

**Translation or commentary? On the Nature of the *Da anban shouyi jing*
(大安般守意經) T 602**

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The *Anban shouyi jing* 安般守意經 (*Scripture on the ānāpānasamṛti*, hereafter ABSYJ), translated during the Later Han dynasty by An Shigao 安世高, was arguably one of the most influential scriptures rendered into Chinese during the early period. This is shown, for instance, by the number of commentaries to the ABSYJ known to have existed.

The present canon contains, as is well known, a text named *Da anban shouyi jing* 大安般守意經 (T 602 in the *Taishō* edition) and ascribed to An Shigao. Already Sugi 守其, the chief editor of the second national Koryō canon (13th century AD), observed that in the ABSYJ, as transmitted in the canon, the basic text was inextricably mingled with the glosses of an interlinear commentary (經注不分).

In 1999, two manuscripts containing, for the most part, till then completely unknown early Chinese Buddhist scriptures, were discovered at the Kongō-ji, a temple located in Osaka prefecture. Subsequent research on this corpus (perhaps a sort of anthology on meditation) established that its texts (lost in China at an early date) can be ascribed, with a considerable degree of probability, to An Shigao and his circle. One of these rediscovered scriptures bears the title *Anban shouyi jing* 安般守意經, and, as was shown in detail by some studies devoted to this text (especially Florin Deleanu's 2003 important article), is completely different from the canonical ABSYJ T 602. Particularly noteworthy is the fact that the Kongō-ji ABSYJ gives every appearance of being just a translated text, with no traces of an interpolated commentary.

Although the Kongō-ji find allows us to see the ABSYJ T 602 in an entirely new light, it has not offered definitive and uncontroversial explanations of all the problems posed by this scripture. It has, in fact, raised some new problems of its own.

In my paper, I will try to re-examine the relationship between the ABSYJ preserved in the Kongō-ji MSS and that contained in the canon, taking into account the developments of early Chinese Buddhist exegetical literature, as well as some sources which have not been used in previous studies on this subject.