A Study of An Shigao’s Translation Style:
An Analysis of the Bazhengdao jing T112

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An Initial Hypothesis
The entire content of the Bazhengdao jing 八正道經, T no. 112\(^1\) (hereafter: BZDJ) has two parts. The first half is the sutra text,\(^2\) and second is a commentary\(^3\) that interprets this sutra text. The content of the first half of BZDJ is almost parallel with the 784th sutra (hereafter: ZAJ784th) of the Za ahan jing 雜阿含經 (hereafter: ZAJ), T no. 99. I hypothesize that the second part of BZDJ, not having a parallel Indian source, was edited into BZDJ by An shigao 安世高 (circa 147 CE). The textual construction of BZDJ is one of An Shigao’s translation styles.

The External Evidence of BZDJ
The one fascicle of BZDJ was translated by An Shigao in the Eastern Han; it was an earlier alternative translation of a sutra ‘Chu Zaahan 出雜阿含 (from the Samyuktāgama).’ The above statement\(^4\) is from Dao’an 道安 and was recorded in the Chu sanzang jiji 出三藏記集.\(^5\) The Kaiyuan shijiao lu 開元釋教錄 advance indicates that the BZDJ is a variant translation from the 28th fascicle of ZAJ. Thus, it is easy to determine that its counterpart sutra in ZAJ\(^6\) is the 784th sutra. It is a short sutra of about 350 characters.

The Internal Evidence: Comparing the BZDJ with ZAJ784th
To verify this hypothesis, I have divided the entire content of ZAJ784th and the sutra text of BZDJ into ten paragraphs to show that they share a typical textual organization. They possibly have similar original Indian sources. Under this hypothesis, I have separated the second part of BZDJ into nine paragraphs to review whether each paragraph is an interpretation of its counterpart section in the first part.

Below, table one shows a given title for the ten/nine parts of the ZAJ784th and BZDJ
A Study of An Shigao’s Translation Style (Shi)

A Study of An Shigao’s Translation Style (Shi)

(including the sutra text and its commentary), and their locations. Three abbreviations are used—Z, B, and C—to show these three documents for analysis. Their definitions are as follows:

Z: the text of ZAJ784th (T02, no. 99, p. 203a1–18)
B: the sutra text of BZDJ (T02, no. 112, p. 504c29–p. 505a22; p. 505b12–13)
C: the commentary of the sutra text of BZDJ (T02, no. 112, p. 505a23–b12)

Each number from one to ten/nine following Z, B, and C show their corresponding paragraph with one another.

Table One: Locations of ten or nine sections in ZAJ784th and BZDJ

| Given title          | Z (ZAJ784th) | B (BZDJ) | C (commentary of BZDJ) |
|----------------------|--------------|----------|------------------------|
| initial statements   | Z1 (p. 203a2–4) | B1 (p. 504c29–p. 505a3) | C1 (p. 505a23–24)     |
| right view           | Z2 (p. 203a4–9) | B2 (p. 505a4–7) | C2 (p. 505a24–b2)     |
| right thought        | Z3 (p. 203a9–10) | B3 (p. 505a8–9) | C3 (p. 505b3–4)       |
| right speech         | Z4 (p. 203a10–11) | B4 (p. 505a10–11) | C4 (p. 505b5–6)       |
| right action         | Z5 (p. 203a11–12) | B5 (p. 505a12) | C5 (p. 505b7)         |
| right livelihood     | Z6 (p. 203a12–13) | B6 (p. 505a13–15) | C6 (p. 505b8)         |
| right effort         | S7 (p. 203a13–15) | B7 (p. 505a16–17) | C7 (p. 505b9)         |
| right mindfulness    | Z8 (p. 203a15) | B8 (p. 505a18–19) | C8 (p. 505b10)        |
| right concentration  | Z9 (p. 203a15–17) | B9 (p. 505a20–22) | C9 (p. 505b11–12)     |
| closing formula      | Z10 (p. 203a17–18) | B10 (p. 505b12–13) |            |

Discussion of the Initial Statements of BZDJ

The content of Z1 is almost correspondent with B1. From the terminology usage of B1, we can confirm its translation style. For example, the initial statements appear as: ’wenrushi 閣如是 (have [I] heard like this) yishifozai 一時佛在 (one time the Buddha on) fogao 佛告 (the Buddha said to) and tingwoshuo 聽我說 (listen to my words).’ These can be ascribed to An Shigeo’s translation style. Except for the BZDJ, the eight terms of the Eightfold Noble Path, from dijian 諦見 (right view) up to diding 諦定 (right concentration) do not appear again in the Taishō Tripitaka 大正藏 (hereafter: TT). However, we can find five occurrences of baxing 八行 (the Eightfold Noble Path) and dijiandaodidingweiba 諦見到諦定為
八 (the Eightfold Noble Path, comprising correct view up to correct concentration) in the 27th sutra, *Qichusanguan jing* 七處三觀經 of one scroll of the *Zaahan jing* 雜阿含經. So the eight terms can be assigned to An Shigao’s terminology usage.

Regarding the content of C1, the terms *daodizi* 道弟子 (the disciples of Buddha) and *baxing* 八行/bazhongxing 八種行⁹ (the Eightfold [Noble] Path) can also be ascribed to An Shigao.

**Discussion of Right View and Thought in the BZDJ**

The content of Z2 and B2 share almost identical definitions of right view: ten bases of the right view (*dasavatthukā sammā-diṭṭhi*). However, some of the terminology usages are different. For example, the Z2 uses *aluohan* 阿羅漢 (arhats), whereas the B2 mentions *tianxiadaoren* 天下道人 (religious practitioners).

There are eight occurrences of *weihedeng* 為何等 (“what is the content of”) in BZDJ. Moreover, there are over 250 occurrences of this term in the entire An Shigao corpus.¹⁰ Compared to the TT (vol. 1–50), which has only about 500 appearances,¹¹ the An Shigao corpus has a significantly higher frequency of *weihedeng*. Thus, we can confirm that the BZDJ is consistent with An Shigao’s translation style.¹²

There are three instances of *shimingwei* 是名為 (“it is named”) in BZDJ, which are located in paragraphs C2, B8, and B9. There are over 250 occurrences of this usage in An Shigao’s entire corpus,¹³ compared with only five times in the whole corpus of Zhiqian 支謙. Such evidence again favors An Shigao as the author of BZDJ rather than Zhiqian.

**Discussion of Right View and Thought in the BZDJ**

In B6, the usage of *daodizi* 道弟子 (“disciples of the sage”) is an almost exclusive case for An Shigao in the Han-wu era. In total, there are 49 occurrences in his corpus. We can distribute the frequency of *daodizi* to *Chang ahan shibaofa jing* 長阿含十報法經¹⁴ like 22 times, *Yiqie liushe shouyin jing* 一切流攝守因經¹⁵ one time, *Pufayi jing* 普法義經¹⁶ nine times, BZDJ two times, and *Yinchiru jing* 陰持入經 (hereafter: YCRJ)¹⁷ 12 times.¹⁸ We will discuss C6 below. Regarding the term *buduotan* 不堕貪, there is also one occurrence in *Foshuo da anban shouyi jing* 佛說大安般守意經 (hereafter: DABSYJ)¹⁹ and YCRJ²⁰ respectively.
Discussion of Right Effort, Mindfulness, and Concentration in the BZDJ

Regarding B7, the term *suojingjin* 所精進 (“being diligent”) also exists in *Sidi jing* 四諦經. Regarding B9, the term *huyizhi* 護已止 (“concentration with equanimity”) and *dijuizhi* 聚已止 (“concentration with assembling”) very possibly have the same meaning as *yizhi* 已止 (establishment, *upaṭṭhānaṃ*) and *shezhi* 攝已止 (concentrating, *samādhānaṃ*) in YCRJ. The term *buduozhong* 不墮中 (“not falling into [right concentration]”) can be found once in both DABSYJ and *Jieshi ermen jing* 解十二門經.

Here, let us examine C7, C8, and C9. There is one occurrence of *sanshiqipinjing* 三十七品經 (thirty-seven factors of enlightenment) in both C7 and C8. The usage of this term is also unique to An Shigao. The term *yinyuanzhi* 因緣止 (concentration connected with a mark) has a close relationship with the content of *Daodi jing* 道地經. The content is *ruoyizaishiyinyuanzhi* 若意在使一因緣止, *zhibudong* 止不動, *buhuonianyu* 不或念餘, *shiyingzhixiang* 是應止相 ("if we let the mind concentrate on one connecting object, and the mind is steadily fixed in one place, is steady, does not move, and does not occasionally conceive of other thoughts, this is the characteristic of concentration").

Discussion of Some Revised Terms in the Sutra Text of BZDJ

In the closing formula of BZDJ—the term *foshuorushi* 佛說如是 (“thus the Buddha said”)—can be found over 70 times in An Shigao’s corpus. The term *jiehuanxishou* 皆歡喜受 (“everyone joyfully upholds the Buddha’s teaching”) can also be found once in the *Qichusanguan jing* 七處三觀經, T no. 150A (hereafter: QCSGJ). However, the QCSGJ is a revised version of *Zajing sishisi pian* 雜經四十四篇 (a miscellaneous collection with forty-four sutras). The term *jiehuanxishou* comes from the 31st sutra of QCSGJ, the title being *Foshuo jioheng* 佛說九橫. However, there is another single *Jiouheng jing* 九橫經 (T no. 150B), original text by An Shigao. The closing formula of *Jiouheng jing* includes *huanxishouxing* 歡喜受行 (“joy to receive and put into practice”). Notably, the term *shouxing* 受行 is used very frequently (about 100 occurrences) in An Shigao’s corpus, so the term *jiehuanxishou* in the QCSGJ and BZDJ was probably revised from its original term *huanxishouxing*. In the initial statements of BZDJ, the term *fogaozhudizi* 佛告諸弟子 (“the Buddha told the disciples”) does not appear a second time in An Shigao’s corpus. He prefers to use *daodizi* 道弟子 (“disciples of the Buddha”) or *zhubiqiou* 諸比丘.
Some Revised Terms in the Commentary of BZDJ

There are several terms below not found in An Shigao’s corpus, except for the BZDJ. Regarding paragraph C2, the three terms xuanzeng 懸綸 (“hanging up silken fabrics”), shaoxiang 燃香 (“burning incense”), and dsanhua 散花 (“scattering flowers”) can be found in the Liuduji jing 六度集經 36 of Kangsenghui 康僧會 and Zhiqian’s Bannihuan jing 般泥洹經 37 and Wuliang qingjing pingdengjue jing 無量清淨平等覺經 38. The term xiaoshun 孝順 (“to venerate [one’s father and mother]”) also appears several times in the corpus of both Zhiqian and Kangsenghui. Regarding paragraph C4, the term daopin 道品 (“factors of enlightenment”) appears 11 times in Zhiqian’s corpus. Regarding section C5, the term chengxin 誠信 (“faithful and trustworthy”) appears ten times in Zhiqian’s corpus.

Conclusion

After comparing and analyzing the content of ZAJ784th and BZDJ, we can infer several points as our conclusion. First, the content of the first part of BZDJ (i.e., from paragraph B1 to B10) almost corresponds (although not entirely) to ZAJ784th (from Z1 to Z10). Therefore, very clearly, the second part of BZDJ (from paragraph C1 to C9) is a commentary on the first part of BZDJ. Second, from the external and internal evidence of the sutra text (i.e., first part) of BZDJ, we can confirm that the author is An Shigao, although two terms in the sutra text were possibly revised. Third, regarding the authorship of the commentary (i.e., second part) of BZDJ, if the author is not An Shiago, then who could it possibly be? It is clear that no other extant catalog record mentions the existence of a commentary on BZDJ.

In the content of C1 (commentary on the initial statements), C7 (commentary on right effort), and C8 (commentary on right mindfulness), the terms 不墮貪 of C6 (right livelihood) and 因緣止 of C9 (right concentration) can be ascribed to An Shigao. Thus, except for him, it is hard to imagine that any other person produced the commentary on BZDJ. However, together with its sutra text, the commentary was revised by another translator after the Eastern Han era, and a possible candidate is Zhiqian.

In short, the BZDJ contains both a sutra text and commentary. The former very likely has its original Indian sources, but the latter does not. The sutra construction of BZDJ re-
fects one of An Shigao’s translation styles.

Notes

1) The Taishō Tripiṭaka 大正蔵 has the two characters Foṣhuo 佛說 (the Buddha said) before the sutra title. 2) T2, no. 112, pp. 504c29–505a22 (the main sutra text); T2, no. 112, p. 505b12–13 (the closing formula). 3) T2, no. 112, p. 505a23–b12. 4) T55, no. 2145, p. 6a12. 5) The Chu sanzang jiji, compiled around 515 CE. by Sengyou 僧祐, is an existent and the most reliable historical catalog of scriptures in Chinese translation. 6) The ZAJ is a collection of 1362 small sutras of TT. 7) From volume 1 to volume 55. 8) T2, no. 101, p. 499a5; 499a16; 499a27; 499b8; 499b17. 9) T55, no. 2145, p. 6a12. 10) T2, no. 101, p. 499a5; 499a16; 499a27; 499b8; 499b17. 11) We need to reduce 70 times from the 500, as the Yinchirujing zhu (T no. 1694) contains the content of YCRJ. 12) In the Han-wu era, there are only 22 uses of ㄩㄩ in Zhiqian’s corpus. Among these, it is written 20 times as ㄌㄌ (what the feature of). 13) T3, no. 152, p. 34b14. 14) T2, no. 101, p. 499a5; 499a16; 499a27; 499b8; 499b17. 15) T55, no. 2145, p. 6a12. 16) T2, no. 101, p. 499a5; 499a16; 499a27; 499b8; 499b17. 17) T no. 87. 18) In contrast to An Shigao’s 49 uses, Zhiqian uses it only one time in his Zhaijing 齋經, T no. 87.

Abbreviations

K Kongō ji issaikyō no kisoteki kenkyū to shinshitsu butten no kenkyū 金剛寺一切経の基礎的研究と新出仏典の研究 (Heisei 12 nendo kara Heisei 15 nendo kagaku kenkyūhō kokin (kiban kenkyū [A] [1]) kenkyū seika hōkōshū 平成12年度～平成15年度科学研究費補助金(基盤研究[A] [1]研究成果報告書). Ed. Ochiai Toshinori 落合俊徳. Tokyo, 2004.

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