

Picturing the Divine Agents of Food Bestowal: The Seven Buddhas in the Sweet-Dew Painting of the Chosŏn Period, 1392-1910

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I. Introduction

The Sweet-Dew painting (*Kammodo* 甘露圖) emerged in sixteenth-century Korea to introduce an unprecedented pictorial representation of a group of Buddhas, whose functional significance lie in the “food bestowal” practice (*shishik* 施食) peculiar to Chosŏn Buddhist liturgy. Notwithstanding the obvious discrepancies in their compositional arrangements, several Buddhas constitute an assemblage, predominantly assuming visual ascendancy over the other Buddhist deities in the upper register of this

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new painting genre of the Chosŏn period (1392-1910).¹ In the soteriological method of food bestowal, they are indeed the pivotal figures who collectively assume the role of a *liturgical agent*, exercising divine faculties indispensable for a successful execution of the rites which ultimately enable departed spirits to achieve rebirth in paradise. The presence of an assemblage of Buddhas in the Sweet-Dew painting thus perspicuously manifests its functional link to the *modus operandi* of salvation via the consumption of a mystically transformed salvific substance, the “sweet dew” (Kr. *kamno* 甘露; Skt. *amṛta*).

Considering the ritual application of the Sweet-Dew painting, Korean scholars have most notably attempted to construe its portrayals of the assemblage of Buddhas, with reference to canonical and extra-canonical texts which expound the liturgical instructions on the rites involving the food bestowal. Initially, Hong Yunsik and Kim Sŭng-hŭi identified the assemblage as the Seven Buddhas (*ch'iryŏrae* 七如來 or Seven Tathāgatas), whose invocations are prescribed in the *Yuqie jiyao jiu Anan tuoluoni yankou guiyi jing* 瑜伽集要救阿難陀羅尼焰口軌儀經 (The Essentials of Yoga Teachings on the Dhāraṇī Flaming-Mouth Rite for Saving Ānanda) (T. 1318), one of the esoteric scriptures set forth the observance of the food bestowal to hungry ghosts (Kr. *agwi* 餓鬼; Skt. *preta*), and the ritual manual for the performance of the *kubyŏng shishik* 救病施食 (Healing through the Bestowal of Food) included in the Food-Bestowal chapter (*shishik p'yŏn* 施食編) of *Sŏngmun ūibŏm* 釋門儀範 (Manuals for Buddhist Rituals), a compendium of Korean Buddhist liturgies compiled by An Chinho in 1935.² However, underlining the incompatibility of their appellations between the two texts, Pak Ŭnkyŏng further considered a corpus of food-bestowal-related texts that potentially have served as the grounds for the genre's espousal of the

¹ The upper register of the Sweet-Dew painting also frequently includes the Amitābha triad (Amitābha attended by Avalokiteśvara and Mahasthamaprapta, or Kṣitigarbha replacing the latter), a set of two bodhisattvas, Avalokiteśvara and Kṣitigarbha, the Bodhisattva Guide of Souls (Illoang posal 引路王菩薩), and heavenly beings. Nevertheless, the assemblage of Buddhas is the only iconographic component that invariably appears in the extant specimens of the Sweet-Dew painting from the Chosŏn period, apart from the Bodhisattva Guide of Souls who takes less visual prominence.

² Hong Yunsik, *Han'guk purhwa ūi yon'gu* 韓國佛畫의 研究 (Iri: Wŏn'gwang taehakkyo ch'ulp'anbu, 1980), 185-188; Kim Sŭnghŭi, “Chosŏn shidae Kamnodo ūi tosang yŏn'gu” 朝鮮時代 甘露圖의 圖像研究, *Misulshak yŏn'gu* 196 (December 1992): 24-25, table 2; idem, “Kamnŏt'aeng ūi tosang kwa shinang ūrye” 甘露幀의 圖像과 信仰 儀禮 in *Kamnŏt'aeng* 甘露幀, 2nd ed., ed. Kang Upang and Kim Sŭnghŭi (Sŏul: Yegyŏng, 2010), 456, table 2. Both authors do not specify the latter source, but the Food-Bestowal chapter of *Sŏngmun ūibŏm* includes two different sets of the invocation of Buddhas (*ch'inyang sŏngho* 稱量聖號), the Five Buddhas and the Seven Buddhas for the *kwanŭm shishik* 觀音施食 (Avalokiteśvara Food Bestowal) and the *kubyŏng shishik* 救病施食 (Healing through the Bestowal of Food), respectively. See An Chinho, ed., *Sŏngmun ūibŏm* 釋門儀範 (Kyŏngsŏng: Mansanghoe, 1935; Sŏul: Pŏmnyunsa, 2001), 475, 494-495. Citations refer to the Pŏmnyunsa edition.

Seven Buddhas and additionally the Five Buddhas (*oyōrae* 五如來 or Five Tathāgatas), a variant formation also found in the Sweet-Dew painting, albeit only on rare occasions.³ Pak conclusively explicated that the Seven Buddhas appertain to those specified in the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century manuals of the Water-Land (*suryuk ūimun* 水陸儀文), advocating the argument previously proposed by Yun Ŭhūi.⁴ In the most recent study on this issue, Pak Jōngwōn also adopted a similar standpoint.⁵ This explanation consequently supported on its merits the general understanding in art-historical scholarship that the iconographies and the ritual function of the Sweet-Dew painting are primarily related to the Water-Land Ritual (*Suryukchae* 水陸齋).⁶ Meanwhile, however, Chōng Myōnghūi advanced a divergent outlook on the nature of the texts formerly recognized as the Water-Land manuals.⁷ Taking a more inclusive approach, Chōng regarded the textual sources for the Five and the Seven Buddhas to have embodied the belief in the deliverance of departed spirits, and she contended that the amalgamation of various Buddhist deities in the upper register of the Sweet-Dew painting attests the genre's association to different Buddhist liturgies which entail the food bestowal.

In this article I take a particular stance that the Seven Buddhas portrayed in the Sweet-Dew painting are distinctively linked to their *liturgical functions* stipulated in the Chosōn redactions of the Food-Bestowal manuals (*shishik ūimun* 施食儀文), whose circulations are contemporaneous with the

³ Pak Ŭnkyōng, *Chosōn chōngi purhwa yōn'gu* 조선 전기 불화 연구 (Sōul: Shigongat'ū, 2008), 366-367, table 3-13. For a general discussion of the textual basis of the Buddhas depicted in the Sweet-Dew painting, see Hattori Yoshio, "Chōsen lichō butsuga "shoki kanrotei" no sekai: Ōtsu shi Seikyōji shozō Urabonkyō setsusō o yomu" 朝鮮李朝仏画〈初期甘露幀〉の世界: 大津市西教寺所藏《孟蘭盆經說相》を読む, *Ajia yūgaku* 29 (2001): 104-108.

⁴ See Yun Ŭnhūi, "Kamnowangdo tosang ūi hyōngsōng munje wa 16, 17 segi Kamnowangdo yōn'gu: Suryukchae ūigwejip kwa kwallyōn hayō" 甘露王圖 圖像의 形成 문제와 16, 17세기 甘露王圖 研究: 水陸齋 儀軌集과 관련하여 (Master's thesis, Tongguk University, 2003), 72-73.

⁵ Pak Chōngwōn, "Chosōn shidae Kamnodo yōn'gu" 조선시대 감로도 연구 (PhD diss., Tongguk University, 2020), 49.

⁶ For example, see Kang Pyōntong and Yi Sūnghūi, "Sōnamsa muhwagi Kamnot'aeng kwa suryuk ūishingmun ūi yōn'gwansōng koch'al" 仙巖寺 無畫記 甘露幀과 水陸儀式文의 연관성 古察, *Chohyōng nonch'ong* 11 (January 2007): 3-16; Yōn Cheyōng, "Ŭiryējōk kwanjōm esō Kamnot'aenghwa wa Suryuk'wa ūi naeyong pigyo" 儀禮的 觀點에서 甘露幀畫와 水陸畫의 內容 비교, *Pulgyohak yōn'gu* 16 (April 2007): 265-297; Pak Ŭnkyōng, "Ilbon sojae Chosōn 16 segi suryuk'oe purhwa, Kamnot'aeng" 일본 소재 조선 16세기 수륙회 불화, 감로도, in *Chosōn shidae Kamnot'aeng: Kamno* 朝鮮時代 甘露幀: 甘露 (Yangsan: T'ongdosa sōngbo pangmulwan, 2005), 1:255-300. Pak Chōngwōn particularly advocates the title "Suryuk'oedo" (Water-Land Assembly) based on the viewpoint that the Sweet-Dew painting illustrates the actual event of the Water-Land Ritual. Pak, "Chosōn chōngi suryuk'oedo yōn'gu" 朝鮮前期 水陸會圖 研究, *Misulshak yōn'gu* 270 (June 2011): 35-65.

⁷ Chōng Myōnghūi, "Chosōn shidae pulgyo ūishik ūi samdan ūirye wa purhwa yōn'gu" 朝鮮時代 佛教儀式의 三壇儀禮와 佛畫 研究 (PhD diss., Hongik University, 2013), 158-160.

emergence of the genre in the sixteenth century. In undertaking the examination of the textual premise of the Seven Buddhas I seek to understand the liturgical inclusivity of the Sweet-Dew painting that occurred by virtue of its creation as the altarpiece for the low altar (*hadan* 下壇 or *yongdan* 靈壇, “spirit altar”) within the standardized ritual configuration of Chosŏn Buddhism.

The article is divided into three sections. In the first section I analyze the pictorial configurations of the Buddhas manifested in the extant specimens of the Sweet-Dew painting from the Chosŏn period.⁸ This endeavor identifies individual representations of the Five and the Seven Buddhas, especially the latter in different measures of dispositions. Precisely establishing the grounds for further investigation of the Seven Buddhas, the second section elucidates their common function as *divine agents* in the execution of the rites involving the bestowal of food to departed spirits. It chiefly determines the textual basis on which the Sweet-Dew painting has espoused the Seven Buddhas, by examining the specifications of the *mantra* invocations prescribed in different Buddhist texts related to the praxis of food bestowal. In further elaborating on the issue of textual association, the section three highlights the potential presence of the Sweet-Dew King (Kamnowang 甘露王) among the Seven Buddhas through particularizing his attributes evinced in the Sweet-Dew painting.

II. The Assemblage of Buddhas in the Sweet-Dew Painting

The Sweet-Dew painting conveys either of two different configurations of Buddhas in the upper portion of the picture plane (Table 1). One specimen that atypically exhibits both instances is the Sweet-Dew painting (*Ssanggyesa Kammodo* 雙溪寺 甘露圖, 1728) housed in the Ssanggyesa Museum (Fig. 1).⁹ Set against a mountainous backdrop, independent groups of the Five and the Seven Buddhas are juxtaposed among other Buddhist deities amid floating clouds. Of these two assemblages, the one

⁸ This article is a revised and expanded version of part of the fourth chapter of my dissertation conducted based on the seventy-four extant Sweet-Dew paintings from the Chosŏn period. See Taylor Pak, “Shaping the Economy of Salvation: The *Gamno* Paintings of the Joseon period (1392-1910)” (PhD diss., Seoul National University, 2018), 231-239, appendix 1. The list includes four underdrawings.

⁹ Hereafter, an English translation of the title is followed by parentheses that contain the romanization of the Korean title under which each individual painting is commonly known in modern scholarship and the date of its production.



Fig. 1. Sweet-Dew Painting (*Ssanggyesa Kammodo* 雙溪寺甘露圖), 1728, ink and color on silk, 224.0×281.5 cm, Ssanggyesa Museum (After Kang Upang and Kim Sūng-hūi, *Kamnot'aeng*, Fig. 9)



Fig. 2. Sweet-Dew Painting (*Kammodo* 甘露圖), 1580, ink and color on hemp cloth, 128.0×111.0 cm, Private Collection (Courtesy of Chōn Yunsu)

comprising the Five Buddhas is first seen in the Sweet-Dew painting (*Kammodo* 甘露圖) dated to 1580 (Fig. 2). It depicts a single group of the Five Buddhas immediately above the elaborate altar offerings. This particular form, however, occurred only on limited occasions thereafter. Merely two other specimens show similar representations from the entire extant corpus of seventy-four Sweet-Dew paintings assigned to the Chosŏn period:¹⁰ one housed in the Wŏlchōngsa 月精寺 Museum (*Yōngwōnsa Kammodo* 領願寺甘露圖, 1759) and another in a private collection (*Kammodo* 甘露圖, 18th cent.) (Fig. 3).¹¹

Apart from these three cases, all specimens of the Sweet-Dew painting deploy the Seven Buddhas in two different modes of formation. First, on most occasions the Seven Buddhas are assembled unequivocally into a single group featuring their central presence. For example, the early works include

¹⁰ See note 8 above.

¹¹ The two paintings exceptionally share a near-identical iconographic composition. Such degree of compatibility is quite unusual, since the surviving examples tend to show a high degree of individuality, only with the exception of the nineteenth-century works from the areas of Sŏul and Kyōnggi Province. Further research may be required to evaluate their association. For the latter painting, see Myōngin auction, *The 2nd Myōngin Auction Sale* (June 2017): 74-75, fig. 78.



Fig. 3. Sweet-Dew Painting (*Yŏngwŏnsa Kammodo* 嶺願寺甘露圖), 1759, ink and color on silk, 138.0×165.0 cm, Wŏlchŏngsa Museum (After Sŏngbo munhwajae yŏn'guwŏn, *Han'guk ūi purhwa*, vol. 10, Fig. 31)

the Kōmyō-ji Sweet-Dew painting (*Kōmyō-ji Kammodo* 光明寺甘露圖, 16th cent.) in which the Seven Buddhas are depicted flanked by the Amitābha triad and the Bodhisattva Guide of Souls (Illowang posal 引路王菩薩) (Fig. 4). Moreover, in the case of the Posōksa Sweet-Dew painting (*Posōksa Kammodo* 寶石寺甘露圖, 1649), the Seven Buddhas dominate the upper portion of the picture plane attended by two bodhisattvas, and on one side is the Bodhisattva Guide of Souls (Fig. 5). Accordingly, similar visual setups of a single composition of the Seven Buddhas prevailed steadfastly throughout the Chosŏn period, with only rare exceptions. Although limited to a few cases, the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century works, in particular, also adopted variant dispositions. Among the eleven specimens dating from



Fig. 4. Sweet-Dew Painting (*Kōmyō-ji Kammodo* 光明寺甘露圖), 16th century, ink and color on hemp cloth, 129.0×123.6 cm, Kōmyō-ji, Hyōgo Prefecture, Japan (After Kang Upang and Kim Sŏng-hŭi, *Kamnot'aeng*, Fig. 46)



Fig. 5. Sweet-Dew Painting (*Posōksa Kammodo* 寶石寺甘露圖), 1649, ink and color on hemp cloth, 238.0×228.0 cm, National Museum of Korea (After Kang Upang and Kim Sŏng-hŭi, *Kamnot'aeng*, Fig. 3)



Fig. 6. Sweet-Dew Painting (*Yakusen-ji Kammodo* 藥仙寺 甘露圖), 1589, ink and color on hemp cloth, 158.0×169.0 cm, Nara National Museum (After Kang Upang and Kim Sŭng-hŭi, *Kamnot'aeng*, Fig. 1)

these periods, three arrange the Seven Buddhas in the manners that they visually subordinate to the Amitābha triad. The Sweet-Dew paintings in the collections of Yakusen-ji (*Yakusen-ji Kammodo* 藥仙寺 甘露圖, 1589) and Ch'ōngnyongsa (*Ch'ōngnyongsa Kammodo* 靑龍寺 甘露圖, 1692) portray the Seven Buddhas on the far right of the centrally stationed Amitābha triad (Figs. 6 and 7), and another in Saikyō-ji (*Saikyō-ji Kammodo* 西教寺 甘露圖, 1590) positions the Seven Buddhas at the center encircling the triad (Fig. 8).¹²



Fig. 6-1. Detail of the Seven Buddhas (After Kang Upang and Kim Sŭng-hŭi, *Kamnot'aeng*, Fig. 1-3)



Fig. 7. Sweet-Dew Painting (*Ch'ōngnyongsa Kammodo* 靑龍寺 甘露圖), 1692, ink and color on hemp cloth, 204.0×236.5 cm, Ch'ōngnyongsa, Kyōnggi Province, Korea (After Sōngbo munhwajae yōn'guwōn, *Han'guk ūi purhwa*, vol. 29, Fig. 16)

¹² Kim Sŭnghŭi contends that these arrangements had been occasioned by the influence of Pure Land faith, which dominated the early phase of iconographic development of the Sweet-Dew painting. Kim, "Uhak munhwajaedan sojang Kamnot'aenghwa: tosang ūi ūimi wa hwamyōn kusōng ūl chungshim ūro" 宇鶴文化財團所藏甘露幀畫: 圖像의 意味와 畫面 構成을 중심으로, *Tanho munhwa yōn'gu* 5 (December 2000): 17. For a similar view, see Pak Ŭnkyōng, *Chosōn chōnggi purhwa yōn'gu*,



Fig. 8. Sweet-Dew Painting (*Saikyō-ji Kammodo* 西教寺甘露圖), 1590, ink and color on hemp cloth, 139.0×127.8 cm, Saikyō-ji, Shiga Prefecture, Japan (After Kang Upang and Kim Sūng-hūi, *Kamnot'aeng*, Fig. 45)



Fig. 9. Sweet-Dew Painting (*Kammodo* 甘露圖), 1681, ink and color on silk, 200.0×210.0 cm, Uhak Cultural Foundation (After T'ongdosa sōngbo pangmulgwan, *Chosōn shidae Kamnot'aeng: Kamno*, vol. 2, Fig. 7)

Despite such arrangements, however, in the entirety of the genre—the Amitābha triad does not constitute its primary iconography—often being absent as previously seen in the Posōksa example (Fig. 5). Additionally, the Sweet-Dew painting in the Uhak Cultural Foundation (*Kammodo* 甘露圖, 1681) arranges the Seven Buddhas in the position comparable to the aforementioned Ssanggyesa painting (Fig. 9). It juxtaposes the Seven Buddhas exceptionally with the Three Buddhas, placing each on either side of the central axis. Therefore, excluding only a few cases, a single composition of the Seven Buddhas engages the central position among other deities in the Sweet-Dew painting (Table 1).¹³

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¹³ The Sweet-Dew painting (*Kammodo* 甘露圖, 18th-19th cent.) in the collection of Korea University Museum is another exceptional case. It exhibits a centrally positioned group of five seated and two standing figures of Buddhas. However, it still belongs to the fifty-seven specimens representing a single composition of the Seven Buddhas in table 1, since the accompanying cartouche confirms the assemblage as the representation of the Seven Buddhas. For an illustration, see Kang Upang and Kim Sūnghūi, *Kamnot'aeng* 甘露頓, 2nd ed. (Sōul: Yegyōng, 2010), 179, fig. 21. The cartouches appended to the painting is listed in T'ongdosa sōngbo pangmulgwan, *Chosōn shidae Kamnot'aeng: Kamno* 朝鮮時代 甘露頓: 甘露 (Yangsan: T'ongdosa sōngbo pangmulgwan, 2005), 2:133.

〈Table 1〉 The Assemblage of Buddhas in the Sweet-Dew Painting of the Chosŏn Period (1392-1910)

Mode of Configuration	Five Buddhas		Seven Buddhas	
Single composition	At the center	3	At the Center	57
			On the side or encircled around the Amitābha triad	3
			At the central plane juxtaposed with another group of Buddhas	2 ¹⁴
Variant composition	-	-	A group of six Buddhas aligned with the Amitābha triad	3
			The Amitābha Triad disjoined from the group of six Buddhas	6
Subtotal	3		71	
Total			74	

Second, the assemblages of the Seven Buddhas are configured in less conspicuous manners while likewise presiding over the upper register. Altogether nine specimens demonstrate such variant formations through rendering a group of six figures of Buddhas and the Buddha Amitābha, the last constituent of the Seven Buddhas, discretely accompanied by two attending bodhisattvas Avalokiteśvara and Mahāsthāmaprāpta (or Kṣitigarbha) (Table 1). Among them, three are relatively straightforward to identify. For example, the Sweet-Dew painting (*Sudosa Kamnodo* 修道寺甘露圖, 1786) in the T'ongdosa Museum horizontally aligns a group of six Buddhas consecutively with the Amitābha triad (Fig. 10).¹⁵ Meanwhile, the remaining six paintings



Fig. 10. Sweet-Dew Painting (*Sudosa Kamnodo* 修道寺甘露圖), 1786, ink and color on silk, 204.0×189.0 cm, T'ongdosa Museum (After Kang Upang and Kim Sūng-hŭi, *Kamnot'aeng*, Fig. 19)

¹⁴ It includes the *Ssanggyesa Kamnodo* 雙溪寺甘露圖 which represents both the Seven Buddhas and the Five Buddhas.

¹⁵ Two others examples are housed in the Ssanggyesa Museum (*Unhūngsa Kamnodo* 雲興寺甘露圖, 1730) and Wŏn'gwang

station the triad independently separated from the group of six Buddhas. For example, the Sweet-Dew painting from the Paek'ung Hermitage of Ūnhaesa (*Ūnhaesa Paek'ungam Kamnodo* 銀海寺百興庵甘露圖, 1792) assembles six Buddhas at the center above a pair of hungry ghosts, while positioning the Amitābha triad on the far right divorced from the main assemblage (Fig. 11).¹⁶ Accordingly, when the Sweet-Dew painting presents an assemblage consisted only of six figures of Buddhas, Amitābha joins the group, either on its contiguous side or detached from it, to form a complete representation of the Seven Buddhas.



Fig. 11. Sweet-Dew Painting (*Ūnhaesa Paek'ungam Kamnodo* 銀海寺百興庵甘露圖), 1792, ink and color on silk, 196.5×196.0 cm, Paek'ungam, Ūnhaesa, North Kyōngsang Province, Korea (After Sōngbo munhwajae yōn'guwōn, *Han'guk ūi purhwa*, vol. 30, Fig. 45)

III. The Mantras of Invoking the Names of Buddhas Prescribed in the Buddhist Texts on Food-Bestowal Practices

The Buddhist texts associated with the ritual praxis of food bestowal offer instructions for invoking an assemblage of Buddhas, for the immediacy of their divine capacity in effectuating the salvific power of the rites. They include several canonical scriptures from which Rolf W. Giebel categorizes as a “group of texts describing the rites for the dead” (T. 1313-1321) and a body of redacted editions of the Water-Land and the Food-Bestowal manuals circulated in the Chosōn period.¹⁷ Particularly, the latter texts of the

University Museum (*Kamnodo* 甘露圖, 1750). For sources of illustrations, see note 8 above.

¹⁶ Five other examples include the paintings in private collections (*Kamnodo* 甘露圖, 1661 and *Yōch'ōn Hūngguksa Kamnodo* 麗川興國寺甘露圖, 1741), the Sōnamsa Museum (*Sōnamsa Kamnodo* 仙巖寺甘露圖, 18th cent.), and Leeum, Samsung Museum of Art (*Kamnodo* 甘露圖, 18th cent.) and the underdrawing (18th cent.) by Monk Pyōngjin 炳震. Ibid.

¹⁷ Giebel, “*Taishō* Volumes 18-21,” in *Esoteric Buddhism and the Tantras in East Asia*, ed. Charles D. Orzech, Henrik H. Sorensen, and Richard K. Payne (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 35.

sixteenth century merit attention for their prevalence closely linked to the contemporaneous emergence of the Sweet-Dew painting; the period, in fact, marked a historical juncture that saw a proliferation of the Water-Land manuals and, more importantly, the inception of independent publications of the Food-Bestowal manuals.¹⁸

However, despite their joint interest in providing the method of food bestowal, the aforementioned collections of texts put forward variable prescriptions for invoking the names of the Buddhas whereby the rite exercises its efficacy. On what ground do we then determine the textual foundation of the assemblage of Buddhas portrayed in the Sweet-Dew painting? Pursuant to the liturgical aim of the food bestowal, the most preeminent features contributing to the pictorial representation of the assemblage are arguably the presence of the Sweet-Dew King (Kr. Kamnowang yörae 甘露王如來; Skr. Amṛta Rājāya Tathāgata) and his divine task directly connected to the salvific capacity of consumption, as also inferred from the title attributed to the genre. Based on this premise, the following pages will identify the Sweet-Dew King's liturgical connection to the food bestowal and the precise chronological juncture of its advent, in order to shed light on the textual basis that has shaped the Seven Buddhas in the Sweet-Dew painting.

As early as the eighth century, the Chinese translations of esoteric scriptures have advanced the *mantra* (*jineon* 眞言) recitations involving an elaboration of the names of Buddhas for the execution of the rites of food bestowal.¹⁹ One of the earliest texts, the *Foshuo jiuba yankou egui tuoluoni jing* 佛說救拔焰口餓鬼陀羅尼經 (Buddha's Discourse on the Dhāraṇī Scripture for Saving the Flaming-Mouth Hungry Ghost, hereafter Flaming-Mouth Sūtra) (T. 1313; K. 1302), details the Buddha's instruction to Ānanda the method of food bestowal that requires invoking the Four Buddhas (sayōrae 四如來 or Four Tathāgatas) in the following order:

¹⁸ For a discussion of the rapid increase in the publications of Buddhist ritual texts, particularly of the Water-Land manuals, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, see Nam Hüisuk, "16-18 segi pulgyo üishikchip üi kanhaeng kwa pulgyo taejunghwa" 16-18세기 佛教儀式集의 간행과 佛教大衆化, *Han'guk munhwa* 34 (December 2004): 115-120; idem, "Publication of Buddhist Literary Texts: The Publication and Popularization of Mantra Collections and Buddhist Ritual Texts in the Late Chosön Dynasty," *Journal of Korean Religions* 3, no. 1 (April 2012): 16-20. The emergence of independent publications of the Food-Bestowal manuals in the sixteenth century is discussed in Pak, "Gammo Paintings," 83-95.

¹⁹ An overview of the development of food-bestowal practices in China and the related esoteric texts is included in Charles D. Orzech, "Esoteric Buddhism and the *Shishi* in China," in *The Esoteric Buddhist Tradition*, ed. Henrik H. Sorensen (Copenhagen: The Seminar for Buddhist Studies, 1994), 51-72; for a comprehensive study on this topic, see Hun Y. Lye, "Feeding Ghosts: A Study of the Yujie Yankou Rite" (PhD diss., University of Virginia, 2003).

1. Duobao rulai 多寶如來 (Many Treasures)
2. Miaoseshen rulai 妙色身如來 (Wonderful-Form Body)
3. Guangboshen rulai 廣博身如來 (Expansive Body)
4. Libuwei rulai 離怖畏如來 (Separated from Fear)²⁰

In undertaking the procedure, the text also explicated the power (Kr. *kaji* 加持; Skt. *adhiṣṭhāna*) generated by each name of the Buddha. Most notable among the Four Buddhas is the Expansive Body (Kr. Kwangbakshin 廣博身), whose divine power assumes a direct connection to consumption enabling the throats of departed spirits to open and fulfill their hunger.²¹

In three other esoteric scriptures possibly of later date, the aforementioned formula underwent a process of expansion to specify the *mantras* of either the Five or the Seven Buddhas (Table 2).²² For example, as enumerated below, the *Shi zhu egui yinshi ji shui fa* 施諸餓鬼飲食及水法 (Bestowing Food and Drink to All Hungry Ghosts and the Water Method, hereafter Bestowing Food and Water Method) (T. 1315) prescribes the names of the Five Buddhas:

1. Baosheng rulai 寶勝如來 (Precious Victory)
2. Miaoseshen rulai 妙色身如來 (Wonderful-Form Body)
3. Ganluwang rulai 甘露王如來 (Sweet-Dew King)
4. Guangboshen rulai 廣博身如來 (Expansive Body)
5. Libuwei rulai 離怖畏如來 (Separated from Fear)²³

From the previous sequence of *mantras*, the *Bestowing Food and Water Method* replaced the Many

²⁰ T. 1313, 21.465a12-a26.

²¹ “由稱廣博身如來名號加持故，能令諸鬼咽喉寬大，所施之食，恣意充飽。” T. 1313, 21.465a22.

²² These texts are commonly attributed to Amoghavajra (Bukong Jin'gang 不空金剛, 705-774), but they probably date from the Yuan period (1271-1368). Charles D. Orzech “Fang Yankou and Pudu: Translation, Metaphor, and Religious Identity,” in *Daoist Identity: History, Lineage, and Ritual*, ed. Livia Kohn and Harold D. Roth (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2002), 221; Lye, “Feeding Ghosts,” 337-350. Daniel B. Stevenson also advocates Lye's argument. Stevenson, “Buddhist Ritual in the Song,” in *Modern Chinese Religion*, ed. John Lagerwey and Pierre Marsone (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 1:359-340n44. *The Korean Buddhist Canon (Koryō taejanggyōng* 高麗大藏經) does not include the three canonical texts listed in table 2. See Lewis R. Lancaster and Sung-bae Park, *The Korean Buddhist Canon: A Descriptive Catalogue* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), 162.

²³ T. 1315, 21.467c3-468a1.

<Table 2> The Invocation of Buddhas Prescribed by the Buddhist Texts Expounding the Method of Food Bestowal²⁴

Five Buddhas		Seven Buddhas	
Esoteric Buddhist Canon	<i>Shi zhu egui yinshi ji shui fa</i> 施諸餓鬼飲食及水法 (T. 1315)	Esoteric Buddhist Canon	<i>Yuqie jiyao jiu Anan tuoluoni yankou guiyi jing</i> 瑜伽集要救阿難陀羅尼焰口軌儀經 (T. 1318) <i>Yuqie jiyao yankou shishi yi</i> 瑜伽集要焰口施食儀 (T. 1320)
Joseon Redactions of the Water-Land manuals	<i>Ch'ŏnji myōngyang suryuk chaeüi ch'anyo</i> 天地冥陽水陸齋儀纂要 <i>Pŏpkye sŏngbŏm suryuk sŏnghoe sujae üigwe</i> 法界聖凡水陸勝會修齋儀軌 <i>Suryuk much'a p'yŏngdŭng chaeüi ch'waryo</i> 水陸無遮平等齋儀撮要	Joseon Redactions of the Food-Bestowal manuals	<i>Samdan shishingmun</i> 三壇施食文 <i>Chŭngsu sŏn'gyo shishik üimun</i> 增修禪教施食儀文 <i>Taech'al samyŏngil yŏnghon shishik üimun</i> 大刹四明日迎魂施食儀文 <i>Unsudan</i> 雲水壇 (<i>Unsudan kasa</i> 雲水壇詞) <i>Chebanmun</i> 諸般文

Treasures (Kr. Tabo yörae 多寶如來) with the Precious Victory (Kr. Posŭng yörae 寶勝如來) and newly included the Sweet-Dew King.²⁵ The Precious Victory thereby acquired the equivalent capacity of the Many Treasures and the Sweet-Dew King the power to “[confer] the heart of the Dharmakāya, causing the attainment of definite bliss.”²⁶ Meanwhile, the Expansive Body maintained his engagement in expanding the throats of departed spirits and thus allowing them to enjoy the “wonderful taste.”²⁷

Similarly, the Chosŏn manuals of the Water-Land espoused the *mantras* of the Five Buddhas and their respective involvements in the food bestowal (Table 2). Among the three most widespread editions in the sixteenth century, the *Suryuk much'a p'yŏngdŭng chaeüi ch'waryo* 水陸無遮平等齋儀撮要 (The

²⁴ The table is revised from Pak, “*Gamno* Paintings,” 146, table 2.

²⁵ “由稱多寶如來名號加持故，能破一切諸鬼多生已來慳慳惡業，即得福德圓滿。” T. 1313, 21.465a14; “曩謨寶勝如來除慳食業福德圓滿。” T. 1315, 21.467c07.

²⁶ “曩謨甘露王如來灌法身心令受快樂。” T. 1315, 21.467c17. The translation is adopted from Lye, “Feeding Ghosts,” 430.

²⁷ “曩謨廣博身如來咽喉寬大受妙味。” T. 1315, 21.467c22.

Abbreviated Ritual for the Water and Land Unobstructed, Equal Feast), for example, includes a chapter on the invocation of Buddhas (*sōnyang sōngho p'yōn* 宣揚聖號篇), which presents the *mantras* of the Five Buddhas accompanied with the illustrations of corresponding *mudrās*.²⁸ Apart from the Many Treasures, who replaces the Precious Victory, the names of the Buddhas and their functional link to the food bestowal correlate to the *Bestowing Food and Water Method*, albeit in different order. In fact, the given configuration has prevailed as early as the fourteenth century in the *Ch'ōnji myōngyang suryuk chaeüi ch'anyo* 天地冥陽水陸齋儀纂要 (Essential Rules for the Ceremony of the Heaven and Earth, Day and Night, Water and Land Feast) compiled by the Koryō monk Chugam Yugong 竹菴猷公 (n.d.).²⁹ Moreover, another popular Chosōn edition, the *Pōpkye sōngbōm suryuk sūnghoe sujae üigwe* 法界聖凡水陸勝會修齋儀軌 (The Rules for the Excellent Assembly for the Observation of the Feast for the Dharmadhātu's Holy and World in Water and on Land), likewise specify the Five Buddhas assuming similar powers.³⁰

Above all, the texts which expound the Seven Buddhas merit special attention as regards the iconographic arrangements of the Sweet-Dew painting examined in the previous section. They include two canonical texts and several Chosōn redactions of the Food-Bestowal manual emerged around the sixteenth century (Table 2). First, the *Yuqie jiyao jiu Anan tuoluoni yankou guiyi jing* 瑜伽集要救阿難陀羅尼焰口軌儀經 (The Scripture from the Essentials of Yoga Teachings on the Dhāraṇī Flaming-Mouth Rite for Saving Ānanda) (T. 1318) and the *Yuqie jiyao yankou shishi yi* 瑜伽集要焰口施食儀 (Essentials of Yoga Teachings for Bestowing Food to Flaming Mouths) (T. 1320) uniformly set forth the names of the Seven Buddhas as below:

1. Baosheng rulai 寶勝如來 (Precious Victory)
2. Libuwei rulai 離怖畏如來 (Separated from Fear)
3. Guangboshen rulai 廣博身如來 (Expansive Body)
4. Miaoseshen rulai 妙色身如來 (Wonderful-Form Body)

²⁸ For example, see HPC 1:636a9-637a6.

²⁹ For example, see HPC 2:240a. The original Koryō edition is not currently extant, but the postscript of Yi Chehyōn 李齊賢 (1287-1367) written in 1342 attached to later publications reveals the name of the compiler; for example, see the Ssangbongsa 雙峰寺 edition (1562) preserved in Tongguk University Library.

³⁰ For example, see HPC 1:609a16-610b8. The text is also commonly referred to as *Chibanmun* 志盤文 (Text of Zhipan) after the name of the original compiler, the Chinese Tiantai 天台 monk Siming Zhipan 四明志磐 (fl. 13th cent.).

5. Duobao rulai 多寶如來 (Many Treasures)
6. Amituo rulai 阿彌陀如來 (Infinite Light)
7. Shijian guangda weide zizai guangming rulai 世間廣大威德自在光明如來 (Physical World, Wide and Large, Authority and Virtue, Unrestricted, and Bright)³¹

The list has been configured fundamentally based on the arrangement of the Five Buddhas, while additionally including the Many Treasures, Infinite Light (Kr. Amit'a; Skt. Amitābha) and the Physical World, Wide and Large, Authority and Virtue, Unrestricted, and Bright (Kr. Segan kwangdae widök chajae kwangmyöng yörae 世間廣大威德自在光明如來) and *omitting* the Sweet-Dew King. In both texts, the capacity of opening the needle-like throats of departed spirits (or hungry ghosts) remained connected to the Expansive Body, and its description further specified the salvific substance to be consumed as the “sweet dew.”³²

Second, the Chosön redactions of the Food-bestowal manuals likewise expound the Seven Buddhas (Table 2). However, they are clearly distinguished for their inclusion of the Sweet-Dew King after the earlier arrangement in the *Bestowing Food and Water Method*. Notwithstanding, these manuals associate the Sweet-Dew King with the capacity that had been previously given to the Expansive Body, reversing the liturgical tasks between the two deities. Such emendation initially occurred in the *Samdan shishingmun* 三壇施食文 (Text of the Three-Altar Food Bestowal) compiled in 1496 (Table 3).³³ Within

³¹ T. 1318, 21.471a1-a22; T. 1320, 21.478a26-479a12.

³² “若聞廣博身如來名號。能令汝等餓鬼針咽業火停燒清涼通達。所受飲食得甘露味。” T. 1318, 21.471a8; T. 1320, 21.478b28.

³³ HPC 1:470a1-490b. Grand Queen Dowager Insu 仁粹 (1437-1504) and Queen Chōnghyōn 貞顯 (1462-1530) commissioned the carving of the *Samdan shishingmun* jointly with the *Chinōn'gwon'gong* 眞言勸供 (Instructions on Making Offerings with Mantras) for the repose of the deceased King Sōngjong 成宗 (r. 1469-1494). Monk Hakcho 學祖 (n. d.) is known to have edited the two texts and compiled them into one book; and four hundred copies were printed at Wōn'gaksa 圓覺寺 in the capital. In spite of the fact that such altered configuration of the Seven Buddhas is first seen in the *Samdan shishingmun*, the impetus for the change is uncertain. We may only surmise that the text is a redacted compilation premised on the prevalent contemporaneous manuals of the Water-Land (which had been already adapted to the liturgical setting of Joseon Buddhism) and the original Chinese manual of the Food-Bestowal authored by Mengshan Deyi 蒙山德異 (ca. 1232-1308), prior to the publications of the *Chūngsu sōn'gyo shishik ūimun* 增修禪教施食儀文 (Revised and Augmented Ritual Manual for the Performance of Food Offerings in Sōn and Kyo) and *Taech'al samyōngil yōnghon shishik ūimun* 大刹四明日迎魂施食儀文 (Text for the Ritual of Welcoming Back the Spirits with Food in Great Temples on the Four Bright Days). Mengshan's authorship nevertheless needs further investigation. See Pak, “*Gamno* paintings,” 88n199.

〈Table 3〉 The Seven Buddhas and Their Liturgical Tasks Stipulated in the *Samdan shishingmun* (Text on Three-Altar Offerings)³⁴

Seven Buddhas	Liturgical Tasks
Tabo yörae 多寶如來 (Many Treasures)	Extinguishes the greedy, parsimonious nature of all departed spirits and fulfills them with Buddha's teaching 某靈駕法界亡魂 破除慳 貪法財具足
Posüng yörae 寶勝如來 (Precious Victory)	Helps all departed spirits to abandon inferior modes of existence and elevates their path for existence 某靈駕法界亡魂 各捨惡 道隨意超升
Myosaekshin yörae 妙色身如來 (Wonderful-Form Body)	Transforms the filthy and uncanny appearance of all departed spirits into one that is pure and gentle 某靈駕法界亡魂 離醜 陋形相好圓滿
Kwangbakshin yörae 廣博身如來 (Expansive Body)	Helps all departed spirits to free themselves from the body of the six realms of existence in order to obtain the <i>dharmā</i> -body 某靈駕法界亡魂 捨六凡身悟清淨虛空身
Ip'ooe yörae 離怖畏如來 (Separated from Fear)	Helps all departed spirits to be free from fear and to obtain the joy of enlightenment 某靈駕法界亡魂 離諸怖畏得涅槃樂
Kamnowang yörae 甘露王如來 (Sweet-Dew King)	Opens the needle-like throats of all departed spirits to taste the sweet dew 某靈駕法界亡魂 咽喉開通獲甘露味
Amit'a yörae 阿彌陀如來 (Infinite Light)	Helps all departed spirits to be reborn in the realm of paradise 某靈駕法界亡魂 隨念超生極樂世界

the offertory services of the three altars (comprising high, middle and low altars), the food bestowal of the low altar particularly involved the procedure of invoking the Seven Buddhas in facilitating the salvation for departed spirits (*manghon* 亡魂 or *hawi* 下位, “the low-status beings”). Starting with the Many Treasures, the text enumerates the names of the Buddhas to be invoked for their divine powers, to transfigure the departed spirits into the condition suitable for consuming the sweet dew and ultimately to bestow upon them a rebirth in paradise.³⁵ In the process, notably, the Sweet-Dew King confers his

³⁴ The table is revised from Pak, “*Gamno* Paintings,” 149-150, table 3.

³⁵ HPC 1:481b17-483a14. The Many Treasures and Sweet-Dew King are regarded as a single entity (*tongch'e* 同體), respectively, with the Precious Victory (Kr. Posüng yörae 寶勝如來) and Infinite Light (Amit'a yörae 阿彌陀如來). Sim Sanghyön, *Pulgyo üishik kangnon* 佛教儀式各論, vol. 3, *Iryong üiböm* 日用儀範 (Söul: Han'guk pulgyo ch'ulp'anbu, 2002), 278-291. In this regard, the configuration of the Seven Buddhas shown in table 3 can be an expansion of the Five Buddhas specified in the *Bestowing Food and Water Method*.

blessings to “open the needle-like throats of departed spirits and taste the sweet dew,” while the Expansive Body “helps all departed spirits to free themselves from the body of the six realms of existence in order to obtain the *dharma*-body” (Table 3). The subsequent editions of the Food-Bestowal manual, which began to circulate in the sixteenth century, also detail the instruction equivalent to the *Samdan shishingmun* (Table 2).³⁶ Accordingly, the recitations of the names of the Seven Buddhas became standard for the food bestowal of the low altar (*hadan shishik* 下壇施食), distinctively implementing the link between the Sweet-Dew King and the liturgical task of opening of the needle-like throats of departed spirits.

IV. The Sweet–Dew King among the Seven Buddhas

Correlating with the Sweet-Dew King’s immediate association to the salvific scheme of the food bestowal, his presence among the Seven Buddhas is discernible in several extant specimens of the Sweet-Dew painting. In fact, the four different titles traditionally ascribed to the Sweet-Dew painting also include “Kamnowang t’aeng” 甘露王幀 (a hanging scroll of the Sweet-Dew King),³⁷ and thus, suitably, the title “Sweet-Dew King” (Kamnowangdo 甘露王圖) was commonly used in modern scholarship especially in the 1980s and 90s when the art-historical studies of this Buddhist painting genre began to accumulate in Korea.³⁸ Notwithstanding, the iconographic identification of the Sweet-Dew King has not been carefully

³⁶ For example, see HPC 1:368b9-15; HPC 2:575a17-b8; HPC 2:55a8-14.

³⁷ Three other titles found in the written record (*hwagi* 畫記) attached to several specimens of the Sweet-Dew painting are *Hadant’aeng* 下壇幀 (a hanging scroll of the Low-Altar), *Kamnohoe* 甘露會 (Sweet-Dew Assembly) and *Kamnot’aeng* 甘露幀 (or *Kamnot’aenghwa* 甘露幀畫, a hanging scroll of the Sweet Dew). Although different titles had prevailed during the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries, only the last-mentioned title continued into the nineteenth century.

³⁸ See Mun Myōngtae, *Han’guk ūi purhwa* 韓國의 佛畫 (Sōul: Yōrhwadang, 1977), 95-98. The title “Sweet-Dew King” was initiated by Mun Myōngtae in the late 1970s. The art-historical publications thereafter frequently espoused this title until the “Sweet Dew” (*Kamot’aeng* 甘露幀 or *Kamnodo* 甘露圖) gained general acceptance among scholars in the late 1990s. For example, see Kim Jōnghūi, *Han’guk ūi mi* 韓國의 美, ed. Kim Wōnryong et al. (Sōul: Chungang ilbo, 1984), 16:230-233; An Kwisuk, “Chosōn hugi purhwasūng ūi kyebo wa Ūgōym pigu e kwanhan yōn’gu” 朝鮮後期 佛畫僧의 系譜와 義謙比丘에 관한 研究, *Misulsa yōn’gu* 9 (December 1995): 158-164; Yu Mari, “Chosōnjo Kamnowangdo ūi yōn’gu” 朝鮮朝 甘露王圖의 研究, in *Chsōnjo purhwa ūi yōn’gu* 朝鮮朝 佛畫의 研究, ed. An Kwisuk, Kim Chōnghūi, and Yu Mari (Sōngnam: Han’guk chōngshin munhwa yōn’guwōn, 1993), 2:113-180. In Western scholarship, Pierre Cambon similarly contended that the genre takes the theme of the “Amṛta-Raja.” See Cambon, *L’Art Coréen au Musée Guimet* (Paris: Reunion des Musées Nationaux, 2001), 329.

considered, as the title was treated as one of the appellations of Amitābha and also due to the preference of alternative titles in subsequent or related studies. Particularly with regard to the former, the primary iconographic focus had been the “descent” imagery of the Amitābha triad, which was argued to dominate the illustration featuring the notion of salvation related to Pure Land faith.³⁹ Its applicability to the extent works, however, is meager; even the four specimens whose written record (*hwagi* 畫記) bear the title “Kamnowang t’aeng” show iconographic discrepancies not quite corresponding to this explanation.⁴⁰ Moreover, as previously examined in the first section of this paper, the Amitābha triad does not consistently appear in the genre’s extant specimens. Equating the Sweet-Dew King with Amitābha in the pictorial program of the Sweet-Dew painting is seemingly questionable, since the Food-Bestowal manuals also specify the *mantras* of individual Buddhas and distinguish their capacities. Rather, the potential presence of the Sweet-Dew King can be determined by particularizing the iconography in association to the textual description of his liturgical role.

The Seven Buddhas represented in the Sweet-Dew painting generally lack individual characteristics. Some distinctions are observable in their hand gestures, but they still have limited degree of consistency. Moreover, although there are nine alternative formations of the Seven Buddhas in which Amitābha is depicted independently with two attending bodhisattvas, the identities of the remaining Buddhas are not readily apparent.⁴¹ On some occasions, however, one particular Buddha can arguably be recognized as the Sweet-Dew King. The most representative example is shown in the Sweet-Dew painting housed in the Peabody Essex Museum (*Kammodo* 甘露圖, 1744) (Fig. 12).⁴² In the upper section of the painting, only the Buddha positioned at the very center of the Seven Buddhas appears holding a small bottle with both hands. Notably, this portrayal precisely parallels the representation of the “Sweet-Dew King” in the scroll created as a part of the set of ritual banners of the Seven Buddhas (*Ch’iryōraedo* 七如來圖) and whose

³⁹ For example, see Mun Myōngtae, 96; Yu Mari, 114.

⁴⁰ The four Sweet-Dew paintings include the *Ch’ōngnyongsa Kammodo* 靑龍寺甘露圖 (1692), *Namjangsa Kammodo* 南長寺甘露圖 (1701), *Haecinsa Kammodo* 海印寺甘露圖 (1723), and *Pongjōngsa Kammodo* 鳳停寺甘露圖 (1765). For the full text of the written records attached to these paintings, see Kogyōng et al., *Han’guk ūi purhwa hwagijip* 韓國의 佛畫 畫記集 (Soul: Sōngbo munhwajae yōn’guwōn, 2011), 968-970, 978.

⁴¹ The first section of this article discusses different configurations of the assemblage of the Seven Buddhas represented in the Sweet-Dew painting; see also table 1.

⁴² For an introduction to the painting, see Susan S. Bean, “The Arts of Life in Late Chosōn Dynasty Korea,” *Arts of Asia* 36, no. 3 (May/June 2006): 95-96.



Fig. 12. Sweet-Dew Painting (*Kammodo* 甘露圖), 1744, ink and color on silk, 290.0×270.0 cm, Peabody Essex Museum (After Susan S. Bean, “The Arts of Life in Late Chosŏn Dynasty Korea,” Fig. 1)

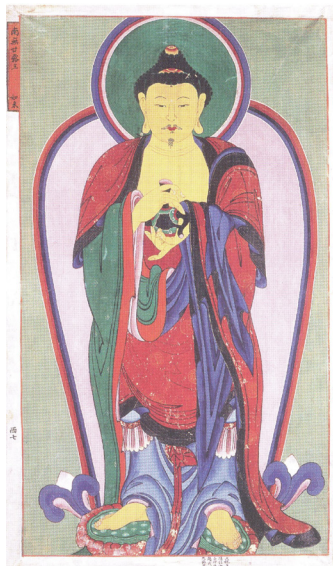


Fig. 13. Sweet-Dew King (*Kamnowang* 甘露王), one of the banners of the Seven Buddhas (*Ch'iryŏraedo* 七如來圖), late Chosŏn dynasty (1392-1910), ink and color on paper, 127.0×73.5 cm, Chikchi Museum (After Pulgyo chungang pangmulgwan, *Pukko p'urŏn changŏm ūi segye: Pulchŏn changŏm*, 154)

name is verified by the accompanying inscription (*Namu Kamnowang* 南無甘露王) (Fig. 13). The two Buddhas display a striking iconographic affinity even in the manner they are holding the bottle. A further example reinforces this observation. The Sweet-Dew painting in the Guimet Museum collection (*Manwŏlsan Suguksa Kammodo* 滿月山守國寺甘露圖, 1832) represents one of the Seven Buddhas holding a *kundika*-shaped bottle that closely resembles the one held by the Sweet-Dew King in the scroll (Fig. 14).

Based on these convincing identifications, we may also associate the Sweet-Dew King with the Buddha holding an alms bowl. Attributed



Fig. 14. Sweet-Dew Painting (*Manwŏlsan Suguksa Kammodo* 滿月山守國寺甘露圖), 1832, ink and color on silk, 192.0×194.2 cm, Guimet Museum (After Kang Upang and Kim Sŏnghŭi, *Kammot'aeng*, Fig. 27)

with either a small bottle or a bowl, the Sweet-Dew King seems to have effectively displayed his liturgical role among the Seven Buddhas, which involves enabling departed spirits to consume (or taste) the sweet dew by opening their needle-like throats, after the specifications of the Food-Bestowal manuals discussed in the previous section. Such liturgical significance of the Sweet-Dew King is especially articulated in the Haeinsa Sweet-Dew painting (*Haeinsa Kammodo* 海印寺甘露圖, 1723) (Fig. 15). While the other Buddhas are uniformly depicted with their palms joined together, the Buddha standing at the right end of the assemblage is holding a small bowl in one hand and the opposite hand lowered in the direction of one of the two hungry ghosts



Fig. 15. Sweet-Dew Painting (*Haeinsa Kammodo* 海印寺甘露圖), 1723, ink and color on ramie cloth, 275.0×261.0 cm, Haeinsa Museum (After Sŏngbo munhwajae yŏn'guwŏn, *Han'guk ūi purhwa*, vol. 5, Fig. 88)

below the ritual altar. Seemingly in response to this action, the hungry ghost tilts its head backward to look up and raises one of its alms bowls towards the Buddha. The visual connection between the Buddha and the hungry ghost is exceptionally explicit. In fact, this piece is one of the four extant specimens that bears the title “Kamnowang t'aeng,” reasonably in reference to the Buddha portrayed with a small bowl.⁴³ Although such degree of visual specification is scarcely seen in the Sweet-Dew paintings, the genre seems to have distinguished the Sweet-Dew King already at the outset of its creation. Two of the six extant specimens from the sixteenth century in the collections of Yakusen-ji (*Yakusen-ji Kammodo* 藥仙寺甘露圖, 1589) and the National Museum of Korea (*Ryūgan-ji Kammodo* 龍岸寺甘露圖, 16th cent.) portray one of the Seven Buddhas holding a small bowl filled with a solid substance, presumably indicative of an alternative pictorial mode of the Sweet-Dew King's engagement in the food bestowal (Figs. 6, 6-1, and 16).

⁴³ See note 40 above.



Fig. 16. Sweet-Dew Painting (*Ryūgan-ji Kamnodo* 龍岸寺 甘露圖), 16th century, ink and color on hemp cloth, 240.0×245.0 cm, National Museum of Korea (After Yi Punhūi et al., *Toech'ajūn munhwajae toesallin munhwajae: Pulgyo munhwajae tashi ikki ikgi*, 52)

V. Conclusion

The prevalence of the Sweet-Dew Buddhist painting genre testifies a significant liturgical focus on the salvific praxis of the food bestowal in the Chosŏn period. Within the offertory services consulted on the three-altar scheme, the Sweet-Dew painting has become an indispensable part of diverse rituals, both daily and occasional, involving the deliverance of sentient beings belonging to the “low-status” category of existence. For its generic characteristics as an altarpiece for the low altar, the genre’s multifarious iconography displays irrefutable associations to a corpus of Buddhist literatures that mutually expound on the food-bestowal practice.⁴⁴ Nevertheless, the most fundamental texts immediately linked to its opportune advancement are arguably the Food-Bestowal manuals that made headway around the sixteenth century, initiating with the *Samdan sisikmun* and subsequently redacted and independently compiled texts for the performance of bestowing food to departed spirits.

In that framework, as examined in the previous three sections, the representation of the Seven

⁴⁴ For a list of Buddhist texts related to the iconographies of the Sweet-Dew painting, see Pak Ŭnkyōng, *Chosŏn chōngi purhwa yōn'gu*, 352-353.

Buddhas lucidly demonstrates close image-text relations between the Sweet-Dew painting and the Food-Bestowal manuals. While allowing some variables in the compositional arrangement, the Sweet-Dew painting has portrayed the Seven Buddhas for their essential role as divine agents in the method of food bestowal, adhering above all to the prescriptions of the Food-Bestowal manuals circulated at the approximate historical juncture that saw its creation for the low ritual altar. Their comparability is distinctively discernible in the identification of the Sweet-Dew King. In manifesting the preeminent power of the Sweet-Dew King, some specimens have shown his presence more straightforwardly by attributing a small bottle or a bowl, directly referencing the liturgical task related to the consumption of the sweet dew. Despite the need for further investigation of the Five Buddhas found in a few early specimens, the prevailing pictorial representation of the Seven Buddhas precisely evinces the textual basis for its assemblage and their liturgical capacity conveyed in the Sweet-Dew painting.

***Keywords:** *Kamnodo* 甘露圖 (Sweet-Dew Painting), *shishik* 施食 (Food bestowal), *Kamnowang* 甘露王 (Sweet-Dew King), *ch'ilbul* 七佛 (Seven Buddhas), *obul* 五佛 (Five Buddhas)

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Abbreviation

HPC	<i>Han'guk pulgyo üirye charyo ch'ongsö</i> 韓國佛教儀禮資料叢書
K	<i>Koryö taejanggyöng</i> 高麗大藏經
T	<i>Taishö shüsu daizökyö</i> 大正新修大藏經

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Abstract

In sixteenth-century Korea, the Buddhist ritual altar for the rites of bestowing food to departed spirits acquired an altarpiece commonly known today as the Sweet-Dew painting (*Kamnodo* 甘露圖). Owing to the standard three-altar scheme of Chosŏn Buddhist liturgy, the ritualistic implementation of this new Buddhist painting genre thereafter occurred in various offertory services entailing the “food bestowal” (*shishik* 施食). In the given liturgical framework, this paper especially brings to light the Seven Buddhas represented in the Sweet-Dew painting. It identifies them through examining different assemblages of Buddhas employed in the extant specimens from the Chosŏn period and argues that their functional link to the method of food bestowal is distinctively configured based on the contemporaneous redactions of the Food-Bestowal manuals, above all other texts that may potentially have partaken in shaping the Seven Buddhas. The paper first and foremost distinguishes the presence and the liturgical capacity of the Sweet-Dew King as the mainstay of the Seven Buddhas’ textual connection. This analysis conclusively refocuses attention on the Food-Bestowal manuals in decoding the iconography of the Sweet-Dew painting.

朝鮮時代 甘露圖의 七佛 研究

박 영 아*

‘감로도(甘露圖)’는 16세기부터 죽은 영혼에게 음식을 베푸는 ‘시식(施食)’이라는 의식(儀式)의 일환으로 제작되기 시작하였다. 새롭게 고안된 회화 장르(genre)인 ‘감로도’는 조선시대 불교의례의 삼단(三壇) 체계 안에서 하단(下壇)의 불화(佛畵)로서 시식이 동반되는 각종 의례에 사용되는 제단화(祭壇畵)로 기능하였다. 본고는 이와 같은 의례적 맥락에서 ‘감로도’에 나타나는 ‘칠불(七佛)’을 고찰하였다. 현존하는 74점의 조선시대 ‘감로도’에 표현된 여러 부처들을 면밀히 검토하여 칠불의 구성을 살펴보았다. 아울러 문헌적 검토를 통하여 각 부처의 명호(名號)와 의례적 역할이 『삼단시식문(三壇施食文)』(1496)을 시작으로 새롭게 편집되어 16세기에 등장한 시식의식문(施食儀式文)들에 기반하고 있음을 밝혔다. 특히 칠불의 문헌적 연관성에서 핵심이 되는 감로왕여래(甘露王如來)의 도상(圖像)을 규명하였다. 본고는 ‘감로도’의 도상을 이해하는 데 있어, 그와 동시기에 출현한 ‘시식의식문’과의 직접적인 관계를 제시하고자 한다.

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