
Buddhist Monks who Journeyed from Funan to China for Scripture Translation: A Study Based on the Continued Biographies of Eminent Monks

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Received 26/11/2024; Revised 21/01/2025; Accepted 23/01/2025

Abstract

The *Continued Biographies of Eminent Monks* (Xu Gaoseng Zhuan) documents the journeys of four monks who traveled from Funan to China for scripture translation. Among them, three were natives of Funan—Saṅghapāla, Mandra, and Subhūti—while one, Paramārtha, hailed from India. These monks lived in China during the 6th Century, dedicating themselves to the translation of Buddhist scriptures. This article offers an overview of the evidence supporting the presence of Buddhism in Funan and its surrounding regions from earlier periods up to the 6th Century, drawing upon archaeological discoveries and Chinese historical accounts. It illustrates that Buddhism had been thriving in the region since the 4th Century.

Furthermore, the article paraphrases the records concerning these four monks as documented in the *Continued Biographies of Eminent Monks* and investigates their translation efforts. A comparison between the accounts in the *Continued Biographies of Eminent Monks* and the scriptures preserved in the *Taishō Tripiṭaka* (*Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō*) reveals that some of the works translated by these monks have been lost over time. However, 32 scriptures translated by Paramārtha have survived to this day, surpassing those attributed to the other three translators. Among the remaining monks from Funan, Saṅghapāla is credited with the highest number of surviving translations, totaling 11 scriptures. This study further emphasizes the close and enduring relationship between Funan and China during the 6th Century.

Keywords: Buddhist Monks; Funan; Scripture Translation; Eminent Monks

This article is adapted from portions of the research report “Translation and Analysis on Biography of Prominent Missionaries on the Silk Road During the Jin and Northern and Southern Dynasties,” funded by a research grant from the *National Research Council of Thailand (NRCT)* for the fiscal year 2024.

Introduction

According to records in Pāli texts, such as the *Dīpavaṃsa* (Oldenberg, 2000, p. 54), Buddhism spread into Southeast Asia as early as the reign of Emperor Asoka (273–232 BCE). Much later, by around the 6th century CE, some monks journeyed from the ancient Southeast Asian kingdom of Funan 扶南 to China to translate Buddhist scriptures from ancient Indian languages into Chinese. This is indicated by sources in the *Continued Biographies of Eminent Monks* (Xu Gaoseng Zhuan). This evidence reflects the flourishing of Buddhism in mainland Southeast Asia, particularly in Funan, during that period. Furthermore, the development of Buddhism in mainland Southeast Asia from the 3rd century BCE to around the 6th century CE remains a topic of considerable interest for further study.

This article will first provide an overview of evidence reflecting the state of Buddhism in mainland Southeast Asia from the 3rd century BCE to approximately the 6th century CE. It will then present records concerning monks who journeyed from Funan to China to translate Buddhist scriptures and summarize the surviving translation works of these monks.



Figure 1 Map of Funan at Its Greatest Approximate Extent (Encyclopædia Britannica)

Buddhism in Mainland Southeast Asia from the Earliest to the 6th Century

This section will discuss Indian culture and Buddhism in Mainland Southeast Asia, drawing from archaeological evidence and Chinese historical records.

1. Ancient Artifacts Indicating the Early Arrival of Indians

Examining the history of Buddhism in Southeast Asia through archaeological research, no Buddhist cultural relics predating the 3rd century CE have yet been discovered. However, some cultural relics suggest that Indians had been traveling to this area for a long time. The following are four such artifacts discovered in southern Thailand:

(1) The Mauryan-Śuṅga Ringstone, from the Mauryan-Śuṅga period around the 3rd-2nd century BC, discovered in Chumphon (Bennett, 2019, pp. 95-101).

(2) A bronze bowl engraved with patterns in the style of the Śuṅga dynasty (185-73 BC), also discovered in Chumphon (Glover, 2023, pp. 12, 14-15).

(3) A copper coin from the 1st century CE, belonging to the Śātavāhana dynasty, discovered in Krabi (Bennett, 2019, p. 107).

(4) The Brāhmī script “Brahspatiśarmasa nāvikaṣa” on a 1st-2nd century CE gold seal, discovered in Ranong (Bennett, 2019, pp. 107-109; Skilling, 2015b, pp. 69-70, plate 10).

2. Evidence of Buddhist Art

Among the Buddhist-related artworks discovered in Thailand, the earliest is a terracotta sculpture depicting three monks holding alms bowls (Figure 2). This artifact, found in the ancient city of U-Thong in Suphanburi province, dates to the 3rd-4th century CE (during the Funan period). It exhibits the artistic styles of Amarāvātī and Nāgārjunakoṇḍa (Murphy, 2016, p. 386) and is currently housed in the U-Thong National Museum.



Figure 2 Fragmentary Terracotta Relief Mould of Three Monks with Alms Bowls (Murphy, 2016, p. 387)

Furthermore, in southern Vietnam, which was formerly part of Funan, wooden Buddha statues have been discovered in Go Thap, Phong My, and Binh Hoa. Some date to the 4th century CE (Le, 2016, pp. 177–178), while others date to the 5th century CE. Additionally, in Binh Dinh, located in central Vietnam, a wooden Buddha statue from the 5th century CE has also been found. (Kang, 2013, pp. 42–44)

3. Buddhist Inscriptions

Artifacts inscribed with Buddhist literature from the 4th - 6th century CE have also been discovered on the Southeast Asian mainland. Two examples are as follows:

(1) A stone slab inscribed with two Sanskrit Buddhist verses, dated to the 4th–5th century CE, was found in Kedah, Malaysia (Chhabra, 1936, pp. 14–20; 1965, pp. 18–26; Skilling, 2015a, pp. 20–21).

(2) Inscriptions on the four leaves of a Pāli text, including content on Dependent Origination (Paṭiccasamuppāda), were found on gold foil dating to the 5th–6th century CE, from Śrī Kṣetra or Pyu period (Falk, 1997, pp. 56–83; Stargardt, 2000, p. 25).

This evidence suggests that Sanskrit and Pāli Buddhist scriptures had been introduced to some extent into the Southeast Asian mainland during this period.

4. Records in Chinese Historical Documents

In Chinese historical records, the Kingdom of Funan was first mentioned during the Eastern Han dynasty 東漢 (25–220 CE) in the *Record of Foreign Matters (Yiwu Zhi)*, which briefly describes its location and the characteristics of its people without reference to Buddhism (Yang Fu, 2009, pp. 3, 5). During the Wu state 吳國 (220–280 CE) of the Three Kingdoms period, an envoy named Kang Tai 康泰 was sent to visit Funan (Yao Silian, 2004, p. 722). He authored the *Records of Funan (Funan Ji 扶南記)*, which has since been lost. Other records mentioning Indian culture and Buddhism on the Southeast Asian mainland date from the earliest periods up to the 6th century CE, as follows:

(1) According to the *History of the Liang Dynasty (Liangshu)*, fascicle 54 (Yao Silian, 2004, p. 712) and the *History of the Southern Dynasties (Nanshi)*, fascicle 78 (Li Dashi and Li Yanshou, 2004, p. 1657), the Funan Kingdom adopted a national system based on Indian traditions and regulations around the late 4th and early 5th centuries CE. In 503 CE, the king of Funan sent envoys to the Chinese Southern Liang dynasty to present a coral Buddha statue.

(2) The *Records of Funan (Funan Ji)*, recorded during the Liu Song dynasty (420–479 CE), mentions the presence of two Buddhist stupas and Indian residents, including over a

thousand Brahmins, in the Kingdom of Dunxun 頓遜. This kingdom was under Funan's rule and located in what is now the upper Malay Peninsula and central Thailand. Although the original text has been lost, this passage is preserved in the *Readings of the Taiping Era (Taiping Yulan)*, fascicle 788 (Li Fang et al., 2008, p. 58).

(3) The *Records of Funan (Funan Ji)*, recorded during the Liu Song dynasty, as quoted in the *Commentary on the Waterways Classic (Shuijing zhu)*, also indicate that Buddhism was already present in mainland Southeast Asia at that time (Li Daoyuan, 2000, p. 5).

(4) The *History of the Southern Dynasties (Nanshi)*, fascicle 78 (Li Dashi & Li Yanshou, 2004, p. 1662), records that between 529 and 534 CE, the king of the Panpan 槃槃 Kingdom, located in the central region of the Malay Peninsula, sent envoys to the Chinese Southern Liang dynasty to present Buddha relics, Bodhi tree leaves, and other items. This practice of venerating the Buddha's relics and Bodhi leaves further affirms the flourishing of Buddhism in this region.

(5) The *History of the Northern Dynasties (Beishi)*, fascicle 95 (Li Yanshou, 2004, pp. 2575–2580), which records historical events from 386 to 618 CE, provides information about Buddhism in these three Southeast Asian kingdoms: (a) The people of Linyi or Champa (Lâm Ấp 林邑 or Chiêm Thành 占婆, 占城, present-day central and southern Vietnam) believed in Buddhism and used Indian scripts; (b) In Chitu 赤土, also known by its Sanskrit name Rakta-mṛttika, an ancient kingdom on the lower Malay Peninsula, people practiced Buddhist worship and created Bodhisattva images; (c) In Zhenla 真臘 (the successor polity to the kingdom of Funan), many people believed in Buddhism and installed Buddha statues in their halls.

From this compilation, traces of Buddhism in mainland Southeast Asia can be observed, from its early beginnings to the period when monks journeyed from Funan to China. This presence becomes especially clear from the 4th century CE onwards.

Preliminary Information on the *Continued Biographies of Eminent Monks*

The *Continued Biographies of Eminent Monks* (Xu Gaoseng Zhuan 續高僧傳, also known as *Tang Gaoseng Zhuan* 唐高僧傳) is a collection of biographies of Buddhist monks compiled during the Tang period (618–907 CE) by the monk Daoxuan 道宣 (596–667 CE). It is included in the *Taishō Tripiṭaka (Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō)*, section T50, no. 2060.

This work serves as a sequel to the *Biographies of Eminent Monks* (Gaoseng Zhuan 高僧傳, also known as *Liang Gaoseng Zhuan* 梁高僧傳), compiled by Huijiao 慧皎 (497–554 CE) during the Southern Liang period (502–557 CE). While Huijiao's compilation primarily focused on monks from the Southern dynasties, Daoxuan expanded it to include biographies of monks

from the Tang period, as well as figures from the Northern and Southern dynasties period (420–589 CE), particularly those from northern China who were omitted from the earlier work.

The collection is divided into 30 fascicles and documents the biographies of over 400 prominent monks. Additionally, some biographies provide details about other monks from the same period, offering further historical context. The biographies are organized into 10 categories based on the monks’ distinctive contributions or attributes.

Table 1 Contents of the Continued Biographies of Eminent Monks

Fascicle	Category
1-4	Translators (譯經)
5-15	Commentators (義解)
16-20	Meditation Practitioners (習禪)
21-22	Elucidators of Discipline (明律)
23-24	Dharma Protectors (護法)
25-26	Sympathetic Resonance (感通)
27	Self-Immolators (遺身)
28	Chanters (讀誦)
29	Benefactors (興福)
30	Those with Excellent Voices, etc. (雜科聲德)

The account of monks journeying from Funan to China for scripture translation is found in fascicle 1, categorized under “Translators.”

Monks Journeyed from Funan to China as Mentioned in the *Continued Biographies of Eminent Monks*

The monks mentioned in the *Continued Biographies of Eminent Monks* journeyed from Funan to China during the period of the Northern and Southern dynasties. Notably, they only journeyed to the Southern dynasties (420–589 CE), which comprised four sub-dynasties: Liu Song 劉宋 (420–479 CE), Southern Qi 南齊 (479–502 CE), Southern Liang 南梁 (or Liang 梁 502–557 CE), and Southern Chen 南陳 (or Chen 陳 557–589 CE). Only the last three of these dynasties coincide with the period when monks journeyed from Funan to China.

The *Continued Biographies of Eminent Monks* records four monks who journeyed from Funan to China: Saṅghapāla, Mandra, Paramārtha, and Subhūti. Saṅghapāla’s biography

includes details about Mandra, while information about Subhūti is incorporated within Paramārtha's biography. The recorded accounts of these four monks, as documented in fascicle 1 of the *Continued Biographies of Eminent Monks*, have not yet been fully translated or published together. Therefore, the following presents a paraphrase of the core biographical details of these monks. The original Chinese text can be found in the Appendix.

1. Saṅghapāla

The following is a paraphrase of the relevant content found in T50, no. 2060, p. 426a3-22.

(1) Ordination and Journey to China

Saṅghapāla (459–524 CE), whose Chinese name has been rendered as “Protector of the Saṅgha” (Sengyang 僧養) and “Defender of the Saṅgha” (Sengkai 僧鎧), was a native of the Kingdom of Funan. From an early age, he displayed remarkable intelligence and a keen affinity for the Buddhist teachings and discipline. Ordaining as a novice in his youth, he specialized in the study of the Abhidharma, earning widespread recognition across Hainan 海南 (which at that time referred to Southeast Asia and Sri Lanka). After his full ordination as a monk, he devoted himself to an in-depth study of the *Vinaya Piṭaka*. Resolute and steadfast in his aspirations, Saṅghapāla took delight in spreading the teachings and guiding others on the path of spiritual cultivation.

Upon hearing about the propagation of Buddhism during the Southern Qi dynasty (479–502 CE) in China, he resolved to journey by ship to its capital (present-day Nanjing 南京 city in Jiangsu 江蘇 Province). He took residence at Zhengguan Monastery 正觀寺 and became a disciple of the Indian monk Guṇavarḍdhi. Under Guṇavarḍdhi's guidance, he diligently studied Mahāyāna scriptures. Although he had not attained unparalleled mastery in any single discipline, he demonstrated remarkable breadth of knowledge and expertise, excelling in various fields and mastering multiple regional scripts.

(2) Imperial Patronage and Translational Contributions

As the Southern Qi dynasty (479–502 CE) fell into decline and religious practices deteriorated, Saṅghapāla remained steadfast in maintaining purity of body and mind. Severing ties with worldly affairs, he retreated into seclusion, dedicating himself to quiet cultivation and nurturing the resources for his spiritual pursuits.

During the reign of the Southern Liang dynasty (502–557 CE), as Emperor Wu of Liang 梁武帝 (Xiao Yan 蕭衍, reigned 502–549 CE) ascended to the throne, he sought out individuals with knowledge and ability. In the 5th year of the Tianjian reign (506 CE), Saṅghapāla received an imperial summons to participate in the translation of Buddhist scriptures. He undertook translation work at five notable locations: Shouguang Palace 壽光殿, Hualin Garden 華林園, Zhengguan Monastery 正觀寺, Zhanyun Pavilion 占雲館, and the Funan Pavilion 扶南館. By the 17th year of the Tianjian reign (518 CE), his translations comprised 11 scriptures in 48 fascicles, including prominent works such as the *Biographical Scripture of King Aśoka* and the *Vimuttimaggā*.

At the outset of the translation efforts at Shouguang Palace, Emperor Wu of Liang personally attended the Dharma assembly and took on the role of scribe, recording the preliminary translations himself. Once the initial work was completed, he entrusted the continuation of the translation to the designated translators to render the entire scripture. The Emperor further decreed that monks Baochang 寶唱, Huichao 惠超, Sengzhi 僧智, Fayun 法雲, and the layman Yuan Tanyun 袁曇允, among others, collaborate in reviewing and refining the text. Their meticulous efforts ensured the translation was both elegant and orderly, maintaining fidelity to the original scriptures and preserving the integrity of the translation tradition.

The Emperor extended profound respect and hospitality to Saṅghapāla, appointing him as a personal monk of the imperial household. All necessary provisions were supplied by the court, inspiring both monastic and lay communities to reevaluate their regard for him with newfound reverence.

(3) Virtue and Final Year

Saṅghapāla did not amass personal wealth, instead dedicating donations to the establishment of monasteries. He was highly honored by General Xiao Hong 蕭宏, who held the title “Linchuan Wang 臨川王.” In the 5th year of the Putong reign (524 CE), due to illness, Saṅghapāla passed away at Zhengguan Monastery, having reached the age of 65.

2. Mandra

The following is a paraphrase of the relevant content found in T50, no. 2060, p. 426a22-26.

In the early years of the Southern Liang dynasty, a monk named Mandra, a native of Funan, whose Chinese name was interpreted as “One with Expansive Gentleness” (Hong-ruo

弘弱), journeyed from afar, bringing a vast collection of Sanskrit Buddhist scriptures to present to the Liang court.

Emperor Wu of Liang commanded Mandra to collaborate with Saṅghapāla in translating the *Ratnamegha-sūtra*, *Dharmadhātusvabhāva*, and *Prajñāpāramitā-Maṅjuśrī-parivarta-sūtra*. The translations of these three scriptures were assembled into 11 fascicles in total. However, despite their efforts, Mandra's limited mastery of Chinese resulted in the translations being somewhat obscured, with many passages failing to fully express the original meaning.

3. Paramārtha

The following is a paraphrase of the relevant content found in T50, no. 2060, pp. 429c6- 430a21, 430b3-22.

(1) Background and Personality

Paramārtha (499–569 CE), originally named Kulanātha, was given the Chinese name rendered as “Protector of the Family” (Qinyi 親依). His name Paramārtha was translated into Chinese as “Ultimate Truth” (Zhendi 真諦). Both Kulanātha and Paramārtha are of Sanskrit origin. He was born in Ujjayinī, a region in western India.

He is upright and principled, disciplined, broad-minded, free from pettiness, composed, calm, and poised. His profound understanding encompassed an extensive array of Buddhist scriptures, with no text escaping his interest, and he excelled in arts and sciences as well. While deeply rooted in Buddhist principles, he also gained renown for his broad and profound knowledge of other fields. Unfazed by hardships or peril, he journeyed across distant lands, adapting to circumstances and seizing opportunities to gain insight.

(2) Journey from Funan to China

Emperor Wu of Liang (reigned 502–549 CE) extended his virtuous influence widely and earnestly promoted the Three Treasures of Buddhism. During the Datong reign (535–546 CE), an imperial edict was issued instructing Zhang Fan 張汜, an official of the Rear Guard, and others to escort the envoys of Funan back to their kingdom. Additionally, they were tasked with inviting renowned masters proficient in the Tripiṭaka, as well as bringing back Mahāyāna scriptures, including the *Avataṃsaka-sūtra*.

At that time, Paramārtha heard of Emperor Wu of Liang's renowned efforts to propagate Buddhism, following the model of sages and worthies, selecting distinguished and

eminent masters, and bringing great benefit to the people. The kingdom of Funan made a formal request for Paramārtha, who was entrusted with the task of delivering Buddhist scriptures and treatises. Humbly accepting the imperial mandate, and with this aspiration already held in his heart, Paramārtha promptly heeded the command and set out. He arrived in the Nanhai region 南海郡 (presently in Guangdong 廣東 Province) in the 12th year of the Datong reign (546 CE), on the 15th day of the 8th lunar month (henceforth, all dates follow the Chinese lunar calendar).

Along the way, Paramārtha made stops at several locations, prolonging his journey for two years. He finally reached the capital (present-day Nanjing) in the 2nd year of the Taiching reign (548 CE), during the intercalary 8th month. Emperor Wu of Liang personally welcomed him with reverence, bowing in salutation. The Emperor arranged for Paramārtha's residence at the Baoyun Palace 寶雲殿 and extended sincere offerings and exceptional care.



Figure 3 Map of Southern China

(3) Escape from Civil Unrest

The Emperor desired to advance the translation of Buddhist scriptures. Dissatisfied with the translation efforts during the Qin dynasty (specifically the Later Qin 後秦, 384–417 CE), he aspired to produce new translations that would surpass those from the Southern Qi dynasty (479–502 CE). However, during this time of ambition, the Southern Liang dynasty faced turmoil

as Jie 羯 tribes launched invasions, leading to widespread destruction of Buddhist texts and the interruption of propagation efforts. In response to the unrest, Paramārtha relocated eastward to Fuchun 富春 (present-day Fuyang 富陽 District, Hangzhou 杭州 City, Zhejiang 浙江 Province). There, Governor Lu Yuanzhe 陸元哲, a devout supporter of Buddhism, established a translation workshop. He invited eminent monks, including Bao Qiong 寶瓊 and over twenty others, to collaborate on translating the *Yogācārabhūmi-śāstra*¹. Unfortunately, only five fascicles were completed before further political unrest disrupted the work, leaving the translation project unfinished.

During the 3rd year of the Tianbao reign (552 CE), Hou Jing 侯景 summoned Paramārtha back to the capital, where he received care and support within the royal court. This period, however, was marked by continuous warfare and famine, posing significant threats to the flourishing of Buddhism. With Emperor Yuan of Liang 梁元帝 (Xiao Yi 蕭繹, reigned 552–555 CE) ascending the throne and restoring order, tranquility was restored during the Chengsheng reign (552–555 CE). Paramārtha then took residence at Zhengguan Monastery in Jinling 金陵 (presently in Nanjing), collaborating with Zen Master Yuan 願禪師 and a group of over 20 scholars to translate the *Suvarṇaprabhāsa-sūtra*.

In the 2nd month of the 3rd year of Emperor Yuan's reign (554 CE), Paramārtha journeyed to Yuzhang 豫章 (presently in Jiangxi 江西 Province), then proceeded to Xinwu 新吳 (presently in Jiangsu Province) and Shixing 始興 (presently in Guangdong Province). Subsequently, he accompanied Grand Guardian Xiao Bo 蕭勃 (birth unknown–557 CE) in crossing the mountains to Nankang 南康 (presently in Jiangxi Province). At each location, he engaged in translation activities and propagated Buddhist teachings, though he led a wandering and unsettled life. By the 7th month of the 2nd year of the Yongding reign (558 CE) under Emperor Wu of Chen 陳武帝 (Chen Baxian 陳霸先, reigned 557–559 CE), he returned to Yuzhang and later resided in places such as Linchuan 臨川 (presently in Jiangxi Province) and Jin'an 晉安 (presently in Fujian 福建 Province).

(4) Aspiration to Journey to another Land

Despite Paramārtha's efforts to disseminate Buddhist scriptures and treatises, he encountered insurmountable obstacles and unfavorable circumstances, unable to fully realize his original intentions. Observing the prevailing circumstances and conditions, he

¹ This scripture (十七地論), as translated by Paramārtha, does not appear in the *Taishō Tripitaka*. The version that is included is the one translated by Xuanzang 玄奘, consisting of 100 fascicles (T30, no. 1579).

contemplated embarking on a sea voyage to the Kingdom of Langkasuka (Lengjiaxiu 楞伽修, an ancient kingdom in the Malay Peninsula). However, both monks and lay devotees earnestly entreated him to remain, and he reluctantly set aside his plans. Due to public criticism, he stayed in Nanyue 南越 (encompassing parts of present-day Guangdong 廣東 and Guangxi 廣西), where he revisited his earlier translations with former officials from the Southern Liang period. Passages that deviated from the original texts or contained conflicting meanings were carefully revised to ensure consistency and coherence throughout the entire work.

(5) The Visit of the Delegates

In the 4th year of the Tianjia reign (563 CE), during the reign of Emperor Wen of Chen 陳文帝 (Chen Qian 陳蒨, reign 559-566), the eminent monks of Jianye 建業 (present-day Nanjing), including Sengzong 僧宗, Fazhun 法准, and Vinaya Master Sengren 僧忍律師 from Jianyuan Monastery 建元寺, had heard of the newly translated Buddhist teachings by Paramārtha. They journeyed a great distance southward down the Yangtze River 長江 to personally consult with him. Paramārtha, appreciating their dedication, translated the *Mahāyānasāṅgraha* and other scriptures for them. This translation process, from beginning to end, took two years, during which he also provided detailed explanations of the key doctrines of the scriptures.

(6) Desire to Return to His Homeland

During this period, Paramārtha's life was unsettled, and his heart was restless. He once again embarked on a small boat and reached Liang'an region 梁安郡 (presently in Nan'an 南安 City, Fujian 福建 Province), where he transferred his belongings to a larger vessel, intending to return to the western lands (Ujjayinī). However, his disciples persistently followed him, pleading with him to stay. The governor, Wang Fangshe 王方奢, speaking on behalf of the people, conveyed their earnest wishes and sincerely entreated him to remain. Out of compassion for the people, Paramārtha decided to postpone his departure and stayed for the time being along the coastal edge, awaiting the right moment to resume his journey, though he had no intention of settling down permanently.

In the 3rd year of the Tianjia reign (562 CE), during the 9th month, Paramārtha departed from Liang'an, intending to sail westward. However, due to unfavorable winds, seemingly the result of past actions dictating his destiny, his ship was blown back to Guangzhou 廣州, eventually docking at Nanhai (present-day Guangdong) in the 12th month. Paramārtha was warmly received by Ouyang Wei 歐陽頔 (498-563 CE), the inspector of Guangzhou, who was later honored with the title "Mugong 穆公." He invited Paramārtha to stay at Zhizhi Monastery

制旨寺 (presently in Guangzhou) and requested further translations of Buddhist scriptures. Paramārtha reflected: “This is the result of past actions; there seems to be no way to return westward.” Instead, he worked with the monk Huikai 慧愷 and others to translate scriptures such as the *Arthavistara-dharmaparyāya* (*Arthavistara-sūtra*) and *Vijñaptimātratāsiddhi*. After Ouyang Wei’s death, his eldest son, Ouyang He 歐陽紇, inherited his noble rank and became a benefactor, donating funds to support the spread of Buddhist teachings and the translation of scriptures. Paramārtha then resided there for an extended period. ...

(7) Challenges of Misunderstanding

At that time, monks such as Sengzong 僧宗 and Zhikai 智愷 sought to invite Paramārtha back to Jianye (present-day Nanjing). However, their efforts were obstructed by Yang Nian 楊輦, a highly esteemed figure who feared losing his current prestige and influence. He petitioned the Emperor, saying: “The Buddhist scriptures translated by Paramārtha in Lingbiao 嶺表 (present-day Guangdong and Guangxi) primarily emphasize the doctrine of pure *Vijñaptimātratā*. The teachings contradict the principles of governance, obstruct the cultivation of national customs, and fail to contribute meaningfully to China. They would be more suitable for dissemination in remote regions.”

The Emperor agreed with Yang Nian’s view, leading to Paramārtha’s newly translated scriptures in Nanhai being hidden away during the Southern Chen dynasty (557–589 CE).

(8) Final Days and Passing

In the 1st year of the Taijian reign (569 CE), Paramārtha fell gravely ill. Realizing that his end was near, he composed a formal farewell, solemnly elucidating the principles of causality in numerous writings, which he entrusted to his disciple Zhixiu 智休. On the 11th day of the 1st month, at midday, he passed away at the age of 71. The following day, his body was cremated at Chaoting 潮亭 (a cultural activity center in certain villages of southern China), where a stupa was erected in his honor. On the 13th day, monks Sengzong, Fazhun, and others gathered his translated scriptures and treatises and returned with them to Kuangshan 匡山 (present-day Lushan Mountain 廬山 in Jiujiang 九江 City, Jiangxi 江西 Province).

(9) Legacy and Contributions

Since Paramārtha’s arrival in the Eastern land (China), although he translated numerous scriptures, his primary focus was on the *Mahāyānasāṅgraha*. Those who seek to understand the essence of the teachings and study his translations will find that the doctrines within these

texts mutually illuminate and enhance one another, making profound ideas clearer and more accessible. In the various locations where Paramārtha carried out his translations, he personally provided commentaries and explanations, which are regarded as exemplary contributions to Buddhist exegesis.

The subsequent commentaries were presented by Sengzong, who elaborated on the teachings. Out of profound respect and reverence for his master, he adhered closely to the core of Paramārtha's teachings, interpreting them in accordance with their intended meaning. Although there were some additions, omissions, or variations, the essential meaning remained intact. Additionally, Sengzong authored a detailed biographical account of Paramārtha, which was widely disseminated among the people.

Paramārtha arrived in China during the Southern Liang dynasty, a period fraught with war, famine, and widespread disorder. He endured significant physical and emotional hardships as obstacles hindered the dissemination of Buddhist teachings. Despite these challenges, he wandered from place to place, tirelessly spreading Buddhist teachings. Wherever he went, he translated scriptures, sometimes in separate parts, with different sections completed at various times and by diverse collaborators. His efforts spanned two dynasties, commencing at the end of Emperor Wu's reign in Liang and extending to the reign of Emperor Xuan of Chen 陳宣帝 (Chen Xu 陳頊, reigned 568–582 CE), encompassing a total of 23 years (546–569 CE). Within this time, Paramārtha produced 64 scriptures, comprising 278 fascicles, characterized by simplicity and clarity, with only slight embellishments. His works achieved prominence and widespread dissemination during the Sui 隋 (581–618 CE) and Tang 唐 (618–907 CE) dynasties.

4. Subhūti

The following is a paraphrase of the relevant content found in T50, no. 2060, pp. 431a3-6.

At that time, there was a monk named Subhūti, a native of Funan, whose name was interpreted in Chinese as “Auspicious Virtue” (Shanji 善吉). Residing at Zhijing Monastery 至敬寺 in Yangdou (present-day Nanjing), he translated the *Mahāyāna-ratnamegha-sūtra* into eight fascicles for the Emperor of the Southern Chen dynasty. This version closely corresponded to the seven-fascicle translation previously completed by Mandra during the Southern Liang dynasty, with only minor differences. The title of this scripture is recorded in the *Records of the Three Treasures Through the Successive Dynasties* (*Lidai Sanbao Ji* 歷代三寶紀, abbreviated as *Sanbao Lu* 三寶錄), a compilation from the Sui dynasty.

The Translation Contributions of Each Monk

The following is a compilation of the translation works by each monk, listing the scriptures with translated content as they appear in the *Taishō Tripiṭaka* (*Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō*) and comparing them with the information documented in the *Continued Biographies of Eminent Monks*, as outlined below.

1. Saṅghapāla

The *Continued Biographies of Eminent Monks* records that between 506 and 518 CE, Saṅghapāla translated a total of 11 scriptures comprising 48 fascicles. It is possible that he translated additional scriptures after 518 CE until his passing in 524 CE. The scriptures in the *Taishō Tripiṭaka* attributed to Saṅghapāla's translation are as follows:

- (1) Scriptures attributed solely to Saṅghapāla as the translator.

Table 2 Scriptures Solely Attributed to Saṅghapāla as the Translator

Order	Section	Scripture	Fascicle
1	T8, no. 233	<i>Prajñāpāramitā-Maṅjuśrīparivarta-sūtra</i>	1
2	T11, no. 314	<i>Mahāyāna Sutra on the Ten Dharmas</i>	1
3	T14, no. 430	<i>Sūtra Spoken by the Buddha on the Eight Lucky Mantras</i>	1
4	T14, no. 468	<i>Sūtra of Maṅjuśrī's Questions</i>	1-2
5	T19, no. 984	<i>Mahāmāyūrividya-rājñī-sūtra</i>	1-2
6	T19, no. 1016	<i>Anantamukhasādhakadhāraṇī</i>	1
7	T24, no. 1491	<i>Bodhisattvapiṭaka-sūtra</i>	1
8	T32, no. 1648	<i>Vimuttimagga</i>	1-12
9	T50, no. 2043	<i>Biographical Scripture of King Aśoka</i>	1-10

- (2) Scriptures attributed to Saṅghapāla as a co-translator with others.

Table 3 Scriptures Attributed to Saṅghapāla as a Co-Translator

Order	Section	Scripture	Fascicle
1	T12, no. 358	<i>Sarvabuddhaviṣayāvatārajñānalokālaṃkāra-sūtra</i>	1
2	T16, no. 659	<i>Mahāyānaratnamegha-sūtra</i> (Co-translated with Mandra.)	1-7

If counting only the scriptures attributed solely to Saṅghapāla as the translator, the total amounts to 9 scriptures comprising 31 fascicles. However, if including scriptures co-translated with others, the total increases to 11 scriptures comprising 39 fascicles.

2. Mandra

The records in the *Continued Biographies of Eminent Monks* state that Emperor Wu of Liang commanded Mandra to collaborate with Saṅghapāla in translating the *Ratnamegha-sūtra*, *Dharmadhātusvabhāva*, and *Prajñāpāramitā-Maṇjuśrī-parivarta-sūtra*. These three scriptures were compiled into a total of 11 fascicles.

This closely aligns with the scriptures in the *Taishō Tripiṭaka* attributed to Mandra's translation work. However, the *Taishō Tripiṭaka* lists only Mandra as the translator, without mentioning Saṅghapāla. The scriptures translated by Mandra and included in the *Taishō Tripiṭaka* are as follows:

Table 4 Scriptures Attributed Solely to Mandra as the Translator

Order	Section	Scripture	Fascicle
1	T8, no. 232	<i>Mahāprajñāpāramitā-Maṇjuśrīparivarta-sūtra</i>	1-2
2	T16, no. 658	<i>Ratnamegha-sūtra</i>	1-7
3	T11, no. 310	<i>Dharmadhātusvabhāvavikalpa</i> (in <i>Mahāratnakūṭa-sūtra</i>)	26-27

If we count only the scriptures attributed to Mandra as listed in Table 4, there are 3 scriptures comprising 11 fascicles. However, if we include another one that was translated in collaboration with Saṅghapāla in Table 3, the total increases to 4 scriptures comprising 18 fascicles.

3. Paramārtha

The records in the *Continued Biographies of Eminent Monks* state that Paramārtha translated 64 scriptures, comprising 278 fascicles. The scriptures in the *Taishō Tripiṭaka* attributed to Paramārtha's translation are as follows:

Table 5 Scriptures Attributed to Paramārtha's Translation

Order	Section	Scripture	Fascicle	The era of translation
1	T1, no. 97	<i>Arthavistara-dharmaparyāya</i> (<i>Arthavistara-sūtra</i>)	1	Chen
2	T8, no. 237	<i>Vajracchedikā-prajñāpāramitā-sūtra</i>	1	Chen
3	T16, no. 664	<i>Suvarṇaprabhāsottama-sūtra</i>	1 (a part), 3	Liang
4	T16, no. 669	<i>Sūtra of the Unsurpassed Reliance</i>	1-2	Liang
5	T16, no. 677	<i>Samḍhinimocana-sūtra</i>	1	Chen
6	T24, no. 1461	<i>Vinaya-dvāviṃsati-prasannārtha-śāstra</i>	1	Chen
7	T24, no. 1482	<i>Buddha's Abhidharma Sūtra: The Chapter on the Characteristics of Ordination</i>	1-2	Chen
8	T26, no. 1528	<i>Treatise on the Verses "Originally Existent, Now Absent" in the Nirvāṇa-sūtra</i>	1	Chen
9	T29, no. 1559	<i>Abhidharmakośa-bhāṣya</i>	1-22	Chen
10	T30, no. 1584	<i>Vinirṇīta-piṭaka-śāstra</i>	1-3	Liang
11	T31, no. 1587	<i>Treatise on the Pravṛttivijñāna</i>	1	Chen
12	T31, no. 1589	<i>Mahāyāna-vijñaptimātratā-śāstra</i>	1	Chen
13	T31, no. 1593	<i>Mahāyāna-saṃgraha-śāstra</i>	1-3	N/A
14	T31, no. 1595	<i>Mahāyāna-saṃgraha-bhāṣya</i>	1-15	Chen
15	T31, no. 1599	<i>Madhyāntavibhāgakārikā</i>	1-2	Chen
16	T31, no. 1610	<i>Treatise on Buddha Nature</i>	1-4	Chen
17	T31, no. 1616	<i>Aṣṭadaśaśūnyatā-śāstra</i>	1	Chen
18	T31, no. 1617	<i>Treatise on the Three Non-natures</i>	1-2	N/A
19	T31, no. 1618	<i>Vidyānirdeśa-śāstra</i>	1	N/A
20	T31, no. 1619	<i>Ālambanaparīkṣā</i>	1	Chen
21	T31, no. 1620	<i>Treatise on Unrolling</i>	1	Chen
22	T32, no. 1633	<i>Tarka-śāstra</i>	1	Chen
23	T32, no. 1641	<i>Lakṣaṇānusāra-śāstra</i>	1	Chen
24	T32, no. 1644	<i>Lokaprajñāptyabhidharma</i>	1-10	Chen

Order	Section	Scripture	Fascicle	The era of translation
25	T32, no. 1647	<i>Catuḥsatya-nirdeśa</i>	1-4	Chen
26	T32, no. 1656	<i>Ratnāvalī (Rājaparikathāratnamālā)</i>	1	Chen
27	T32, no. 1666	<i>Mahāyāna-śraddhotpāda-śāstra</i>	1	Liang
28	T32, no. 1669	<i>Original Śāstra of the Esoteric Text on the Great School of Earth</i>	1-20	N/A
29	T49, no. 2032	<i>Aṣṭadaśanikāya-śāstra</i> ²	1	Chen
30	T49, no. 2033	<i>Samayabhedoparacanacakra</i> ³	1	Chen
31	T50, no. 2049	<i>Biography of Dharma Master Vasubandhu</i>	1	Chen
32	T54, no. 2137	<i>Sāṃkhyakārikā (Hiraṇyasaptati)</i>	1-3	Chen

Based on the list of scriptures in Table 5, a total of 32 scriptures comprising 112 fascicles can be identified. This accounts for approximately half of the total recorded in the *Continued Biographies of Eminent Monks*. Additionally, it is notable that the majority of these scriptures were translated during the Southern Chen dynasty.

4. Subhūti

The *Continued Biographies of Eminent Monks* records that Subhūti translated the *Mahāyāna-ratnamegha-sūtra* into 8 fascicles. However, no content of this scripture attributed to Subhūti's translation appears in the *Taishō Tripiṭaka*. The only mention of this scripture being translated by Subhūti is found in certain documents, such as the *Records of the Three Treasures Through the Successive Dynasties* (T49, no. 2034, p. 88b26–27).

Overall, the scriptures translated by Mandra, as mentioned in the *Continued Biographies of Eminent Monks*, have been fairly well-preserved and remain largely intact to this day, despite the fact that he translated only a few scriptures. In contrast, approximately half of the scriptures translated by Paramārtha appear to have been lost. Nevertheless, the

² It is one (十八部論) of the three Chinese translations of the *Treatise on the Sects*. Although the *Taishō Tripiṭaka* attributes the translation to Paramārtha, some scholars suggest it might actually be the work of Kumārajīva (Lamotte, 1988, pp. 275, 530; Pitakteeradham, 2016, p. 72).

³ It is also one (部執異論) of the three Chinese translations of the *Treatise on the Sects*. Additionally, there is another version translated by Xuanzang (T49, no. 2031 異部宗輪論).

scriptures by Paramārtha that have survived to the present day are still more numerous than those of the other three translators. Paramārtha achieved significant recognition and was later honoured as one of the “Four Great Translators of Buddhist Texts” in China.

Some Remarks on the History of Buddhism in China and Funan

This section discusses Buddhism in China and Funan during the period when monks journeyed from Funan to China to translate scriptures. The discussion is based on the information presented above and connections to other relevant documents.

1. Buddhism in China: From the Southern Qi to the Southern Chen Dynasties

(1) Southern Qi Dynasty (479–502 CE)

During the Qi dynasty, Buddhism flourished significantly, including the translation of Buddhist scriptures, attracting monks like Saṅghapāla to journey to China. At that time, Indian monks also resided in China, as evidenced by Saṅghapāla’s arrival. Upon his arrival, he took residence at Zhengguan Monastery in Nanjing and became a disciple of the Indian monk Guṇavṛddhi, under whom he studied Mahāyāna scriptures. The account of Saṅghapāla residing in the same monastery as Guṇavṛddhi is also mentioned in the “Biography of Guṇavṛddhi” in the *Biographies of Eminent Monks* (T50, no. 2059, p. 345b6-12).

Additionally, during this dynasty, Mahāyāna scriptures were translated alongside a notable commentary on the Theravāda Vinaya, namely *Shanjianlu Piposha* 善見律毘婆沙 (T24, no.1462), which summarized the *Samantapāsādikā*. According to the *Records of the Three Treasures Through the Successive Dynasties*, this translation was completed in 488 CE by Saṅghabhadra (T49, no. 2034, p. 95c2-3).

(2) Southern Liang Dynasty (502–557 CE)

Emperor Wu of Liang (reigned 502–549 CE) extensively supported Buddhist activities, particularly scripture translation. Monks from Funan joined these efforts, bringing Buddhist scriptures from Funan, marking a shift from the earlier dominance of Indian and Central Asian translators. Despite political unrest after Emperor Wu’s reign, influential Buddhist patrons supported Paramārtha’s translation work. Notably, between 552 and 554 CE, Paramārtha was able to return to the facilities originally established by Emperor Wu of Liang to continue his translation efforts (T50, no. 2060, p. 429c25-29; Chen Jinhua, 2006, p. 58). Interestingly, Paramārtha achieved significant recognition and later earned a place as one of the “Four Great Translators of Buddhist Texts” in China.

(3) Southern Chen Dynasty (557–589 CE)

The *Continued Biographies of Eminent Monks* mentions that monk Subhūti translated scriptures for the Chen dynasty, with the *Records of the Three Treasures Through the Successive Dynasties* specifying his contributions around 560–578 CE (T49, no. 2034, p. 88b26–28). However, during this dynasty, Paramārtha did not receive support from the royal court.

2. Buddhism in Funan: The Era of Monks Journeying to China for Scripture Translation

The region of Funan and its surrounding areas display numerous signs of Buddhist prosperity, as evidenced by archaeological findings and Chinese historical records.

According to the *Continued Biographies of Eminent Monks*, monk Mandra brought Sanskrit Buddhist scriptures from Funan to present to Emperor Wu of Liang. This event is noted in the *Supplement to the Portraits and Records of Translated Scriptures, Past and Present* (*Gujin Yijing Tuji*), which records it as occurring in 503 CE (T55, no. 2151, p. 364b14-17). This suggests that Funan possessed a notable collection of Sanskrit Buddhist scriptures. Additionally, the *Complete Buddhist Chronology* (*Fozu Tongji*) mentions that at that time, Mandra also presented a coral Buddha statue to Emperor Wu of Liang and was subsequently invited to participate in scripture translation (T49, no. 2035, p. 348b20-c8). This information aligns with accounts in the *History of the Liang Dynasty* (*Liangshu*), fascicle 54 (Yao Silian, 2004, p. 712), and the *History of the Southern Dynasties* (*Nanshi*), fascicle 78 (Li Dashi and Li Yanshou, 2004, p. 1657). Together, these sources suggest that Mandra journeyed with Funan envoys to China in 503 CE, where he presented a Buddha statue along with Sanskrit Buddhist scriptures from Funan to Emperor Wu of Liang and was subsequently invited to participate in scripture translation.

Monk Saṅghapāla (459–524 CE), also a native of Funan, dedicated himself to the study of the Abhidharma after ordaining as a novice. According to the *Records of the Three Treasures Through the Successive Dynasties*, he was ordained as a novice at the age of 15 (T49, no. 2034, p. 98b25-26). After receiving full ordination as a monk, he focused on studying the *Vinaya Piṭaka*. He journeyed to China before 502 CE and, in 506 CE, was chosen by Emperor Wu of Liang to translate Buddhist scriptures. (T50, no. 2060, p. 426a3-13) In the biography of Paramārtha, it is recorded that Emperor Wu of Liang later actively sought monks proficient in the Tripiṭaka and aimed to bring Mahāyāna scriptures from Funan (T50, no. 2060, p. 429c11-14). This underscores the significant collection of Buddhist texts in the region, dating back to at least the 5th century CE. Furthermore, the success of the initial group of translators from

Funan is demonstrated by the imperial court's establishment of a special residence for Funan envoys and translator monks (T50, no. 2060, p. 426a13; Xinhuashe Guojibu, 2017, p. 80; Yuan Shu, 2017, p. 65) and its continued efforts to invite more masters proficient in the Tripiṭaka from Funan.

Among the list of these translated scriptures, it is revealed that, in addition to Mahāyāna texts, there were also Hīnayāna texts, notably a Theravāda text, the *Vimuttimaggā*. This highlights the dual tradition of Buddhist study in Funan. Furthermore, the presence of the Indian monk Paramārtha in Funan underscores the region's vibrant Buddhist culture and its significance as a center of Buddhist learning.

This study highlights the interactions between Funan and China. For instance, Saṅghapāla's awareness of Buddhist dissemination in China during the Southern Qi dynasty suggests ongoing communication between the two regions. Later, Chinese historical records indicate that Funan sent envoys to the Southern Liang dynasty, underscoring their diplomatic ties. Notably, the *Continued Biographies of Eminent Monks* documents an instance when Emperor Wu of Liang dispatched imperial officials to escort Funan's envoys back to their kingdom. As part of this mission, they were also tasked with inviting Buddhist masters and acquiring Mahāyāna scriptures, which were later brought back to China (T50, no. 2060, p. 429 c11-13). This example demonstrates that Emperor Wu of Liang also took the initiative to send imperial officials to Funan, indicating that the exchange was not a one-sided effort. While Funan dispatched envoys to the Southern Liang dynasty, Emperor Wu's reciprocal gesture highlights the mutual engagement and balanced diplomatic interactions between the two regions.

Buddhism in Funan during the 5th–6th century CE was highly prosperous, laying the foundation for the subsequent flourishing of Buddhism during the Dvāravatī period. The Kingdom of Dvāravatī, first mentioned in the *History of the Southern Dynasties*, fascicle 10 (Li Dashi & Li Yanshou, 2004, p. 237), is recorded as having sent envoys with tributes to the Southern Chen dynasty in 584 CE during the reign of Emperor Houzhu of Chen 陳後主 (Chen Shubao 陳叔寶, reigned 582–589 CE).

Conclusion

This article explores the historical journey of monks traveling from Funan to China to translate Buddhist scriptures, utilizing sources such as the *Continued Biographies of Eminent Monks*, archaeological findings, Chinese historical records, and various Chinese Buddhist texts.

It emphasizes the vibrant development of Buddhism in Funan, with origins tracing back to the 3rd–4th century CE. By the 5th–6th century CE, Buddhism in Funan had become increasingly significant, reflecting a deep engagement with Mahāyāna texts while also indicating the study of Theravāda scriptures during this era. Furthermore, the article investigates the connection between China and Funan, first documented in Chinese historical records during the Eastern Han dynasty (25–220 CE). Specific mentions of Funan appeared during the Wu state (220–280 CE) in the Three Kingdoms period and continued through the Liu Song dynasty (420–479 CE), suggesting a degree of interaction. This relationship reached its zenith during Emperor Wu's reign (502–549 CE) of the Southern Liang dynasty, evolving beyond trade to encompass religious exchanges.

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Appendix

Below is the original Chinese text regarding the four monks, which has been excerpted and translated in this article, with proper nouns underlined. Where different versions use varying terms, the most appropriate one has been selected for presentation here.

1. Saṅghapāla

[T50, no. 2060, p. 426a3-22]

僧伽婆羅，梁言僧養，亦云僧鎧，扶南國人也。幼而穎悟，早附法律，學年出家，偏業阿毘曇論，聲榮之盛，有譽海南。具足已後，廣習律藏，勇意觀方，樂崇開化。聞齊國弘法，隨舶至都，住正觀寺，為天竺沙門求那跋陀之弟子也。復從跋陀研精方等，未盈炎燠，博涉多通，乃解數國書語。

值齊曆亡墜，道教陵夷，婆羅靜潔身心，外絕交故，擁室栖閑，養素資業。大梁御宇，搜訪術能，以天監五年，被勅徵召，於楊都壽光殿、華林園、正觀寺、占雲館、扶南館等五處傳譯，訖十七年，都合一十一部、四十八卷，即《大育王經》、《解脫道論》等是也。

初翻經日，於壽光殿，武帝躬臨法座，筆受其文，然後乃付譯人，盡其經本。勅沙門寶唱、惠超、僧智、法雲及袁曇允等相對疏出，華質有序，不墜譯宗。天子禮接甚厚，引為家僧，所司資給，道俗改觀。

婆羅不畜私財，以其嚬施，成立住寺。太尉臨川王宏接遇隆重。普通五年，因疾卒于正觀，春秋六十有五。

2. Mandra

[T50, no. 2060, p. 426a22-26]

梁初，又有扶南沙門曼陀羅者，梁言弘弱，大齋梵本，遠來貢獻。勅與婆羅共譯《寶雲》、《法界體性》、《文殊般若經》，三部合一十一卷。雖事傳譯，未善梁言，故所出經，文多隱質。

3. Paramārtha

[T50, no. 2060, pp. 429c6-430a21]

拘那羅陀，陳言親依，或云波羅末陀，譯云真諦，並梵文之名字也，本西天竺優禪尼國人焉。景行澄明，器宇清肅，風神爽拔，悠然自遠；群藏廣部，罔不厝懷，藝術異能，偏素諳練，雖遵融佛理而以通道知名。遠涉艱關，無憚夷險，歷遊諸國，隨機利見。

梁武皇帝德加四域，盛唱三寶，大同中，勅直後張汜等送扶南獻使返國，仍請名德三藏、大乘諸論、《雜華經》等。真諦遠聞行化，儀軌聖賢，搜選名匠，惠益民品。彼國乃屈真諦并齋經論，恭膺帝旨。既素蓄在心，渙然聞命，以大同十二年八月十五日達于南海。沿路所經，乃停兩載，以太清二年閏八月始屆京邑。武皇面申頂禮，於寶雲殿竭誠供養。

帝欲傳翻經教，不羨秦時，更出新文，有逾齊日。屬道銷梁季，寇羯憑陵，法為時崩，不果宣述。乃步入東土，又往富春，令陸元哲創奉問津，將事傳譯，招延英秀沙門寶瓊等二十餘人，翻《十七地論》，適得五卷，而國難未靜，側附通傳。

至天保三年，為侯景請還，在臺供養。于斯時也，兵饑相接，法幾頽焉。會元帝啟祚，承聖清夷，乃止于金陵正觀寺，與願禪師等二十餘人翻《金光明經》。

三年二月，還返豫章，又往新吳、始興。後隋蕭太子保度嶺，至于南康，並隨方翻譯，栖遑靡託。逮陳武永定二年七月，還返豫章，又止臨川、晉安諸郡。

真諦雖傳經論，道缺情離，本意不申，更觀機壤，遂欲汎舶往楞伽修國。道俗虔請，結誓留之，不免物議，遂停南越。便與前梁舊齒重覆所翻，其有文旨乖競者，皆鎔冶成範，始末倫通。

至文帝天嘉四年，揚都建元寺沙門僧宗、法准、僧忍律師等，並建業標領，欽聞新教，故使遠浮江表，親承勞問。諦欣其來意，乃為翻《攝大乘》等論，首尾兩載，覆疎宗旨。

而飄寓投委，無心寧寄。又汎小船至梁安郡，更裝大舶，欲返西國。學徒追逐，相續留連。太守王方奢述眾元情，重申邀請。諦又且循人事，權止海隅，伺旅束裝，未思安堵。

至三年九月，發自梁安，汎舶西引，業風賦命，飄還廣州。十二月中，上南海岸。刺史歐陽穆公顧延住制旨寺，請翻新文。詒顧：“此業緣，西還無措，”乃對沙門慧愷等翻《廣義法門經》及《唯識論》等。後穆公薨沒，世子紇重為檀越，開傳經論，時又許焉。……

[T50, no. 2060, p. 430b3-22]

時宗、愷諸僧欲延還建業，會楊輦碩望，恐奪時榮，乃奏曰：“嶺表所譯眾部，多明無塵唯識，言乖治術，有蔽國風，不隸諸華，可流荒服。”帝然之，故南海新文，有藏陳世。

以太建元年遘疾，少時，遺訣嚴正，勗示因果，書傳累紙。其文付弟子智休。至正月十一日午時遷化，時年七十有一。明日於潮亭焚身，起塔。十三日，僧宗、法准等，各齋經論，還返匡山。

自詒來東夏，雖廣出眾經，偏宗《攝論》。故討尋教旨者，通覽所譯，則彼此相發，綺績輔顯。故隨處翻傳，親注疏解，依止勝相。後疏並是僧宗所陳，躬對本師，重為釋旨，增減或異，大義無虧。宗公別著行狀，廣行於世。

且詒之梁，時逢喪亂，感竭運終，道津靜濟，流離弘化，隨方卷行。至於部帙或分，譯人時別，今總歷二代，共通數之，故始梁武之末至陳宣即位凡二十三載，所出經論記傳六十四部，合二百七十八卷。微附華飾，盛顯隋唐。

4. Subhūti

[T50, no. 2060, p. 431a3-6]

時又有扶南國僧須菩提，陳言善吉，於揚都城內至敬寺，為陳主譯《大乘寶雲經》八卷。與梁世曼陀羅所出七卷者同，少有差耳。並見隋代《三寶錄》。