

## **The Spread of Sarnath-Style Buddha Images in Southeast Asia and Shandong, China, by the Sea Route**

KANG, HEEJUNG

Sogang University, Republic of Korea  
esvara@sogang.ac.kr

**Abstract.** Certain Buddhist statues discovered in Southeast Asia were sculpted after Sarnath-style sculptures. Thus, these statues were produced between the late fifth and early sixth centuries. Considering the sea route during that period, it was natural that Buddhist statues would be introduced from Sarnath to Funan in its prime via the Ganges and the Indian Ocean. Buddhist sculptures conveyed through that channel became the foundation for early Buddhist art in Southeast Asia. Based on the style created at Sarnath in India, this art is significant because it reveals the first stage of Buddhist art in Southeast Asia. These Buddhist sculptures reflect the Central and Southern Indian styles of the Gupta period. Hence, Buddhist art forms must have spread to Southeast Asia by different routes. Certain sculptures that were recently excavated in Shandong have no traces of drapery and have slender physical outlines. Such features were most likely influenced by styles employed in Sarnath Buddhist sculptures. These Shandong sculptures were most likely modelled after Buddhist statues discovered in Southeast Asian regions such as Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam, indicating that Central Indian Buddhist art was introduced earlier than Southern Indian art and conveyed from the Ganges to the South China Sea through the Gulf of Bengal via the sea routes. Thus, Southeast Asian Buddhist sculpture was the "missing link" that connected Central India to East China, and it was highly valuable as the first stage in the area.

**Keywords and phrases:** Sarnath-style, Buddhist statues in Shandong, Funan, sea route, Faxian, Indianisation

### **Introduction**

It is generally known that Indian culture spread to China, Korea, and Japan via two main routes. In addition to the Silk Road, which ran along the countries bordering Western China, and the overland route along the Central Asian countries, the southern sea route was important with regard to cultural diffusion. Whereas the Silk Road ran along the countries in the oasis zone, such as Khotan and Turfan, the southern sea route stretched to China via Southeast Asia. Unlike the Silk Road, the southern sea route has not been well investigated.

Studying the southern sea route is difficult because scholars encounter different languages, customs, and cultures. In addition, scholars must address highly fluid

situations in the ancient ports in Southeast Asia that were located along the southern sea route. The overland route and the Silk Road began to develop during the Han dynasty. The southern sea route had been used before or after the beginning of the Common Era, but it was not used frequently until the sixth century, and most of the relevant records are found in Tang dynasty sources. More goods can be transported by sea than on land. Therefore, overland trade was gradually replaced by sea trade. The transport of goods using sea routes was involved with the transport of human resources. Many Buddhist pilgrims visiting India accompanied caravans along the Silk Road. Likewise, many pilgrims accompanied sea merchants throughout the sea routes. Faxian, a famous Chinese Buddhist monk, took a merchant vessel when returning from his pilgrimage to India in 401. Monks were allowed to accompany sea traders for religious reasons, but they could become human sacrifices when there was a need to calm the sea. Their pilgrimages involved passing along religious information and bringing souvenirs or gifts, such as sculptures and figurines.

The sea route, extending from India and the Middle East to China and Japan, was necessary to travel through Southeast Asia. During this period, shipbuilding was not sufficiently advanced, and vessels had to sail near the coast, stopping at many ports for supplies and fuel. Thus, many Southeast Asian ports assumed highly significant roles along the route (Sen 2009, 116–118). Prior to the sixth century, many large and small Southeast Asian city-states were located along the major sea route (Choi 2006, 42–48; Chandler 1992, 13–27). It is noteworthy that Funan, in what is now Cambodia, held sway in the early period. In early times when borders were not clearly defined, Funan controlled vast territories covering much of inland Southeast Asia (Vickery 2003/2004). Around that time, many countries, such as Banban, Lankasuka, Panpan, and Kantary, rose and fell (Chandler 1992, 26). Most of these countries are mentioned in Chinese texts, but their history and culture are rarely mentioned. Therefore, it is important to attempt to restore the "ancient" through remains and artefacts.

Funan, the first ancient country in Southeast Asia, appears to have played a pivotal role in the sea trade route between India and China until the early sixth century (Choi 2006, 48). That is, Funan might have functioned as a means of spreading Indian and Western cultures to China in early times. Artwork found in Funan shows the vestiges of active trade, and the religious arts, in particular, demonstrate the introduction of Indian culture (Kang 2009). Hindu sculptures, such as statues of Vishnu and Buddhist sculptures, were excavated from ancient sites such as Óc Eo. That site is now part of Vietnam, but it was once part of Funan. This was not an unusual phenomenon because most ancient Southeast Asian countries were part of the confederation of city-states. Although few Buddhist sculptures were excavated in Southeast Asia, these sculptures reveal the earliest stages of Buddhist sculpture production in the region (Kang 2009,

55–56). Indian immigrants had spread Buddhism to Funan by the third century, but it was only in the fifth century that Buddhist art began to be produced there.<sup>1</sup>

This study examines statues found in inland areas among ancient Southeast Asian remains. These statues can be considered Funan art because most inland areas at that time were part of ancient Funan. These areas currently belong to Thailand, Cambodia, and Malaysia; however, these boundaries did not exist during the ancient period. Current national boundaries and territories were established only after World War II. The sculptures are scattered over a broad area across several countries and are considered to belong to the Funan style (Funan art). Because modern Cambodia is not a direct successor of Funan, there are no political undertones in this study.

### **The First Stage of Buddhist Statues in Southeast Asia**

Around the third century, the Isthmus was added to the sea routes. Regarding the sea route between India and China, the Kra Isthmus—the narrowest region in the Malay Peninsula—was used as a shortcut during the time when marine transportation was not well developed. Merchants and mariners used the Isthmus rather than sailing the rough southern tip of the Malay Peninsula because it reduced distance and time. When they reached the Kra Isthmus, they took the land route to pass through the Isthmus and then reboarded the ship. This practice indicates the importance of the Kra Isthmus, and the country that ruled this narrow region was able to dominate the sea trade. Funan must have dominated the sea trade with its solid ships and strong navy. The Kra Isthmus is relevant here because the Buddhist sculptures that were found in southern Vietnam and around the Kra Isthmus—as well as the parts of the Malay Peninsula that are part of present-day southern Thailand—may have been produced in Funan. Few Buddhist statues from the period discussed here have survived, and those that have survived are spread over many countries in Southeast Asia. The author therefore regards Funan as representative of Buddhist art (in Southeast Asia) from that period of history.

Art activities began when Indian culture was introduced in Funan after the Bronze Age. Buddhist and Hindu art were the typical types of art (Takash 2001a, 11–12). In this respect, Funan Buddhist statues can be considered the first religious art in Southeast Asia. Despite its historic and artistic value, there have been few studies on Funan religious art. It is problematic to refer to Funan in relation to statues discovered in different countries. Moreover, the history of Buddhism in Southeast Asia is not well known. Therefore, it is necessary to establish a chronology of Buddhist art in Funan to comprehend the ancient culture of Southeast Asia. If the few records in stelae are the only literary sources that remain, it is necessary to establish an art-historical standard based on art

styles. Regarding Indian Buddhist art, the history of art styles has been recorded comparatively well. Thus, the chronological record should be based on a comparison with Indian Buddhist art. Considering the lack of records and texts, it is necessary to compare this record with Indian statues rather than to depend on vague presumptions. The earliest Buddhist sculptures produced in Southeast Asia date from around the seventh century, and studies on earlier religious sculptures are lacking. Excavated Hindu statues outnumber Buddhist statues, implying that Hinduism developed earlier than Buddhism in the area. In any case, relatively few religious statues were produced during that time in Southeast Asia. Some scholars assume that early statues were modelled on Indian ones and were made of tractable materials, such as clay or wood, and thus could not be preserved over time (Takash 2001b, 87). The use of clay and wood enabled the advancement of sculpting and the fabrication of bronze and stone statues. Clay and wood were preferred because they were easily acquired. The problem is that sculpting with clay and wood is markedly different from using bronze, which undermines the opinion that the use of clay and wood enabled the advancement of bronze sculpting.

The wooden Buddhist statues found in Óc Eo in the swamps of South Vietnam are good examples of early works. Several wooden Buddhist sculptures were excavated in the Óc Eo wetlands, a region of ancient Cambodia—in other words, the territory of Funan. Some were damaged, but some remained intact. In particular, a wooden Buddhist statue found in Go Thap in P'ong Tuk should be considered the first example of religious art in Southeast Asia. The standing statue with both ankles visible below the garment was assumed to have been created in the fifth century (see Figure 1) (Khoo 2006, 25). The surface is cracked and warped, so it is difficult to determine its original shape. Coedes, a prominent scholar who laid the foundations for the study of Southeast Asia, believed the wooden statue was sculpted in the Amaravati style (Coedes 1968, 16–20). This style is characterised by a bare right shoulder and a narrow pleated garment with the hem falling above the ankles. However, given the condition of the statue, one can see only the body proportions with no stylistic details. Coedes must have determined the statue was modelled after the Amaravati style by considering the influence from southern India, not by actually comparing the styles. Moreover, Coedes mentions that the statue was imported from Gandhara in India, which is likely untrue (Coedes 1968, 17–18). The Gandhara style was completely different from the Amaravati style. Furthermore, it is difficult to find a possible link between the Amaravati and Gandhara styles. Coedes' claim, therefore, seems unreliable. Another example is a Buddhist statue preserved in the An Giang Museum. This statue is one of the more important wooden statues found in South Vietnam. The statue was severely damaged, except for the head and feet, but it was considered to be in the Amaravati style (Khoo 2006, 44). However, the statue was too damaged to define its style, similar to the case described above.



Figure 1. Wood statue of Buddha from fifth century found in Go Thap, Vietnam

In comparison with these two statues, the statue found in the Plain of Reeds in Binh Dinh, Vietnam is well preserved (see Figure 2). It is 1.35 meters tall but is well proportioned; thus, it is reminiscent of the Amaravati, or Nagarjunakonda, style. Early Buddhist statues in Southeast Asia are usually dated to the sixth and seventh centuries, but this statue is assumed to have been made in the early sixth century due to the even bodyline and erect posture with bilateral symmetry. The garment is not clearly visible, but it seems that the right shoulder is bare because the lower drapery appears lopsided. The draperies are hardly visible on the cracked surface, and the hem of the left sleeve comes down to the ankles, which is similar to the Southern Indian style. However, the image has little volume because it was made of wood.

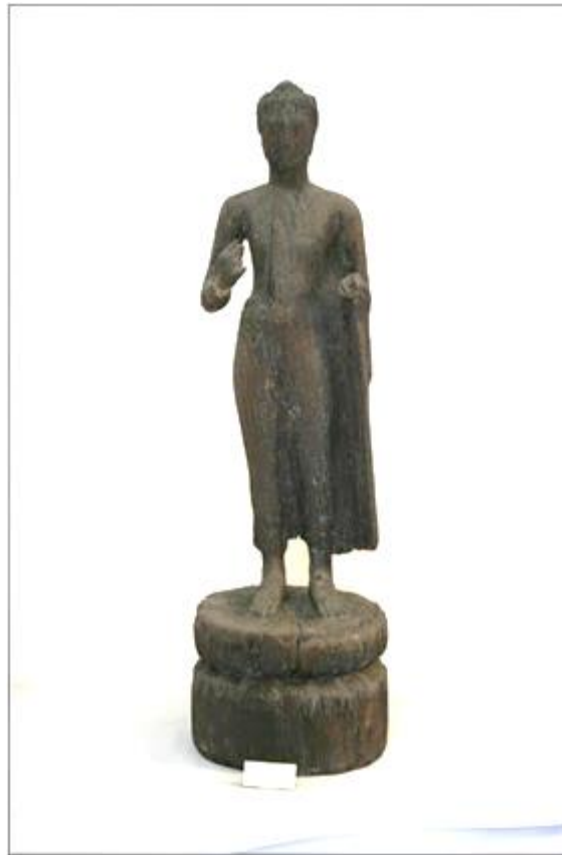


Figure 2. Wood statue of Buddha from fifth century found in Binh Dinh, Vietnam

Buddhist statues made in Southeast Asia are usually characterised by a bare right shoulder. This feature is known to have originated in Sri Lanka and Southern India. However, not all Buddhist statues produced in Southeast Asia have bare right shoulders. Statues with garments covering both shoulders have been found quite often in Southeast Asia. Such images have primarily been found in inland areas and are remarkably similar to Indian statues. Thus, it is likely that the style was first introduced into inland areas, revealing the first stage of Buddhist statues made in Southeast Asia. When these sculptures were produced, Funan was part of the city-state federation. Although the statues belong to Funan in a broad sense, they were not found in specific regions. Buddhist statues have been found sporadically in the southland of Vietnam, the Malay Peninsula that falls under the territory of Thailand, and Angkor Borei in Cambodia. These areas were likely to have been part of the territory of Funan in its prime. After Zhenla (the former name of Cambodia) encroached on the territory of Funan in the mid-sixth century, large and small countries rose and fell there (Kang 2009).

Among the Funan Buddhist statues, the early ones all have round neck garments covering both shoulders like a Greek tunic. In India, Buddhist sculptures with round necks began during the Kushan dynasty and were influenced by Greek and Roman cultures. This type of Buddhist sculpture, which was primarily produced in northwestern India, influenced third-century sculptures at Mathura in Central India. As a result, round-neck statues were found in Mathura along with statues with bare right shoulders. During the Gupta dynasty, round-neck Buddhist sculptures were made throughout Central India (see Figure 3). This type of Buddhist statue found in Mathura is characterised by mechanically repeated U-shaped narrow draperies. Interestingly, however, no draperies are expressed in Funan statues, only the collar and the end of the garment. These characteristics are not observed in statues from Mathura during the Gupta dynasty. Thus, it is certain that the original form of the round-neck type, which influenced statues in Southeast Asia, came from somewhere other than Mathura. These types of Buddhist statues originated from Mathura in India, but they are strikingly different from those discovered in Southeast Asia. Where did Funan-style statues come from? According to the Chinese texts *Nan Qi Shu* (南齊書), *Liang Shu* (梁書), and *Nan Shi* (南史), the upper class in Funan used Sanskrit, which could imply that they were well versed in Indian customs and religious matters. There were also frequent interactions between monks in Funan and those in the southern dynasties of China. Some of the Funan monks translated Sanskrit scriptures into Chinese in the Liang court.<sup>2</sup> There are no records of cultural exchanges between India and China or between India and Funan, and monks from India and China who visited Funan have not been identified. However, we can infer the existence of such exchanges by looking at the arts of Funan.

Among the early Buddhist statues in Funan, the standing Buddha image found at Wat Wiang Sa in Surat Thani, Thailand is worth noting (see Figure 4). This sandstone statue is currently housed in the Bangkok National Museum. Although the lower part is destroyed, the basic style is well preserved. It has the well-proportioned figure, and the garment is expressed delicately, as if it were naked. Both shoulders are covered by a garment, and there are no draperies expressed, unlike the Mathura statues with the U-shaped draperies. Because of the round facial features, the detailed bodyline, and the garment, this statue is remarkably similar to the image in the Sarnath Museum, which has an inscription indicating the year 473 CE (see Figure 5). Because the two statues are very similar, the statue in Wat Wiang Sa seems to be imported from India.<sup>3</sup> However, it cannot be determined that the statue was imported without more conclusive evidence. It is reasonable to assume that the statue was made in Southeast Asia in the late fifth century, around the time shortly after the Sarnath piece was made. Given that it was made approximately 200 years later, when Buddhism spread from India to

Southeast Asia, the locals must have acquired the skills to make small-sized Buddhist statues. The above-mentioned wooden statues support this assertion.



Figure 3. Sandstone statue of Buddha from fifth century found in Mathura, India



Figure 4. Sandstone statue of Buddha from fifth century found at Wat Wiang Sa, Thailand





Figure 5. Sandstone statue of Buddha from 473 CE found in Sarnath, India

The Sarnath sculptures from the Gupta period have less volume, are thinner, have longer limbs, and have a rhythmically treated bodyline compared to Mathura sculptures (Kang 2004, 268–299). Because the garments of these statues do not have draperies, they appear as if naked. Another difference involves the materials used for the sculptures. Mathura sculptures are made of reddish sandstone, whereas Sarnath statues are made of light-grey or buff sandstone. The surfaces of Sarnath sculptures are smoothly polished. As discussed, some scholars believe the Buddhist statue from Wat Wiang Sa was imported from India because it has the characteristics of Indian statues (Beek and Tettoni 1999, 52–56). However, the surface of this statue was not smoothed but was left intact. The Sarnath sculpture has lowered eyes as if meditating, but this statue has staring eyes. It is presumed that the statue was made independently in Funan or by immigrants from India.<sup>4</sup> Surat Thani was located in the central part of the Malay Peninsula, and, according to Chinese texts, it was where Panpan was located. It is recorded that approximately ten small countries were located around the shoreline along the Siam Bay during the third century. According to *Liang Shu*, Tun Sun was the most advanced country among them and came to power in the Kra Isthmus by the fifth century.<sup>5</sup> However, no envoy had been sent to China in this area since the fifth century. Thus, these countries were under the authority of Funan between the fifth and sixth centuries, when the statue was created.

Another Buddhist sculpture, found at Wha-Yan Temple in Nakhon Si Thammarat, Surat Thani, Thailand, is similar to the one found in Wat Wiang Sa. The head, arms, and parts below the knees are destroyed, but the slim bodyline and non-draping garment are similar to that of the Sarnath pieces (see Figure 6). The well-balanced, slim bodyline is exposed under the garment, and the elongated bodily proportion closely resembles the Sarnath Buddha images made in the Gupta period. However, the sculpture has less volume; the statue's front and back appear flat, and the belt is expressed simply. It differs from the Sarnath sculptures made in the fifth century. In Thailand, this statue was classified as Dvaravati style, but it appears to be earlier (Office of Archeological and National Museums 2000, 51).



Figure 6. Statue of Buddha from sixth century found in Nakhon Si Thammarat, Thailand

Standing Buddha sculptures influenced by the Sarnath-style did not appear only in the Kra Isthmus; they are also found elsewhere in Thailand. This is because Indian culture was not spread only by sea. Another image of the standing Buddha, found in Lopburi, Thailand, shows that trade through the overland route started from India. This sculpture also has a slinky and pleat-less garment, as described above (National Museum of Bangkok 2009, 25). However, the statue has large, curly hair, and both hands are raised in the *Abhaya-mudra* gesture. In addition, the statue is less rhythmical and is bilaterally symmetric without liveliness, implying that the statue was made immediately following the prime of the Funan period.

Angkor Borei was presumed to be the centre of Funan, where the Sarnath-style Buddha sculptures were found. The area was adjacent to Phnom Da, one of the most important historical sites in Cambodia. The Buddha image found in Wat Romlok in Ta Keo, Angkor Borei, is the best example (see Figure 7) (Jessup 2004, 34–35). This well-preserved statue is superior to the Wat Wiang Sa statue in sculpturing, and its surface is finely smoothed like the Sarnath sculpture. It has a well-proportioned figure despite a height of approximately one meter. The thin and long limbs, the well-balanced bodyline, the tribhanga with a slightly bent left leg, and the curvy belt finishing reflect the Sarnath-style. In particular, the well-proportioned figure, slinky garment, and natural bodyline are very similar to Sarnath sculptures made in the late fifth century. However, there are a few differences. Whereas Sarnath sculptures have round, solid faces, the Wat Romlok statue has a narrower face, and no collar line is depicted in the garment. This means that the Buddha sculpture, originating from Sarnath, had been changed in accordance with the aesthetic sensibilities of Funan. The narrower face was likely more preferred in Funan than in India considering the statues found in Cambodia and Angkor Borei.



Figure 7. Statue of Buddha from sixth century found at Wat Romlok, Cambodia

The important model in the first stage of Funan's Buddhist statues is the one that originated from Sarnath in Central India. Sarnath was an important Buddhist site where the enlightened Sakyamuni gave his first lecture to the five followers. In a Chinese scripture, it is referred to as "Deer Park". Since the Kushan dynasty, many Buddhists went on pilgrimages to the sites related to Sakyamuni; Sarnath was one of the four major Buddhist sites (Huntington 1987, 55–56). Mathura had been the centre of Buddhist sculptures since the Kushan dynasty. Because Mathura was not a Buddhist site, it did not attract pilgrims. Therefore, it was natural that Sarnath became the centre for Buddhist sculptures. Sarnath Buddhist sculptures developed rapidly during the fifth century and developed their own peculiar artistic style; thereafter, Sarnath became the centre for Buddhist pilgrimages. The high period of Sarnath sculpture is presumed to have been approximately 470 CE (Kang 2004, 282–284). Here, the author limits the Sarnath-style to a somewhat narrow sense. In this view, the Sarnath-style developed from 470 to 500 CE. However, it is inaccurate to classify every statue without drapery lines as belonging to the Sarnath-style. We can find statues without drapery lines everywhere in Southeast Asia, and these images, which existed for a long time, should be considered as belonging to a local style. Thus, the "Sarnath" style in Southeast Asia was influenced by Sarnath but developed in particular local areas. It should therefore be classified as a local style of sculpting, like the styles of Sukhotai and Angkor.

The Sarnath-style is characterised by slinky and pleat-less garments. These characteristics are distinguished from those of sculptures made in other regions in India during the Gupta period. Thus, it is likely that Buddhist statues in Southeast Asia with similar styles were modelled after Sarnath-style sculptures. Additionally, grinding the surfaces of Chunar sandstone to create a glossy effect was a unique technique in the local Sarnath-style. A similar surface-grinding effect is observed in the Buddhist sculptures found in Southeast Asia, indicating that sculptures of a similar style must have been made at nearly the same time as the Sarnath sculptures. Sarnath was not far from Varanasi, a city located around the Ganges and thus a strong point for water transportation. Sarnath sculptures would have been easily introduced to Southeast Asia via the mouth of the Ganges, the Bay of Bengal, and the Kra Isthmus. These Buddhist sculptures became the model for Funan's Buddhist art because its location was suitable for water transportation. Therefore, in this context, it can be argued that Funan-style statues, which are very similar to Sarnath-style statues, were made in or around the sixth century (Williams 1982, 76–82). In particular, the Wat Wiang Sa image, which was presumably made earlier, shows a strong Indian style because there was no time to develop the freshly introduced Buddhist style on its own. The other statues mentioned above can be estimated to have been sculpted in at least the sixth century because their styles and finely smoothed surfaces are similar to the Sarnath-style.

### **The Spread of Sarnath-Style Sculpture from Southeast Asia to Shandong, China**

During the reign of Jayavarman, the Sarnath-style Buddha sculpture was first created in Funan. According to *Liang Shu*, Jayavarman sent delegations to China at least ten times during the Liang dynasty. As a result, he was offered a mandate to rule not only Funan but also *Annam* (安南). Jayavarman, who was governing Funan by 514, sent an Indian Buddhist monk, Nagasena, to ask China to subdue Linyi (林邑), which was Champa, the central part of Vietnam. This was a period of brisk exchange between Funan and China, and at the same time, a period when Buddhism flourished in Funan. According to fragmentary Chinese historical records, Funan and China conducted vigorous exchanges from the late fifth century until the early sixth century. The exchanges were especially dominated by monk visits and Buddhist cultural exchanges. In those days, Southeast Asian Buddhist culture was spread to China through Funan, Champa, Panpan, and Banhwang. As mentioned previously, the culture of Central and Southern India was spread and developed in Southeast Asia. It is well known that Chinese Buddhist sculptures had developed in different styles since the Northern Qi dynasty. The newly introduced Indian culture was cited as the cause. However, the Indian influence must be discussed along with other factors. The time gap and the role of Southeast Asia as a halfway station have been underestimated. Chinese sculptures in the sixth century that were influenced by Sarnath-style will first be discussed below.

Since the 1970s, various Buddhist sculptures have been discovered in great quantities in Shandong province, China. Shandong and Korea were geographically close, and it was assumed that they had traded with each other since the Three Kingdoms period. Many scholars have therefore made comparisons between Buddhist sculptures found in Shandong and those found in Korea (Gwak 1993; Kim 2004; Yang 1995; 2006; Onishi 1999; Moon 2007). However, Korean scholars have focused on the relationship between sculptures from Shandong and those from the Three Kingdoms rather than on Buddhist art in Shandong itself. Since the mid-sixth century in the Six Dynasties era, new-style sculptures were produced in Shandong and in seaside areas in eastern China. Some sculptures in the Xiangtangshan and Tianlongshan caves reflect the new style, and research on the new style has primarily focused on the relationship with India (Soper 1959). In those days, it was difficult to visit India through the Silk Road. Therefore, the southern sea route was used in most cases, and Southeast Asia was included in this route.

In the areas around Shandong, such as Qingzhou, Zhucheng, Bo-Xing, Linqi, Linzi, and Qufu, gilt-bronze statues and stone statues, which were produced

between the Northern Wei and Tang dynasties, were discovered in great quantities (Liu 2007). The artefacts discovered mostly date to the late period of the Northern Wei, Eastern Wei, and Northern Qi dynasties, and there are several sculptures related to the Sarnath-style among the standing Buddha sculptures found in Shandong. These sculptures reflect the Sarnath-style, with slinky and drapery-less garments. This style was often observed in stone statues found in Shandong. The sculptures discovered in Shandong are similar to the Sarnath-style sculptures dominated by Buddha images rather than Bodhisattvas. Several Buddhist sculptures discovered at Qingzhou Longxing-Si (清州 龍興寺址), a typical Buddhist site in Shandong, reflect a similar style. In 1996, approximately 400 Buddhist sculptures were found in a construction pit located at the south of the Qingzhou Museum. Among the discovered sculptures, there were sculptures with painted garments rather than draperies. Among these painted sculptures were statues with well-preserved gold foil and colour (see Figure 8). The smiling countenance, the *Varada-mudra*, and the *Abhaya-mudra* are similar to the Buddhist statues made during the Eastern Wei dynasty, but the understated bodyline and volume suggest that the statue reflects the style of the early Northern Qi dynasty.<sup>6</sup> Most of the statues are made of limestone, a common material in Qingzhou, but some are made of granite. Compared to the statues made in the Eastern Wei dynasty, the Buddhist statues found in Longxing-Si have different bodylines and garment expressions. In particular, the slinky garments naturally expose the bodylines. There are no expressions on the draperies, belt, and undergarment (僧脚崎) and no decoration. Instead, the entire garment is painted red with specific patterns. The statue is a harmonised combination of advanced sculptural technique and a pictorial approach. Perhaps this statue, excavated from the site of Longxing-Si, is designed to naturally expose the body itself through the thin garment.

Zhucheng, located in south central Shandong, was close to Qingdao harbour, which had been a traffic hub since ancient times. Starting in 1978 with the pot that contained the gilt-bronze Buddhist statues found in Qingyun, Zhucheng, more than 300 stone statues, which seem to have been intentionally destroyed, were discovered between 1988 and 1990 in the ruins of the Northern Dynasties in the south of Zhucheng.<sup>7</sup> This find attracted significant public attention. These stone statues have a remarkable expression of physical volume and reflect the Southern Indian style, with slinky garment expression (Kim 2004, 19). Oddly, there are several sculptures with non-draping garments and statues with garments that cover both shoulders (see Figure 9). On some statues, certain patterns are painted in red and gold to indicate the garment rather than using drape expressions. Some patterns and drapery on the garments are painted, and the paintwork is mainly gold over a red background. The statues with garments that exclude drapery can be distinguished from statues made during the Eastern Wei

dynasty. These statues are slender in physical volume and show different proportions compared to statues from India and Southeast Asia. Nevertheless, because no drapery is expressed on the garments and the garments are treated to better reveal the physical outlines, the Buddha images found in Zhucheng are very similar in style to those in India and Southeast Asia.



Figure 8. Statue of Buddha from sixth century found in Qingzhou, Shandong, China

Stone sculptures found in Linqu, Qingzhou, and Shandong are dominated by those made between the Eastern Wei and Northern Qi dynasties, indicating that Buddhist statues were made intensively during those periods. Qingzhou and Linqu were the fertile plains that had been referred to as *Jiaolaihe Plains* since earlier days. These plains were located near the Mihe River. This region had a vigorous interchange with other countries through the Gulf of Pohai. In earlier days, foreign exchanges occurred primarily through the overland route that connected Dengzhou, Qingzhou, and Jinan. Thus, this region was more accessible to cultural exchanges by sea and was able to develop an exotic culture compared to inland China. A stone statue discovered in Linqu also reflects the Sarnath-style (see Figure 10). This statue has an oval face, a low *ushnisha*, narrow and roundish shoulders, and a large stature, reflecting the typical style of the Northern Qi dynasty. In addition, the thin round-neck garment clings closely to the body, and no draperies are expressed.



Figure 9. Statue of Buddha from sixth century found in Zhucheng, Shandong, China



Figure 10. Statue of Buddha from sixth century found in Linqi, Shandong, China



In 1976 and 1983, Buddhist sculptures made of various materials were found at the site of the Longhua Temple located in Bo-Xing and Chongde in Shandong. The stone statues were primarily made between the Eastern Wei and Northern Qi dynasties (Li 1984). The thin, bare-right-shoulder garment clinging to the body reflects the style created in Southern India or Southeast Asia (Kim 2004, 16). Some of the standing Buddha images found in Bo-Xing also reflect the Sarnath-style (see Figure 11). The narrow shoulders and insufficient volume differ somewhat from Sarnath-style sculptures, but the roundish shoulders and legs and delicately touched arms were never seen before in Chinese sculptures. The understated volume is reminiscent of the standing Buddha image found at the site of Temple Wha-yan (see Figure 6). In addition, similar to the statues found in Chengzhou or Zhucheng, the garment is painted, not sculpted.



Figure 11. Statue of Buddha from sixth century found in Bo-Xing, Shandong, China

Among the stone statues recently found in the area of Shandong, there were many standing Buddha sculptures originating from Sarnath. Thin, non-draping garments indicate the influence of the Sarnath-style. Few such statues were found in Shandong, and choosing colouring over drapery expression indicates the transition to the Chinese style. This type of garment treatment did not appear until the Eastern Wei dynasty (534–550), and it is believed that this style reflects

the influence of Southern India. It is problematic to assume that new sculpting styles that appeared in Eastern China were introduced by the Silk Road. Therefore, the sea route naturally arose as a way to explain the introduction. Thin garments clinging to the body with no draperies are expressed, and the garments that fall along the bodyline are similar to Sarnath-style Buddhist statues. The Sarnath-style Buddhist statues found in Shandong were more likely introduced via Southeast Asia. However, because the style took a long time to transfer, it is not consistent with the Sarnath-style. As mentioned earlier, the Sarnath-style that was independently assimilated in Funan must have influenced Shandong.

During the Southern and Northern dynasties, the south and east areas in China could not conduct brisk exchanges with the countries bordering Western China. Therefore, they conducted overseas trade through the overland route between Linyi (Champa) and Jiaozhou, and the sea route developed along the Chinese coastline. Shandong developed harbours early on and thus functioned as a strongpoint for sea trade. Considering that Faxian, a famous Chinese Buddhist monk, made a stopover in Shandong due to a storm when returning from India, the northernmost place in the sea trade route between India and Southeast Asia must have been Shandong, adjacent to the Gulf of Pohai.<sup>8</sup> Faxian and Yijing stayed in many countries within Southeast Asia whenever they returned from India, suggesting that Sarnath-style Buddhist sculptures were not directly introduced into Shandong but were transfigured in Southeast Asia halfway through their introduction. The garments without collars support this view. According to various texts, the Liang dynasty conducted brisk exchanges with Funan. From these records, one can assume that Shandong-style Buddhist sculptures were modelled on Sarnath-style Buddhist images introduced by Funan to Northern dynasties in China. If we ignore the possible role of Buddhist monks in introducing Funan-style Buddhist art into China, it is difficult to explain the origin of the newly introduced styles of Buddhist sculpture. Monks made their visits through two routes: one used sea and land routes to go through Jiaozhou and Guangzhou, and the other was linked to Shandong along the Chinese coast. Because no similar styles were found in areas other than Shandong, it is certain that the Southeast Asian Buddhist sculptures were brought into Shandong by the sea route.

### **Conclusion**

Through Indian migration and cultural influence, the ancient people in Southeast Asia made new progress in their civilisation. In those days, Hinduism and Buddhism were spread throughout Southeast Asia, accompanied by a cult of icon production.<sup>9</sup> In particular, Funan, the largest country that held sway throughout Southeast Asia, deserves attention. Few Buddhist sculptures made in Funan have been preserved, but they all display certain characteristics. In recent studies,

Funan-style Buddhist sculptures are described as products of the sixth and seventh centuries, when Funan was influenced by Southern Indian culture. In reality, however, early Funan-style Buddhist sculptures were modelled on Sarnath-style sculptures; thus, those images can be dated to the late fifth and early sixth centuries. Considering that voyages were made along the coast, it was natural that Buddhist sculptures would be introduced from Sarnath, located near Central India, to Funan during its prime via the Ganges and the Indian Ocean. The Buddhist statues conveyed through that channel became the solid foundation for early Buddhist art in Southeast Asia. However, as Zhenla became powerful, Funan gradually waned and lost control as the centre of human and material resources in cultural exchange, and Funan Buddhist sculptures faced a new situation. As a result, the centre of Buddhist art shifted from Funan to Srivijaya, based in Palembang in the southeastern part of Sumatra.<sup>10</sup> In his travel record *Nanhai jigui neifa zhuan* (南海寄歸內法傳, *A Record of the Buddhist Religion as Practised in India and the Malay Archipelago*), Yijin (義淨) mentions that Buddhist monks in Funan were nowhere to be seen.<sup>11</sup> Funan-style Buddhist sculptures, which were developed based on the Sarnath-style, are significant in the sense that they show the first stage of Buddhist art in Southeast Asia. In addition, Funan Buddhist sculptures reflect the Central Indian style as well as the Southern Indian style in the Gupta period, indicating that the styles of Buddhist sculpture spread through Southeast Asia through various channels.

Meanwhile, the newly introduced styles of Buddhist sculpture, produced in Eastern China during the mid-sixth century, were presumed to be introduced from Southern India to Southeast Asia. The Indian and Southeast Asian influences mentioned here are reflected in the physical depictions and the treatment of the garments. In particular, among the sculptures recently discovered in Shandong, the sculptures with no traces of drapery and slender physical outlines must have been based on Sarnath-influenced Funan statues. These Buddhist sculptures were most likely modelled after the Funan-style Buddhist sculptures discovered in mainland Southeast Asia (e.g., Thailand, Cambodia, and Vietnam). This suggests that Buddhist images sculpted in Sarnath in Central India during the Gupta period were introduced in Southeast Asia by the sea route. Because Sarnath was located along the riverside, it was advantageous for sea trade. Thus, Sarnath's sculptures must have been transmitted to Southeast Asia earlier than those from other regions in India. Moreover, it is certain that Buddhist sculptures developed in Funan influenced Shandong sculptures in the late sixth century during the Northern Qi dynasty. Thus, Central Indian Buddhist art was introduced earlier than Southern Indian art and was conveyed from the Ganges to the Southern China Sea through the Gulf of Bengal via sea routes. In conclusion, Southeast Asian Buddhist sculpture is the "missing link" that

connects Central India to East China, and it is highly valuable as the first stage of Buddhist art in Southeast Asia.

### Acknowledgement

This work was supported by the Sogang University Research Grant of 2011.

### Notes

1. The Buddhist history of Funan is simply explained in a book by Iwamoto Yutaka et al., *The Buddhist History of Southeast Asia: Development and Present State of Hinayana Buddhism*, trans. Hong, Sa Sung (Seoul: Banya Saem, 1987), 204–205. In this book, it is written that Buddhism was first propagated by two monks, Sona and Uttara, at Suvarnabhumi (now Suwannaphum), the borderland between Thailand and Myanmar.
2. It is well known that Funan Centre was built so that Funan's monks could stay, translate scriptures, or give lectures on Buddhism, and it is written that the upper class in Funan used Sanskrit. Taken together, we can say that Funan's monks translated various types of scriptures.
3. This statue was exhibited in the Bangkok National Museum in 2009. In those days, the statue was believed to be an import.
4. Scholars of Southeast Asian art history describe the prominent eyes as *diamond type*. For reference, the eyes of some of Buddhist statues made in the Age of Korean Three Kingdoms are referred to as *apricot stone type*.
5. Some called Tun Sun *Dan Sun*. Regarding the records of *Liangshu* (梁書) and *Nanshi* (南史), the following reference was used: P. Wheatley, *The Golden Khersonese* (Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press, 1961), 15–18. Artists in this region have preserved extant works of art. See Beek and Tettoni (1999, 52–53).
6. Considering the burial method, it seems that the statues were buried suddenly at one period during the Tang dynasty (Du and Han 1991). The report assumes that the statues were buried during the end of the Northern Song dynasty.
7. The pot containing a gilt-bronze Buddhist statue is referred to as *Taoguan* in Chinese. In this study, it is defined as a *pot*. The details on gilt-bronze Buddhist statues have been addressed in "Statues Made in the Northern and Southern Zhao Dynasties in Shandong" (Han 1986). In relation to stone statues, refer to "山東省諸城出土の石佛像について" (1) (Du and Han 1991), "山東省諸城出土の石佛像について" (2) (Du and Han 1992a), "山東省諸城出土の石佛像について" (3) (Du and Han 1992b), and "山東省諸城出土の石佛像について (4): 一建築遺物と石仏造像の概観" (Du and Han 1992c).
8. In relation to Faxian's route and surroundings when he made a stopover in Shandong, refer to the books *Story of Faxian* (法顯傳) (T2085) and *Buddhist Ruins in India and Truth-Seeking Monks in East Asia* (Rhi 2010).
9. Groslier argues that Hinduism became prevalent with Shiva worship and that Buddhism flourished early on. He suggests that Funan and Zhenla flourished on the basis of Indianised culture and refers extant sculptures to Zhenla, except the Krishna statue. See B. P. Groslier, *The Art of Indochina* (New York: Crown Publishers, 1962), 53–68.
10. Srivijaya used Palembang as a strategic position with a strong navy and thus seized control of the Malacca Strait, the Sunda Strait, and the western part of Southeast Asia (Choi 2006, 57).
11. Yijing named Funan *Banan* and wrote that its past name was *Funan*. This means that a change occurred in Funan. See *A Record of the Buddhist Religion as Practised in India and the Malay Archipelago* (南海寄歸內法傳) (T2125). In the annotation, Banan (Funan) is defined as today's Thailand. However, it should be modified to Cambodia.

## Bibliography

- Beek, S. V. and Tettoni, L. I. 1999. *The Arts of Thailand*. Hong Kong: Periplus Editions.
- Bo-Xing Civilization Office. 1986. A report on the investigation into the site of Temple Longhua in Shandong. In *Archeology*. Vol. 9. Beijing: The Institute of Archaeology, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1997. Buddhist relics made in the Northern Zhao dynasty in Bo-Xing, Shandong. In *Archeology*. Vol. 7. Beijing: The Institute of Archaeology, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences.
- Chandler, D. P. 1992. *A history of Cambodia*. Boulder, Oxford: Westview Press.
- Choi, B. W. 2006. *The history of Southeast Asia*. Seoul: Mirae N Co.
- Coedès, G. 1968. *The indianized states of Southeast Asia*. Trans. Susan B. Cowing. Honolulu: East West Center Press.
- Du, Z. and Han, K. 1991. 山東省諸城出土の石佛像について (1). Trans. Kang Bain. In *Ancient art 99*. Tokyo: Sansaisha.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1992a. 山東省諸城出土の石佛像について (2). Trans. Kang Bain. In *Ancient art 101*. Tokyo: Sansaisha.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1992b. 山東省諸城出土の石佛像について (3). Trans. Kang Bain and 単亦平. In *Ancient art 102*. Tokyo: Sansaisha.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1992c. 山東省諸城出土の石佛像について (4): 一建築遺物と石仏造像の概観. Trans. Kang Bain and 康銳. In *Ancient art 103*. Tokyo: Sansaisha.
- Goezuka, D. 2001a. Southeast Asia and its culture (東南アジアと‘東南アジア化’). In *New history of world art vol. 12: Southeast Asia*. Tokyo: Shogakukan.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2001b. The sculptures of pre-Angkor period. *New history of world art vol. 12: Southeast Asia*. Tokyo: Shogakukan.
- Groslier, B. P. 1962. *The art of Indochina*. New York: Crown Publishers.
- Gwak, D. S. 1993. Gilt-bronze three noble in a Halo: Focused on Korean and Shandong in China. *Misul jaryo* 51: 1–22.
- Han, K. 1986. Statues made in the Northern and Southern Zhao dynasties in Shandong. *Civilization* 11: 95–96.
- Huntington, J. 1987. Pilgrimage as image: The cult of the Astamahāprātihārya, Part I. *Orientalism* 18(4): 55–63.
- Iwamoto, Y. et al. 1987. *The Buddhist history of Southeast Asia: Development and present state of Hinayana Buddhism*. Trans. Hong, Sa Sung. Seoul: Banya Saem.
- Jessup, H. I. 2004. *Art and architecture of Cambodia*. London: Thames and Hudson.
- Kang, H. 2009. The origin and development of Funan's Buddhist sculptures. *Art History and Visual Culture* 18: 40–63.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2004. The Buddhist ruins in Sarnath, and Chinese pilgrimage monks. *Art History and Visual Culture* 3: 268–299.
- Khoo, J. C. 2006. *Art and archeology of Funan*. Singapore: Orchid Press.
- Kim, C. S. 2004. Buddhist statues in Shandong and Korean three kingdoms. *Misulsa Nondan* 19: 7–47.
- Li, S. N. 1984. About 100 statues made between the Wei dynasty and the Sui dynasty in Bo-Xing, Shandong. *Civilization* 5: 21–31.

- Liu, F. J. B. 2007. Buddhist statues made in the Northern Zhao dynasty, the Sui dynasty and the Tang dynasty in Shandong. In *Buddhist statues in Goguryeo and Shandong*. ed. M. D. Moon et al. Seoul: Northeast Asian History Foundation.
- Moon, M. D. 2007. Exchange between gilt-bronze Buddhist statues in Goguryeo and Shandong. In *Buddhist statues in Goguryeo and Shandong*. ed. M. D. Moon et al. Seoul: Northeast Asian History Foundation.
- National Museum of Bangkok. 2009. *Dvaravati art: The early Buddhist art of Thailand*. Bangkok: National Museum of Bangkok.
- Office of Archeological and National Museums. 2000. *Visitors guide to the Nakhon Si Thammarat National Museum*. Bangkok: Rung Slip Printing Co.
- Onishi, S. 1999. The pensive Bodhisattva from Qingzhou of Shandong province and the Korean pensive Bodhisattva image (山東省青州出土石造半跏像と韓國半跏像). 豪佛鄭永鎬教授停年退任紀念論叢. Seoul: Korean Society of Cultural History.
- Rhi, J. 2010. *Buddhist ruins in India and truth-seeking monks in East Asia*. Seoul: Sapyoung.
- Sen, T. 2009. Sea trades between China and India: The rise of maritime powers in coastal regions in India and the Indian Ocean. In *Trades and traders on the Silk Road, the collection of treatises: Proceedings of the 2nd International Conference of Central Eurasia Research Institute at Seoul National University*. Seoul: Institute of the Central Eurasian Studies.
- Soper, A. C. 1959. Literary evidence for early Buddhist art in China. In *Artibus Asiae Supplementum* 19. Ascona, Switzerland: Artibus Asiae.
- Takash, K. 2001a. Southeast Asia and "southeast asianizaion". In *World art vol. 12*. Tokyo: Shogakukan, 11–16.
- . 2001b. The sculptures in pre-Angkor period. In *World art vol. 12*. Tokyo: Shogakukan, 88–91.
- Vickery, M. 2003/2004. Funan reviewed: Deconstructing the ancients. In *Bulletin de l'École Française D'extrême-Orient*. Vol. 90–91. Paris: l'École Française D'extrême-Orient.
- Wheatley, P. 1961. *The golden Khersonese*. Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press.
- Williams, J. 1982. *The art of Gupta India*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
- Yang, E. G. 1995. A consideration on Buddhist sculptures in Ta Shan stone caves in China. *Bulgyo Misul Yeongu* 2.
- . 2006. Exchange between Buddhist statues in Shandong and Korean three kingdoms. *Gangjoa Misulsa* 26: 235–257.