

The work of Paramārtha
An example of Sino-Indian cross-cultural exchange

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While translating *sūtras* and *śāstras*, Paramārtha (Ch. Zhendi, 499-569) also composed oral commentaries which were transcribed by his disciples. Unfortunately, most of these commentaries have been lost, but a number of fragments exist within other commentaries from the Tang Dynasty. This paper discusses the distinctive features of these fragments such as giving multiple meanings to a single term; discussing the etymology of proper nouns; comparing India and China; comparing the theories of different *nikāyas* (schools); commenting on Chinese apocryphal texts; and incorporating exegetical interpolations into the translations. Each of these aspects is illustrated with specific examples. Together, they reveal that Paramārtha, though Indian, was conscious of the culture of his Chinese disciples and audience. For this reason, his work can be regarded as an example of Sino-Indian cross-cultural exchange.