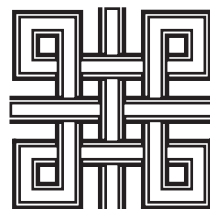


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SOME REMARKS ON THE AUTHORSHIP AND
CHRONOLOGY OF THE
YIN CHI RU JING ZHU 陰持入經註
THE SECOND PHASE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF EARLY CHINESE
BUDDHIST EXEGETICAL LITERATURE*

Stefano Zacchetti

Introduction

Throughout the history of Chinese Buddhism, whereas translations chiefly (though by no means exclusively) represented the foreign side of a long process of acclimatisation, commentaries have generally embodied the indigenous response. That is, commentaries show more clearly what texts and ideas interested Chinese Buddhist audiences, and played an actual role in the doctrinal innovations.¹ If this is largely true of any epoch, the study of exegetical literature is of particularly high significance for inquiring into the intellectual history of the earliest period of the introduction of Buddhism in China (2nd-3rd century AD), a subject of research as crucial as it is poorly documented, and otherwise largely inaccessible to us. Moreover, it is also at the level of exegetical literature that the early phase of Buddhist interaction with Chinese indigenous thought—a source of so many lasting misunderstandings in the modern scholarship on this subject—can be better analysed.

Indeed, some of the early commentaries have received a certain amount of attention by modern scholars, although, to the best of my knowledge, a systematic general study of all the available sources is still lacking. This is also the case with the text that is the object of the present article, an

* I wish to express my gratitude to the following friends for advice on issues dealt with in this study: Nicoletta Celli, John R. McRae, Jan Nattier, Antonello Palumbo, Maurizio Scarpari and Jonathan Silk. Any error remaining in this paper is my own.

¹ Cf. Erik Zürcher's remarks on the potential significance of the study of early commentaries versus translations ("A New Look at the Earliest Chinese Buddhist Texts", 1991, p. 278).

interlinear commentary on the *Yin chi ru jing* 陰持入經 (Canonical Text Concerning the *Skandhas*, the *Dhātus*, and the *Āyatanas*; hereafter YCRJ) translated into Chinese by An Shigao 安世高 (active from around 148 AD at Luoyang) during the Later Han dynasty. Printed as no. 1694 in the *Taishō* edition of the canon with the title of *Yin chi ru jing zhu* 陰持入經註 (hereafter YCRJZ), in two *juan*, this has been generally considered by specialists of early Chinese Buddhism to be one of the earliest surviving Buddhist works of exegesis composed in China.²

More specifically, there is a broad consensus that the YCRJZ was compiled sometime during the 3rd century in the Kingdom of Wu 吳.³ In fact, none of the numerous quotations found in it—one of its most obvious characteristics—refers to scriptures translated after the Three Kingdoms period, while some are the work of Zhi Qian 支謙,⁴ the most

² For a useful survey (with a particular emphasis on exegetical techniques) of the few surviving pre-Kumārajīva commentaries, see Shi Guopu, *Dunbuang xiejuan P 3006 Zhi Qian ben “Weimojie jing” zhujie kao*, 1998, pp. 163-79; see also the appendix on pp. 277-81 discussing the records on early commentaries found in the *Gaoseng zhuan* 高僧傳.

³ See for example Ui Hakuju, *Shaku Dōan kenkyū*, 1956, pp. 76-77; Tsukamoto Zenryū, *A History of Early Chinese Buddhism*, 1985, p. 90; E. Zürcher, *The Buddhist Conquest*, 1972, p. 54. Few authors known to me have expressed different opinions on this point. Indeed, radically divergent is Zhou Shujia. According to him (*Zhou Shujia foxue lunzhu ji*, 1991, vol. 2, pp. 1020-21), this commentary should be ascribed to Dao’an 道安. Zhou’s arguments are, however, shaky to say the least: he mentions some unspecified similarities with Dao’an’s commentary to the *Ren ben yu sheng jing* 人本欲生經 (T. 1693), and that Dao’an is the only author who we know composed a commentary on the YCRJ (see *Chu sanzang ji ji* 出三藏記集 5.39c19-20 and 6.45a10-13). Shi Guopu (*Dunbuang xiejuan P 3006 Zhi Qian ben “Weimojie jing” zhujie kao*, 1998, p. 163 note 1) refers to a dissertation by Gao Mingdao 高明道 (*Rulai zhiyin sanmei jing fanyi yanjiu* 如來智印三昧經翻譯研究, which I could not access) according to which the *Huiyin jing* 慧印經, quoted four times in the YCRJZ (1.11b11-13; 1.11c22-23; 1.12b11; 1.13b12; two are actually quotations of the same passage), is a translation by Dharmarakṣa. I do not know the exact reasons for this hypothesis, but all the passages quoted in the YCRJZ are found in the *Huiyin sanmei jing* 慧印三昧經 (T. 632), safely ascribable to Zhi Qian (see J. Nattier, *A Guide to the Earliest Chinese Buddhist Translations*, 2008, p. 141; cf. also Tsukamoto Zenryū, *A History of Early Chinese Buddhism*, 1985, p. 91).

⁴ The chronology of Zhi Qian presents several problematic points; on this issue now see A. Palumbo, “Dharmarakṣa and Kaṅṭhaka”, 2003, pp. 203-5 with note 108. The dates proposed by Palumbo for Zhi Qian’s life are between 194 and 199 for his birth, and between 253 and 258 for his death.

important translator active in the Wu Kingdom.⁵

The YCRJZ cannot be called, to be sure, a neglected text. There has been a complete modern translation (in Japanese *kundoku* style, by Ui Hakuju),⁶ and, in addition to more or less detailed discussions in all the main works devoted to the history of early Chinese Buddhism, there are at least two articles on it.⁷ However, I believe that there are enough reasons to justify more research on the subject.

One of the main obstacles to the study of the YCRJZ is the obscurity of its basic text, An Shigao's YCRJ. The recent identification of a Pāli parallel to this Chinese translation—chapter 6, or “Compendium of the Meaning of the Suttas” (*Suttatthasamuccayabhūmi*), of the (generally) post-canonical treatise titled *Peṭakopadesa*⁸—has changed the situation considerably. Although many passages of both the YCRJ and the YCRJZ

⁵ See Tang Yongtong, *Han Wei liang jin Nanbeichao fojiao shi*, 1983, p. 97; Tsukamoto Zenryū, *Chūgoku Bukkyō tsūshi*, 1979, pp. 85-86 (= *A History of Early Chinese Buddhism*, 1985, pp. 90-92); Cai Zhenfeng, “*Yin chi ru jing zhu xu zhong geyi wenti de kaocha*”, 1999, pp. 24-26; and now especially J. Nattier, *A Guide to the Earliest Chinese Buddhist Translations*, 2008, pp. 164-66. Cf. also S. Zacchetti, “A ‘New’ Early Chinese Buddhist Commentary”, 2010, pp. 471-78. Here I shall not discuss the quotations in the YCRJZ, as this is perhaps one of its best studied aspects. It is also, to be sure, one of the most interesting ones. The fact that both Mahāyāna and non-Mahāyāna scriptures are quoted in order to interpret the YCRJ (in itself obviously not a text of the Great Vehicle) has attracted particular attention: e.g., see Cai Zhenfeng, *ibid.*, pp. 24-26; Wang Bangwei, “Mahāyāna or Hinayāna: A Reconsideration of the *Yāna* Affiliation of An Shigao and His School”, 1997, p. 693.

⁶ Included in Ui Hakuju's general study of An Shigao's corpus, published posthumously: “Shina bukkyō saisho no yakukyō gudensha An Seikō no kenkyū” シナ佛教最初の譯經弘傳者安世高の研究, in Ui, *Yakukyōshi kenkyū*, 1971, pp. 114-200; Ui translated both the YCRJ and the YCRJZ.

⁷ W. Lai, “The Early Chinese Buddhist Understanding of the Psyche: Chen Hui's Commentary on the *Yin Chih Ju Ching*”, 1986, and Cai Zhenfeng, “*Yin chi ru jing zhu xu zhong geyi wenti de kaocha*”, 1999. The latter has also been published, with minor differences, as a part of Cai's *Wei jin foxue geyi wenti de kaocha*, 2004 (pp. 55-98).

⁸ See S. Zacchetti, “An Early Chinese Translation Corresponding to Chapter 6 of the *Peṭakopadesa*”, 2002. For information on the *Peṭakopadesa*, see O. von Hinüber, *A Handbook of Pāli Literature*, 1996, pp. 80-82 (§§ 167-171). Chapter 6 is a peculiar portion of this book, containing some of the basic Buddhist teachings organised on the basis of an old list partly shared by several early *Abhidharma* texts (see S. Zacchetti, *ibid.*, pp. 89-91).

remain completely problematic (the *Peṭakopadesa* itself is often extremely obscure), nevertheless it is now possible to see these texts in an entirely new light. With regard to the YCRJZ, for instance, we can now evaluate the exegetical technique employed by its authors with far greater precision than before. And this, as we shall see, allows a better understanding also of the milieu in which it was produced.

In general, our knowledge of An Shigao, his translations, and his exegetical works—quite obviously one of the main sources for the authors of the YCRJZ—has made considerable progress during the last ten years. More specifically, given that much of the little that has been written on the historical aspects of the YCRJZ is based on assumptions, it might not be superfluous to review here the factual evidence we possess, in order to see what we actually know and what we can infer with varying degrees of plausibility.

My work is part of an ongoing research project aimed at the systematic study of early Chinese Buddhist commentaries. Here I have simply collected some notes on the historical problems posed by this text (especially concerning its authorship and chronology), while I hope to devote another study to its doctrinal content in the future. But in trying to track down the people behind it in the following pages, I will also reconsider the life and work of one of the most important figures of early Chinese Buddhism, Kang Senghui 康僧會. In the process, we will come across the faint traces of a community of Buddhist adepts who were active, under Kang Senghui's guidance, during the first half of the 3rd century AD, and played a crucial role (albeit entirely unacknowledged in historical sources) in the early phase of transmission of Buddhist doctrines to South Central China.

The textual history of the YCRJZ

Elsewhere I discussed the transmission of both the YCRJ and the YCRJZ (with the relevant preface).⁹ Since then, however, I have been able to access some new sources, and, as a result, I can now clarify certain details.

The *Taishō* edition presents the two texts separately. This arrangement is the work of the Japanese editors, and a departure from the text on which

⁹ S. Zacchetti, "An Early Chinese Translation", 2002, pp. 94-96.

the *Taishō* is based, the 13th century Koryō edition (hereafter Kr).¹⁰ In the latter, the basic text and the commentary are transmitted together under the title *Yin chi ru jing*, and, in fact, even the title of T. 1694, i.e. *Yin chi ru jing zhu* (which appears in the margins but not in the body of the text) is likewise a modern coinage, almost certainly, again, by the editors of the *Taishō* canon.¹¹ For the sake of clarity, however, in this article I have retained the distinct title of YCRJZ.

The 12th century Jin 金 canon (hereafter J)¹² contains both texts in exactly the same form as in Kr. No doubt these two printings of the canon simply took over this feature from their common ancestor, the late 10th-century Northern Song edition known as *Kaibao zang* 開寶藏, which is the earliest printed version of the entire canonical collection.¹³

As I pointed out in a previous article (“An Early Chinese Translation”, 2002, p. 95), in another group of interrelated wood-block editions carved from the Song to the Qing dynasties (cf. S. Zacchetti, *In Praise of the Light*, 2005, pp. 110-17), this text has no preface and interlinear commentary. Moreover, contrary to the hypothesis I advanced in 2002 on the basis of the information provided by the critical apparatus in the *Taishō*, the edition of

¹⁰ K 807; reproduced in *Koryō taejanggyōng* 高麗大藏經, Tongguk University Press, Seoul 1976, vol. 20, p. 493a; cf. L.R. Lancaster and Sung-bae Park, *The Korean Buddhist Canon: A Descriptive Catalogue*, 1979, p. 309.

¹¹ The so-called *Manji zōkyō* 卍字藏經, for instance, has faithfully preserved the arrangement of the Koryō edition (although it is not directly based on it: see S. Vita, “Printings of the Buddhist ‘Canon’ in Modern Japan”, 2003, p. 220), with the YCRJ printed together with the glosses and the preface: see vol. 27 of the Taiwanese reprint, pp. 213-29.

¹² See the facsimile reproduced in *Zhonghua dazangjing* 中華大藏經, Beijing 1984-1988, vol. 36, pp. 129-54.

¹³ Cf. S. Zacchetti, *In Praise of the Light*, 2005, p. 95 with note 78. This is further confirmed by another source, the descriptive catalogue of the canon named *Dazangjing gangmu zhiyao lu* 大藏經綱目指要錄 (*Shōwa hōbō sōmoku roku* 昭和法寶總目錄 no. 37; vol. 2 pp. 571-772), and compiled at the beginning of the 12th century by Weibo 惟白. Recently Li Fuha and He Mei (*Hanwen Fo jiao dazangjing yanjiu*, 2003, pp. 78-79) have shown that the text used for the compilation of this work was a copy of the *Kaibao zang*. Now, the entry on the YCRJ (708c-709a) begins with a partial quotation from the preface (安世高譯也。普見菩薩，示現為安息國王太子; cf. YCRJZ 1.9b15-16, and the appendix below, with note 19), and ends with a remark (... 及有注義等因緣) which, though not entirely clear, suggests the presence of an interlinear commentary.

the canon in the library of the Kunaichō 宮内庁 in Tokyo (whose readings are cited in the *Taishō* as 宮) also contains the YCRJ alone. The Kunaichō canon consists of texts from two ancient (and closely related) editions, both carved at Fuzhou during the 11th and 12th centuries (see S. Zacchetti, *ibid.*, 2005, pp. 110-12). However, the portion containing the YCRJ presents some characteristics which do not agree with the parts safely ascribable to the two Fuzhou editions, and thus may actually reflect a different carving.¹⁴ In short, we cannot be sure about the original editorial arrangement of the YCRJ in the Fuzhou editions until other exemplars become available for analysis. It would thus seem that, apart from the two editions already mentioned (Kr and J), the Song period edition of Sixi 思溪 (12th-13th century; see S. Zacchetti, *ibid.*, 2005, pp. 112-15)—which unfortunately I could not access—is the only one including both the preface and the commentary (Zacchetti, “An Early Chinese Translation, 2002, p. 95).

So far I have not been able to trace any manuscript of the YCRJ. Consequently, the early phase of its transmission has to be tentatively

¹⁴ The following discussion is based on a microfilm of this exemplar of the canon held by the International Research Institute for Advanced Buddhism, Soka University, Tokyo. One of the most typical features of both Fuzhou editions is the presence, at the beginning of each *juan*, of fairly detailed notes under the names of the two monasteries where the editions were produced (Fuzhou Dong chan dengjue si 福州東禪等覺寺 and Fuzhou Kaiyuan chan si 福州開元禪寺), containing, among other things, some information on the carving (date, etc.). The YCRJ is, in the text from the Kunaichō library, the second scripture contained in the case numbered with the character 無 in the *Qian zi wen* 千字文 (Thousand-character text) sequence, and all the *juans* in this case lack the initial notes described above. For the rest, the format of this YCRJ seems on the whole consistent with that of other portions of the two Fuzhou editions. In fact, this anomaly is not confined to case 無. All the *juans* in the nine cases included from 宜 to 無 equally lack the notes. On the other hand, cases 終 and 竟 (preceding and following the above sequence of cases) have them. The scriptures contained in these belong to the first Fuzhou edition (carved at the Dong chan dengjue si); the last *juan* of case 終 (being *juan* 60 of the *Zhengfa nianchu jing* 正法念處經), and the first of case 竟 (beginning of the *Wubai dizi zi shuo benqi jing* 五百弟子自說本起經) are both dated to July-August 1097 (紹聖四年六月). On this basis, most likely all the texts with no initial notes (YCRJ included) might have been taken from a separate carving, probably in order to make up for parts lost in that particular exemplar or set of exemplars. It would be interesting to check whether other parts in the copy from the Kunaichō show a similar irregularity.

inferred from other indirect sources. On the basis of the scriptural catalogues we can determine with a reasonable degree of probability that during the Tang the text was transmitted predominantly as in J and Kr, with commentary and preface, although an edition lacking these elements was also circulating.¹⁵ The same is suggested by the fact that even in the printed editions with no commentary there remain several glosses interpolated into the basic text (see S. Zacchetti, *ibid.*, 2002, pp. 95-96), obviously going back to a version from which the commentary was removed, rather than one in which it was abstent from the outset. What is more, such circumstances can also explain why no bibliographical source records the YCRJZ as a separate text.¹⁶ This holds true as far back as our sources go—that is, up to the manuscript hyparchetypes of the various printed editions carved from the Song period onwards. It would be unwarranted, however, to extend such a conclusion to the entire history of the text.¹⁷

¹⁵ I had already suggested this—building upon an observation by A. Forte (“An Shih-kao: biografia e note critiche”, 1968, p. 187)—in my article on the YCRJ (“An Early Chinese Translation”, 2002, p. 95 note 128), but only with some hesitation. I now think that this conjecture can be confirmed by a simple calculation. In the *Da Tang neidian lu* 大唐內典錄 7.298c10 (completed in 664 AD) and in several subsequent catalogues the YCRJ is recorded as consisting of 32 folios; however, according to the *Zhongjing mulu* 眾經目錄 3.186c2 (completed in 665 AD) the YCRJ had 22 folios. If we transpose, with an approximate calculation, the text edited in Kr (i.e., YCRJ + commentary + preface) into the format of a standard Tang Buddhist manuscript (with 28 columns of 17 characters per folio), we find that it would correspond to around 31-32 folios. In other words, the YCRJ in 32 folios recorded in the catalogues no doubt included both the commentary and the preface. On the other hand, the edition of the YCRJ with no commentary in the *Qisha zang* 磧砂藏 (carved between the Southern Song and the Yuan; see S. Zacchetti, *In Praise of the Light*, 2005, p. 115), is made up of 20 folios slightly larger than Tang manuscripts (30 columns of 17 characters per block/folio); see vol. 20, pp. 89-96 of the facsimile reprint (*Song ban Qisha dazangjing* 宋版磧砂大藏經, Taipei, 1987). And this would approximately match the statement found in the *Zhongjing mulu* concerning the YCRJ in 22 folios.

¹⁶ Cf. Cai Zhenfeng, “*Yin chi ru jing zhu xu zhong geyi wenti de kaocha*”, 1999, p. 11.

¹⁷ In fact, there is some evidence suggesting (though, admittedly, entirely *ex silentio*) that in an earlier period the YCRJ may have also circulated without a commentary. Dao’an composed a preface to his lost commentary to the YCRJ that is preserved in the *Chu sanzang ji ji* (6.44b29-45a13; on this document, see Ui Hakuju, *Shaku Dōan kenkyū*, 1956, pp. 73-79). Here we find no mention of any previous commentary to this text. This, of course, could well mean nothing, but it should be observed that at the end

Many hands behind one commentary

The authorship of the YCRJZ is a tangled question. The main difficulty is not that we lack information (though we certainly do so on certain key issues), but that the sources provide us with pieces difficult to put together into a single, coherent picture. And although several authors (including some of the greatest scholars of Chinese Buddhism) have expressed their opinions on this point, it seems to me that none has fully taken into account all the facets of the question, or discussed all of its difficulties in detail.

1. Master Chen

Let us begin with a basic fact: as far as I have been able to ascertain, in all the editions which transmit the text together with the commentary, the YCRJ is headed by the words “Annotated by Master Chen” (陳氏注).¹⁸ Our direct knowledge of the author of the YCRJZ does not go beyond such admittedly meagre notice. This very paucity has, however, a positive implication: for the attribution is so colourless, so anonymous, that it must surely be authentic. It is not the stuff out of which false attributions—a constant leitmotif in the earliest strata of the canon—are fabricated. Generally texts are ascribed to celebrated masters, such as An Shigao, for example, and not to an unknown “Master Chen”.

Nothing positive is known of this personage, as several scholars have duly observed.¹⁹ The table of contents of vol. 33 (p. 1) of the *Taishō*

of his preface to the *Anban shouyi jing* 安般守意經 Dao'an discusses Kang Senghui's commentary on that scripture (*Chu sanzang ji ji* 6.43c22; tr. A.E. Link, “Evidence for Doctrinal Continuity of Han Buddhism from the Second through the Fourth Centuries”, 1976, pp. 86-87; cf. also the discussion of this passage below, with note 64). It is thus possible that Dao'an did not know our YCRJZ, as also observed in passing by Cai Zhenfeng, “*Yin chi ru jing zhu xu zhong geyi wenti de kaocha*”, 1999, p. 11. After all, Dao'an wrote this preface during his early years in the North (Tang Yongtong, *Han Wei liang jin Nanbeichao fojiao shi*, 1983, p. 142; E. Zürcher, *The Buddhist Conquest*, 1972, pp. 185-86; A.E. Link, “Biography of Shih Tao-an”, 1958, p. 11), and it is possible that at that time the circulation of a Wu Kingdom commentary such as the YCRJZ was still limited to its original area.

¹⁸ The Sixi 思溪 edition, quoted in the apparatuses of the *Taishō* and the *Zhonghua dazangjing* as 宋 and “Zi[fu]” 資 respectively, has a variant here: 陳氏製并注, “composed [presumably referring to the preface] and annotated by Master Chen”.

¹⁹ See, for instance, Cai Zhenfeng, “*Yin chi ru jing zhu xu zhong geyi wenti de kaocha*”, 1999, p. 11.

edition, however, ascribes the YCRJZ to Chen Hui from Wu 吳陳慧. And concerning him we have some precious, if scant, first-hand information provided by the famous Wu Kingdom Buddhist translator and exegete Kang Senghui. In a well-known passage of his preface to the *Anban shouyi jing* 安般守意經 translated by An Shigao, he describes his encounter with three lay Buddhist adepts of this scripture (I quote from Arthur Link's translation, with the transcriptions given in *pinyin*):

“[Fortunately, however, as] my allotted blessings from a former life were not yet exhausted, I met with Han Lin of Nanyang, Pi Ye of Yingchuan, and Chen Hui of Kuaiji. ... I asked for and received instruction from them, that ‘the compasses would be identical and the carpenter’s squares would correspond,’ and that doctrinally there would be nothing heterodox. Chen Hui annotated these doctrines and I aided in consultation and revision. If it was not from the master, it was not transmitted [by me] since I dared not [add anything] on my own initiative”.²⁰

²⁰ A.E. Link, “Evidence for Doctrinal Continuity”, 1976, pp. 79-90. Kang Senghui’s preface has been transmitted in two different places in the canon: prefixed to the *Anban shouyi jing* (1.163a5-c 8), and in the *Chu sanzang ji ji* (6.42c29-43c3). Some portions of the passage quoted above are also found at the end of An Shigao’s biography in Huijiao’s *Gaoseng zhuan* (1.324a28-b1) with a considerable variant: 案如康僧會注安般守意經序云：『此經世高所出，久之沈翳。會*見南陽韓林、潁川*皮業、會稽陳慧。此三賢者信道篤密，會共請受，乃陳慧義，余助斟酌』。(tr. A. Forte, “An Shih-kao: biografia e note critiche”, 1968, p. 160; R. Shih, *Biographies des Moines Éminents*, 1968, pp. 10-11). While we notice in this quotation some omissions and a few scribal errors, there is one portion of it (此經世高所出，久之沈翳) that, while fundamental to Huijiao’s discussion, does not appear either in the *Chu sanzang ji ji* or in the *Anban shouyi jing*, or even in the two Kongō-ji MSS containing Kang’s preface together with some hitherto lost texts ascribable to An Shigao (see Ochiai Toshinori, *Kongōji issayikyō no kisoteki kenkyū to shinsbutsu butten no kenkyū*, 2004, p. 188). This passage from the *Gaoseng zhuan* has been discussed in some detail by A.E. Link (*ibid.*, 1976, pp. 63-64; cf. also A. Forte, *ibid.*, p. 160 note 37, and Cai Zhenfeng, *Wei Jin foxue geyi wenti de kaocha*, 2004, pp. 36-37 note 3). Prima facie it would seem to be genuine, given the rarity of the expression 沈翳 in the canon; yet upon a closer examination it poses several problems. To begin with, it is not clear where the sequence 此經世高所出，久之沈翳 could have occurred in Kang Senghui’s preface. It could not have occurred, to be sure, where it is seemingly suggested by Huijiao’s quotation, i.e., before 會*見南陽韓林 etc., for the latter passage fits perfectly with the preceding phrase (瞻言顧之，潛然出涕。宿祚未沒 ...). Here Kang Senghui is not discussing An Shigao and his translations, but his own life: a reference to the *Anban shouyi jing* would be entirely out of place at this point. The phrase 此經世

I shall come back to this preface, and especially to its chronology below. What now I would like to note is that Kang Senghui assisted Chen Hui in composing a commentary to An Shigao's *Anban shouyi jing* (陳慧注義, 余助斟酌)—probably based on the latter's own explanations (非師不 [v.l. 所]傳, 不敢自由也)²¹—that had presumably been recorded by his direct followers and was later transmitted by the Chen Hui and the other two persons mentioned by Kang Senghui.

No other information concerning this Chen Hui (or, for that matter, Han Lin and Pi Ye) seems to exist.²² To my knowledge, his name is only mentioned one other time in the canon, in the biography of An Shigao in Huijiao's *Gaoseng zhuan*. The passage in question is in fact a quotation from a “separate biography” 別傳,²³ and fully belongs to the lore of miraculous tales that grew up around the life of the Parthian translator.²⁴

高所出 is also suspect: Kang Senghui has already said that An Shigao “translated the arcana of the *Ānāpāna-[smyti]*” 譯安般之祕奧學者. Curiously enough, we find exactly the same words occurring also in Dao'an's preface to the *Da shi'er men jing* 大十二門經序, where they are referred to that text (*Chu sanzang ji ji* 6.46b6-7; see also S. Zacchetti, “The Rediscovery of Three Early Buddhist Scriptures on Meditation”, 2003, p. 263). I wonder whether Huijiao has not concocted this alleged quotation by mixing, perhaps inadvertently, some heterogeneous material.

²¹ See A.E. Link's astute remarks (“Evidence for Doctrinal Continuity”, 1976, p. 64); cf. also Tang Yongtong, *Han Wei liang jin Nanbeichao fojiao shi*, 1983, p. 96. On some possible remnants of An Shigao's explanations on the *Anban shouyi jing*, see S. Zacchetti, “The Rediscovery of Three Early Buddhist Scriptures on Meditation”, 2003, p. 289 with note 162; “Teaching Buddhism in Han China”, 2004, pp. 216-17; “An Shigao's Texts Preserved in the Newly Discovered Kongō-ji Manuscript”, 2004b, and especially “A ‘New’ Early Chinese Buddhist Commentary”, 2010, pp. 460-61 with notes 120-121.

²² That these three personages fled to the South from Luoyang, as stated by A.E. Link (*ibid.*, 1976, p. 63), is also entirely speculative. Incidentally, Chen Hui was from Kuaiji 會稽 (in present-day Zhejiang), well within the Kingdom of Wu.

²³ On this type of sources in the *Gaoseng zhuan*, see A.F. Wright, *Studies in Chinese Buddhism*, 1990, p. 109.

²⁴ *Gaoseng zhuan* 1.324a11-18; tr. A. Forte, “An Shih-kao: biografia e note critiche”, 1968, p. 159 and R. Shih, *Biographies des Moines Éminents*, 1968, pp. 9-10. According to this bizarre and somewhat confused account (related to the intricate and semi-legendary traditions concerning An Shigao's escape to South China in his later years), an An Shigao active between the end of the Wu Kingdom and the beginning of the Jin dynasty (on the issue of this later An Shigao, see A. Forte, *The Hostage An Shigao and his Offspring*, 1995, p. 76 note 32), left some scriptures he had translated sealed

Suggestive and, in some respects, plausible as it is,²⁵ the identification of the “Master Chen” author of the YCRJZ with the Chen Hui associated with Kang Senghui remains to be demonstrated, and, in fact, is not free from problems. We ought not to forget that this is just a hypothesis by the *Taishō*’s editors, who for some reason appear to have been a little hyperactive in dealing with YCRJ and YCRJZ.

One of the main tasks left to us is then to see whether this hypothesis fits with what the primary sources say: the commentary itself, above all, but also the preface which is prefixed to it. And with this preface we are immediately confronted with a problem.

2. The preface

Short as it is—just twenty lines in Kr and J—the preface to the YCRJZ is a specimen of considerable interest among the very few Chinese Buddhist texts of the earliest period (Han-Three Kingdoms) that have survived in addition to the sizeable body of coeval translations. Nonetheless, it would be fair to say that it has not yet received the attention it deserves. For all these reasons, I have given in the appendix below a complete annotated translation of this difficult document.

The author calls himself Mi 密 (at least according to the most widely accepted interpretation: see note 2 to the appendix), and, as one of the few indisputable facts one can glean from this text, he is also the author

in a box, to be opened after four years. When, after some vicissitudes that we can omit here, he died after exactly four years and the box was opened, it was discovered that the veins of the wood formed the following phrase: “the one who venerates my teaching is the layman Chen Hui; the one who transmits the *dhyāna* canonical texts is the *bbikṣu* [Kang] Senghui” (財理自成字云: 尊吾道者, 居士陳慧; 傳禪經者, 比丘僧會). The fact that even here Chen Hui’s name is mentioned in association with Kang Senghui suggests that we are probably facing a legendary expansion ultimately stemming from Kang’s preface. It is noteworthy that the latter is the only source Huijiao quotes in his criticism of the chronological inconsistencies of this narration: probably no other information on Chen Hui was available to him than the little we know nowadays.

²⁵ As already remarked by Ōchō Enichi (“Shakkyō shikō”, 1979, p. 169). The YCRJZ is ascribed to Chen Hui by P. Demiéville, “La *Yogācārabhūmi* de Saṅgharakṣa”, 1954, p. 353 note 1; Ui Hakuju, *Shaku Dōan kenkyū*, 1956, p. 76 and *Yakukyōshi kenkyū*, 1971, p. 183; Kamata Shigeo, *Chūgoku Bukkyō shi*, 1982, p. 141 (but cf. p. 223!); E. Zürcher, “A New Look”, 1991, p. 296 note 22.

of a commentary to the YCRJ—arguably the very commentary following the preface.²⁶

A noteworthy feature of the document, especially in the beginning, is its predominantly intimate tone, which conveys a sort of concise spiritual self-portrait. The author describes, in the first place, his own spiritual experiences, and only afterwards does he introduce the text that is the object of his commentary. In this way the composition of the latter is portrayed as the outcome of an individual path. This formulation is all the more remarkable in that it goes against what seem to have been the conventions of this genre: already in the earliest Chinese Buddhist prefaces available to us,²⁷ but also in the contemporary non-Buddhist specimens of the same kind,²⁸ the description of the scripture to which the preface refers takes regularly the place of honour at the beginning.

What else does the text tell us? Mi, a fervent Buddhist and an admirer of An Shigao, is probably a layman: this seems suggested by his assertion—apparently not a cliché in its precise wording²⁹—that he composed the commentary during a three-month period of mourning during which he wore the hemp clothes prescribed by the tradition.³⁰ These would hardly befit a monk.

²⁶ This is not only explicitly stated in the preface itself (為其注義; see below note 27 to the appendix), but also suggested by the many self-derogatory expressions found throughout the preface, which are typically inserted into this kind of text to justify one's own work.

²⁷ See for example Yan Fotiao's 嚴佛調 preface to the *Shami shi hui zhangju* 沙彌十慧章句序 (*Chu sanzang ji ji* 10.69c20-70a8), the anonymous preface to the *Fa ju jing* 法句經 generally ascribed to Zhi Qian (see note 54 below), and Kang Senghui's two prefaces to the *Anban shouyi jing* and to the *Fa jing jing* 法鏡經 (on which see the discussion below).

²⁸ On non-Buddhist prefaces to commentaries composed from the Later Han to the Jin period see now Kogachi Ryūichi's detailed study ("Gokan Gi Shin chūshaku no jobun", 2001); on the structure of these texts and their degree of codification, see especially pp. 4-12.

²⁹ However, this motif—the fact that a given commentary was written during a period of leisure from official duties—is not uncommon. See, for example, the passage from Gao You's 高誘 preface to his *Huainan zi* 淮南子 commentary quoted and discussed by Kogachi, "Gokan Gi Shin chūshaku no jobun", 2001, pp. 10-11. Cf. also Kang Senghui's preface to the *Fa jing jing*, as quoted below in note 27 to the appendix.

³⁰ 因間麻紕; see also note 27 to the appendix below.

The style is elaborate, rich in parallel phrases and literary expressions. We have, then, a cultivated author. At this point, we ought to pause for a moment to reflect upon this fact: what we can hear resounding is a new voice in early Chinese Buddhism, albeit one that is certainly amplified by the scarcity of other direct sources. It is the voice of a socio-cultural type of lay Buddhist adept destined for a role of great importance in the following century, especially in South Central China.

Now, to turn back to the main issue of the authorship of both preface and commentary, in light of the preceding discussion, we should take the name Mi as referring to the “Master Chen” 陳氏 to whom the commentary is ascribed. This, however, poses some problems concerning the identification of “Master Chen” as Chen Hui, and I shall return to this issue below.

This preface does not seem to contain anything that could suggest a precise temporal location.³¹ However, Tang Yongtong³² argued that the description of An Shigao’s activity in Luoyang³³ is the account of a direct witness. Against this, one can observe that in a subsequent passage, the author describes his own encounter with An Shigao’s teaching as follows: “[I,] Mi, having observed its diffusion (流), was [so] delighted that I was forgetful of hunger” (密睹其流, 稟玩忘飢; YCRJZ 1.9b20). The expression 流, while not unambiguous, seems to me rather to describe the *transmission* of An Shigao’s teachings and texts. In fact, it is used in an apparently similar sense a few lines before with reference to the YCRJ: “[the teaching of the YCRJ] has the same origin as the *Ānāpāna-[smṛti]*, but represents a

³¹ On the use of 京師 with reference to Luoyang (YCRJZ 1.9b17), see the discussion below (note 62). However, it should be observed that the terminology of this document is entirely consistent with a Wu Kingdom dating, and that it shares with Kang Senghui’s textual corpus even some rare expressions (see the notes to the translation, in the appendix below, especially notes 4 and 22).

³² Tang Yongtong, *Han Wei liang jin Nanbeichao fojiao shi*, 1983, p. 45. The same view was upheld in a letter sent by the famous scholar-monk Juzan 巨贊 (1908-1984) to Tang Yongtong on February 15, 1963 (see *Tang Yongtong quanji*, 2000, vol. 7, p. 35). Curiously Juzan does not refer to Tang’s identical interpretation of the preface. Tang (*Han Wei liang jin Nanbeichao fojiao shi*, 1983, p. 45) considered the YCRJZ an early 3rd century work (漢末魏初), and implicitly rejected Chen Hui’s authorship.

³³ “He proclaimed the Three Jewels, and shone in the capital (Luoyang). At that time, talented person gathered [from all quarters] like clouds” (YCRJZ 1.9b17-18).

separate stream (流)” (與安般同原而別流; YCRJZ 1.9b15; see also note 17 to the appendix below). If anything, then, the aforementioned description would rather suggest a certain distance from the time of An Shigao.

Towards the end, the text also contains a few details on the composition of the commentary: we learn that the author was helped by three anonymous assistants, whose role, as described there, seems not to have gone beyond proofreading it (“Three persons have checked the errors [of the commentary,] and to my luck have polished it”; YCRJZ 1.9b24-25). That is, only one person—the author of the preface itself—would seem to have been responsible for its entire doctrinal content. The commentary itself, however, tells us a different story.

3. “The Master says”

To further complicate the picture sketched so far, the YCRJZ also contains nineteen glosses of varying length introduced by the formula “the Master says/said” 師云. There are two things that we should immediately notice: these glosses are found only in the first roll (*juan*), and their very presence does not fit with what the preface says about the composition of the commentary. As we have just seen, the help of no Master is acknowledged therein. However, the Master’s glosses include some of the most interesting and characteristic passages in the entire text. There is little doubt that this figure was not an occasional or marginal source of information, but was deeply involved in the composition of at least part of it, and, what is more, played a key role in shaping its peculiar ideology. Needless to say, this makes the silence of the preface all the more puzzling, and I shall come back on this problem below (pp. 179-180).

The identification of this Master has been one of the most widely debated issues, although no consensus has seemingly been reached so far on the subject. Yet, as I will show, exactly through this issue it is possible to throw some light on the milieu in which the commentary was produced.

Essentially, three hypotheses³⁴ have been proposed.

³⁴ Apart from that formulated by Zhou Shujia (*Zhou Shujia foxue lunzhu ji*, 1991, p. 1020) who, ascribing the commentary to Dao’an as noted above (note 3), believes that 師 must refer to the two masters—Zhu Faji and Zhi Tanjiang—with whom Dao’an had studied the YCRJ (see *Chu sanzang ji ji* 6.45a8-9; cf. S. Zacchetti, “An Early Chinese Translation”, 2002, p. 94 note 114).

Tang Yongtong (*Han Wei liang Jin Nanbeichao fojiao shi*, 1983, p. 45; cf. also p. 99) considered that the Master must be An Shigao.³⁵ He did not provide detailed argument in support of his hypothesis, explicitly based on the interpretation of the preface discussed in the preceding paragraph. Given that Tang considered Mi to be a direct disciple of An Shigao, it was logical to assume that he—the author of the preface—might have collected some of his teacher’s interpretations.

Although one would expect that this individual, with his remarkable display of cold feet and repeated professions of inadequacy, would not have hesitated to claim explicitly An Shigao’s indirect backing had he had at hand such a trump card, in itself Tang’s interpretation is quite reasonable. After all, 師 in the passage from Kang Senghui’s preface to the *Anban shouyi jing* quoted above (非師不傳 etc.) must refer to An Shigao (see note 21), and we know that the latter used to give oral explanations on the texts he translated.³⁶ That is, in the case of the *Anban shouyi jing* commentary, Kang Senghui and Chen Hui did indeed make use of some explanations by An Shigao that had been preserved and transmitted to the Wu Kingdom Buddhist adepts (see pp. 179–180 below).

The problem is that the internal analysis of the Master’s glosses in the YCRJZ simply does not allow this tantalising interpretation. To begin with, they are composed in a style simple but accurate, and are thus very different from the few presumed remains of An Shigao’s exegetical activity. Both the *Ahan koujie shi'er yinyuan jing* 阿含口解十二因緣經 T. 1508 and the anonymous commentary to the *Shi'er men jing* 十二門經 included in the Kongō-ji manuscripts³⁷ rather resemble transcriptions of lectures, poor in style and language. Even more important is the adoption, by the YCRJZ’s Master, of ideas and terms that are utterly foreign to the corpus of texts translated or composed by An Shigao (see pp. 172–176 below; cf. S. Zacchetti, “The Rediscovery of Three Early Buddhist Scriptures on Meditation”, 2003, p. 294).

³⁵ This opinion is also shared by Wang Bangwei (“Mahāyāna or Hīnayāna”, 1997, p. 693 note 23).

³⁶ S. Zacchetti, “Teaching Buddhism in Han China”, 2004, pp. 217–ff.

³⁷ Now published in Ochiai, *Kongōji issayikyō no kisoteki kenkyū to shinsbutsu batten no kenkyū*, 2004, pp. 197–203 (Kongō-ji MS A, columns 386–584); on the possibility that this commentary reflects An Shigao’s teaching, see S. Zacchetti, “The Rediscovery of Three Early Buddhist Scriptures on Meditation”, 2003, pp. 285–95.

But the most compelling evidence comes from the exegetical technique displayed in the glosses. These are, in fact, entirely downstream from the translated text, so to speak. That is, the Master's starting point and main aim is the interpretation of the *already translated* text, and, although he did on the whole a remarkably good job, we find that he was at times misled by the notoriously treacherous terminology of An Shigao's translation.

Let us consider, for example, the following passage from the YCRJ (at the end of the exposition of the five *skandhas* / *khandhas*; cf. S. Zacchetti 2002, "An Early Chinese Translation", p. 80):

1. 識種名爲身六識：眼識 etc. ... 心識。是爲身六識，是名爲識種，名爲五陰種 (YCRJ 1.173b19-21).

This should be compared with *Peṭakopadesa* p. 112, 15-18:

Tattha cha viññāṇakāyā viññāṇakkhandho, cakkhuvīññāṇaṃ yāva manovīññāṇaṃ ime cha viññāṇakāyā, ayaṃ viññāṇakkhandho. Ime pañcakkhandhā.

In the light of the Pāli parallel (識種 = *viññāṇakkhandho*), it is clear that 種 is being used (presumably in the sense of "class, category") throughout this passage as another translation of *khandha* / *skandha* besides the more common rendition 陰, "obscure [or obscuring] one".³⁸ The usage is quite normal in An Shigao's corpus, being well attested in other passages of the YCRJ,³⁹ and in other translations as well.⁴⁰

The Master's rather long comments on this passage constitute one of the most interesting portions of the entire YCRJZ (1.10a 23-b2), and I will touch upon it again in the following discussion. Here I limit myself to quoting its beginning:

³⁸ Note also 五陰種, "five obscure [or obscuring] categories" = *pañcakkhandhā* in the above passage; the compound 陰種 = *khandha* / *skandha* is also attested elsewhere: e.g., 是為色陰種 (no doubt meaning just "this is the *rūpaskandha*") in the *Daodi jing* 道地經 1.232a7 (see also P. Demiéville, "La *Yogācārabhūmi* de Saṅgharakṣa", 1954, p. 400, chap. IV).

³⁹ E.g., 1.173b27: 火種 = *Peṭakopadesa* p. 113, 2: *aggikkhandho*; and *passim*.

⁴⁰ See, for example, the *Chang Aban shi baofa jing* 長阿含十報法經 1.234c23-24: ... 當知五種。一為色受種 etc. = *Daśottarasūtra* p. 66: (*pañca dharmāḥ parijñeyāḥ* /) *pañcopadānaskandhāḥ* / ... *rūpopādā(naskandho* etc.). See also P. Demiéville, "La *Yogācārabhūmi* de Saṅgharakṣa", 1954, pp. 399 note 6 and 400 note 5 on 種 in the *Daodi jing*.

2. 師云：『五陰種，身也。...』(1.10a23).

As is made clear by a following phrase, where the sensorial activity inherent in the body and governing one's existence is compared to the cycle of vegetal growth (... 滅此生彼，猶穀種朽于下，栽受身生于上; 1.10a26), the Master interpreted 種 as “seed”,⁴¹ and hence the text quoted above must mean: “The seed of the five obscure ones (*skandhas*) is the body”.⁴²

It is also noteworthy that 身, presumably in the sense of “body”, is brought into the picture at this point by the Master. This word occurs frequently in this part of the YCRJ, including the very passage commented upon in the gloss in question (1.173b11 and ff.: 痛種爲身六痛 = *Petakopadesa* p. 112, 7: *tattha cha vedanākāyā vedanākkhandho*; etc. up to 識種名爲身六識 = *tattha cha viññānakāyā viññānakkhandho*, as quoted above in passage no. 1), and here of course *kāya* means “group, collection”. However, the Master was apparently misled by such a usage of 身, with its peculiar (and indeed wrong) construction, typical of An Shigao's translations,⁴³ and clearly interpreted 身六識 etc. as “the six forms of consciousness *belonging* to the body”. This is shown with particular clarity by the gloss 身有六情 (YCRJZ 1.10a23), “the body has the six sense organs”, no doubt referring to 身六識, i.e., 眼識 etc., in the relevant YCRJ passage (see passage no. 1 above).

⁴¹ See also below, passage no. 8 with note 57. Cf. W. Lai, “The Early Chinese Buddhist Understanding of the Psyche”, 1986, p. 92; Cai, “*Yin chi ru jing zhu xu zhong geyi wenti de kaocha*”, 1999, pp. 16-20. A significant parallel to this YCRJZ gloss occurs (as already noted by Tang, *Han Wei liang jin Nanbeichao fojiao shi*, 1983, p. 99) in Kang Senghui's preface to the *Anban shouyi jing*, where the mind's activity is compared to a farmer's random sowing, to the effect that of the plants “[o]ne rots below, and a myriad are born above” 一朽乎下，萬生乎上 (*Chu sanzang ji ji* 6.43a11; tr. A.E. Link, “Evidence for Doctrinal Continuity”, 1976, p. 71). It is noteworthy that the quotation from Kang Senghui's preface in the YCRJZ discussed below (passages nos. 3-4) also belongs with this part of the preface.

⁴² Note that even in texts ascribable to An Shigao we find, in fact, a similar imagery: cf. S. Zacchetti, “Teaching Buddhism in Han China”, 2004, p. 208 note 59. Cf. also a passage from the controversial treatise *Mouzi li buo* 牟子理惑 (in *Hong ming ji* 弘明集 1.3b14-16; tr. P. Pelliot, “Meou-tseu ou les doutes levés”, 1920, p. 301; J.P. Keenan, *How Master Mou Removes our doubts*, 1994, p. 95).

⁴³ See T. Vetter and P. Harrison, “An Shigao's Chinese Translation of the *Saptasthānasūtra*”, 1998, pp. 209 and 214 note 16.

My analysis of this gloss is not done for the sake of pedantry: the kind of interpretation embodied in the commentary is, needless to say, entirely legitimate. After all, producing new meanings out of canonical texts—often flying felicitously on the wings of false etymologies or philologically questionable interpretations—represents one of the most typical and fascinating features of religious exegesis in general. What matters here is that interpretations such as those just discussed can be taken, in the particular context of our texts, as something approximately equivalent to a separative error in textual criticism. In principle, they rule out the possibility that the translator himself was directly involved.⁴⁴

Other than An Shigao, there remain two other chronologically plausible candidates: the already mentioned Kang Senghui, and Zhi Qian, the most prominent translator of the Three Kingdoms period. We know that both were active as commentators.⁴⁵

The identification of the Master as Zhi Qian was proposed in Ui Hakuju's work on An Shigao's translations (*Yakukyōshi kenkyū*, 1971, p. 184, followed by W. Lai, "The Early Chinese Buddhist Understanding of the Psyche", 1986, p. 86). Ui's hypothesis is not supported, so far as I can see, by any detailed evidence.⁴⁶ Apparently his main argument is that no other person liable to be called "Master" can be found within the presumed period of composition of the YCRJZ. To show the fragility of this argument, it is enough to say that Ui had previously already used it

⁴⁴ Some glosses headed by the words "the Master says" include also quotations. E.g., see YCRJZ 1.11b11-12 and 12b11, where the *Hui yin* [*jing*] 慧印 translated by Zhi Qian (see note 3 above) is quoted. This fact would suffice by itself to rule out An Shigao's involvement in the YCRJZ, but unfortunately we cannot be absolutely sure that in these cases the entire gloss is by the Master (and the quotations do not occur at the beginning of these passages).

⁴⁵ See for instance *Chu sanzang ji ji* 13.97a15 and 13.97c13.

⁴⁶ Elsewhere (*Yakukyōshi kenkyū*, 1971, p. 200), Ui Hakuju remarks that from the presence of Mahāyāna texts, terms, and ideas in the YCRJZ, one can infer that Chen Hui was a follower of Zhi Qian. This is, clearly enough, entirely speculative. The fact that some of Zhi Qian's translations are quoted in the YCRJZ, also mentioned by Whalen Lai in support of the hypothesis that the Master was Zhi Qian ("The Early Chinese Buddhist Understanding of the Psyche", 1986, p. 86 and note 9, p. 101), only demonstrates that these scriptures were influential in the place and at the time the commentary was composed.

(in almost exactly the same words!) to demonstrate that the Master in question was Kang Senghui.⁴⁷

The latter hypothesis has been proposed also by Zürcher: “The ‘master’ may be K’ang Seng-hui as among the thirteen works quoted in the commentary we find an ‘Explanation of the *An-pan*’, *An-pan chieh* 安般解, which probably refers to K’ang Seng-hui’s commentary on the *An-pan shou-i ching* ...” (*The Buddhist Conquest of China*, 1972, p. 54; cf. note 80 below). Incidentally, it is now possible to confirm with some evidence Zürcher’s hypothesis on the authorship of the *Anban jie* quoted in the YCRJZ (for a detailed discussion see S. Zacchetti “A ‘New’ Early Chinese Buddhist Commentary”, 2010, pp. 476-78). I think that Zürcher’s opinion is correct, and for stronger reasons than the one actually adduced by this great scholar.

We may begin with a simple statement of fact: the *presence* of Kang Senghui in the YCRJZ, discreet as it is, can be established beyond doubt. Let us consider the following passage:

3. 彈指之間，意九百六十轉。故曰使。(1.16a14-15).

The very same passage (apart from the variant 心 for 意) also appears in Kang Senghui’s preface to the *Anban shouyi jing*:

4. 彈指之間，心九百六十轉。... (*Chu sanzang ji ji* 6.43a11-12; *Anban shouyi jing* 1.163a16-17).⁴⁸

A comparison of the two contexts where this passage occurs proves quite telling. Whereas in the YCRJZ it is nothing more than an extemporaneous remark in a very short gloss, employed to explain a single word of the YCRJ,⁴⁹ in the preface to the *Anban shouyi jing* the phrase on the mind’s activity—

⁴⁷ See Ui Hakuju, *Shaku Dōan kenkyū*, 1956, p. 77.

⁴⁸ “In the interval of the snap of the fingers the mind has turned about nine hundred and sixty times” (tr. by A.E. Link, “Evidence for Doctrinal Continuity”, 1976, p. 71).

⁴⁹ The entire gloss reads as follows (1.16a13-15): 一想之中見有四倒；意、見亦然。彈指之間，意九百六十轉。故曰使。“Within the single notion (*saññā*) one [can] perceive that there are four distortions; the same holds true for thought (*citta*) and view (*diṭṭhi*). Etc.”. This comments on YCRJ 1.175b28-29: 何等爲三倒？一爲想，二爲意，三爲見；是爲三倒使，corresponding to *Peṭakopadesa* p. 120, 12-13: *Katamāni tīṇi vipallāsāni? Saññā cittam diṭṭhi ca. Imāni tīṇi vipallāsāni*. The last character in the YCRJ’s passage (and the one at the end of the YCRJZ’s gloss), i.e., 使 (“application?”), is not entirely clear.

indeed one of the main motifs in Kang Senghui's text—is clearly part of a wider context: it naturally grows out of the authors's discussion (which is also echoed in other passages of the YCRJZ⁵⁰), perfectly fitting in with what precedes and follows it.⁵¹ In other words, although the text is not explicitly marked as a quotation (which is quite suggestive), I think that there is little doubt that in this case the YCRJZ is drawing from Kang Senghui's work.

Another clear parallel with Kang Senghui's corpus occurs in a preceding passage:

5. 夫心者，衆法之本也。(1.10a13-14).

This phrase is also found (again, with a variant: 原 for 本) in another preface by Kang Senghui to his lost⁵² commentary on the *Fa jing jing* 法鏡經 (*Ugraparipṛcchā*):

6. 夫心者，衆法之原，... (*Chu sanzang ji ji* 6.46b20).

⁵⁰ See note 41 above. Another noteworthy passage is the interpretation of the rendition 陰 = *kbandha* / *skandha* given in the YCRJ (YCRJZ 1.9c11-12: 謂識神微妙，往來無診，陰往默至，出入無間。莫睹其形，故曰陰；“the conscious spirit is subtle, it goes and comes unnoticed, it obscurely goes and quietly arrives, unimpeded in its movements; no one perceives its forms, therefore [the YCRJ] says: ‘the [five] obscure ones’”). This discussion has a significant parallel in Kang Senghui's *Anban shouyi jing* preface (*Chu sanzang ji ji* 6.43a6-8, tr. A.E. Link, “Evidence for Doctrinal Continuity”, 1976, pp. 68-69), as already pointed out by some scholars (Tang Yongtong, *Han Wei liang jin Nanbeichao fojiao shi*, 1983, p. 99; Cai Zhenfeng, “*Yin chi ru jing zhu xu zhong geyi wenti de kaocha*”, 1999, p. 12).

⁵¹ After this passage, Kang's preface goes on to remark: 一日一夕十三億意 (A.E. Link, *ibid.*, 1976, p. 71: “In a day and night there are one thousand three hundred million thoughts”). This idea is taken up again after few lines, in a definition of *dhyāna*: 禪，棄也。棄十三億穢念之意。(*Chu sanzang ji ji* 6.43a16; *Anban shouyi jing* 1.163a21); A.E. Link (*ibid.*, 1976, pp. 72-73) translates this as follows: “Dhyāna (chan) is *qi* 棄, ‘abandoning’. It has the sense of abandoning the three hundred million unclean thoughts”. The interpretation of *dhyāna* as 棄 is also attested in some other early translations (see J. Nattier, “Beyond Translation and Transliteration”, 2004, pp. 6-7).

⁵² Only one fragment of Kang Senghui's *Fa jing jing* commentary (on which see *Chu sanzang ji ji* 13.97a15) seems to have survived; it is quoted by Sengyou's *Shijia pu* 釋迦譜 (2.55b3-4): 康會注法鏡經云：『凡夫貪染六塵，猶餓夫飯不知厭足。聖人斷貪，除六情饑飢，故號出家為除饑』。I am indebted to Jan Nattier for pointing out to me this quotation.

In this case, however, the direction of the borrowing is more difficult to assess. Let us consider the gloss in its entirety:⁵³

7. 心念善，即善法興；惡念生，即惡法興。夫心者，衆法之本也。法句經曰：『心爲法本』，斯也。(1.10a12-14).⁵⁴

The passage 夫心者 etc. clearly belongs with the exposition carried out in this gloss, as a conclusive general statement based upon the preceding phrases, and it is further supported by reference to a canonical source (a fact that perhaps also pleads against its being, in turn, a quotation).⁵⁵ In contrast to this, in Kang's preface to the *Fa jing jing* the same stands at the very beginning, without a preceding context: 夫心者，衆法之原，臧否之根。I think that, everything considered, the internal analysis of the last two passages (6-7) cannot rule out that in this case Kang Senghui may have adopted the phrase from the YCRJ commentary (which would have then been composed prior to the *Fa jing jing* preface).⁵⁶

While all this still has no direct bearing on the issue of the identity of the Master (after all, neither of these two glosses is introduced by the words 師云), it shows, at least, that the commentary was composed in a

⁵³ This is a commentary on the definition of 思想種 = *saññākkhandha* provided by the YCRJ (1.173b13-16): 思想種爲身六思想：一色想 etc.; cf. *Peṭakopadesa* p. 112, 10-11: *Tattha cha saññākāyā saññākkhandho, rūpasaññā yāva dhammasaññā.*

⁵⁴ "If the mind thinks of wholesome [things], then wholesome *dharmas* arise; if unwholesome thoughts are produced, then unwholesome *dharmas* arise. For the mind is the origin of the multiplicity of dharmas; this is exactly what the *Fa ju jing* says: 'The mind is the origin of the *dharmas*'". The *Fa ju jing* is a revision, made by Zhi Qian and Zhu Jiangyan, of an earlier translation (by Vighna and Zhu Jiangyan, around 224 AD) of a *Dharmapada*, as attested by the anonymous preface (generally ascribed to Zhi Qian) in *Chu sanzang jiji* 7.49c20-50a28; see S. Lévi, "L'Apramā-varga – étude sur les recensions des Dharmapadas", 1912, pp. 205-9; E. Zürcher, *The Buddhist Conquest*, 1972, pp. 47-48; Mizuno Kōgen, *Hokkukyō no kenkyū*, 1981, pp. 265-70. For Indic parallels to the famous passage here quoted (*Fa ju jing* 1.562a13-15 = Yamaka-vagga 1 in the Pāli *Dhammapada*) see Mizuno Kōgen, *ibid.*, pp. 82-83.

⁵⁵ Note that in this case the only variant displayed with respect to Kang's preface, 本 instead of 原, seems genuine as it corresponds to the *Fa ju jing* passage.

⁵⁶ It is interesting to note that in a gloss by the Master occurring few lines after passage no. 6 quoted above we find a very similar formulation (this is a commentary on the term 本持 = *dhātu*, introduced in YCRJ 1.173v 27-28): 師云：心爲衆之本主，持諸欲故曰持。(YCRJZ 1.10b21-22)

circle deeply familiar with Kang Senghui's works. True, Kang Senghui's *Anban shouyi jing* preface is not explicitly cited in the YCRJZ—a text well-known for its quotations from numerous scriptures. Given that it did not enjoy canonical status, this is not, after all, surprising, but such a way of quoting also suggests a certain degree of intimacy that would not be unfit for documents being circulated within the same group of persons.

The YCRJZ, however, contains also other passages providing more direct evidence on the issue in question. Perhaps the most significant one occurs at the end of the Master's gloss whose beginning I have already quoted as passage no. 2:

8. 有識之靈、及草木之栽，與元氣相含，升降廢興，終而復始，輪轉三界，無有窮極，故曰種也。(1.10a29-b2).⁵⁷

A very close parallel to this passage is to be found in Kang Senghui's *Chawei wang jing* 察微王經:⁵⁸

9. 於是，群臣、率土黎庶，始照魂靈與元氣相合，終而復始，輪轉無際。(Liu du ji jing 8.51c24-26).⁵⁹

⁵⁷ “The spirit endowed with consciousness and the seedlings of plants and trees are in harmony with [I read, with some hesitation, 相合 as in the *Liu du ji jing* 六度集經] the Primordial Pneuma [元氣; see S.R. Bokenkamp, *Early Daoist Scriptures*, 1997, pp. 15-20 and note 24 p. 27]: they grow and decline, die out and prosper, beginning anew after having come to an end; [in this way] they transmigrate endlessly through the three realms; therefore [the YCRJ] says ‘seed’ (種)”. On this passage, see W. Lai, “The Early Chinese Buddhist Understanding of the Psyche”, 1986, p. 92, and Cai Zhenfeng, “*Yin chi ru jing zhu xu zhong geyi wenti de kaocha*”, 1999, pp. 17-ff.; on 元氣 in Buddhist texts of this period, see Cai Zhenfeng, *ibid.*, p. 19 note 24.

⁵⁸ This text is now included in the *Liu du ji jing* as no. 90. The *Cha wei wang jing* is part of the group of four tales which, while included in our present *Liu du ji jing* (as nos. 88-91; the title of no. 88, is to be read as 阿離念彌經 with T. 152 8.49b24, instead of the *Chu sanzang ji ji*'s 阿難念彌經), are mentioned separately in Kang Senghui's biography in the *Chu sanzang ji ji* (see 13.97a13-14, and *Gaoseng zhuàn* 1.326a20-21; cf. E. Chavannes, “Seng-houei 僧會 - † 280 p. C.”, 1909, p. 210, R. Shih, *Biographies des Moines Éminents*, 1968, p. 29 with note 104; Kamata Shigeo, *Chūgoku Bukkyō shi*, 1982, p. 221). Cf. however the catalogue in *Chu sanzang ji ji*, 2.7a25-27.

⁵⁹ For a translation see E. Chavannes, *Cinq cents contes et apologues extraits du Tripitaka chinois*, 1962, vol. 1, p. 344: “Alors les ministres et la population de tout le pays comprirent pour la première fois que l'âme est unie au souffle primitive, que, dès qu'elle prend fin, elle recommence, et que le cycle qu'elle parcourt est sans limites”.

Not only is the same idea expressed in both texts (the fact that the spirit, 有識之靈 / 魂靈, is united to the Primordial Pneuma [元氣], and, accordingly, undergoes an endless cycle of deaths and rebirths), but their wording is also strikingly similar, and partly verbatim identical. A coincidence seems, in this case, altogether out of question.

In the light of all the preceding evidence, we can conclude that the Master whose explanations are so important to the YCRJZ was in all likelihood Kang Senghui. There are also to be noted some significant similarities in the use of terms and expressions between the preface to the YCRJZ and some of Kang Senghui's works, especially the preface to the *Fa jing jing* (see below, notes 3, 5, 22, 26, and 33 to the appendix). This constitutes further evidence of his involvement in the group which produced our commentary.

Some further remarks on the chronology and authorship of the YCRJZ

In trying to establish the period of composition of the YCRJZ we have essentially to grope our way in the dark. At first sight the sources do not seem to provide more precise evidence than what we can draw from the quotations in the commentary (see note 3 above), i.e., the 3rd century AD. This may explain why Zürcher has been able to propose two different datings for this text: "middle of the third century" (*The Buddhist Conquest*, 1972, p. 54), and "early third century" ("A New Look at the Earliest Chinese Buddhist Texts", 1991, p. 296 note 22).

We have seen, however, that the text presupposes Kang Senghui's presence. Is there, then, any clue as to when in his presumably long

Tang Yongtong (*Han Wei liang jin Nanbeichao fojiao shi*, 1983, pp. 98-99) already noticed some parallelism between the YCRJZ and the *Cha wei wang jing*, but he did not refer specifically to passage no. 9 (cf. Irisawa Takashi, "Butsu to rei", 1994, p. 254). For another significant instance of similarity between these two texts, see YCRJZ 1.14a24-26 (a gloss—not by the Master—on YCRJ 1.174c11-12, definition of *rūpa* in *nāmarūpa*; cf. *Peṭakopadesa* p. 116, 12-14): 身強者, 地也; 軟濕, 水也; 溫煖, 火也; 氣息, 風也。斯四大可見, 謂之色。識神爲斯名色因 [read *困?] 于三界也, and cf. *Liu du ji jing* 8.51b10-12: 元氣強者爲地; 軟者爲水; 煖者爲火; 動者爲風。四者和焉, 識神生焉。Although the *Liu du ji jing* is generally classified as a translation, it bears signs of significant editing on the part of Kang Senghui, and I would not hesitate to ascribe to him the passages quoted here.

career it was composed? Let us note, to begin with, that no work by Kang Sengui is quoted in this commentary so rich in citations (perhaps with the exception of the *Anban jie* 安般解, on which see note 80 below), and, in fact, his preface to the *Anban shouyi jing* was the only one of whose existence we can be certain.⁶⁰ If anything, this points (albeit only *ex silentio*) at a comparatively early date in Kang Senghui's scholarly life.

Indeed, there are several bits of evidence which hint at a date for the composition of the YCRJZ not too far apart from those of the *Anban shouyi jing* commentary and the relevant preface by Kang Senghui. The key to the problem lies with these two texts. Concerning this point, Tang Yongtong (*Han Wei liang jin Nanbeichao fojiao shi*, 1983, p. 96) observed that the *Anban shouyi jing* commentary must have been composed before 229 AD, the year when the Wu ruler assumed officially the imperial title and then moved his capital to Jianye.⁶¹ In Tang's opinion, this is shown by the preface, as Kang Senghui, when describing An Shigao's coming to China, refers to Luoyang as "the Capital" 京師 (*Chu sanzang ji ji* 6.43b 18; exactly the same usage is also found in the YCRJZ preface, 9b17). Unfortunately, Tang's argument is not supported by contemporary sources.⁶²

⁶⁰ Those quoted as passages nos. 8-9 are just parallels: in this case it is merely a matter of some ideas and expressions that a single author may well have used in works composed at different times.

⁶¹ See *Sanguo zhi*, pp. 1134-35.

⁶² See also Kida Tomoo, "Kōsetsu shoki butsuji kō", 1991, pp. 56 and 74 note 36. E. Zürcher had already written that Tang's argument for the pre-229 dating of Kang's preface is "non valid" (*The Buddhist Conquest*, 1972, p. 337 note 149). However, it seems to me that the examples Zürcher proposes to counter Tang's reasoning are also not entirely convincing. Since this point is of considerable import for our discussion, I should like to consider Zürcher's treatment of this issue in greater detail. At first he remarks that if Tang's hypothesis is correct the *Anban shouyi jing* preface would have been composed "at least fifty-one years before his death in 280. Since K'ang Seng-hui, as T'ang observes (...) must have been in the middle years of his life when he wrote this preface, he should in that case have been at least some ninety years old when he died. This is by no means impossible, but the fact—apt to be recorded in Chinese biographical literature—is nowhere mentioned". But that Kang Senghui at the time of this preface was already of middle age (當已及中年; Tang Yongtong, *Han Wei liang jin Nanbeichao fojiao shi*, 1983, p. 96) is just Tang's speculation, and I see nothing in Kang Senghui's text compelling us to share this view—rather the opposite, I would say (see the following note). To counter Tang's argument that after 229 Luoyang could have not been referred to in Wu

However, that the *Anban shouyi jing* commentary (as well as—we can infer—the preface) was composed at an early stage of Kang Senghui’s life can be gleaned from the preface itself,⁶³ while a dating to sometime during

as “the capital”, Zürcher resorts to two counterexamples. The first is the preface to the YCRJZ, “which dates from the middle of the third century and which is certainly of southern provenance”. Apart from other considerations (cf. the rest of this paragraph in the present article), clearly Zürcher dated the YCRJZ preface on the basis of the commentary, which he ascribed to exactly the same period (cf. *The Buddhist Conquest*, 1972, p. 54); however, as already observed earlier in this paragraph, in a more recent publication he described the YCRJZ as an “early third century commentary” (“A New Look”, 1991, p. 296 note 22). The second counterexample is a passage from the *Zheng wu lun* 正誣論, an apologetic work included in the *Hong ming ji* (1.7a 23–ff.; see also *The Buddhist Conquest*, 1972, p. 15), where “the capital Lo[yang]” 京洛 is mentioned (8b 22), while the “treatise in question was written in southern China at some date after 324, at least seven years after the transfer of the Chinese capital to Chien-K’ang, and at least thirteen years after Loyang had fallen at the hands of Hsiung-nu invaders”. Yet in this case the political and ideological context is obviously entirely different from what we face in the Wu Kingdom after 229: in passing from Western to Eastern Jin 晉, continuity is obviously to be expected—after all it was a matter of restoration. Decisive proof that Luoyang could be called “the capital” during the Wu period when narrating events of the Han period is provided by the official history of the State of Wu, the lost *Wu shu* 吳書 (“first commissioned by Sun Quan, probably about 250”: see R. de Crespigny, *Generals of the South*, 2004, ch. 9, p. 10), passages of which are quoted in Pei Songzhi’s 裴松之 commentary to the *Sanguo zhi* 三國志 (see R. de Crespigny, *The Records of the Three Kingdoms*, 1970, pp. 14–19). In a gloss included in the biography of Pan Jun 潘濬, the *Wu shu* touches upon a certain “Leader of Court Gentlemen Xu Zong from Yuzhang 中郎將豫章徐宗 (on the title 中郎將, see C.O. Hucker, *A Dictionary of Official Titles in Imperial China*, 1985, p. 191, no. 1581) who is said to have been a famous scholar in close contact with Kong Rong (153–208; see *Hou Han shu*, p. 385 and pp. 2261–80) when he visited the Capital (有名士也, 嘗到京師, 與孔融交結; *Sanguo zhi* 三國志, p. 1398). Here 京師 obviously refers to Luoyang.

⁶³ The encounter with the three laymen—Han Lin, Pi Ye, and especially Chen Hui—with whom he worked on the commentary, is introduced by Kang Senghui immediately after the narration of how he lost his parents and his three masters, which, in turn, happened when he “had just begun to be able to bear firewood [as a novice disciple]” (始能負薪; *Chu sanzang ji ji* 6.43b24–25; tr. A.E. Link, “Evidence for Doctrinal Continuity”, 1976, p. 79), that is, when he was probably in his teens (Tang Yongtong, *Han Wei liang Jin Nanbeichao fojiao shi*, 1983, p. 95; E. Zürcher, *The Buddhist Conquest*, 1972, p. 51; cf. also his biography in *Chu sanzang ji ji* 13.96b2 = *Gaoseng zhuan* 1.325a14: 會年十餘歲, 二親並亡). I think that this narrative sequence suggests that Kang Senghui took part in the compilation of the *Anban shouyi jing* commentary not

the first half of the 3rd century is suggested by a generally trustworthy source. In the preface to his own commentary to the *Anban shouyi jing*, Dao'an 道安 (312-385) mentions Kang Senghui's work on the same scripture in the following terms:

10. "At the beginning of the Wei [dynasty of the Three Kingdoms (220-265 AD)] Kang [Seng]hui composed a commentary to it [viz. the *Anban shouyi jing*]."⁶⁴

There is also, curiously enough, a far later source concurring with Dao'an's testimony: a passage from Daoxuan's 道宣 (596-667) *Xu gaoseng zhuàn* 續高僧傳 contains a short but intriguing reference to Kang Senghui's circle, described as "Kang [Seng]hui's disciples of the Huangwu [era] (222-28)".⁶⁵

Kang Senghui's traditional chronology, as established chiefly on the basis of his biographies,⁶⁶ centres around two dates: 247,⁶⁷ when he reportedly reached Jianye 建業 (present-day Nanjing), the capital of the Wu Kingdom, and 280,⁶⁸ the year of his death and the end of Wu Kingdom. From this account, we get the impression that his activity mainly took

too long after these events took place, when he must have been still rather young. As I have pointed out elsewhere ("A 'New' Early Chinese Buddhist Commentary", 2010, p. 430 with note 31), Kang Senghui's *Anban shouyi jing* preface contains a hitherto unnoticed quotation from the *Fa ju jing*, translated sometime after 224 CE.

⁶⁴ 魏初康會爲之注義。(《Chu sanzang ji ji》6.43c22); cf. also A.E. Link, "Evidence for Doctrinal Continuity", 1976, p. 86.

⁶⁵ 康會黃武之徒 (《Xu gaoseng zhuàn 續高僧傳》22.621b11). I am grateful to Antonello Palumbo for directing my attention to this passage. We do not know what evidential basis lies behind Daoxuan's description (which certainly carries less significance than Dao'an's testimony), but we know that in order to prepare his work he had painstakingly collected information from a variety of sources (see, for example, Cao Shibang, *Zhongguo Fojiao shixue shi*, 1999, p. 110-12), and it is not impossible that he may have come across some record bearing on the subject.

⁶⁶ 《Chu sanzang ji ji》13.96a29, *Gaoseng zhuàn* 1.325a13-326b13; tr. by E. Chavannes ("Seng-houei 僧會 - † 280 p. C.", 1909) and R. Shih (*Biographies des Moines Éminents*, 1968, pp. 20-30).

⁶⁷ 《Chu sanzang ji ji》13.96b7 (以赤烏十年至建業). An alternative date (赤烏四年 = 241 AD) is provided in the *Guang hongming ji* 廣弘明集 (1.99c14), quoting the *Wu shu* 吳書, which, however, is described by E. Zürcher (*The Buddhist Conquest*, 1972, p. 337 note 150) as a "late Buddhist forgery"; on this issue, see also Kida Tomoo, "Kōsetsu shoki butsuji kō", 1991, p. 56.

⁶⁸ 《Chu sanzang ji ji》13.97a16-17 (會以晉武帝太康元年卒).

place after 247 (although this is not explicitly stated in the sources). However, these dates do not seem to be attested before the biography of Kang Senghui in the *Chu sanzang ji ji*, and, as Tang Yongtong (*Han Wei liang Jin Nanbeichao fojiao shi*, 1983, pp. 95-96) has already pointed out, the accounts in question, in any case, have several problems.

Moreover, the *Chu sanzang ji ji* shows a notable discrepancy between the records concerning Kang Senghui's translations contained in the catalogue section (roll 2) and the biography.

In the catalogue, after the list of his two translations (the *Liu du ji jing* and the lost *Wu pin* 吳品), we read:

11. "The two preceding texts, 14 rolls in all, were translated at the time of Mingdi of the Wei (r. 227-239) by the Indian⁶⁹ *śramaṇa* Kang Senghui, under the Wu rulers Sun Quan (r. 222-252; since 229 as emperor) and Sun Liang (252-257)".⁷⁰

In the light of the immediately preceding entry in the catalogue, devoted to Zhi Qian (*Chu sanzang ji ji* 1.7a22-24), it appears that in the slightly confusing double chronological record (Wei = legitimate / Wu = usurpers) the reference to "the time of Mingdi of the Wei" is to be taken as marking the beginning of Kang's activity as translator. Clearly, according to this record, he must have translated something before he moved to Jianye in 247. However, in his biography (*Chu sanzang ji ji* 13.97a12-15) his entire production is described in considerably different terms (cf. note 58 above), and also as having been entirely carried out at the Jianchu si 建初寺 (會於建初寺譯出經法, *Chu sanzang ji ji* 13.97a12-13), the alleged first Buddhist monastery of South Central China founded by Kang at Jianye (*Chu sanzang ji ji* 13.96b28-29), obviously after 247.

No doubt, there are enough problems in these sources to make their thorough re-examination a great desideratum. Although a detailed discussion of the issue is beyond the scope of the present study, it is very probable that an oversimplified image was superimposed upon a far richer and more complex reality. What receives almost exclusive emphasis here

⁶⁹ The reference to Tianzhu 天竺 is probably due to the fact that Kang Senghui's ancestors, though originally from Kangju 康居, had been living for generations in India (see the biography in *Chu sanzang ji ji* 13.96a29-b1: 其先康居人, 世居天竺).

⁷⁰ 右二部, 凡十四卷, 魏明帝時, 天竺沙門康僧會以吳主孫權、孫亮世所譯出。

are Kang Senghui's activities at Jianye—centred around the Jianchu si—to the detriment of his earlier career.⁷¹

This process of canonisation of Kang Senghui's life and especially of the Jianchu si probably has to do with the particular ideological role both were made to play by Buddhists of the Liang 梁 period in the foundational myth of Jiangnan 江南 institutional Buddhism. But whatever the reasons for this, one point, at least, seems clear enough: if we stick to the earliest available sources (especially Dao'an's preface to the *Anban shouyi jing*), we can assume that Kang Senghui had been active, as a commentator and perhaps also as a translator, well before 247.⁷²

From the points established so far, we are now in the position to look back at the other questions discussed above, and to try to draw some conclusions, especially concerning the problem of the authorship of the YCRJZ.

I will begin by reviewing the evidence provided by the commentary. Probably, as we have seen, the YCRJZ was composed not long after Kang Senghui's commentary and preface to the *Anban shouyi jing*, at some date during the first half of the 3rd century.⁷³ And it is certain that it was

⁷¹ A typical example is the claim, found in Kang Senghui's biography, that at the time of Sun Quan's reign, previous to Kang's arrival, there was no Buddhism in the lower Yangzi area (*Chu sanzang ji ji* 13.96b5-6: 時孫權稱制江左, 而未有佛教; cf. also *Gaoseng zhuban* 325a17-18, tr. E. Chavannes, "Seng-houei 僧會 - † 280 p. C.", 1909, p. 200; R. Shih, *Biographies des Moines Éminents*, 1968, p. 21); cf. Tang Yongtong, *Han Wei liang Jin Nanbeichao fojiao shi*, 1983, p. 95, and (particularly on the Jianchu si) Kida Tomoo, "Kōsetsu shoki butsuji kō", 1991 pp. 56 and ff. It is also important to remember that the author of the *Chu sanzang ji ji*, Sengyou, belonged to the same Jianchu si allegedly founded by Kang Senghui in the Wu capital (see A.E. Link, "Shih Seng-yu and his Writings", 1960, p. 22 with note 30), and, most obviously, was inclined to emphasise the Wu Kingdom master's role.

⁷² According to E. Zürcher (*The Buddhist Conquest*, 1972, p. 337 note 149), "[i]t is not impossible that K'ang Seng-hui had been living or roaming around in China for some time before he came to Chienyeh [Jianye]". I would rather say that this is almost certain, and that there are too many data that would become impossible to account for if we do not assume Kang Senghui's presence in South Central China before 247.

⁷³ A crucial issue concerning this early dating of the YCRJZ is the chronology of Zhi Qian's texts quoted in it (cf. note 3 above); according to J. Nattier (*A Guide to the Earliest Chinese Buddhist Translations*, 2008, p. 164, note 3), they are: T. 210, 225, 474, 532, 561, 632. As far as I know, we possess information (albeit vague) on the chronology of only one of these translations: the *Fa ju jing*. This is, in fact, the revision of an early translation dating back to 224 (see note 54 above), and of course we do not know which of these two versions is the one

composed with the help of Kang Senghui himself, likely still rather young at that time.⁷⁴

We can say that the presence of Kang Senghui in this commentary strengthens, if anything, the hypothesis that Master Chen is to be identified as Chen Hui: after all, one of the very few things we know about this figure is exactly his association with Kang.

This identification may be further, though indirectly, corroborated by a passage in the YCRJZ preface already quoted above:

12. 蓋陰持者，行之號也。與安般同原而別流。(YCRJZ 1.9b14-15).⁷⁵

As I will argue in detail below (see notes 16-17 to the appendix), here the author is introducing the YCRJ and its doctrinal content, and, in a sense, he is indirectly emphasising the significance of his own work on it. What is particular noteworthy is that he chose to do so by comparing it to the *Anban shouyi jing*, a fact suggesting that he was addressing an audience already familiar with the latter scripture, and with which this was probably enjoying a particularly high status. Such a conclusion is further confirmed by the YCRJZ itself, as this text, apart from quoting several times both the *Anban shouyi jing* and a related commentary (see S. Zacchetti, “On the Authenticity of the Kongō-ji Manuscript of An Shigao’s *Anban Shouyi jing*”, 2002b, and note 80 below), refers in a number of passages to aspects of the *ānāpānasmṛti* practise.⁷⁶

quoted in the YCRJZ. There is also another translation, ascribed to Zhi Qian in the canon, which is quoted in the YCRJ: the *Liao ben shengsi jing* 了本生死經, representing an early recension of the *Śālistambasūtra*. However, I have argued elsewhere that this is actually not a translation by Zhi Qian, but probably an earlier work (S. Zacchetti, “Teaching Buddhism in Han China”, 2004, pp. 210-12; now cf. also J. Nattier, *ibid.*, pp. 109-10).

⁷⁴ Even if Kang Senghui did indeed live to see the end of Wu in 280, as maintained in his biographies, this would not be irreconcilable with the comparatively early dating proposed here for the *Anban shouyi jing* commentary and the YCRJZ. If Kang Senghui had been born at the beginning of 3rd century, he may well have composed the *Anban shouyi jing* preface when he was 25-30 years old.

⁷⁵ “The obscure ones (陰, *khandba*) and the constituents (持, *dhātu*) are a [comprehensive] name of the practise; [this teaching] has the same origin as the *Ānāpāna-[smṛti]*, but represents a separate stream”.

⁷⁶ See YCRJZ 1.17a21; 1.20a13-14; 1.20a21-23 (on the six aspects of the *ānāpānasmṛti* practise; see S. Zacchetti, “The Rediscovery of Three Early Buddhist Scriptures on Meditation”, 2003, p. 288); 2.20c21; 2.23b9-10.

Although there is little doubt that the *Anban shouyi jing* was one of the most popular early translations,⁷⁷ this clue (especially in the light of the remaining evidence) leads us once again to the Chen Hui-Kang Senghui duo, which had co-operated in composing a commentary on it.⁷⁸ It is thus not illogical to think that the YCRJZ is the result of a team-work similar to that described by Kang Senghui himself (see the passage discussed on pp. 148-150) with regard to the *Anban shouyi jing* commentary, with Chen Hui playing the part of the main redactor, and Kang (the Master quoted in the commentary, as we have seen) acting as advisor on certain key doctrinal issues.

If we accept this scenario, we must, however, also account for some problems posed by the YCRJZ preface and already mentioned above (pp. 153-154). It is, of course, impossible to rule out that the preface transmitted together with the YCRJZ had originally nothing to do with this particular commentary, but this seems, on the whole, an unlikely hypothesis.

If Chen Hui is the main author of the commentary, he must also be, as already observed, the author of the preface, and therefore the name Mi 密 occurring in that document must refer to him. The problem is that Mi 密, given the way it is used in the preface, would seem to be the personal name (名) of the author, and this obviously constitutes a problem vis-à-vis the identification of “Master Chen” as Chen Hui.⁷⁹ Even taking this Mi as a nickname (號) of Chen Hui seems to involve further problems.

⁷⁷ See, for example, A.E. Link, “Evidence for Doctrinal Continuity”, 1976, especially pp. 63-66.

⁷⁸ See also the remarks by Ui Hakuju, *Shaku Dōan kenkyū*, 1956, p. 77.

⁷⁹ Tang Yongtong (*Han Wei liang jin Nanbeichao fojiao shi*, 1983, p. 97) took due notice of this problem, and accordingly described the YCRJZ as the work of an unknown author. However, this problem has not always been clearly recognised by the modern scholars who have discussed this text. For instance, Ui Hakuju (*Shaku Dōan kenkyū*, 1956, p. 76; *Yakukyōshi kenkyū*, 1971, pp. 183-84) ascribed both preface and commentary to Chen Hui, without further discussion. Erik Zürcher (“A New Look”, 1991, p. 296 note 22; cf. *The Buddhist Conquest*, 1972, p. 54), on the other hand, writes: “... in an anonymous preface (the author only refers to himself as Mi—apparently his personal name) to Chen Hui’s early third century commentary on the *Yin chi ru jing* ...”. Zürcher’s underlying assumption seems to be that the author of the preface is not Chen Hui, and hence he is not even the author of the YCRJZ; the problem is, however, that, as already stated above, the author of the preface is also, almost without doubt, the author of the commentary. Tsukamoto (*A History of Early Chinese Buddhism*, 1985, p. 93 = *Chūgoku Bukkyō tsūshi*, 1979, p. 87) writes that “[t]here is no proof that the ‘Mi’ above mentioned is the same

Unfortunately, in the sources currently available there is not the slightest clue to solve this issue, and therefore the question of Chen Hui's authorship of the YCRJZ (though possible, and even probable) must ultimately remain undecided. The other problem with the preface is that its description does not fully agree with the commentary as we read it now, especially because it contains no mention of the Master. This is a puzzle even more difficult to deal with, and admittedly I have not been able to work out a satisfactory solution. However, in order to come up with at least a working hypothesis, it is first necessary to discuss the nature and the historical position of the YCRJZ.

The historical significance of the YCRJZ: the second phase in the development of Chinese Buddhist exegetical literature

As we have seen in the preceding paragraphs, the YCRJZ was likely produced by the same circle, centred around Kang Senghui and (perhaps) Cheng Hui, from which originated the commentary on the *Anban shouyi jing* (T. 602). If this is correct, another problem would follow—and this time one of considerably greater significance.

There is a general agreement that the *Anban shouyi jing* ascribed to An Shigao contains many interpolated glosses, presumably reflecting the commentary by Chen Hui and Kang Senghui.⁸⁰ In a recent article (“A

person as Ch'en Hui”. It is, however, noteworthy that Tsukamoto is seemingly not ruling out the possibility that they may be the same person. See also Wang Bangwei, “Mahāyāna or Hīnayāna”, 1997, pp. 690 and 693 with note 24; Wang rejects Chen Hui's authorship of the YCRJZ, taking its author, Mi, as a different person.

⁸⁰ See E. Zürcher, review of *Mélanges de sinologie offerts à Monsieur Paul Demiéville II*, 1978, p. 119 (cf. *The Buddhist Conquest*, 1972, p. 53), and S. Zacchetti, “An Shigao's Texts Preserved in the Newly Discovered Kongō-ji Manuscript”, 2004b; cf. F. Deleanu, “The Newly Found Text of the *An ban shou yi jing* [Translated by An Shigao]”, 2003, pp. 85–86 with note 51; Ui Hakuju (*Yakukyōshi kenkyū*, 1971, p. 236) advanced the hypothesis that the glosses interpolated into the *Anban shouyi jing* may reflect Chen Hui's commentary alone, which then would have been different from Kang's own commentary (which in turn would then be entirely lost). As already pointed out above, among the scriptures quoted in the YCRJZ there is also an *Anban jie* 安般解 (“Explanation of the [Canonical scripture on the] *ānāpāna*-[*smṛti*]”) which, in my opinion, can be attributed to Kang Senghui on the basis of stylistic and terminological evidence (see S. Zacchetti, “A ‘New’

‘New’ Early Chinese Buddhist Commentary”, 2010), I have shown that the text is in fact just a commentary (not a translation plus an interpolated commentary) to a scripture of the same title translated by An Shigao, and nowadays preserved in the recently discovered Kongō-ji manuscripts (see Ochiai Toshinori, *Kongōji issayikyō no kisoteki kenkyū to shinshutsu butten no kenkyū*, 2004, pp. 186-94 and 206-17).

While parallels between YCRJZ and *Anban shouyi jing* (T. 602) are not absent,⁸¹ the former shows some remarkable peculiarities, in matters of doctrine as well as of terminology, that are completely missing from the latter.⁸² From the viewpoint of doctrinal content, the most conspicuous of them is perhaps the theory of a spiritual core in living beings, variously denominated as 識神, 魂靈 etc.

Altogether there are approximately twenty occurrences of this complex of ideas,⁸³ but by far the most common term related to this motif is 識神 (fourteen occurrences), presumably to be interpreted as “conscious spirit”.⁸⁴

Early Chinese Buddhist Commentary”, 2010, pp. 471-78; cf. E. Zürcher, *The Buddhist Conquest*, 1972, p. 54; Tsukamoto Zenryū, *Chūgoku Bukkyō tsūshi*, 1979, p. 86; Cai Zhenfeng, “*Yin chi ru jing zhu xu zhong geyi wenti de kaocha*”, 1999, p. 26 note 49; F. Deleanu, “An Seikō yaku *Anpan shui kyō* genkō-bon no seiritsu ni tsuite”, 1992, p. 51).

⁸¹ Consider for instance the following gloss on 了白黑, “comprehending white and black [things]” (see YCRJ 1.176a15: 了白黑 ... 如有分別 ...; cf. *Petakopadesa* p. 122, 19-21: ... *dhamesu ... kaṇhasukkesu vā ... so yathābhūtaṃ vicayo* etc. ...): 道為清白: 世為濁黑。黑, 冥也。(“The Way is pure and white, the world is filthy and black; here ‘black’ means darkness”; YCRJZ 1.17b10). A clear parallel reflecting the same interpretation can be found in the *Anban shouyi jing* 2.168b27-28: 思為念惟, 為分別白黑。黑為生死, 白為道。For a parallel between the YCRJZ and the *Shi'er men jing* commentary found in the Kongō-ji manuscripts, see S. Zacchetti, “The Rediscovery of Three Early Buddhist Scriptures on Meditation”, 2003, p. 288.

⁸² Ui Hakuju also noted the differences between the YCRJZ and the exegetical portion of the *Anban shouyi jing* T. 602 (*Yakukyōshi kenkyū*, 1971, p. 236).

⁸³ Curiously enough, exactly as in the case of the Master’s glosses, these are all found only in the first roll of the YCRJZ. While a connection between these two facts is certainly worth considering, the differences in the content of the two parts of the basic text, the YCRJ, may at least in part account for this discrepancy. But further research should certainly address the question of whether the extant YCRJZ is a single, homogeneous work.

⁸⁴ On this term, cf. Cai Zhenfeng, “*Yin chi ru jing zhu xu zhong geyi went de kaocha*”, 1999, p. 15 with note 17; W. Lai, “The Early Chinese Buddhist Understanding of the Psyche”, 1986, p. 87. 識神 is recorded in HD, vol. 11, p. 424a only as a Buddhist usage; one would then infer that this was a Buddhist neologism, and a reasonable

This word, as it appears, was first used in texts translated or composed in the Wu Kingdom (although rarely outside the YCRJZ).⁸⁵ I have not been able to find a clear Indic parallel to these few early occurrences.⁸⁶ However, when we analyse some later occurrences, especially in the *Āgamas*, we find that it was used to translate several different terms designating a spiritual entity—a soul—transmigrating through the endless cycle of rebirths, and this is also its main function in the YCRJZ.⁸⁷

hypothesis would be to take it as a rendition of *vijñāna*, when used with reference to the entity linking up two successive existences (so do, for example, W. Liebenthal, “The Immortality of Soul in Chinese Thought”, 1952, p. 336, and W. Lai, *ibid.*). This is not, however, clearly suggested by the Indic parallels I could find: cf. notes 86–87 below.

⁸⁵ See for instance *Liu du ji jing* 5.24a20, and 51b12 (as quoted in note 59 above). There is only one possible exception, an occurrence of 識神 in the *Amituo jing* 阿彌陀經 (2.314b20), a translation of the *Larger Sukhāvativyūhasūtra* that, while transmitted in the canon under the name of Zhi Qian, appears on internal evidence to be ascribable to Lokakṣema (see P. Harrison, “Women in the Pure Land: Some Reflections on the Textual Sources”, 1998, pp. 556–57).

⁸⁶ This is also the case with the two occurrences in the *Faju jing* (2.574a22 and 2.574b22), which seem to have no equivalent in the various available Indic parallel texts (cf. Mizuno Kōgen, *Hokkukyō no kenkyū*, 1981, pp. 297 and 311–12). The case of the *Yi zu jing* 義足經 1.179a11–12—also a translation by Zhi Qian where we find the same term—is more interesting. The portion relevant to our discussion is contained in *pādas* c-d: 悉捨世到何所, 識神去但名在, “Where does [the departed] go when he has completely abandoned [this] world? The conscious spirit departs, and only the name remains”. The corresponding verse (no. 808) in the *Aṭṭhakavagga* (*Suttanipāta*, ed. PTS p. 159) is on the whole rather different; *pādas* c-d read as follows: *nāmaṃ evāvasissati akkheyyaṃ petassa jantuno* (tr. K.R. Norman, *The Group of Discourses (Sutta-nipāta) Volume II*, 1995, p. 94: “When he has departed, only a person’s name will remain to be pronounced”). As such, apparently here there is nothing corresponding to 識神 in Zhi Qian’s translation. However, it is interesting to observe that in the commentary on this passage in the *Mahāniddeśa* (ed. PTS p. 127) *jantu* is glossed by quoting a well-known list of synonyms (cf. for example P. Skilling, *Mahāsūtras: Great Discourses of the Buddha*, 1997, pp. 300–1 and 331) containing some terms that could correspond to that word: *jantuno ti sattassa narassa mānavassa posassa puggalassa jīvassa* etc. (on the use of similar lists in the *Niddeśa* see the remarks by O. von Hinüber, *A Handbook of Pāli Literature*, 1996, p. 59 § 117).

⁸⁷ In the *Chang Aban jing* 長阿含經 (*Dīrghāgama*) 7.44a22–23, 識神 corresponds to *jīva*, “soul”, in *Dīrgha* II p. 333, 25 and p. 334, 3–4 (the same equivalence is attested again in the rest of this *sūtra*). 識神 occurs also in *sūtra* 1091 of the main Chinese *Samyuktāgama* translation (*Za aban jing* 雜阿含經), and at least in one case here has a more or less clear parallel in the corresponding *sutta* (according to Akanuma, *The Comparative Catalogue*

In a smaller number of passages of the YCRJZ, we find other expressions used in essentially the same meaning: 神 (1.13c24); 神靈 (1.14c 15); 魂靈 (1.9c13, 1.13c6, and 1.14c7); 有識之靈 (1.10a29); 靈 (1.14c17). Although more research is needed before drawing conclusions, my impression is that all these terms are used as synonyms.⁸⁸ This is clearly suggested, for example, by the following passages from the portion dealing with the *paṭiccasamuppāda*:

13. 識，知也。魂靈受身，即知好惡，而有憎愛之心也。(1.13c6-7).⁸⁹

14. 已有盛陰，識神因親受身更生 (1.13c21-22).⁹⁰

What is noteworthy is not so much the occurrence of these terms, but their very *systematic* use by the authors of the YCRJZ: they are certainly

of Chinese *Āgamas & Pāli Nikāyas*, 1929, p. 97): 此是惡魔波旬於瞿低迦善男子身側，周匝求其識神。(Za aban jing 39.286b11-12); cf. *Samyutta* vol. 4 p. 122 § 19 (*Godhikasutta*): *Eso kho bhikkhavo māro pāpimā godhikassa kulaputtassa viññāṇam samanvesati*. This suggests the equivalence 識神 = *viññāṇa*. In the *Zeng yi aban jing* 增壹阿含經 (*Ekottarikāgama*), 識神 is used in a *sūtra* dealing with the conditions under which a woman becomes pregnant (see *Zeng yi aban jing* 12.603a3-11); by comparing these occurrences with *sutta* no. 38 in the *Majjhima-nikāya* (vol. 1 pp. 256-71), the parallel suggested by Akanuma (ibid., p. 130), we find that the corresponding Pāli term is in this case *gandhabba* (e.g., pp. 265-66). See also the *sūtra* quoted in the *Abhidharmakośa* III.12, ed. Shastri vol. 1 p. 324: ... *gandharvas ca pratyupasthito bhavati*, and cf. L. de La Vallée Poussin, *L'Abhidharmakośa de Vasubandhu*, 1980, tome II, ch. 3, pp. 36-37, with note 1, p. 37, who refers to Oldenberg's opinion that the Buddhist *gandharva* is "le germe animé qui, passant d'une existence ancienne en une nouvelle existence, attend et saisit l'instant d'un acte de generation pour devenir embryon, *garbha*". On this term, now cf. Anālayo, "Rebirth and the Gandhabba", 2008, pp. 96-98.

⁸⁸ Another issue is whether we should interpret these words as referring to a single entity, as I have provisionally done, or to a plurality of spirits, in compliance with traditional Chinese ideas (see S.R. Bokenkamp, *Early Daoist Scriptures*, 1997, p. 205).

⁸⁹ "Consciousness means knowing: as soon as the soul (魂靈) takes a body, it knows good and evil, and has the mind of liking and disliking" (this is a gloss on YCRJ 1.174b24: "on the basis of the *saṅkhāras* there is *viññāṇa*"). Note that a similar function of judgement is described elsewhere in the YCRJZ as pertaining to the 識神 (a fact that further corroborates the synonymy of the two terms): 眼與色會，識神樂之，謂之相會更也。(YCRJZ 1.14c29), "eye and form meet, and the conscious spirit likes this [meeting]; this is called 'contact through reciprocal meeting' (相會更 = *sannipāta*)". Cf. YCRJ 1.175a9-10: 思望相爲何等? 爲相會更生，是爲思望相，令從是致墮痛處 = *Peṭakopadesa* p. 117, 20-21: *sannipātalakkhaṇo phasso, so vedanāya padaṭṭhānam*.

⁹⁰ "Once there are the five proliferating obscuring factors [盛陰, **upādānaskandha* / *upādānakkhandha*], the conscious spirit (識神) takes a body through the parents and is reborn".

not to be regarded as mere verbal ornaments, doctrinally indifferent. Rather, they reflect the conscious adoption of a particular line of thought. As a result, in the first roll of our commentary, the content of the basic Buddhist teachings expounded in the YCRJ is largely represented as a drama whose protagonist is this soul/conscious spirit, in a very distinctive and original unifying vision of the entire process of existence. This notion is central, for example, in the definitions of the aggregates (五陰, *khandha*; see YCRJZ 1.9c11-12 [see note 50 above] and 1.10a29-b2, quoted above as passage no. 8), of the *dhātus* (1.9c13-14 and 1.13b21), of the *pañcikasamuppāda* (1.13c2-3 and *passim* up to 1.14c29), and of *vipassanā* (觀, 1.17a22 and 1.17c23).⁹¹

I will leave aside the problem often raised with regard to these ideas and terms, viz., whether they are or are not in keeping with the alleged Buddhist *anātman* orthodoxy⁹²—hardly a constructive issue, not to mention that it is based on simplistic assumptions concerning the Indian background, indeed far from being monolithic on this point.⁹³ I will also avoid discussing the relationship between the ideas elaborated in the YCRJZ and the later debates on the immortality of the soul (神不滅) typical of early Chinese Buddhism.⁹⁴

From the viewpoint of the main theme discussed in this article—the development of Chinese Buddhist exegesis in the Han-Three Kingdoms

⁹¹ It is however interesting to note that in the YCRJZ this peculiar ideology plays no role in the treatment of the soteriological path (on this topic see Cai Zhenfeng, “*Yin chi ru jing zhu xu zhong geyi wenti de kaocha*”, 1999, pp. 20-24). The authors were apparently more interested in describing the functioning of this soul/spirit within the cycle of *samsāra*.

⁹² This problem is central to Whalen Lai’s discussion of the YCRJZ, and he takes great pains to argue that the terminology and ideas found in this commentary are not in contrast with what he calls the “*anātman* ideal” (see especially W. Lai, “The Early Chinese Buddhist Understanding of the Psyche”, 1986, pp. 86-90; cf. Cai Zhenfeng, “*Yin chi ru jing zhu xu zhong geyi wenti de kaocha*”, 1999, p. 15). In my opinion, such an approach has the disadvantage of blurring the historical specificity, and hence significance, of this text. However, in principle I agree with Lai (*ibid.*, pp. 87 and ff.) on the fact that the soul-language here is probably in part related to the Buddhist notion of *vijñāna* as the factor ensuring continuity in the rebirth process, although I think that its connection with pre-Buddhist Chinese ideas on the afterlife is equally significant if not stronger.

⁹³ See for example T. Vetter, *The ‘Khandha Passages’*, 2000, pp. 66-73.

⁹⁴ See the materials gathered in W. Liebenthal, “The Immortality of Soul in Chinese Thought”, 1952; cf. also R.H. Robinson, *Early Mādhyamika in India and China*, 1967, pp. 107-8 and 196-99.

period—there is a far more interesting aspect. I shall start from a simple statement of fact: this terminology, this kind of soul-language, is extremely rare in Han translations (and particularly in An Shigao’s corpus)⁹⁵ while, on the other hand, it suddenly appears widespread in Wu Kingdom texts (not only in the YCRJZ, but also in scriptures translated by Zhi Qian and Kang Senghui).

Not surprisingly, in the YCRJZ most of these expressions (especially 識神) are found in the section commenting upon the exposition of the *paṭīcasamuppāda*.⁹⁶ Now, we have in the *Aban koujie shi'er yinyuan jing* 阿含口解十二因緣經 an exegetical text by An Shigao devoted for the most part to exactly the same topic.⁹⁷ In other words, in this particular case there is the rare opportunity of comparing a Later Han text with the discussion carried out in a Wu Kingdom commentary supposedly reflecting a closely related doctrinal tradition. The result is very clear, at least on one point: in the *Aban koujie shi'er yinyuan jing* there is nothing comparable to the ideas and terms so common in the YCRJZ, which are then to be regarded as a later elaboration.

What may have been the reasons for adopting in such a systematic fashion this kind of language in Wu Kingdom Buddhist texts? A clear-cut answer is probably impossible, and yet I think that the question is well worth discussing.

In a very detailed and stimulating article (“Butsu to rei: Kōnan shutsudo busshoku konbin kō”, 1994), Irisawa Takahashi analysed the ideological background (especially with regard to Wu Kingdom Buddhism) of those extraordinary funerary artefacts often referred to as *huning* 魂瓶, or “soul urns”.⁹⁸ These objects may be of interest to our topic for two reasons: their use

⁹⁵ There are, however, some counterexamples. Of particular interest is a passage in An Shigao’s *Dao di jing* 道地經 (*Yogācārabhūmi*) 233c3-4, part of the discussion of the *antarābhava*: 譬如種生根, 種亦非根, 根亦不離種。人神亦如是。(“just as, for instance, the seed generates the root, and neither is the seed identical to the root, nor is the root apart from the seed; so it is also for human beings’ spirits”); cf. Dharmarakṣa’s translation, *Xiuxing daodi jing* 修行道地經 1.186b5-6 (... 如是人死精神魂魄 ...), and see also P. Demiéville, “La *Yogācārabhūmi* de Saṅgharakṣa”, 1954, p. 401.

⁹⁶ YCRJZ 1.13b24-15a26 (for the corresponding portion of the YCRJ, see S. Zacchetti, “An Early Chinese Translation”, 2002, pp. 81-82).

⁹⁷ See S. Zacchetti, “Teaching Buddhism in Han China”, 2004, pp. 198-206.

⁹⁸ These vessels, for the most part dating back to the period between the second half of the 3rd and the first half of the 4th century, have been discovered in numerous tombs

in funerals and burials appears to have been limited to a particular area (mainly the eastern part of South Central China) and period of time (3rd–4th century); and the decoration of a number of exemplars includes Buddha figures,⁹⁹ thus suggesting some connection (comparatively close in time and space to the literary documents presented here) between certain forms of Buddhism and funerary practises (and, arguably, the ideology underlying them) which—with all its controversial aspects—is of great potential significance for studying Wu Kingdom Buddhist texts. To the best of my knowledge, Irisawa is the only scholar who has tried to research in some detail the relationship between *hunping* vessels and texts produced in (broadly speaking) the same area and period. He (“Butsu to rei”, 1994, pp. 251–56) has argued that the use of the former is to be connected to a very distinctive “belief in the soul” (靈魂信仰)¹⁰⁰ also reflected in several Wu Kingdom Buddhist sources. And this could help to explain the presence of Buddhist motifs in these funerary objects.¹⁰¹ Among other texts, Irisawa also mentions the YCRJZ (ibid., p. 254), quoting the Master’s gloss discussed above (passages nos. 2 and 8).

Thus, Irisawa comes to touch upon the problem I have posed above—the significant presence of soul-language in Wu Buddhist texts—from an entirely different starting point. As is well-know, the interpretation

in the eastern part of the area between Southern Jiangsu and Zhejiang (see the map in Kominami Ichirō, “Shinteiko to Tōgo no bunka”, 1993, p. 295). On *hunping*, see for example Wu Hung, “Buddhist Elements in Early Chinese Art”, 1986, pp. 283–91; Kominami Ichirō, *ibid.* (especially pp. 238–74 for a detailed classification and periodisation of the vessels); M. Rhie, *Early Buddhist Art of China and Central Asia*, 1999, pp. 113 with note 45, and 115–9; A.E. Dien, “Developments in Funerary Practises in the Six Dynasties Period”, 2001; S.K. Abe, *Ordinary Images*, 2002, pp. 60–101. As M. Rhie (*ibid.*, p. 115) describes them, *hunping* vessels typically have “a flat bottom, tall body with bulbous shoulder and a highly decorative upper portion of moulded sculptural decor equal to about half of the total height of the vessel”. According to some interpretations, the *hunping* vessels were meant to house the souls of the departed (see note 102 below for further details).

⁹⁹ Or “Buddha-like figure”, as Abe (*Ordinary Images*, 2002, p. 61 and *passim*) more cautiously puts it. According to him (*ibid.*, pp. 60–61), “[a]s of the early 1990s, it was reported that some 130 examples of *hunping* were extant. Of these, some fifty or more contain a Buddha-like figure”; see also *ibid.*, pp. 97–101 for a discussion of these figures.

¹⁰⁰ According to Irisawa (“Butsu to rei”, 1994, p. 251), this would be ultimately rooted in the traditions of the ancient State of Chu 楚國.

¹⁰¹ Cf. also Wu Hung, “Buddhist Elements in Early Chinese Art”, 1986, pp. 289–90.

of *hunping* vessels is still very much a matter of debate (and in fact even the accuracy of the interpretative neologism *hunping* itself remains controversial),¹⁰² and, having no qualification in this field, I will not enter here the question of whether Irisawa's opinion is correct or not.

Yet I think that, perhaps unwittingly, Irisawa's ideas contain a precious suggestion for interpreting the YCRJZ. That is, rather than seeing in the systematic adoption, of the soul-language discussed above an instance of generic "sinicization" (a notion that I think should be thoroughly reconsidered, if not altogether abandoned), it would be more fruitful to interpret it as a sign of the interaction of Buddhist texts and doctrines with the specific—and indeed very distinctive—environment of 3rd-century South Central China. In this connection it could be useful to recall that Chen Hui (if he was indeed the author of the YCRJZ) was a native of Kuaiji.

Interestingly, as shown by Kamitsuka's article ("Reihōgyō to shoki kōnan bukkyō", 1988), the complex of ideas centred on karmic retribution and incorporating the typically related soul-language figures prominently among the doctrinal elements borrowed from Wu Kingdom Buddhist texts by the authors of Taoist Lingbao 靈寶 scriptures.¹⁰³ In her study,

¹⁰² Concerning the names for this kind of object, see Wu Hung, *ibid.*, p. 286; Kominami Ichirō, "Shinteiko to Tōgo no bunka", 1993, pp. 223; and especially S.K. Abe, *Ordinary Images*, 2002, p. 60 and note 169 p. 326. On the function of the objects see, for instance, Wu Hung, *ibid.*, pp. 286-ff., who relates them to the *zhaobun* 招魂 ("summoning the soul") rituals (cf. also Yü Ying-shih, " 'O Soul, Come Back!' A Study in the Changing Conceptions of the Soul and Afterlife in Pre-Buddhist China", 1987, on the related ritual of *fu* 復, "summoning [the soul]"). In this perspective, the *hunping* was conceived as "dwelling place for the soul of the dead" (Wu Hung, *ibid.*, p. 288; cf. A.E. Dien, "Developments in Funerary Practises in the Six Dynasties Period", 2001, pp. 529-30). Kominami's interpretation of these objects and their symbolism is extremely rich and complex (see A.E. Dien, *ibid.*, pp. 526-29 for a discussion), but the main function of them was, according to him, to accompany safely the soul of the deceased to the world of the ancestors, also in order to assure prosperity to the surviving relatives (Kominami Ichirō, *ibid.*, pp. 276-77; 290). For a recent and careful discussion of this issue see S.K. Abe, *Ordinary Images*, 2002, pp. 92-ff.

¹⁰³ Kamitsuka Yoshiko, "Reihōgyō to shoki kōnan bukkyō, 1988, pp. 10-13 (cf. E. Zürcher, "Buddhist Influence on Early Taoism", 1980, pp. 135-41). On early Buddho-Taoist interplay during the Wu Kingdom, see also S.R. Bokenkamp, "Sources of the Ling-pao Scriptures", 1983, pp. 466-67 and ff.

Kamitsuka understandably places more emphasis on the active role played by the Buddhist side. But, if we reverse the perspective (especially with the Han-Three Kingdom terminological shift in Buddhist texts in mind), this can be taken as further evidence of the prominence of these ideas and the relevant language in that particular environment—Jiangnan 江南 around the 3rd century. As a result, we can also interpret their systematic adoption in the YCRJZ (and in other related texts) as a response to such a historical and cultural context.

Now we can turn back to the issue raised at the beginning of this paragraph, and reconsider the *Anban shouyi jing* commentary represented by T. 602. Not only does this text completely lack the soul-language so prominent in the YCRJZ (which, to be sure, could be in part explained with the different topics dealt with), but it is in many details closer to the surviving exegetical texts ascribable to An Shigao's activity as a teacher.¹⁰⁴ Then, how can we explain the considerable differences in doctrine and terminology between the *Anban shouyi jing* T. 602 (possibly being the commentary compiled by Chen Hui and Kang Senghui) and the YCRJZ, if they are the products of the same group of persons?

This is not at all a marginal point if we are to fully understand the intellectual context within which the YCRJZ was composed. As we can glean from the passage of Kang Senghui's preface quoted above, he and Chen Hui can be credited with the transmission and propagation, in the case of the *Anban shouyi jing*, of An Shigao's doctrinal legacy during the Wu Kingdom period. That is, in the case of the *Anban shouyi jing*, they could make use of An Shigao's explanation of the text, probably in the form of glosses like the three discovered by a rare chance in the Kongō-ji manuscript.¹⁰⁵ What Kang Senghui tells us is confirmed by the analysis of all the available sources: the exegetical material incorporated into the

¹⁰⁴ See S. Zacchetti, "A 'New' Early Chinese Buddhist Commentary", 2010, pp. 459-61; "Teaching Buddhism in Han China", 2004, pp. 215-17; "An Shigao's Texts Preserved in the Newly Discovered Kongō-ji Manuscript", 2004b.

¹⁰⁵ Kongō-ji MS A columns 276-82 (in Ochiai Toshinori, *Kongōji issayikyō no kisoteki kenkyū to shinsbutsu butten no kenkyū*, 2004, p. 194); for a discussion of these glosses—one of which is also found in the *Anban shouyi jing* (T. 602)—see S. Zacchetti, "The Rediscovery of Three Early Buddhist Scriptures on Meditation", 2003, pp. 287-89; "A 'New' Early Chinese Buddhist Commentary", 2010, p. 460 note 120.

canonical *Anban shouyi jing* appears indeed close to what we know of An Shigao's Han tradition. But then, in commenting on the difficult YCRJ, the author of the preface (probably Master Chen, who might or might not be Chen Hui) and the "Master" (Kang Senghui) clearly were, for better or worse, essentially on their own, and as a result this text reflects with far more liberty ideas that, while foreign to An Shigao's doctrinal tradition, were probably of great significance to them and their milieu.

On the basis of the preceding discussion we can, at last, turn back to the problem left pending from the end of the preceding paragraph: the glaring discrepancy between the account of the compilation of the YCRJZ in the preface, and what we actually find in the commentary.

It is quite evident from the former that its author regarded this commentary as essentially his own work—hence the vast display of self-deprecatory formulas, even to a larger degree than it is customary in this kind of documents. In other words, the situation was even psychologically very different from the *Anban shouyi jing* commentary, and this could account for Master Chen's vague and perfunctory mention of his collaborators. Therefore, it is not impossible to understand how he could have failed to mention the young Kang Senghui (at that time certainly still far from being the venerable patriarch of Wu Buddhism), while referring to him—after all a learned ordained monk—as the Master in the commentary. Being aware that this is far from being a completely satisfactory explanation of the issue, I am proposing it here just as a working hypothesis.¹⁰⁶

Conclusions

We can now try to sum up the results of our analysis of the YCRJZ and related sources. This text is the product of a circle of Buddhist adepts engaged in the composition of exegetical works, and active in the Wu

¹⁰⁶ There is, needless to say, no way to solve this problem with absolute certitude, and other scenarios could well be imagined in addition to the hypothesis I have proposed. For example, it is also conceivable that Kang Senghui intervened with his explanations—the Master's glosses—only at a later stage in the composition of the YCRJZ, after the preface had already been written, and that nevertheless the latter was transmitted unaltered with the commentary.

Kingdom, presumably sometime in the first half of the 3rd century. The group consisted of several laymen,¹⁰⁷ including the “Master Chen” 陳氏 to whom the YCRJZ is ascribed and who might be Chen Hui (though this remains uncertain), and at least one prominent monk, Kang Senghui—the “Master” 師 whose explanations are quoted therein.

From a doctrinal point of view, this circle, while dedicated to the transmission and interpretation of An Shigao’s teachings, was also open to the influence of other trends and of non-Buddhist ideas as well. All in all, it must have been a group of people very different from that of An Shigao’s direct disciples, as we can infer from the latter’s exegetical works (cf. S. Zacchetti, “Teaching Buddhism in Han China”, 2004, p. 221).

We have seen above that there is some evidence that Kang Senghui’s collaboration on the YCRJZ took place (very probably during his early years) in close proximity to the composition of two other commentaries, on the *Anban shouyi jing* and on the *Fa jing jing*.¹⁰⁸ Thus, have emerged the faint but still discernible contours of an early phase of Kang Senghui’s activity, apparently mainly focused on textual exegesis and largely ignored in the biographical sources.

Yet there are also some observations of more general import which we can distil from the analysis of the YCRJZ and its background.

¹⁰⁷ As pointed out by E. Zürcher (review of *Mélanges de sinologie offerts à Monsieur Paul Demiéville II*, 1978, p. 115), the earliest record of laymen’s participation in copying Buddhist scriptures in China dates back to around the same period (and area) as the YCRJZ. See the colophon quoted in Dao’an’s preface to the *Da shi’er men jing* 大十二門經, which records the copying of this text in Jianye in 238, at the residence of a “Metropolitan Commandant Zhou” 周司隸 (*Chu sanzang ji ji* 6.46b8-9; cf. also E. Zürcher *The Buddhist Conquest*, 1972, pp. 48-49; S. Zacchetti, “The Rediscovery of Three Early Buddhist Scriptures on Meditation”, 2003, p. 269 with note 82). On the traces of another Buddhist circle active in Wu at around this time, see S.R. Bokenkamp, “Sources of the Ling-pao Scriptures”, 1983, pp. 466-67.

¹⁰⁸ Apart from Kang Senghui’s own prefaces, these commentaries are also known from his biography—where also a further commentary, to the *Dao shu jing* 道樹經 (see *Chu sanzang ji ji* 2.6c23, and cf. 2.16c19; see also *Kaiyuan shijiao lu* 開元釋教錄 2.491b19-23), is mentioned—in *Chu sanzang ji ji* 13.97a15 = *Gaoseng zhuan* 1.326a23. From the analysis of the parallels between YCRJZ and the prefaces to Kang Senghui’s two commentaries (see passages nos. 3-4 and 5-7 above), we may even venture to conjecture that the former was composed after the preface to the *Anban shouyi jing* commentary, and before that to the *Fa jing jing* commentary.

Buddhism in the Wu Kingdom has often been portrayed as a straightforward continuation of Han traditions, with its two main figures—Zhi Qian and Kang Senghui—seen as followers of the two alleged main Han doctrinal lineages, going back to An Shigao (centred on meditative practises and *Abhidharma*, or 禪數, as it is described in some sources) and Lokakṣema (Mahāyāna) respectively. This general interpretation of the Han-Three Kingdoms transition has played a considerable role in some modern studies on early Chinese Buddhism.¹⁰⁹ Consequently, it is important considering to what extent the YCRJZ (arguably the most significant product of Wu exegesis that has survived in the canon) fits into this picture, and how it can contribute to drawing a more accurate portrait of the Han-Three Kingdoms transition.

Thanks to the *Ahan koujie shi'er yinyuan jing* and to the newly discovered *Shi'er men jing* commentary we have now a fairly clear picture of Han Buddhist exegesis as it was practised by An Shigao and his circle, and elsewhere I have tried to summarise its main features (see S. Zacchetti, “Teaching Buddhism in Han China”, 2004, pp. 219-21). As a result, it is also possible to better understand the developments undergone by the doctrinal tradition stemmed from An Shigao which flourished in the Wu Kingdom.

In other words, we can now qualify the very notion of “doctrinal continuity” (to use Arthur Link’s expression) between the Han and Three

¹⁰⁹ See especially Tang Yongtong, *Han Wei liang jin Nanbeichao fojiao shi*, 1983, pp. 97-ff.; cf. also R. Shih, *Biographies des Moines Éminents*, 1968, p. 20, note 73. My impression is that a careful examination of the sources—translations and other texts produced during this period—does not support this picture of two neatly distinguished traditions flowing uninterruptedly from the Han to the Wu (cf. also Cai Zhenfeng’s observations: “*Yin chi ru jing zhu xu zhong geyi wenti de kaocha*”, 1999, p. 26 with note 50). Certainly more research is needed on this important subject, but we can already point at some facts going against this received notion: such as, for instance, the extensive use of Zhi Qian’s translations in the YCRJZ (a product, as we have seen, of the allegedly “other” school), or the striking similarities in language and terminology between the works of the same Zhi Qian and Kang Senghui—rather suggesting the existence of a fairly distinctive “Wu scriptural idiom” (cf. J. Nattier, “How to Do Things with Translations”, 2002, p. 8). In dealing with this issue, I have greatly benefited from countless conversations with Jan Nattier on Wu translations, and I am glad to acknowledge here my debt to her.

Kingdoms periods. That is, we are now able to detect different layers within the early commentaries, or—to put it differently—to point out what, in the Three-kingdoms phase of this tradition, *was probably not* An Shigao's doctrinal inheritance (as we have seen above with the comparison of the YCRJZ and the *Ahan koujie shi'er yinyuan jing*) but reflects the original elaboration of Wu Buddhism.

As a corollary, all this also shows how potentially dangerous may be any assumption concerning An Shigao (especially in doctrinal matters) based uncritically on these later commentaries alone. Indeed, the transmission of his texts and teachings to the Wu area was a far more complex (and, to be sure, much more interesting) phenomenon than has been suggested in some studies on this period. Far from being a mechanical process, it was, rather, a thoroughly innovative reinterpretation capable of making the scholasticism inherited from the old Han tradition interact in a very creative way not only with other Buddhist doctrines—as shown by the quotations from Mahāyāna scriptures found in the YCRJZ—but also with a very different cultural environment.

Appendix

The Preface to the *Yin chi ru jing*

陰持入經序¹

(1.9b9-25)

I, Mi,² have been humbly³ considering how, [due to my] profound luck related to blessings from former lives,⁴ I was born far away from the blindness [resulting from] the eight difficult conditions,⁵ [so that I have

¹ In translating this preface, I have collated, besides the *Taishō*, also the text of J and Kr (see above note 10 and 12). These constitute the only ancient evidence I could access, given that, as noted above in the paragraph on the textual history of the YCRJZ, in the majority of printed editions of the canon, the YCRJ has been transmitted without preface and commentary. This is unfortunate, for in the present text (as it is, of course, also the case with most of the canon: cf. S. Zacchetti, *In Praise of the Light*, 2005, pp. 123-27 § 3.3.1) both J and Kr essentially reflect the same textual tradition. I should like to thank here John R. McRae and Jan Nattier for kindly allowing me to read their unpublished translation of this preface, which saved me from a number of errors.

² 密; following some scholars who have discussed this text (e.g., see Tang Yongtong, *Han Wei liang jin Nanbeichao fojiao shi*, 1983, p. 45, and E. Zürcher, *The Buddhist Conquest*, 1972, pp. 54), I take this character (here and in its other occurrences in the text) as the name of its author.

³ 密伏自惟; so read both J and Kr, and this is unquestionably the genuine reading. Similar expressions are not infrequent, for instance, in official communications; e.g., see *Hou Han shu*, vol. 3, p. 648: 臣伏自思惟 etc.; or *ibid.*, p. 800: 融即復遣鈞上書曰: 「臣融竊伏自惟 etc. The reading found in the *Taishō*, 密依自惟, is probably just a mere error of transcription.

⁴ 宿祚淳幸; concerning the expression 宿祚 (not recorded in HD, and indeed very rare in the entire canon), cf. the passage from Kang Senghui's preface to the *Anban shouyi jing* where he describes his encounter with (intriguingly enough) Chen Hui and the others: 宿祚未沒, 會見南陽韓林 etc. (*Chu sanzang ji ji* 6.43b26-27; tr. A.E. Link, "Evidence for Doctrinal Continuity", 1976, pp. 79-80: "[Fortunately, however, as] my allotted blessings from a former life were not yet exhausted, I met etc."). 宿 (especially as a part of the compound 宿命) is already attested with the meaning of "previous existence" in An Shigao's translations (e.g., see S. Zacchetti, "An Early Chinese Translation", 2002, p. 85).

⁵ 八難, i.e., the eight *akṣaṇas*, or types of "unfavourable birth" (on which see for instance F. Edgerton, *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Dictionary*, 1953, p. 2b; É. Lamotte, *Le Traité*

been able to] see the splendour of the three venerable things.⁶ [Their] great favour⁷ reaches every place, [and] all living beings benefit from their blessing; [so] they let [even] Mi's disposition, which is like a raw mass of lead,⁸ be humbly admitted⁹ to the jewels [of the Buddha's teaching].¹⁰

Although I have seen the numinous manifestation and harbour in my heart the pure precepts [of Buddhism], due to the hindrances [caused by my] dullness, in learning I [have not been able to] apply myself¹¹ [well enough, and as a result] I have been staying anxiously awake¹² during the nights, being afraid that I should disgrace the Great Way.

Fleeting is life, [like] the flash of lightning; fragile is the body, [like] thin ice. [Due to my] nature prone to doubt,¹³ in learning I [was not able to] penetrate the depth [of the Buddha's teaching;] now I will [be merely] assisting the sun in heaven with the light of a firefly or a candle.¹⁴

de la Grande Vertu de Sagesse, 1944, pp. 479-80 note 2). This rendition occurs also in some translations by Zhi Qian and Kang Senghui (e.g., *Liu du ji jing* 1.4b14; 3.15b28).

⁶ For a partial parallel to this passage (生遠八難之矇瞽, 值睹三尊之景輝), cf. *Liu du ji jing* 1.1c15-16: 吾觀衆生沒于盲冥, 不覩三尊, 不聞佛教。The expression 三尊 is a common old rendition of the “three jewels” (viz. the Buddha, the Dharma, and the monastic community, further down in this preface referred to as 三寶: see *Yin chi ru jing zhu* 1.9b17 and 25); see for instance the *Zengyi Aban jing* (*Ekottarikāgama*) 9.589b22-23: 自歸三尊, 佛、法、聖眾。

⁷ On 洪潤 see HD, vol. 5, p. 1135a.

⁸ 鉛鋌. On the metaphorical sense of “dullness, lack of penetration” conveyed by 鉛, see HD, vol. 11, p. 1235a.

⁹ On the self-deprecatory expression 獲廁 see HD, vol. 5, p. 111a.

¹⁰ The reading 圭璧 given in the *Taishō* edition is actually a modern error; both Kr and J have the expected reading 圭璧 (HD, vol. 2, p. 1008). Note also the parallelism of these two phrases: 使密鉛鋌之質 獲廁圭璧之次, with the rhyming final characters 質/次 (tri^h and ts^hi^h respectively, according to the reconstruction of Early Middle Chinese in E.G. Pulleyblank, *Lexicon of Reconstructed Pronunciation in Early Middle Chinese, Late Middle Chinese, and Early Mandarin*, 1991).

¹¹ Punctuate: 然以魯鈍之否, 學不精勤, etc.

¹² I conjecture *怵惕 (see HD, vol. 7, p. 473a).

¹³ 疑滯之性 (cf. HD, vol. 8, p. 517a).

¹⁴ On 螢燭 see HD, vol. 8, p. 949a. This whole passage, 今以螢燭之耿, 裨天庭之日, has a partial parallel in the *Mouzi li buo* 牟子理惑 (in *Hong ming ji* 1.3c15-16): 窺炬燭之明, 未睹天庭之日也 (tr. P. Pelliot, “Meou-tseu ou les doutes levés”, 1920, p. 303; J.P. Keenan, *How Master Mou Removes our doubts*, 1994, p. 103).

The¹⁵ obscure ones (陰, *skandha*) and the constituents (持, *dhātu*) are a [comprehensive] name of the practise;¹⁶ [this teaching] has the same origin as the *Ānāpāna-[smṛti]*, but represents a separate stream.¹⁷

Shigao, the Marquis of An¹⁸ was an all-seeing Bodhisattva.¹⁹ He renounced the dignity of [his] royal status and remained content with poverty, taking pleasure in the Way.²⁰ Getting up at dawn and going to bed late at night,²¹ he worried for and saved²² [those living in] extreme

¹⁵ From this point onward, a portion of this preface has been translated by Hurvitz, in Tsukamoto, *A History of Early Chinese Buddhism*, 1985, p. 92.

¹⁶ 蓋陰持者，行之號也。Hurvitz (in Tsukamoto Zenryū, *ibid.*, 1985.) renders this passage as: “Now by *skandha* and *dhātu* are meant ‘constituents’”, adding in a note (note h p. 496): “Ch. *Hsing* [行], here apparently standing for *saṃskāra*. ...?. This is an unlikely interpretation. I think that this is rather to be seen as a reference (with the ellipsis, probably *metri causa*, of the expected 入) to the *incipit* of the YCRJ (1.173b5-6): 佛經所行亦教誡，皆在三部爲合行。何等爲三？一爲五陰；二爲六本；三爲所入。 Cf. *Peṭakopadesa* p. 112, 1-2: *Buddhānaṃ bhagavantānaṃ sāsanaṃ tividhena saṅgahaṃ gacchati, khandhesu dhātūsu āyatanesu ca* (“The teaching of the Buddhas, the Lords is summarised into three categories: the aggregates, the constituents, and the sense-fields”). Note that An Shigao has freely expanded the rendition of *sāsana*, “teaching”, as 經所行亦教誡, and it is probably to this that 行 in the preface is referring to (but note also 爲合行 = *saṅgahaṃ gacchati*).

¹⁷ In this passage (蓋陰持者，行之號也。與安般同原而別流。), I interpret 陰持 and 安般 as referring primarily to doctrines, but also—which is of some significance for understanding the background of the author of the preface—to the relevant scriptures translated by An Shigao. This is also suggested by the fact that the Parthian translator is mentioned immediately after this phrase.

¹⁸ On the title 安侯世高, see A. Forte, *The Hostage An Shigao and his Offspring*, 1995, pp. 78-81.

¹⁹ 普見菩薩也; see A. Forte, *ibid.*, p. 71 with note 16; cf. Hurvitz, in Tsukamoto, *A History of Early Chinese Buddhism*, 1985, p. 92 and note i, p. 496 (“Bodhisattva Universally Visible”, reading 見 as *xiàn*; similarly also E. Zürcher, “A New Look”, 1991, p. 296 note 22), and Nakamura Hajime, *Bukkyōgo daijiten*, 1981, p. 1179c (who interprets this epithet as a reference to Avalokiteśvara).

²⁰ 安貧樂道; see A. Forte, *ibid.*, 1995, p. 66 note 5.

²¹ The expression 夙興夜寐 is taken from the *Shi jing* 詩經 (see HD, vol. 3, p. 1174a-b).

²² The compound 憂濟 is extremely rare in the canon. It occurs, quite significantly, a couple of times in Kang Senghui’s *Liu du ji jing*: see *Liu du ji jing* 8.46c22, and 8.49b8 (note also 憂齊 at 5.27a6); the context of the second occurrence is particularly close to this passage of the preface: 勞心經緯，憂濟衆生。

hardship.²³ He proclaimed the Three Jewels, and shone in the capital (Luoyang).²⁴ At that time, talented persons gathered [from all quarters] like clouds [to listen to An Shigao,] and ultimately came to be a huge crowd:²⁵ among the literati of outstanding talent, there was no one who did not long for the sweetness [of his teaching].

[Indeed] flourishing is his doctrine, profound and difficult to fathom. In altitude, it surpasses the pure sky; in width, it fills the eight directions [of space]. [It is like] vast rapids,²⁶ [flowing] immensely: there is nothing to compare to it.

[I,] Mi, having observed its diffusion, was [so] delighted that I was forgetful of hunger. Availing myself of [a three-month period of mourning during which I had to wear] hemp, I composed a commentary to it [viz. the YCRJ].²⁷ I distinguished [the various topics of this scripture] according

²³ 塗炭 (lit. “mud and coal”) is another literary expression (see HD, vol. 2, p. 1178a-b) which is not particularly rare in the canon and also occurs in Kang Senghui’s works. See, for example, the following passage from the *Liu du ji jing*: 開土世世憂念衆生，拯濟塗炭 (8.47b13); and especially Kang Senghui’s preface to the *Fa jing jing*: 可以拯塗炭之尤嶮 (in *Chu sanzang ji ji* 6.46c8).

²⁴ 光于京師; Hurvitz (in Tsukamoto Zenryū, *A History of Early Chinese Buddhism*, 1985, p. 92, following Tukamoto, *Chūgoku Bukkyō tsūshi*, 1979, p. 87) translates this as: “he enlightened the capital”. There is probably a classical literary echo in this passage: cf. for example 光于四方 in *juan* 11 of the *Shang shu* 尚書 (in Li Xueqin 李學勤, main ed., *Shang shu zhengyi* 尚書正義, Taiwan guji chuban youxian gongsi, Taipei 2001, p. 333), or 光于四海 in chapter 16 of the *Xiao jing* 孝經 (in Li Xueqin 李學勤, main ed., *Xiao jing zhushu* 孝經注疏, Taiwan guji chuban youxian gongsi, Taipei 2001, p. 62); cf. also *Han shu*, p. 4033; *San guo zhi*, p. 37. On this reference to Luoyang as 京師 see note 62 above.

²⁵ So I interpret 遂致滋盛, in the light of HD, vol. 5, p. 1515b, and especially of the example from the *Hou Han shu* (p. 1606) quoted therein: ... 學者滋盛, 弟子萬數. Hurvitz renders this passage as: “eventually affecting his glory”.

²⁶ HD does not record this meaning for 洪洞 (HD, vol. 5, p. 1132b; as a noun: “vast empty space”), but I have based my interpretation on the following words: 浩洋 (which suggest the image of running water: see HD, vol. 5, p. 1215a), but also 密睹其流 in the next phrase.

²⁷ 因閑麻總，為其注義. 麻總 is probably to be read as 總麻, on which see HD, vol. 9, p. 942b; see also Tsukamoto Zenryū, *Chūgoku Bukkyō tsūshi*, 1979, p. 87. For an interesting parallel, see also Kang Senghui’s preface to the *Fa jing jing* (*Chu sanzang ji ji* 6.46c9): 因閑竭愚，為之注義, “availing myself of a period of leisure, and making the best of my dullness, I composed a commentary to it”. On the expression 注義 see S. Zacchetti, “A ‘New’ Early Chinese Buddhist Commentary”, 2010, note 27 p. 429.

to their sequence, [and yet I] penetrated thoroughly²⁸ [the meaning of the entire text. As a result, I was able to] explain in detail the well-arranged ranks [of the words of the YCRJ], letting its paragraphs be separated and its phrases divided, [thus] allowing those who are impeded to understand clearly,²⁹ [so as to] make [their] insight gradually progress.

[However, my] talent is not such that [I can] know innately, [and] I am not able to fully express the splendour [of the Teaching];³⁰ it is like [wishing] to contribute to the moisture of the immense ocean with a droplet of water.³¹

If some gifted persons will glance [even] briefly at this [commentary, its] shortcomings will be easily realised. [For my part,] I only hope that persons of high intellect [will acquiesce to] pay [some] attention [to it].³²

Three persons have checked the errors [of the commentary],³³ and to my luck have polished it.

Together we [wish to] manifest the Three Jewels, without misleading future [readers].³⁴

²⁸ 差次條貫; see HD, vol. 2, p. 975a, and vol. 1, p. 1485b respectively. I have interpreted both compounds as verbs (though HD records 條貫 also as a noun), apparently describing the commentary as the result of both an analytical (差次) and a synthetic (條貫) approach.

²⁹ I read 情通 as *清通 (see HD, vol. 5, p. 1314a; cf. vol. 7, p. 582a).

³⁰ This passage (揚不盡景) is not entirely clear, and my translation remains tentative.

³¹ 指滲之水; the precise meaning of the rare expression 指滲 is not entirely clear to me, but this reading seems genuine. Cf. a parallel in Zhi Qian's *Fanmo yu jing* 梵摩渝經 1.884b28-c1: 佛之明慧猶崑崙河, 千川萬流皆仰之焉。川流溢滿, 而河無指滲之減。佛之為明有踰之矣。

³² This sort of appeal to the readers is a codified component of prefaces to commentaries in this period: cf. Kogachi Ryūichi, "Gokan Gi Shin chūshaku no jobun", 2001, pp. 7, 11, and 31-32.

³³ In the reading found in the *Taishō*, 誦睡, the second character 睡 does not seem to make sense and must be corrupt (note also that both J and Kr actually have a particular variant for 睡). The meaning required by the context, "errors" (= 誦) is, however, clear enough.

³⁴ 唯願明哲留思。... 共顯三寶, 不誤將來矣。 Cf. Kang Senghui's preface to the *Fa jing jing* (*Chu sanzang ji ji* 6.46c10-11): 今記識闕疑, 俟後明哲, 庶有暢成, 以顯三寶矣。

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