliang qingjing* 無量清淨, is the origin of the Chinese term *jingtū* 淨

土. Recently, Karashima<sup>56)</sup> presented a different suggestion to what I discussed in another study. On this problem, the following points, which are discussed above and in other studies,<sup>57)</sup> can be summarized as follows:

First of all, as I have discussed in another study, the term *Jingtu* has two meanings, one derived from other Mahāyāna Buddhist sūtras discussed by Hirakawa in advance, and the other from the name of the Buddha, *Wuliang qingjing* in the *Pingdeng jue jing*, to indicate *Amida's* realm.

Secondly, *Amida's* realm is renamed 無量清淨佛國 (土) by means of *Wuliang qingjing* in order to correspond in meaning to *anle* 安樂 and *ānyáng* 安養. Obviously, *Wuliang qingjing fogue (tu)* 無量清淨佛國土 is derived from the name of the Buddha, *Wuliang qingjing* 無量清淨, occurring in the *Pingdeng jue jing*. Therefore, *jingtu*(= *qingjing*) is an abbreviation of *Wuliang qingjing fogue (tu)*.

Thirdly, this idea is proved by *Houchu amituo fo ji*, and is inherited by *Pātīlīāzhi* 菩提流支 and *Tānlún* 曇鸞.<sup>58)</sup>

### ***Chanting Amituo's Name in the LSukh (Namo amitufo)***

The name of the Buddha, *Amituo*, always shows close relation with either “visualizing the Buddha” (見佛 *jianfo*) or rebirth in his land, the world of Sukhāvati, in the sūtras of Pure Land Buddhism, especially in the *LSukh*. The thought of “visualizing the Buddha” is one of the most important developments in the Pure Land School. The most important thing for someone who desires to visualize the Buddha is to hear *Amituo*, the Buddha's name. Four kinds of “visualizing the Buddha” have been distinguished by Fujita<sup>59)</sup> (1985: 123), (1) Visualizing the Buddha by rebirth in the world of Sukhāvati. This kind of visualizing the Buddha is taught both in the *Guan wuliangshoufo jing* (T. 365) and in the Larger *Sukhāvativyūha-sūtra*. (2) Visualizing the Buddha through his power. This appears both in the *Guanwuliang shoufo jing* and in the *Da amituo jing*. (3) Visualizing the

Buddha by means of *samādhi*. This dharma is taught in the ninth contemplation in the *Guanwuliang shoufo jing*. (4) Visualizing the Buddha on the point of death. This kind is talked about in almost all of the *sūtras* of the Pure Land School.

In addition to the above, I observe some traces related to visualizing the Buddha in the two *sūtras* in the Early Recension, of *LSukh*. I would like to append it as No. 5: (5) Praising and Chanting Amida's Name. This can be found in both *sūtras* of the Early Recension (see below). One may say that all kinds of "visualizing the Buddha" have a close relationship to Amida's Name.

One of the most important themes in the Pure Land Buddhist studies area is whether the idea of chanting of *Amituo's* name, *Namo amituofo*, is still presented in the Larger *Sukhāvativyūha-sūtra*. Kagawa agrees that *Namo amituofo* 南無阿彌陀佛 first appears in the *Guanwuliangshou-jing* 觀無量壽經 (T. 12, No. 365), but I observe that *Namo amituofo* did exist in the *Da amituo jing*, for example.

(識) 佛告阿難。我哀若曹。令悉見阿彌陀佛及諸菩薩阿羅漢所居國土。若欲見之不。阿難即大歡喜長跪叉手言。願皆欲見之。佛言。若起更被袈裟西向拜。當日所沒處。為阿彌陀佛作禮。以頭著地言。南無阿彌陀三耶三佛檀。(T. 12, 362, p. 316b)

The Buddha said to Ananda, "I commiserate with you and will let you see *Sukhāvati* where *Amituo* Buddha and the Bodhisattvas and Arhats live. Do you want to see that?" Ananda with great gladness immediately knelt down, joined his palms and said, "I want to meet them." The Buddha said, "Get up and put on your robe and worship facing west toward the setting sun and worship *Amituo* Buddha. Let your head touch the ground and then say 'homage to *Amituo* the perfectly enlightened Buddha' (*Namo amituo sanyesanfotan*)."

Although the *Namo amtosanyesanfotan* which occurs in the above context is

not the same style as chanting Amituo's name for the sake of rebirth in Sukhāvātī, which occurs in the *Guanwuliangshou jing*, this is the earliest form of *Namo amituo* in Chinese Buddhist literature, and probably has a connection to *Guanwuliangshou-jing*.<sup>60</sup> The following points support my conclusion:

(1) I do not agree with KAGAWA's suggestion that the above context is to only praise and take refuge in the Buddha are intended (1993: 239). This expression occurs three times in the two sūtras of the Early Recension of the *Sukhāvativyūha-sūtra*. Kagawa's example is only the third example in the *Da amituo jing*. We can clearly understand from the above quotation that the purpose of saying *Namo amituo* is neither to attain meditation nor to praise him, but rather for the purpose of visualizing *Amituo*. And the following context, some sentences are on how many bohisattvas should experience rebirth in the Sukhāvātī. That is to say that by saying *Namo amituosanyesanfotan* one expects to be reborn in Sukhāvātī.

(2) Even though many examples of *Namo* 南無 plus a certain Buddha occur in the early Chinese translations, the Pure Land school only focuses on reciting *Amituo*, *Namo amituofo*.

(3) The term *Namo amituofo* occurs two times in the *Guanwuliangshou-jing* with the aim of rebirth in Sukhāvātī and the style is similar to the *Da amituo jing*. For instance, the *Da amituo jing* has 西向拜, 當日沒處 (worship facing the West where the sun sets), which is very similar to the wording in the first contemplation from the *Guanwuliangshou-jing*, 想于西方……皆見日沒。

(4) Depending on the configuration of the two sūtras as to the concept of *nian-fo* 念佛, the two sūtras are the same in presenting two kinds of *nian-fo*, contemplation and chanting.

(5) No Sanskrit version of the *Guanwuliangshou-jing* has yet been found. (for the formation of this sutra, see Kagawa and Ochiai).

## Conclusions

In light of the above investigations, I would like to point out the following conclusions.

I support Karashima and Nattier's conclusion that the earliest form of Amida's name which occurs in Lokakṣema's translation of the *Da amituo jing*, is *Amituo*. In this case it corresponds to Sanskrit Amitābha "Limitless-light." This characteristic is closely connected with limitless wisdom. The origin of this characteristic is derived from the *Da amituo jing*. Even though this characteristic also occurs in the *Pingdengjue jing*, these occurrences are left over from the *Da amituo jing*, of which it is a revision. Recognition of wisdom is one of the important characteristics of the *Da amituo jing*. In the *Pingdengjue jing*, the name of the Buddha has been changed to *Wuliangqingjue jing*, so that the connection between the characteristics of light and wisdom, seen in the *Da amituo jing*, is obscured in the *Pingdengjue jing* (see Xiao 2008).

Concerning the reason the name of the Buddha has been changed to *Wuliang qingjing* 無量清淨, *qingjing* 清淨 does not have an original counterpart in the Sanskrit version, but rather reflects an attempt to make this name more meaningful for Chinese people. It is probably the invention of the author of the *Pingdengjue jing* based on Chinese culture in order that it can correspond to the Chinese traditional culture appearing the *Pingdengjue jing*.

*Qingjing* 清淨 "Purity" has two meanings. On the one hand, *qingjing* "purity" represents the ideal characteristic of human beings in the *Huainanzi*. On the other hand, *qingjing* is similar in meaning to *wuwei* 無爲. In the early Chinese Buddhist texts, *wuwei* is used to refer to nirvāṇa. So 無量清淨 is most suitable to represent a Buddha, introduced from a foreign culture, who has attained the highest stage for the Chinese people.



Furthermore, in addition to *anle*, Amida's realm is also renamed *Wuliang qingjing fo guo (tu)* as *qingjing* is similar in meaning to *anle*.

Pure Land Buddhism in Chinese is *jingtu* 淨土. The term *jingtu* 淨土, which is an abbreviation of *Wuliang qingjing fo guo (tu)*, must have been derived from the Buddha's name, *Wuliang qingjing* occurring in the *Pingdeng jue jing*.

The rebirth in Sukhāvati in the *Da amituo jing* aims not only at overcoming Samsara, but also at the attainment of a wisdom like the Buddha's. A trace of this characteristic remained in the 'three stages paragraphs' in both the *Pingdengjue jing* and the *Wuliangshou jing*.

The instruction to recite the Buddha's name, *Namo amituo*, is first found in the *Da amituo jing*. This is probably the origin of the practice of chanting *Amituo's* name in order to attain rebirth in Sukhāvati, and may have been the source of the *Guanwuliangshou-jing*.

#### ABBREVIATIONS

HD = *Hānyū dā cīdiān* 漢語大詞典 13 Vols. Shanghai: *Hanyu da cidian chubanshe*.

T = J. Takakusu & K. Watanabe, eds., *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō*. 100 vols. (Tokyo: Taishō issaikyō kankōkai, 1924-35).

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註

\* This is a revision of the paper, “The Names of the Buddha in the Early Recension of the Larger *Sukhāvativyūha sūtra*,” presented to the 13<sup>th</sup> International Association of Shin Buddhist Studies (IASBS) held at the University of Calgary in Canada on August 3<sup>rd</sup>—5<sup>th</sup>, 2007, A Japanese summary was published in the *Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies* in 2008, Vol. 56(2) pp. 751-754. I thank the community of the Association of Buddhist Studies of Bukkyo University (ABSBS) for allowing me to present this for Vol. 15 *The Bulletin of the Association of Buddhist Studies Bukkyo University* giving me an opportunity to have further discussion including the newest research progress during these two years in this area. I owe a special debt of gratitude to my supervisor, RYUZEN FUKHARA, who gave me so much invaluable guidance for this study. I also appreciate the help of Robert Latta, Andrew Glass, Zuiō Inagaki, and Mitsunobu Nakasone for their kind help with on my English. Despite the help of these many scholars and professors and friends, no doubt many shortcomings remain. These

are responsibility of the author alone.

- 1) For convenience, throughout this paper, I show tone marks only for Chinese characters appearing the first time in the paper.
- 2) For convenience, throughout this paper, I refer to this Buddha by the most popular form in Japanese, *Amida*, for the general names in the Larger *Sukhāvativyūha-sūtra*.
- 3) Four kinds of *niān-fó* 念佛: True reality (實相), visualization (觀想), contemplation of images (觀像), and reciting (稱名) were discussed in the Tiantai school, but in this study I discuss reciting *Amituo's* name only when I talk about *niān-fó*, so-called *chēngmíng niān-fó* 稱名念佛 “reciting the Buddha’s name” which is the most representative Buddhist practical way in Pure Land Buddhism both in China and in Japan.
- 4) First by Nāgārjuna in *Shīzhū pīpó shā-lūn* 十住毘沙論 (T.1521), this view was subsequently developed by Tānlúan 曇鸞 (476–542). According to Nāgārjuna, there are two ways for Bodhisattvas’ attainment of the stage of Non-retrogression: the normal practice, by one’s own efforts, is called the Difficult Way 難行道. Desiring rebirth in *Amituo's* realm based on *Amituo's* original Vow Power is called the Easy Way 易行道. See *Wúliàngshòu jīng yōupóttshēyuānshēng jì pǎobù pántóu púsà zāo zhū* 無量壽經優婆提舍願生偈婆藪槃頭菩薩造 (hereafter *Wúliàngshòu jīng lúnzhū* 無量壽經論註, T40, No. 1819).
- 5) For notable studies on the formation of this sūtra, see KAGAWA 1990 and OCHIAI 1999.
- 6) In the past fifty years notably in this area: Jūshin IKEMOTO 1958; Kokun SONODA 1960; Kōtasu FUJITA 1970 and 2007; Kagawa TAKAO 1984, 1993; Risho ŌTA: 1990, 2004. In addition to the above scholars, recently Seisi KARASHIMA presented a modern Japanese translation of the *Da amituo jīng* so that it can be more easily understood than before.
- 7) In addition to those mentioned in footnote 6, recently some prominent scholars have paid attention to this topic: Karashima, Gómez, Harrison, and Nattier.
- 8) To my knowledge, the two recensions of the Larger *Sukhāvativyūha-sūtra* were suggested as early as in Ikemoto’s studies (1958), but their chronological order could not be understood until 1970, when Fujita’s study was published.
- 9) In the catalogues, the Larger *Sukhāvativyūha-sūtra's* authorship is mainly indicated as follows: First, memorizing in the catalogue *Chū sānzàng jǐjì* 出三藏記集, attributed to Sēngyōu 僧祐 (445–518), Sengyou pointed out that the *Da amituo jīng's* authorship is *Zhī Qiān* 支謙, the authorship of the *Pēngdēng jué jīng* is *Zhūfǎhù* 竺法護 (T. 55; pp. 6c; 7c). Secondly, in the *Zhōngjīng mùlù* 眾經目錄, it was suggested that the authorship of the *Da amituo jīng* is that of Zhi Qian, but the *Pīngdēng jué jīng* is attributed to *Báiyán* 白延 (T. 55; p. 119b); and in the later’s three catalogues, *Rēnshòu* 仁壽 (T. 55; p.

- 158c) and *jìngtài* 靜泰 (T. 55; p. 191b) and *Dào xuān*'s 道宣 *Dātāng nèidiān lù* 大唐內典錄 (T. 55; pp. 289c-290a), are the same as the suggestion in the *Zhongjing mulu* 眾經目錄. Thirdly, in the *Lidai sanbao ji* 歷代三寶紀, compiled by *Feichangfang* 費長房 in 597, eight versions of the Larger *Sukhāvativyūha-sūtra* are memorized in this catalogue, and the records in the *Dāzhōu kāndìng mùlù* 大周刊定目錄 are also based on the *Lidai sanbao ji*, but only for three sūtras, the *Da amituo jing*, the *Pingdeng jue jing*, and the *Wuliang shou jing* (T. 12, No. 360) was it indicated how many papers were used in each manuscript, the same as indicated in the *Zhongjing mulu*, so that we can speculate that these three versions of *LSukh* were indeed in existence at that time (for a detailed survey see Yinshun 1981, pp. 759-763).
- 10) Some of the evidence for this is reviewed in Harrison 1998, pp. 556-557.
  - 11) For a review of the evidence for this, see Fujita 1970, pp. 62-96. Cf. also Gómez 1996, pp. 126-130.
  - 12) See Fujita 1970, pp. 35-62, Kagawa 1993, pp. 17-52.
  - 13) In addition to the above problems, Kagawa also introduced two possibilities as to the placement of the Song Dynasty's version, traditionally attributed to Faxian with thirty-six vows in relation to the scheme of the early and late recensions. Kagawa has presented two main ideas, as follows: (1) Faxian's version came into existence after the two texts comprising the early recension, and before the versions that make up the Later Recension. Or (2) Faxian's version is posterior to the forty-eight vows of the Later Recension (see Kagawa 1984, pp. 49-51).
  - 14) *The Rulai hui* (T. 310.5) was once regarded as the best version by *Zhixu* (智旭 1599-1655), who was one of the Chinese Pure Land School's foremost masters during the Ming Dynasty.
  - 15) See Harrison 2002, p. 180.
  - 16) Sakaino: 243; Mochizuki: 220; Ono: 100; Tsukamoto: 636; Fujita: 75; Kagawa 1984: 30; and Harrison 1999 (Fujita 1970, p. 75, No. 1).
  - 17) See Harrison 1998: 556-557. He gave a further discussion presented at the International Association of Buddhist Studies, Lausanne, Switzerland in 1999. Many thanks to Paul Harrison sending his unpublished paper to me.
  - 18) See Harrison 1978 and 1990.
  - 19) See Nattier 2006, and a further details, including *Wulangqing jing*, are given in Nattier 2007.
  - 20) Xiao first pointed out this function in 2007 and gave a further discussion in 2008.
  - 21) The counterpart in the *Pingdeng jue jing* is T. 12, No. 361, 280c14-20, but the context has been changed to 法寶藏比丘說此唱讚世饒王如來至真真正覺已，發意欲求無上正真道最正覺---.



- 22) As I pointed out in another study , even though the vow articles in the both sūtras in the Early Recension of *LSukh* are twenty-four, I donot think the original vow articles in the original Sanskrit manuscript of the *Da amituo jing* and the *Pingdeng jue jing* were also twenty-four as some of vows in the both sūtras include two or three vows (for a comparative table see Sizudani: 54). For example, notably the No. 17 vow in the *Da amituojing* includes three vows that were separated in the No. 7, 8, 9 vows in the *Pingdeng jue jing* and the *Wuliang shou jing*. The number twenty-four is a special number in traditional Chinese culture, corresponding to the Chinese solar calendar terms, *jieqi* 節氣. Twenty-four *jieqi* stands for a year presenting *ziran* 自然 “nature,” one of the most important thoughts in the *Da amituo jing*, discussed below. Obviously, the vow articles which we see at present must be deliberately compiled by someone on the basis of the Chinese twenty-four Solar terms in order that vows number corresponds to the Chinese concept of nature found in the *LSukh* (see Xiao 2009b, pp. 272-273=2009c).
- 23) My thanks to Andrew Glass for helping me check this translation.
- 24) In addition to this part and the following parts (T. 12: 301a16-8), which are representative of Bodhisattva Dharmākara, several contexts addressing Amituo’s wisdom and light appear in the *Da amituo jing*, such as T. 12: 308b15-7 cf. T. 12: 290a21-23; T. 12: 309a12-4 cf. T. 12: 291a1-2. Even though the terms 光明 and 智慧 are both found in the two sutras of the Early Recension, the counterparts in the *Pingdengjue jing* are apparently revisions of the *Da amituo jin*. Thereby the origin of the relationship between light 光明 and wisdom 智慧 is first found in the *Da amituo jing*.
- 25) Buddha was called as *jue* 覺 in Chinese in the Han Dynasty (around A. D 70), evidence reads in *Hōuhàn jì* 後漢紀, also see TSUKAMOTO 1979, p. 44).
- 26) The term 智慧勇猛 appears in the No. 7 vow of the *Da amituo jing*, but its counterpart, the No. 19 vow and the second part of the No. 7 vow, in the *Pingdeng jue jing*, are completely different with the *Da amituo jing* (Kagawa 1984, p. 121). The term *Zhihui* 智慧 in the No. 18 vow in the *Da amituo jing* has no counterpart in the *Pingdeng jue jing*. (Kagawa 1984, p. 127). The term *Zhihui yongmeng* 智慧勇猛 in both No. 22 and No. 23 vow in the *Da amituo jing* see Kagawa 1984, p. 111 and p. 115).
- 27) According to my survey of the statistics, the term 智慧勇猛 appears a total of 17 times in the *Da amituo jing*, and 16 times in the *Pingdengjue jing*, (Xiao 2007, p. 85) but these 16 cases in the *Pingdeng jue jing* are almost all revisions of the *Da amituo jing*. Just three cases are unique in the *Pingdengjue jing*, and these probably are annotations of the contexts.
- 28) Karashima’s translation is probably derived from *prajñāvān adhimāiraṃ vīryavān* in the Sanskrit version (see Karashima 1999, p. 137, footnote 8), which was translated as



- ‘perfect discernment, possessing vigor to a superlative degree’ in Gómez’s English translation from the Sanskrit version (1995, p. 65), and as ‘wisdom and zealous progress’ 精進 in Fujita’s Japanese translation (Fujita 1975, p. 50), see also Nakamura’s Japanese translation p. 26.
- 29) The seventh vow in the *Da amituo jing* reads 我即與諸菩薩阿羅漢共飛行迎之。即來生我國則作阿惟越致菩薩，智慧勇猛。得是願乃作佛，不得是願終不作佛 (T. 12, p. 301 b-c5). The counterpart in the *Pingdeng jue jing* (Kagawa 1984, p. 121) reads 諸天人民蠕動之類聞我名字，皆悉踊躍來生我國，不爾者我不作佛 (T. 12, p. 281 b29-c1), in the *Wuliang shoujing* (the eighteenth vow) reads 設我得佛。十方衆生至心信樂。欲生我國乃至十念。若不生者不取正覺。唯除五逆誹謗正法 (T. 12, p. 268 a26-28).
- 30) The term 智慧勇猛 only appears two times in the *Wuliangshoujing*. They are T. 12, pp. 272b18-20, and p. 278c. Also see Xiao 2008.
- 31) Hirakawa and Fujita tried to discuss this problem in advance, but they did not present a positive suggestion on this problem.
- 32) See Nattier 2007. p. 390.
- 33) See Karashima 2008.
- 34) Kagarashima further suggested shis. Also see Karashima’s suggestion (2008).
- 35) See Fujita 1970, p. 19.
- 36) Regarding the meaning of the *Da amituo jing*’s title, in addition to Okayama and Kararashima’s suggestions, at least there was another suggestion, the oldest, which was given by the author of the *Pingdeng jue jing* as the title of the *Pingdeng jue jing* itself is an annotation of the *Da amituo jing*’s. This problem deserves a detailed discussion than I would like to do here.
- 37) As I pointed out in another study (2009b, c), the number of vows in the *Da amituo jing* must be compiled by someone in order that its number corresponds to the Chinese twenty-four solar terms, so-called *jieqi* 節氣, which is to express nature.
- 38) Nattier’s translation is as follows: The monk who only thought about the Dahrma. As I pointed out, here 法比丘 must be an abbreviation of 法寶藏 found in the *Pingdeng jue jing*.
- 39) In *Huāinānzī* reads 清淨恬愉人之性也 “purity and happiness is human’s nature.
- 40) For other evidence see Tsukamoto 1979, pp. 29-36 in Japanese, or its English translation Tsukamoto 1985, pp. 29-37.
- 41) Attributed to *Yuānhōng* 袁宏 (328-379).
- 42) See TSUKAMOTO 1979, p44 in Japanese, in English Tsukamoto 1985, p. 41.
- 43) See No. 17
- 44) See TSUKAMOTO 1979, pp. 91-102, English translation 1985; and E. ZÜRCHER 1972, pp. 35-42.

- 45) I suggest two main reasons that have made the Name of Amituo very famous in China. First, once Zhi Qian revised the *Da amituo jing*, more people could understand the thoughts of Pure Land Buddhism. Second, Kumarajiva also popularized this practice.
- 46) *Ziran* 自然 is used as a typical phrase in Taoism combined with *wuwei* 無爲. According to Mori's statistics, one can find the term *ziran* 自然 146 times in the *Da amituo jing*, 177 times in the *Pingdengjue jing*, and 56 times in the *wuliangshou jing* (See Mori 2003, p239).
- 47) See FUJITA 1994: 47-48.
- 48) *Amituo* also can be found nine times in the *Pingdengjue jing*.
- 49) In addition to the *Pingdengjue jing*, *wulaingqingjing* appears only once in the *Lao munu liuying jing* 老母女六英經, T14: 912c.
- 50) See Nattier 2007.
- 51) *Qingjing wuwei* 清淨無爲 is also written as *qingjingwuwei* 清淨無爲, and in *Huangdi* 皇帝 and *Laozi* 老子, the central tenet of Taoism is *qingjingwuwei* 清淨無爲 (HD5: 1326).
- 52) Also see HD7: 138.
- 53) The following context is in the *Zhuangzi keyi* 莊子/刻意, reads 恬憺寂寞, 虛無無爲、此此軋地之平而道德之質也; and in the *Zhuangzi tiandao* 天道莊子: 天道夫虚静恬淡、寂寞無爲者、天地之平而道德之至也. And in the *Laozi*: reads 恬淡為上勝而不美, and here 虚静 = 寂寞 = 恬淡 = 清淨. And in the *Wenzi ziran* 文子/自然 reads 至德無為、万物皆容。虚静之道、天長地久. And in the *Huainanzi* 淮南子: 清淨恬愉人之性也. *tianyu* 恬愉 happiness = *anle* 安樂 occurring in the *Pingdeng jue jing* as the name fo Amida's realm. And the character *tian* 恬 means both calm down and happiness.
- 54) Also see the Japanese translation of this book (Tanaka 1995, p. 232).
- 55) Also see the Japanese translation of this book. (Tanaka 1995, p. 222).
- 56) Karashima 2008.
- 57) See Xiao 2009a, b, c.
- 58) See Xiao 2009.
- 59) See Kajiyama Yuichi 1992, p298
- 60) See Xiao 2007, p. 87.