

# The Geography of Gandhāran Art

Edited by  
Wannaporn Rienjang  
Peter Stewart





# **The Geography of Gandhāran Art**

**Proceedings of the Second International  
Workshop of the Gandhāra Connections Project,  
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Finally, and fundamentally, we wish to express our sincere thanks to the Bagri Foundation and to Neil Kreitman, whose generous support has underpinned the Gandhāra Connections project from the outset.

## Editors' note

### Orthography

The editors have aimed for broad, but not dogmatic, consistency in orthography and use of diacritics, as well as some other conventions, throughout this book. We have endeavoured to apply a reasonable compromise between widely varying practices, embracing inconsistency where appropriate.

### Provenance

The Classical Art Research Centre does not normally publish previously unpublished ancient artefacts which have no recorded provenance and have become known since 1970. We seek to avoid adding value and legitimacy to objects whose origins have not been properly documented. We have chosen to make an exception in the case of the heart-shaped lamp reported to have been found in Malakand District, which Stefan Baums interprets in his paper on the basis of a photograph and information provided to him. There are two reasons for this exception. Firstly, the challenges posed by the loss of provenance information are an explicit focus of the paper, which demonstrates how epigraphic evidence may be used to try and mitigate the problem and partially to re-contextualize unprovenanced objects. Secondly, the historical value of the inscription on this object makes it imperative that it should become available to scholarly discussion.

## Contributors

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**Alexandra Vanleene** is an independent scholar specializing in Gandhāran Buddhist art and archaeology. Her research focuses on the artistic tradition of Gandhāran sculptures in Afghanistan, particularly Haḍḍa, the geographic expansion of Gandhāran art, and the development of regional characteristics. She worked in Afghanistan for eight years with the French Archaeological Mission for the prospection and excavation of Bamiyan.



Map of the Greater Gandhāra



region (copyright: Jessie Pons).



## Preface

Wannaporn Rienjang and Peter Stewart

This volume presents the edited papers from the second Gandhāra Connections workshop, which was held at the Classical Art Research Centre in Oxford on 22nd and 23rd March, 2018. The Gandhāra Connections project ([www.carc.ox.ac.uk/GandharaConnections](http://www.carc.ox.ac.uk/GandharaConnections)) has been generously supported since 2016 by the Bagri Foundation and the Neil Kreitman Foundation, with the aim of stimulating and supporting new research and discussion on unresolved problems in the study of Gandhāran art, and in particular the venerable issue of the cultural links between Gandhāra and the classical world. One of our primary concerns has been to make the research produced and shared within the project as widely available as possible, and consequently the workshop proceedings are freely available as open access e-books online.

As we described in the Introduction of the first volume of proceedings (Rienjang and Stewart 2018: v), several key themes were selected for particular emphasis in the planning stages of the project – themes which appeared to be fundamental for furthering our understanding of Gandhāran art in general, and not only the question of its cross-cultural connections. One of these was the geography of Gandhāran art, by which we largely mean the ‘micro-geography’ of this tradition within a region that was comparatively small, despite its immense ancient influence (on the development of Buddhist art) and modern appeal (to researchers and the wider public since the nineteenth century). Ancient Gandhāra, if narrowly defined as the region focused on the Peshawar basin, has a diameter of less than 300 km and in fact the area of the well known archaeological sites of the Peshawar valley is no more than half that distance from west to east. Yet this region saw a phenomenal efflorescence of sculptural production in the first few centuries AD.

We are used to talking about this sculptural tradition and the related traditions of other artistic media in Gandhāra as if they are straightforwardly a unified phenomenon. Gandhāran art is often referred to as a ‘school’. We sometimes take its limits for granted and assume that its definition is established. This perspective may do justice to the distinctiveness of Gandhāran art, to the special social and religious forces that gave rise to it, the patterns of patronage involved, its Buddhist functions, and so on. But in respect to formal aspects of the art, such as its styles, techniques, material dimensions, and perhaps even its iconography, the apparent consistency and coherence of Gandhāran art is accompanied by a remarkable diversity (See for example Rhi 2008). Variety exists in the styles employed for specific works, in the innovations that they sometimes embody, in the materials employed (including diverse forms of schist), and in the level of specialist technical skill invested in them (we might perceive this as ‘quality’). The paradoxical tension between the homogeneity and recognizability of Gandhāran art in general and the diversity of specific works becomes manifest if we consider any regularly reproduced iconographical type, such as scenes of the Birth of the Buddha or his Parinirvāṇa (Figures 1 and 2 and cf. Figure 1 in Zarawar Khan’s contribution; for a variety of examples see e.g. Ingholt 1957). Just like the narrative scenes being carved for Roman imperial sarcophagi thousands of miles to the west, these compositions exhibit a remarkable consistency in their arrangement of figures, gestures and attributes, the body-types and their interactions. There are ‘sub-types’ within these iconographical traditions, variants of the imagery, which only serve to emphasize the basically repetitious and typological character of the most popular scenes.

Yet, at the same time, one only needs to look at a selection of sculptures reproducing this conformist iconography to recognize the diversity inherent in the execution of Gandhāran art: differences in the rendering of the same motifs, variations in incidental elements, different levels of detail and skill. Moreover, it is interesting to note how varied the ‘classicism’ of Gandhāran art actually is – how many ways there are of drawing from Graeco-Roman artistic traditions, which themselves comprise a complex



Figure 1. Gandhāran Parinirvāṇa scene. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Florence and Herbert Irving, 2015; inv. 2015.500.4.1 (Photo: Metropolitan Museum CC0 licence).

and inventive multiplicity of styles, notwithstanding our ability to define the core characteristics of ‘the classical’ (Boardman 1993; Behrendt 2017; Nehru 1989; Rowland 1942). Gandhāran sculptures of divergent levels of quality and importance make use of the classical heritage in differing ways. Sometimes it may be the highest quality works (in respect to technical virtuosity) that are the most idiosyncratic, while humbler sculptures may appear very close to Graeco-Roman ‘models’. So it is not possible to image a homogeneous cloud of ‘classical influence’ coming over Gandhāra nor that influence ‘trickling down’ from the higher-end commissions to more common products of devotional patronage.

The eclectic nature of Gandhāran art is intriguing in itself, but it must reflect a complex underlying picture of patronage, artistic formation, and transmission of ideas and methods (Neelis 2011). How much of the variety in Gandhāran sculpture is the result of conscious choices or habitual preferences on the part of customers or artists, or those rather fuzzy entities often called ‘workshops’? How much does it relate to the availability of skilled craftsmanship in particular places and times? Or to the degree of exposure



*Figure 2. Gandhāran Parinirvāṇa scene. Berlin, Ethnologisches Museum, no. I 80  
(Photo: courtesy of the Warburg Institute, London).*

of craftsmen and their patrons to outside influence and imported artefacts? And how much is due to geography? It may be that if we knew more than we do about the provenance of Gandhāran artworks we could develop a very fine-grained picture of how they came to be produced and what factors led to their variety. The work carried out in recent decades in the Swat valley, to the north of the Peshawar basin, has demonstrated the potential in thinking about the distinctiveness of artistic production on a very local level (about which Pia Brancaccio and Luca Olivieri, and Abdul Ghafoor Lone write in this volume).

Further questions arise when we focus on production. To what extent can geography help to explain differences in technical methods or abilities in Gandhāran art? Does distance matter, and how much is the connectedness of Gandhāra distorted by physical and political geography? How can new research on quarries or other sources of artistic materials illuminate the development of art? To what extent did the artists themselves move around? How useful are notions of artistic centres and peripheries within such a small region?

Looking at the inner workings of Gandhāran art in a spatial framework may help us to reconstruct how the dissemination of imagery and forms occurred. We might therefore consider how artists, their products and materials, and their customers interacted in relation to one another and their environment. For

example, we can consider the differences and similarities in art produced in the same period, both at specific and different sites within and between the Peshawar valley, the Swat valley, the Taxila valley, and Afghanistan. This is to say nothing of the wider geographical context of 'Greater Gandhāra' and other parts of the Kushan empire.

The general issues and some of the specific answers to these sorts of questions are the subject of this book. The workshop on which it is based ranged widely, but it is not possible for the contributions to address the geography of Gandhāran art comprehensively, or indeed to do more than scratch the surface of the problems summarized above. The papers that follow are, however, a starting-point, and a stimulus, for thinking about the regional shape and texture of the Gandhāran tradition.

The book is loosely divided into three parts. In the first chapter Jessie Pons adopts a broad view of the challenges and priorities of Gandhāran artistic geography. This programmatic study might serve as prolegomena for the study of the subject. It is complemented by Satoshi Naiki's discussion of contemporaneous stylistic and technical features in sculptures across the three main Gandhāran regions, the Swat valley, the Peshawar valley, and the Taxila valley. His work shows that while similar stylistic developments could be detected in all three regions, certain technical methods appear to have been confined to specific areas. Might this imply the greater mobility of artefacts than the artists who made them or vice versa? The second part of the book provides some of the granularity required to understand Gandhāran art on a micro-geographical level. The editors (and workshop organizers) were keen to emphasize some of the archaeological research on the ground which is being carried out continuously in Pakistan, and the contributions in this part offer short summaries of new material and fresh perspectives on specific localities in the greater Gandhāran region, including the Taxila valley (Muhammad Ashraf Khan), the Peshawar valley (Muhammad Habibullah Khan Khattak, Zarawar Khan), the Swat valley (Pia Brancaccio and Luca Olivieri, Abdul Ghafoor Lone) and the Buddhist remains of Afghanistan with their flourishing tradition of stucco sculpture (Alexandra Vanleene). The final part of the book deals with a virtual geography of Gandhāran art, a view of geography at one remove through textual traces of place-names and the religious associations of particular places in both inscriptions and literary sources (Stefan Baums, Jason Neelis).

A common theme in these studies is the obstacle posed by fragmentary evidence, lost provenances, selective excavation and recording. We see Gandhāran art through a glass, darkly. But what the contributions also demonstrate is that sometimes our view can still crystalize into clarity.

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**Part 1**  
**Artistic Geographies**



# Gandhāran art(s): methodologies and preliminary results of a stylistic analysis

Jessie Pons

The sculptures produced during the first centuries of the Common Era in the region which broadly corresponds to north-west Pakistan and north-east Afghanistan share features which justify the designation of ‘a Gandhāran art’: the predominant use of schist and stucco, the ubiquitous depiction of Buddhist subjects, as well as the aesthetic language which results from the Indian, Iranian and Graeco-Roman heritage of the region. Despite this indubitable homogeneity, local iconographic and formal differences can be identified. Some of these local productions – first and foremost those of the Jambil-Saidu zone in the Swat valley and, to a lesser extent the region of Kāpiśā – have been subjected to extensive analysis (Faccenna 1962; Faccenna 1964; Faccenna 2001; Cambon 1996; Tsuchiya 1999-2000: 97-114; Tarzi 1999-2000: 83-96). In the last decade, isolated studies have also been dedicated to specific sites, such as Zar Dherī or Thareli (Koizumi 2011: 297-380; Naiki 2018). Others however, have remained largely overlooked or at least have received less systematic attention. This has not only made our appreciation of the diversity of Gandhāran artistic idioms and of their synchronic and diachronic relations incomplete, it also potentially undermines our methodological approaches to issues of style.

This paper addresses some of the methodological difficulties I have been confronted with in my research projects on Gandhāran art, both past and present. The first of these projects is my doctoral dissertation on the iconographic and formal variations of Buddhist stone sculptures. In support of a corpus of pieces discovered in archaeological contexts,<sup>1</sup> this project research attempted to provide an extensive, although not exhaustive, characterization of the many sculptural languages which constitute what is commonly referred to as Gandhāran art. The second project is the development of a database of the collection of Buddhist images in both stone and stucco preserved in the Dir Museum, Chakdara (DiGA: Digitization of Gandhāran Artefacts) and of technical tools to manage related metadata.<sup>2</sup>

The challenges I contended with relate to the terminology used by scholars of Gandhāran archaeology, art, and Buddhism to refer to their respective objects of study. What *exactly* do we designate when we use the terms that we use? This contribution will focus on two bodies of terms applied in the study of Gandhāran art, that which relates to geography and that which relates to style, its analysis and its description. It will successively discuss some of the discrepancies and uncertainties encountered with respect to these two topics. It will review methodological tools proposed by scholars of Gandhāran art and when needed – and if possible – suggest additional solutions developed within the frame of the abovementioned projects. Their application will be illustrated by selected case-studies primarily drawn from my doctoral research.

This reflection essentially stems from the analysis of Buddhist sculptures in stone. For this reason, it must be warned at the outset that the results of the stylistic analysis only shed incomplete light into the diversity of Gandhāran art and that the ensuing discussion of methodological questions is partial. Nevertheless, I suspect that scholars who work on different types of material, be they images in stucco or plaster, coins, or manuscripts, are not unfamiliar with some of these difficulties. They might also

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<sup>1</sup> The corpus counts approximately 3,500 pieces for which the provenance has been ascertained based on archaeological reports and museum or library archives (Pons 2011).

<sup>2</sup> For more information about the institutional framework of this project financed by the German Ministry of Higher Education and Research (BMBF) as well as its research and technical goals see: <<https://ceres.rub.de/en/research/projects/diga/>> (last accessed on 27.10.2018).

offer alternative solutions to similar challenges. With this in mind, this contribution is an invitation to unite forces to overcome these challenges and collectively reflect upon common standards used to analyse and describe Gandhāran material. These standards will not only facilitate scholarly exchange between the sub-disciplines of Gandhāran studies – archaeology, art history, numismatics, philology – but also eliminate the discrepancies which hinder our assessment of the material.

### **The geography of Gandhāran art: defining the frame of research**

In the preliminary phase of my doctoral project, I was mainly preoccupied with the following questions: what material to include in the corpus? Where should I set the geographical limits of the study? How to describe the geographical situation of the archaeological sites included? In other words, how to transcribe the information that a map or geographic coordinates provide? The terminology, or rather terminologies, used to define the geographical zone corresponding to the cradle of the so-called Gandhāran School as well as to reference the localization of archaeological sites often mix terms drawn from historical sources (i.e. classical, Indian, Chinese) with others relying on political contours or on reliefs. While these layers are not unrelated, they do not always overlap. This has made it difficult to understand what the term ‘Gandhāra’ precisely covers and to map archaeological sites therein. Added to this, the contours given to the field of research depend on the nature of the corpus and the sites under scrutiny. While the selection of objects is determined by the research questions pursued, it is also informed by art historical conventions which – at times – result from long-standing assumptions – or I dare say expectations – about Gandhāran art. The following section will address these interrelated issues. It will sketch the outlines of the school, examine the terms used to refer to this geographical zone and, at least in its first part, draw attention to possible dichotomies which may arise from diverging perceptions about the region and its art.

### **The geographical limits of the school, or how great is Gandhāra (and should we care)?**

The cradle of the Gandhāran School was first delineated by Alfred Foucher in *L’Art Gréco-Bouddhique du Gandhāra* (Figure 1). At the time of his writing during the first half of the twentieth century, knowledge of Gandhāran Buddhist archaeology primarily derived from the pioneering explorations of French and British officers serving for the Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the East India Company, and the British Government of Punjab (Lafont 1992; Errington 1987: 29–82). Based on the distribution of Buddhist sculptures ‘typical if not archetypal of this art’<sup>3</sup> excavated by the first decades of the twentieth century, Foucher described the cradle of the Gandhāran School as consisting of:

To mix ancient names [those of Chinese pilgrims] besides Gandhāra proper (the Peshawar District), Kapisa and the Kāboul Valley towards the West, Udyana (Bajaur, Dir, Swāt and Buner) towards the North. One must also add, on the left bank of the Indus, the districts of Hazāra and Rawāl-Pindi. Finally, on the southern side, stray finds have been made in the districts of Kohat and Bannou (probably Fa-hien’s Po-na), and even of Dêra-Ismail-Khân.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> ‘Encore s’agit-il ici de territoires où les fouilles ont fait retrouver les productions type sinon archétype de cet art’ (Foucher 1905-1951: I, 3). It is important to note that it is the sculptures which display the strongest classical features which constitute for Foucher and others an archetype of the school. One should also specify that their style is generally that which is prevalent in the Peshawar basin and as such they only reflect one aspect of the Gandhāran production. In spite of this, they have long been accepted as a benchmark on which to assess other Gandhāran products and the scope of influence of the school. The ideological assumptions which underlay the perception of the Gandhāran style in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as well as the new course that the discovery of sites in the Swat valley set for the definition of the style have been discussed by several scholars. See in particular: Taddei 1980: 1943-64; Abe 1995: 63-106; Falser 2015: 1-52; Willis 2015: 145-52 and Pons 2017: 199-219.

<sup>4</sup> ‘En résumé, l’aire géographique de l’école gréco-bouddhique, telle qu’elle est actuellement définie, comprend avant tout, pour mêler les noms anciens aux modernes, outre le Gandhāra proprement dit (district de Pêshawar), à l’Ouest le Kapiça et la vallée de Kāboul, et au Nord l’Udyāna (Bajaur, Dir, Swāt et Bounêr). Il faut y adjoindre encore, sur la rive gauche de l’Indus, les

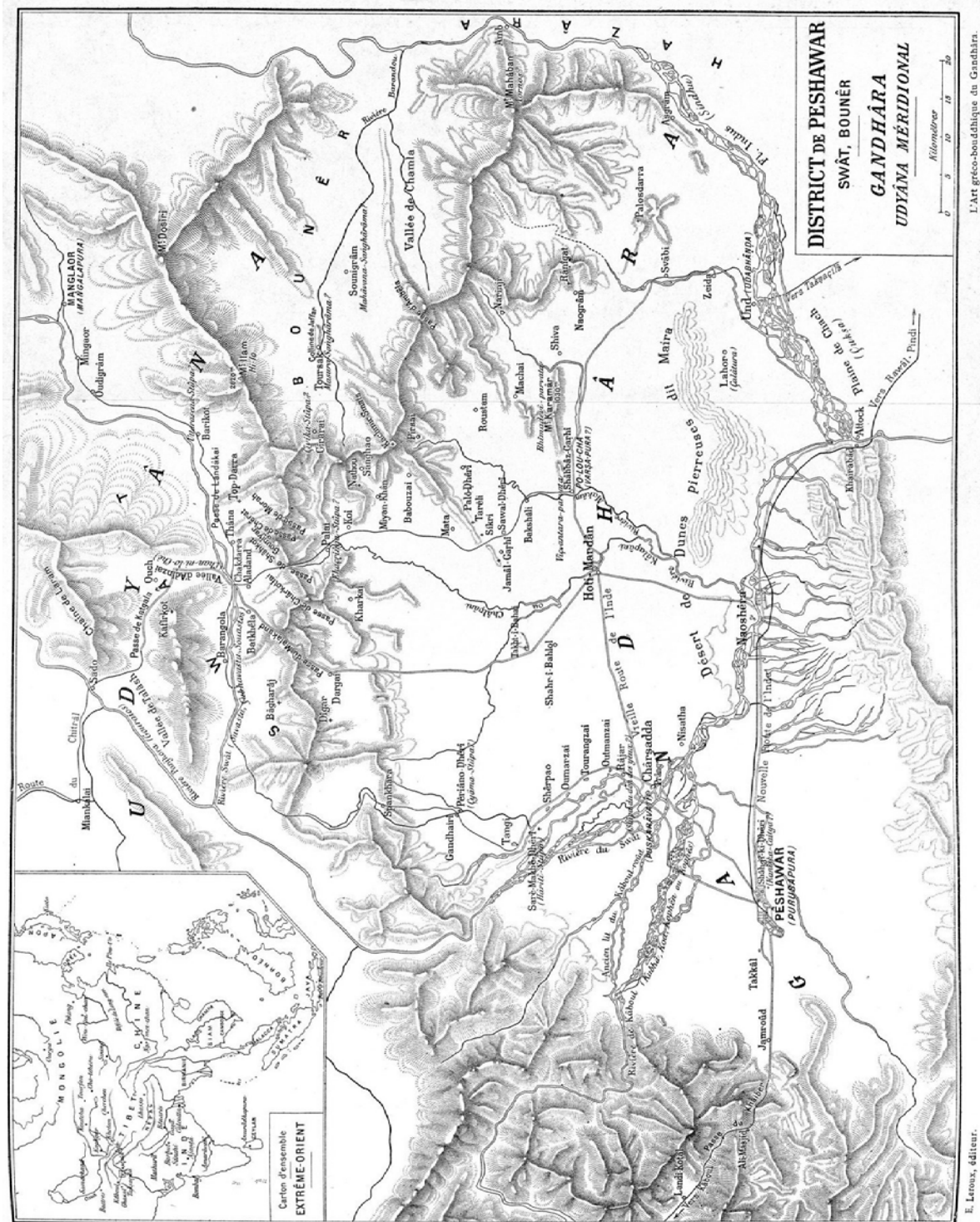


Figure 1. Map of Gandhāra after Alfred Foucher. (Photo: after Foucher 1905-1951.)

Archaeological discoveries made since have not called for a dramatic redefinition of this geographical frame (see map on pages vi-vii). The excavations conducted by the Afghan Institute of Archaeology in the province of Kāpīśā and the region of Kabul, the programmatic investigations of the Swat valley led by the Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan, as well as the surveys coordinated by different Pakistani teams in the districts of Dir and Bajaur have yielded stone sculptures which by and large substantiate Foucher's proposition. According to the present state of archaeological research, the western boundary is marked by the sites located at the confluences of the Panjshīr, Kabul and Logar rivers south of the Hindu Kush.<sup>5</sup> In the north, a concentric line running in a west-east direction is formed by the ruins of Kotkai in Barang Tehsil, Chatpat in Dir and Pānṛ and Butkara I along the Jambil tributary of the Swat River.<sup>6</sup> The excavation of the monastic complex of Zar Ḍherī as well as the identification of ten Buddhist sites following a preliminary archaeological survey push the eastern boundary eastwards to the Siran river.<sup>7</sup> As for the south-eastern limit, although Saifur Rahman Dar sought in 2007 to extend the geographical frame to the left bank of the Jhelum river, on account of six Buddhist images discovered at the sites of Mehlan, Patti Koti, Burarian, Cheyr and Qila Ram Kot (Dar 2007: 45-59),<sup>8</sup> evidence remains insufficient to support his conclusions.<sup>9</sup>

For the last two decades, it has become customary to refer to the cradle of the Gandhāran School or the 'artistic province' (Zwalf 1996: 11)<sup>10</sup> as 'Greater Gandhāra'. The expression was coined by Richard Salomon in his book *Ancient Buddhist Scrolls from Gandhāra*, published in 1999. It designates the geographical zone with a shared political and cultural history resulting from being incorporated into 'the several Indo-Greek, Indo-Scythian, Indo-Parthian, and Kuṣāṇa empires' and from 'their adoption of the distinctive eclectic styles of Gandhāran art as well as by their use of the Gāndhārī language'. It comprises:

besides Gandhāra proper, several neighboring regions, particularly the Swat and other river valleys to the north, the region around the great city of Taxila to the east, and the eastern edge of Afghanistan to the west. These, and later on other, more distant regions as well, came under the cultural influence of Gandhāra proper [...] (Salomon 1999: 3)

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districts de Hazāra et de Rawāl-Pindi. Enfin, du côté du Sud, des trouvailles occasionnelles ont été faites dans les districts de Kohat et de Bannou (probablement le Po-na de Fa-hien), et même de Dēra-Ismaīl Khān' (Foucher 1905-1951: I, 12-13).

<sup>5</sup> Some of the most famous sites which have produced stone sculptures traditionally associated with the Kushan period are Shotorak (Meunié 1942), Paitava (Cambon 1996: 13-28), Koh-e-Mohri in Kham-i-Zargar (Mustamandi & Mustamandi 1968: 67-79) and Mes Aynak. The preliminary results of the excavation of the Buddhist sites of Mes Aynak directed by the Afghan Institute of Archaeology with the support of the Délégation Archéologique Française en Afghanistan (DAFA) have been published in several isolated papers. To date, the most extensive are Engels 2011, Litecka & Engel 2013 and Klimburg-Salter 2018: 213-238.

<sup>6</sup> This overview limits itself to the largest sites or those which have produced the greatest number of sculptures. In 1995, the archaeological explorations of the Bajaur Agency by the Department of Archaeology and Museums, Government of Pakistan documented over thirty Buddhist sites. These are briefly described in ur-Rehman et al. 1996: 121-75. With respect to Dir, Ahmad Hasan Dani's archaeological reports on the sites clustered around Chakdara are gathered in the fourth volume of the journal *Ancient Pakistan*. See Dani 1968-1969a-f. The systematic survey of the Swat valley by the Italian team has resulted in numerous publications. Concerning the material from Butkara I see: Faccenna 1962; 1964 and Faccenna et al. 1993a for the report on Pānṛ. The analysis of the architectural features of sites in the vicinity (Loebanr, Jurjurai, Gharasa, Arapkanchina) has been published by Faccenna and Spagnesi 2014.

<sup>7</sup> The site of Zar Ḍherī had already been reported by Harold Hargreaves in 1922 (Hargreaves 1923) and placed under legal protection since. The results of the archaeological excavation (1995-2005) and of the survey of the neighbouring area (1992-1995) jointly carried out by the Tokyo National Museum Mission to Pakistan and the Department of Archaeology and Museums of the Government of Pakistan are published by the Tokyo National Museum Mission to Pakistan 2011.

<sup>8</sup> The identification of these sites, which have in fact been submerged since the construction of the Mangla dam in the 1960s, relies on the hearsay of British and Pakistani officials rather than proper archaeological investigation.

<sup>9</sup> The southern limit of the school had been set by Foucher at the Kohāt mounds so as to include the site of Rokhri where a few stucco images had been discovered. Foucher 1905-1951: I, 12-13, n. 1.

<sup>10</sup> The geographical frame which Wladimir Zwalf delimits for the artistic province in his introductory essay to the Gandhāran sculptures preserved in the British Museum broadly corresponds to that delineated here. One notable difference is the eastern boundary which he places at Taxila. The catalogue being published in 1996, the finds of Zar Ḍherī had not been yet fully uncovered.

This expression has largely been adopted by art historians, although not without criticism. The grounds for dissatisfaction may be set out as follows. Firstly, it is not clear what the geographical locus ‘Gandhāra proper’, systematically opposed to Greater Gandhāra, should be. Secondly, the limits of Greater Gandhāra differ according to different scholars. Not all would agree with those delineated above.

‘Gandhāra strictly speaking’ or ‘Gandhāra proper’ (Salomon 1999: 3; Behrendt 2004: 3. Klimburg-Salter 1995: 120-121) is invariably defined as the ancient name of the Peshawar basin.<sup>11</sup> Yet a review of ancient sources reveals that ancient Gandhāra was not everywhere the same. Achaemenid, Greek, and Indian sources are very imprecise and inconstant as to what the term Gandhāra and its cognates correspond.<sup>12</sup> It alternately designates a people, a province, and a kingdom. Herodotus, Strabo, and Ptolemy associate for instance the people<sup>13</sup> with a variety of places which have been tentatively identified with several territories ranging from a (relatively small) district between Attock and the Indus to a (much larger) zone east and south of Bactria.<sup>14</sup> The idea that ‘Gandhāra’ was the former name of the Peshawar basin finds justification in the travelogues of Chinese pilgrims, at least to some extent. In the report of Faxian 法顯 for instance, Gandhāvātī is indeed a realm distinct to those of Udyāna and Suheduo 宿呵多 (Swat), Takṣaśilā (Taxila), and Najie 那竭 (Nagarahāra), broadly situated beyond the hills that delimit the fertile basin of Peshawar.<sup>15</sup> And that some of the Buddhist establishments which he describes in the section on Gandhāvātī have been equated with remains of the Peshawar basin simply cannot be denied. That being said, the works of Max Deeg and Shōshin Kuwayama among others have revealed that Chinese sources are far from being unequivocal. This can be illustrated by two examples. As Deeg points out, Gandhāvātī and Puruṣapura are at the time of Faxian two separate kingdoms (Deeg 2005: 124). The latter is a vivid cultural and religious centre but not yet the capital of Gandhāra (Deeg 2005: 522-24). This, however, has become implicit in Song Yung 宋雲 (Beal 1884: cii) and is explicitly confirmed by Xuanzang 玄奘 (Rongxi 1996: 59). Kuwayama’s analysis of geographical data in the *Gaoseng zhuan* 高僧傳 (Biographies of Eminent Monks) compiled and completed by Huijiao 慧皎 in 530, adds another dimension to the problem (Kuwayama 2006: 107-34). The author attempts to identify the region called Jibin 罽賓, known as a great centre of Buddhism and goal of Buddhist pilgrimage. Other scholars had alternately equated Jibin with Kāpiśā and more frequently with Kashmir.<sup>16</sup> Kuwayama concludes that while this identification might prove correct for some sources, the ‘*Gaoseng zhuan*’s fourth- and fifth-century placement of Jibin coincides clearly with the narrower geographical definition of Gandhāra’ (Kuwayama 2006: 110). Central to his demonstration, is the localization of the shrine of the Buddha’s alms bowl – venerated by several monks – at Puruṣapura.<sup>17</sup> What emerges from this brief discussion

<sup>11</sup> Stressing that Gandhāra is a cultural entity distinct to those of Swat and Kāpiśā some scholars have argued that using the term to refer to the broader artistic production is misleading. Some, such as Susan Huntington or Farooq Swāti, have preferred to use other terms: Bactro-Gandhāran school (Huntington 2014: 116) and the Indus-Oxus School of Buddhist Art (Swāti 1997: 1-60).

<sup>12</sup> A helpful overview of these sources is provided by Zwalf (1996: 11, nn. 1-12). The author also tracks the history of the use of the term Gandhāra to designate the sculptural remains from the turn of the nineteenth century to the middle of the 1980s.

<sup>13</sup> These are referred to as the Gandarii by Herodotus (*Historiae* III.91.4), Gandaris and Gandaritis by Strabo (Strab. xv. p. 699 and xv. p. 697), and Gandarea by Ptolemy (7.1.4).

<sup>14</sup> William Smith’s *Dictionary of Greek and Roman Geography* provides a review of the geographical features occurring in Herodotus, Strabo, and Ptolemy and of their interpretation by several authors. An idea of the perplexing information that can be gleaned from classical sources can be gained by a cursory reading of the lemma ‘Gandarāe’ which can be accessed online at <<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus:text:1999.04.0064:entry=gandarāe-geo&highlight=gandarāe>> (last accessed on 14.09.2018).

<sup>15</sup> For the Chinese geographical terms found in Faxian’s account and their etymology as well as a discussion of their correspondence (or lack thereof) with the accounts of Song Yun see Deeg 2005: 118-226. For a reassessment of Greek sources from the sixth century BC to the rise of Roman imperial hegemony see Karttunen 1989 and 1997. Klaus Karttunen’s comparative study of Greek and Indian literary evidence shows that the ‘India’ of early Greek sources primarily related to the north-west (present-day Pakistan). The information culled from Greek and Indian sources, only concur to some extent – particularly in early sources – and pertain to the history of the geography of the region, its history and customs.

<sup>16</sup> A brief overview of other interpretations based on sources of the Han 漢, Sui 隋, Tang 唐 and North and South Dynasties periods by Sylvain Lévi, Édouard Chavannes, L. Shiratori and Luciano Petech is provided by Kuwayama (2006: 128, n. 14).

<sup>17</sup> In this respect, Kuwayama builds upon his previous work on the Buddha’s bowl and its relevance for the development of

of primary sources is that the terms used to refer to the area which scholars sometimes designate as ‘Gandhāra proper’ as well as its contours have shifted as knowledge of its geography and of its political and religious history changed over time.

Regardless of the terminology chosen to refer to the broader artistic province,<sup>18</sup> scholars are sometimes at odds over its limits. The Greater Gandhāra of philologists, or at least of Salomon, extends beyond the western foothills of the Hindu Kush and the Karakorum Highway to include parts of Bactria and even parts of the region around the Tarim Basin (Figure 2). As Salomon specifies in *The Buddhist Literature from Ancient Gandhāra*, ‘[t]hus Greater Gandhāra can be understood as a primarily linguistic rather than a political term, that is, as comprising the regions where Gāndhārī was the indigenous or adopted language’ (Salomon 2018: 11). Accordingly, it includes places such as Bamiyan where over two hundred of fragments of manuscripts in Gāndhārī have been discovered along with a larger group of manuscripts in Sanskrit.<sup>19</sup> Bamiyan has however fallen outside the scope of studies dedicated to the Gandhāran School of art. Foucher excluded Bamiyan from the geographical frame of the school because of its distinct artistic language, characterized as Central Asian (Foucher 1942-1947, 2: 307-8). Zemporaryalāi Tarzi recognizes the contribution of Gandhāran models in the formation of the artistic language of the site (Tarzi 1977: 125-9). Yet the bulk of the production being later than the Kushan dynasty<sup>20</sup> – to which the heyday of Gandhāran art is traditionally associated – he does not include Bamiyan in Gandhāra. Tarzi does not seem to attribute it to a broader artistic province other than that of the Valley of Bamiyan. To Klimburg-Salter however, Bamiyan is an expression of the art of the Hindu Kush and reflects ‘the earliest phase of the Śāhi art of historical northwest India’ (Klimburg-Salter 1989: 137-8).<sup>21</sup>

This excursus into the linguistic definition of Greater Gandhāra touches upon issues with which art historians are confronted. It raises the question of the scope of influence of Gandhāran artistic models, of the distinction between local production (i.e. ‘indigenous’) and products of importation (i.e. ‘imported’), and how the relationship between sites located in the Peshawar basin, long assumed to reflect the quintessence of the School,<sup>22</sup> and those situated at the periphery is envisaged. This, ultimately, impinges on the limits given to the artistic province. In what follows, I would like to consider one case, that of Tepe Sardar, which encapsulates several of these issues. It will further illustrate how assumptions about the nature of Gandhāran art might determine the inclusion or exclusion of a site.

The Buddhist sanctuary of Tepe Sardar is located four kilometres south-east of the city of Ghazni on a hill dominating the Dasht-i Manara plain (see map on pages vi-vii, lower left corner).<sup>23</sup> The site, which was discovered in the late 1950s and systematically excavated by the Italian Archaeological Mission in Afghanistan between the late 1960s and the late 1970s, yielded an important sculptural production in unbaked clay as well as some pieces in stucco.<sup>24</sup> Scholars have adopted different attitudes toward

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Gandhāra as a prominent Buddhist centre (Kuwayama 1990: 945-978).

<sup>18</sup> The extent of the latter broadly corresponds to the geographical zone covered by the ancient realm of Gandhāvati as well as those of Udyāna, Suheduo 宿呵多, Takṣaśilā and Najie 那竭.

<sup>19</sup> Most of the manuscripts are now in the Schøyen collection and the rest is distributed between the Hirayama Institute and the Genshu Hayashidera in Japan (Allon 2008: 168-70).

<sup>20</sup> The excavations conducted by Tarzi at the Oriental Monastery in 2003-2004 yielded Kushan-type pottery and confirmed the early occupation of the site. However, no structural or sculptural finds can be securely attributed to this period (Tarzi 2012: 50).

<sup>21</sup> The Buddhist complexes of Folādi, Kakrak, Fondukistan and Nigār constitute other expressions of the art of the Hindu Kush.

<sup>22</sup> See note 3.

<sup>23</sup> Foucher suspected that the domain which he had circumscribed could potentially extend in this direction. Yet, at the time of his writing, no archaeological exploration had uncovered the remains of the numerous Buddhist establishments reported by Xuanzang (Foucher 1905-1951: I, 3, 9).

<sup>24</sup> Excavations were resumed in 2003 and stopped again due to security reasons. For a review of the archaeological campaigns at Tepe Sardar and of the evidence of the site see Filigenzi 2009: 41-57.



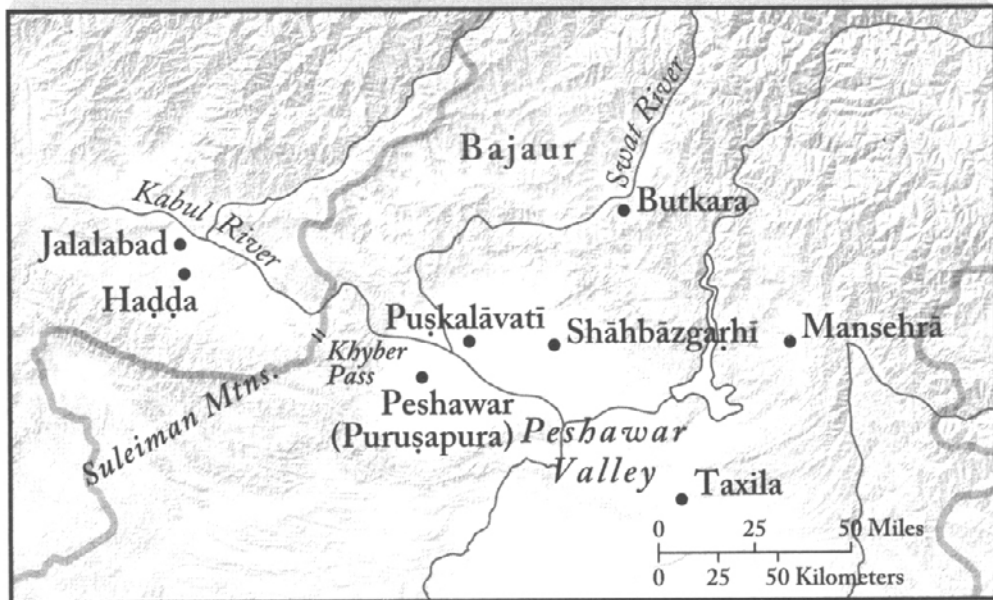
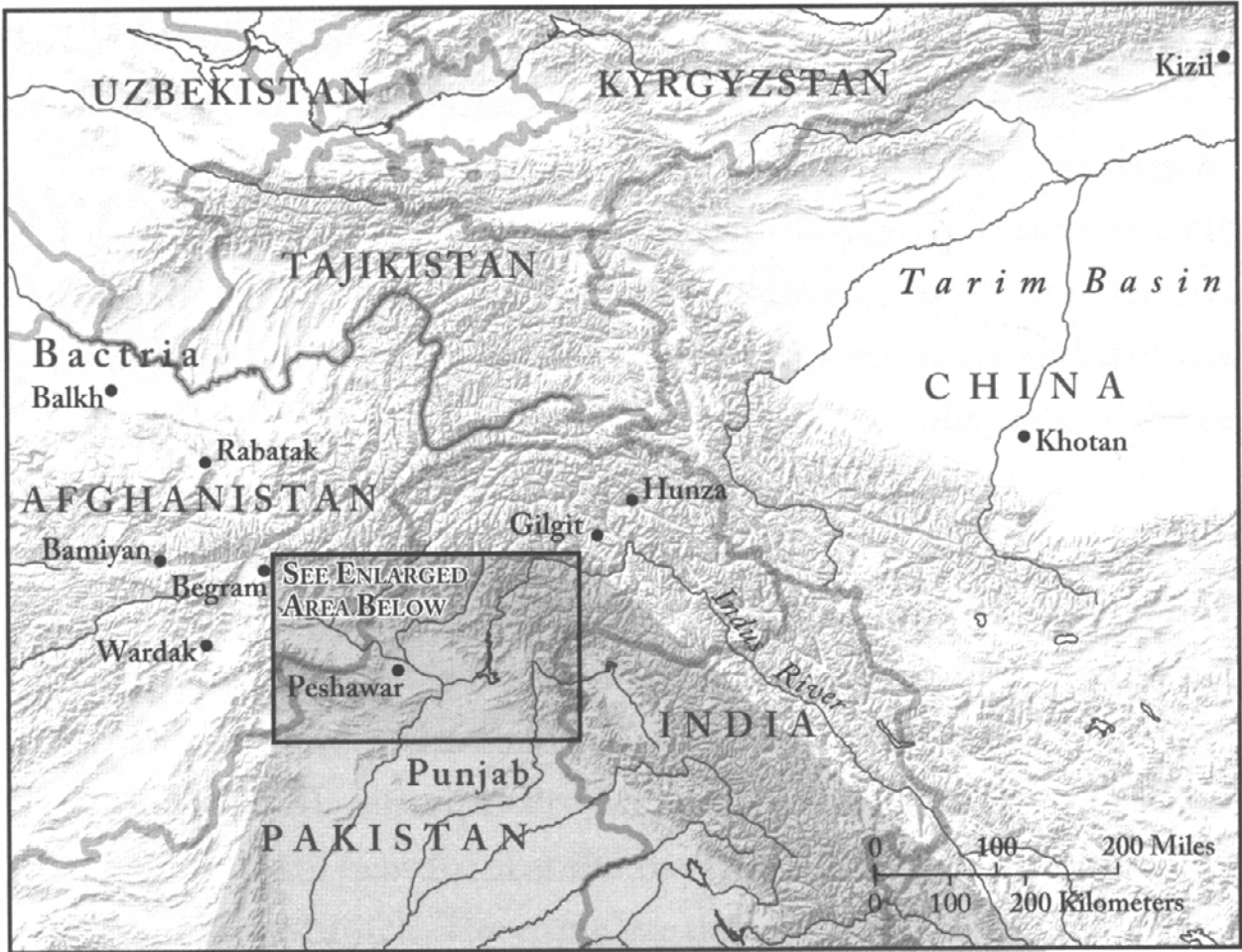


Figure 2. Map of Greater Gandhāra after Richard Salomon.  
(Photo: after Salomon 2018: map 1; © Courtesy of Wisdom Publications.)

this corpus. Wladimir Zwalf, for instance, does not rule out that the clay sculptures associated with late Kushan coinage might invite us to reconsider the southern limits of the artistic province generally set in the Kabul valley. He does not firmly argue for it either.<sup>25</sup> Kurt Behrendt includes the site in his definition of Greater Gandhāra and integrates the finds in his chronological assessment of images in stucco and clay (Behrendt 2004: 21, 277-81). In his review of Behrendt's monograph, Gérard Fussman is hesitant though he does not clearly state the reasons for his hesitation.<sup>26</sup> In fact, scholars hardly ever articulate what motivates the inclusion or the exclusion of Tepe Sardar within the artistic province. One may only speculate that the ambiguity lays in the fact that being composed of images in clay and stucco, the corpus from Tepe Sardar does not match our traditional understanding of Gandhāran art as being – essentially – a production in stone. A second related concern is the issue of dating. The occupation of the site spans from the Kushan period to the late eight/ninth century but evidence is too flimsy to reconstruct a detailed chronological frame for the early – Kushan – period to which the heyday of Gandhāran art is normally attributed. In consequence, Tepe Sardar is situated at the periphery of the artistic province not only geographically but also from the perspective of art historical conventions. It belongs to what Filigenzi calls 'the vague domain of negative nomenclature such as *non-* or *post-*' (Filigenzi 2010: 390). And yet, she argues that the corpus of Tepe Sardar informs us about significant developments in Gandhāran art. In this respect, Filigenzi examines the stucco sculptures from Butkara I *in light of* the material from Tapa Sardar. She identifies the reoccurrence of close parallels between two distinct stylistic groups present at each site – respectively characterized by Hellenistic features and features reminiscent of Gupta images – and attributed to two periods. A date 'earlier – or certainly not later – than the 5th century' is attributed to the first group while the second group can be dated between the seventh and the eighth century. The material from *both* sites, she stresses, thus illustrates an evolution of the stylistic models. Taken together, the evidence from Butkara I *and* Tepe Sardar not only sheds light on the crucial issue of the transition from stone to stucco, but also compels us to reassess the material from other sites, such as Taxila (Filigenzi 2010: 389-406).

In the case of Tepe Sardar, the inclusion or exclusion of the site and its corresponding corpus is determined by notions of materiality (clay and stucco 'instead of' stone) and date. In other instances, say rock carvings, a different criterion – medium (a stone boulder or rock monument 'instead of' of a hewed stone block) – might be at play. Their date also being fairly late (sixth/seventh century) these do not conform with the taxonomy of Gandhāran art, although they offer a window into the changing face of Buddhism in the region. On the basis of the rock monuments of Jare near Tirat (Filigenzi 2015: 218-9), the northernmost examples documented, the limits of Gandhāra could subsequently extend to the upper section of the Middle Swat Valley. Though I fear that I might be making the matter more complicated or the problems more dramatic than they are by restating the obvious, I contend that the framework within which Gandhāran art is approached is worth discussing in this context. Although it might not matter all that much whether one uses 'Gandhāra' or 'Greater Gandhāra', it is important to bear in mind that the terms which we chose and the conventions we rely upon, however helpful and necessary they are, can be loaded with misconceptions and assumptions about the objects they designate.<sup>27</sup> These inform our selection of the objects upon which the analysis of the school relies and potentially engender discrepancies in our

<sup>25</sup> 'Although the Kābul valley is generally the southern limit of sites, in Afghanistan Tapa Sardār near Ghazni has yielded clay sculpture of Gandhāra type associated with late Kuṣāna coinage [...]. Zwalf 1996: 11. The author lists additional sites where sculptures have been found and which could potentially amend the southern limit of the school but does not clearly voice his opinion.

<sup>26</sup> 'As for Ghazni, if it is to be included in Kurt Behrendt's "Greater Gandhāra [...]".' (Fussman 2004: 238).

<sup>27</sup> Commenting on this contribution in private correspondence, Anna Filigenzi underlined the problem of the unevenness of the level of information, documentation, and investigation methods which prevents us from formulating a more appropriate definition which 'may do justice to the multiple voices of this artistic phenomenon.' Until better knowledge about single sites or clusters of sites is gained, the old conventional term 'Gandhāra' is preferable lest we substitute 'a historicized, though unsatisfactory definition, with other unsatisfactory definitions lacking the critical neutrality with which 'Gandhāra' is being presently used.' Private communication: 25.11.2018.

perception of its geographical frame. They impinge upon how the synchronic and diachronic relationships between the various productions are defined, how questions of diffusion patterns are articulated, and how broader comparisons between visual and textual corpora are put into operation. Ultimately, these discrepancies bear consequences for the conclusions which we draw.

### Referencing the localization of archaeological sites

During the preliminary inventory for my PhD research, I was confronted by an unexpected difficulty related to the definition of archaeological sites. By ‘definition’ I mean something as straightforward as the designation by a name and their precise geographic localization. The tumultuous history of the region which was under British rule and which then became a province of Pakistan (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, known as the North-West Frontier Province until 2010), as well as the evolution of the structure of the institutions in charge of the study and preservation of its archaeological heritage, complicate the reconstruction of the archaeological map. For instance, between 1902 and 1947, Gandhāran archaeology has fallen within the scope of no fewer than four of the Circles of the Archaeological Survey of India: the Northwestern Provinces and Central Provinces Circle and the Panjab, Baluchistan and Ajmer Circle from 1902 to 1906; and the Frontier Circle (i.e. Northwest Frontier Province and Baluchistan) and the Northern Circle (i.e. United Provinces, Panjab, Ajmer, Kashmir, and Nepal) from 1906 to 1947. Information about a given site must in consequence be retrieved from the corresponding annual archaeological reports. But beyond the mere practical irritations it causes, this complex situation may elicit misconceptions and misunderstandings of the type that the two examples below seek to illustrate.

The first example is that of the so-called Yusufzai country. This term – the name of a Pashtun tribe – is at times equated with Buner or designates the area where the sites of Mala Tāngi, Mīr Jān, Shangao, Nathu, Rhode Tope, Koī Tāngi and Miān Khān are located. This equation presumably relies on the activity report of Major H. H. Cole, Curator of Ancient Monuments in India in the early 1880s, who discovered an important number of Buddhist sculptures at these sites. In the winters of 1883 and 1884, with the permission of the Government of Punjab, Cole opened a series of excavations ‘on the Swat and Buneyr frontier in the Yusufzai District’ (Cole 1885: 1) which had remained unexplored. As stated in his introduction to the *Memorandum on Ancient Monuments to Eusofzai*, Cole builds upon the work carried out by Henry Walter Bellew, Gottlieb Wilhelm Leitner, and Alexander Cunningham to name but a few, at the sites of Sahrī Bāhloḷ, Sawal Dheyr, Takht-i-Bāhī, Jamālgarhī, Kharkāi, Charsaḍḍa, and Karamar Hill (Cole 1883: 1).<sup>28</sup> Though the limits of the Yusufzai country shifted over time, it is clear at the time of Cole’s report that it was far from being limited to Buner. In fact, Cunningham gives a definition of this country, to which the fifth volume of his reports of the Archaeological Survey of India, published in 1875, is dedicated (Cunningham 1875: 7):<sup>29</sup>

Yusufzai is the common name of the country which is now occupied by the Yusufzai Afghans. It comprises the independent districts of Suwāt and Buhner, to the north of the Hazārno and the Mahāban range of mountains, and the level plains to the south of the mountains lying between the Suwāt River and the Indus. Its boundaries are Chitrāl and Yasin to the north, Bajāwar and the Suwāt River to the West, the Indus to the east, and the Kābul River to the south. The southern half of Yusufzai, which is now under British rule, is the only portion of the country that is accessible to Europeans.

In other words, the Yusufzai country (Figure 3) covers much of what some scholars refer to as Gandhāra ‘strictly speaking’. Consequently, the mention of ‘Yusufzai’ attributed to about one hundred of sculptures preserved in the India Museum in Kolkata provides no indication as to their precise provenance, let

<sup>28</sup> For an overview of the preceding excavations mentioned by Cole see Errington 1987.

<sup>29</sup> See also Zwalf 1996: 14.

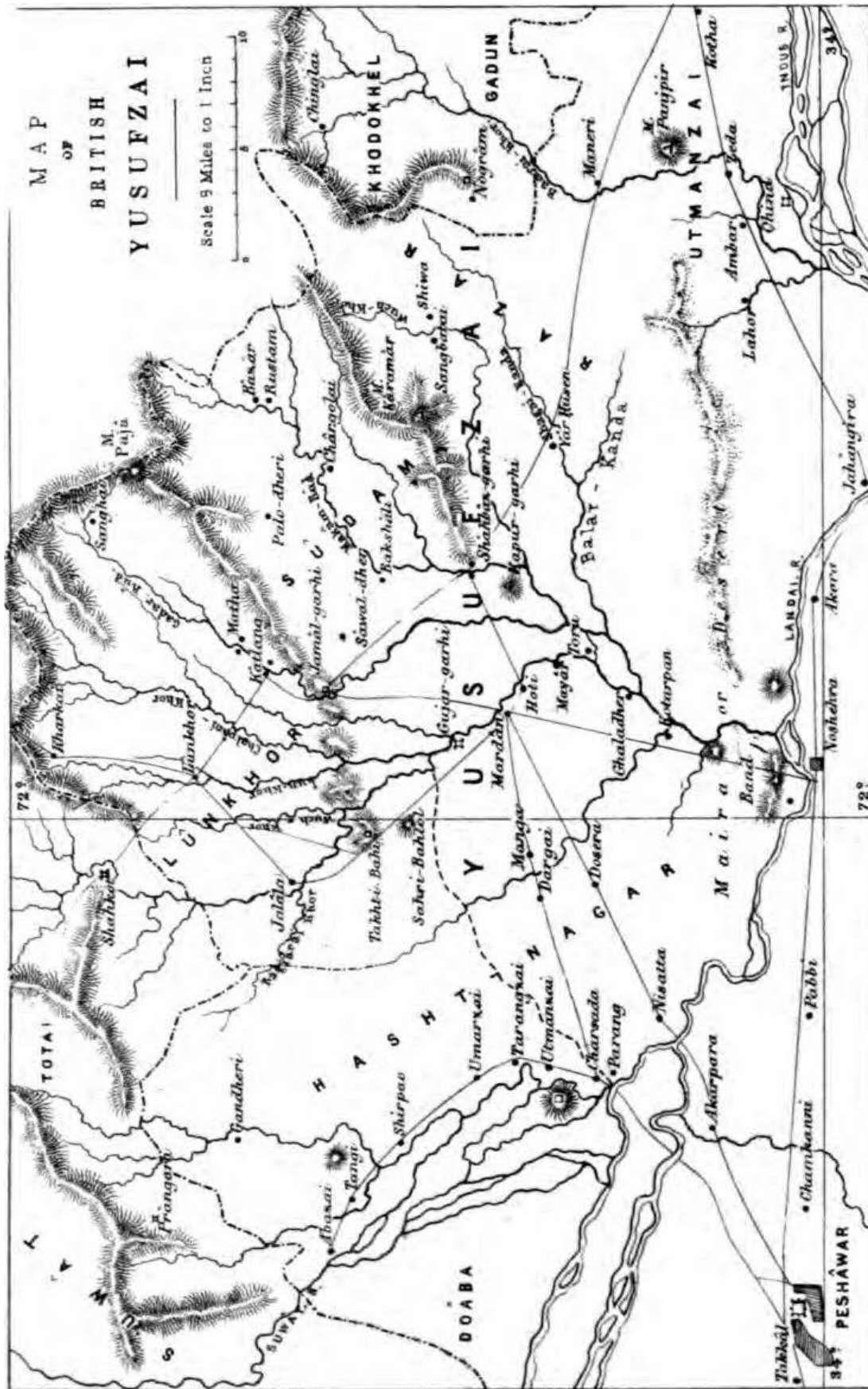


Figure 3. Map of British Yusufzai after Alexander Cunningham. (Photo: after Cunningham 1875: map II.)

alone Buner: the excavated sites by Cole are not located in Buner in the first place but in the north-east of the Peshawar basin (Sengupta & Das 1991: 59-69).<sup>30</sup>

Another disorienting example is related to generic toponyms in Pashto used to designate ancient ruins across the region. Among these are Kāfir Koṭ (fort of infidels), Gumbat (dome) and Gumbatuna (domes), or Nawāgai (new or small valley) which I would like to briefly consider. To most, Nawāgai is the name of a group of Buddhist ruins located on the road from Barikot to the Karakar Pass and Buner, half a mile before the village of the same name in the *tehsil* (sub-district) of Barikot. The ancient site was first cleared by Evert Barger and Philip Wright before independence (Barger & Wright 1941: 26) and more systematically excavated by the Department of Archaeology and Museums, Government of Pakistan (hereafter the Department of Archaeology) in the 1990s (Qamar 2004: 181-221). The toponym Nawāgai is however found in two other contexts. It is mentioned in the report of the *Archaeological Reconnaissance in Gandhara* conducted by the Department of Archaeology and Museum in 1991-1992 in the section dedicated to Bajaur Agency of the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (which became a District of the Province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in 2018). In this instance, Nawāgai is not only the name of a town but also that of a valley and a *tehsil* – on the same basis as Barikot – in which several ruins are found (Khan et al. 1999-2000: 13). To add to the nascent confusion, the same toponym also refers to a site identified during the archaeological survey of Buner by the Archaeology Department (2014-2015) near the village of Girārai in the Union Council of Ābkhel (Samad & Khan 2016: 13). To cut a complicated story short, the toponym Nawāgai applies to at least three distinct groups of ancient ruins – the documentation of which varies in degrees of precision – respectively located in the modern Districts of Swat, Bajaur, and Buner (the latter being a part of the Swat District until 1991!) of the Province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (see map on pages vi-vii).

The grounds for the scholar's perplexity are numerous and rather than enumerating them all, one might attempt to find solutions. The geographic coordinate system and GPS tracking obviously constitute a salutary instrument for mapping sites. There are several platforms from which one can retrieve the coordinates of sites across the world and of those located in Pakistan and Afghanistan in particular. The *Getty Thesaurus of Geographic Names® Online* as well as *GeoNames* are two geographical databases which have become standard in projects which include a digital component with a geo-spacing function. Yet the percentage of ancient sites (Buddhist and non-Buddhist) covered for the area corresponding to Gandhāra is negligible. Other independent projects which rely on a scientific collaboration network, more specifically concerned with the archaeology of Asian Buddhism (*Mapping Buddhist Monasteries*) or the archaeological heritage of Gandhāra (*The Archaeological Gazetteer of Gandhāra*), have designed tools that are more adapted to our field of research. Unfortunately, for lack of institutional support, these projects cannot ensure the systematic cataloguing of sites and of their related metadata, crucial to this kind of endeavour.

Within the frame of my doctoral research, a terminology that would transcribe the information provided by the aforementioned digital instruments needed to be developed to refer to the geographical units to which the sites belong. Sites may cluster around an area; this is for instance the case for Jamālgarhī, Thareli and Sikrī or for Sahrī Bāhlol, Takht-i-Bāhī and Muhammad Nāri. Furthermore, formal and iconographic patterns reoccur across the sculptural productions of clusters. In the first example, the majority of bodhisattvas are depicted with a soft or stylized knot divided by a web of ornament. This fashion distinguishes them from their counterparts from Sahrī Bāhlol and Takht-i-Bāhī who, in most cases, sport a *krobylos* (knot of hair). What name should we give to these two areas, as well as their respective sculptural languages? In my research, I have come down on the side of physical geography, which is more constant than historical or political geography, and formulated a terminology whereby the denomination is no longer determined by the name of people or modern frontiers but by that of

<sup>30</sup> Although it is true that a large portion of the sculptures excavated under the supervision of Cole were sent to the Indian Museum and might, potentially, come from the sites mentioned above, their entry into that specific collection was so poorly documented, that one should probably use caution before making any attribution.

rivers, mountains, and valleys. Accordingly, the ‘Middle Gadar Valley’ refers to the zone around which Jamālgarhī, Thareli and Sikrī cluster while the ‘Middle Kalpani Valley’ designates that in which Sahrī Bāhlol, Takht-i-Bāhī and Muhammad Nāri are located. An extensive list of these geographical units is given in the Appendix to this article.

### **From Gandhāran art to Gandhāran arts: what methods for stylistic analysis?**

In the second phase of my doctoral research, namely the assessment of the various sculptural languages and of their levels of relationship, I was concerned with new issues: how to characterize the material as objectively and as accurately as possible? How to name and categorize the sculptural languages reflected in the iconographic and formal variations? To what extent do they inform us about the dynamics of Gandhāran art, its modes of production and patterns of diffusion? The first of these questions, connected to the development of a fitting vocabulary, is in fact extremely relevant to digitization projects such as DiGA. Within the frame of these, the use of established ontologies is one of the criteria with which the digital concept should comply. These standard vocabularies guarantee the long-term availability of the information, ensure the cross-linking of collections of not only images but also of texts and facilitate their simultaneous analysis. Hence, they foster cross-disciplinary collaboration between archaeologists, art historians, numismatists, historians, and philologists. There exist several established ontologies used for the descriptions of architecture and works of art: *The Art & Architecture Thesaurus® Online* and *Iconclass* and, more specific to our discipline and discussed in more detail below, the *Repertory of Terms for Cataloguing Gandharan Sculptures* (hereafter *Repertory of Terms*). These tools focus in the main on iconographic motifs. While this is certainly an important aspect, one might question the extent to which a stylistic analysis which primarily relies on iconographic features can capture the multiplicity of Gandhāran sculptural expressions. A style results from certain iconographic choices but also from the treatment of the composition, particularly in the case of narrative episodes, the formal rendering (i.e. proportions, measurements, volumes) which is, at least partly, dependent upon material and technique. All these aspects must accordingly be taken into consideration.

The procedure, which encompasses several levels of analysis – ‘technical features, craftsmanship, extrinsic, typological and intrinsic, stylistic’ – was fully articulated by Domenico Faccenna in 2001 (Faccenna 2001: 30). This is, according to the author, ‘the most correct way’ not only to define the production of one site but also to reconstruct the synchronic and – on the basis of evidence of the re-worked reliefs and the few dated pieces – the diachronic links between the productions within one site. By applying this method to each artistic centre and comparing their production ‘proceeding in ever widening circles’, one may solve issues connected to the development of Gandhāran art. While the method found its fullest expression in the analysis of the sculptures of Saidu Sharif and Butkara I published in 2001,<sup>31</sup> it is worth exploring for the present purpose some of the tools now available to implement Faccenna’s programmatic approach.

### **The objective characterization of sculptures**

#### ***Iconography***

The work of Francine Tissot, Domenico Faccenna, and Anna Filigenzi has greatly contributed to the standardization of descriptions of iconographies. The typology developed by Tissot (1985) takes a broad range of categories into account and gives a detailed description for each of the types identified.<sup>32</sup> Yet

<sup>31</sup> The classification of the sculptures from Butkara I in three stylistic groups each composed of several series was published in 1962 and 1964 (Faccenna 1962; 1964). Their complete analysis however was not published until 2001 in the volume dedicated to the narrative friezes from Saidu Sharif (Faccenna 2001).

<sup>32</sup> The typology is dedicated to architecture and decor, costumes and hairstyles, jewellery, furniture and utensils.

it has received little attention outside French-speaking scholarship, though it constitutes the main reference work for the more widely used *Repertory of Terms* published in 2007 (Faccenna & Filigenzi 2007: 16). This project was born out of Faccenna's desire to create a digital catalogue for the sculptures of Gandhāran art. The development of a terminology as precise and consistent as possible that would allow for an objective description of the pieces and their systematic classification rapidly appeared as a prerequisite to the project Faccenna had envisioned. In view of this, the *Repertory of Terms* covers glossaries related to material (i.e. Parts 1 and 2: the sculptor's work and architecture) as well as to subject matter (i.e. Parts 3-12: decorative motifs, people, fauna, flora, weapons, musical instruments, ceremonial objects, everyday objects, furniture, and means of transport). One cannot stress enough how valuable this tool is. Yet, as signalled by Filigenzi, the coordinator of the project, the *Repertory of Terms* is not exhaustive and deserves to be further refined over time (Faccenna & Filigenzi 2007: 15). With this invitation in mind, one may suggest two areas which could be expanded.

Firstly, since the *Repertory of Terms* initially sought to facilitate the cataloguing of sculptures excavated by the Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan, its terminology primarily relies on material from the Swat valley. Although it gradually incorporated material from other regions and time-periods, certain motifs or figures – such as Vajrapāṇi – still await a more comprehensive treatment. The Buddha's companion – or rather, his attribute – is only dealt with in one place in the *Repertory of Terms* (Faccenna & Filigenzi 2007: 181). A typology of his modes of portrayal across Gandhāra would provide a substantial basis on which to reassess issues linked to his problematic nature. Secondly, the range of subject headings could be enlarged to include a terminology of Buddhist narratives (i.e. *jātakas* and episodes of the Buddha's last existence) illustrated on the reliefs as well as of the countless generic scenes such as those depicting the Buddha or bodhisattvas flanked by groups of monks, devotees, or donors. These three terms are often used interchangeably, though the reliefs undoubtedly convey distinct messages about the Buddha and his community of followers, as well as about Buddhist cosmology (Amato forthcoming). There is clearly no consensus on how to designate numerous scenes and yet, it is important to agree on how we refer to the objects of our comparisons.<sup>33</sup>

### **Narrative scenes**

With respect to narrative reliefs, a helpful methodology can be drawn from the works of Lolita Nehru, Vidya Dehejia, and Martina Stoye (Nehru 1989; Dehejia 1997; Stoye 2008: 1-35). None of these authors were occupied with the identification of regional variations. Yet despite the unrelated motivations of their research and regardless of whether one agrees with their respective conclusions, Nehru, Dehejia and Stoye altogether put forward a series of criteria which can be applied to the identification of workshops. Nehru sought to unravel the processes underlying the formation of the Gandhāra style and the assimilation of stylistic imports. In this respect, she examined three aspects: the treatments of the concepts of time, space, and the human figure (Nehru 1989: 15-28). The second is particularly valuable for our purpose. The analysis includes the distribution of space within a composition, its definition as a physical setting for narrative through the use of landscape elements, architectural features or interiors, and finally the rendering of spatial depth (Nehru 1989: 17-22).<sup>34</sup> Concerning Dehejia, she proposes to fulfil a desideratum in the study of ancient Buddhist art – primarily concerned with issues of chronology, stylistic development, and the identification of iconographies – and explores the 'manner of storytelling' (Dehejia 1997: vii). In her seminal investigation of the techniques by which Buddhist stories are

<sup>33</sup> Although largely descriptive and therefore lacking the synthetic quality to be included in a tool such as the *Repertory of Terms*, the stylistic study of Gandhāran Buddha images by Juhyung Rhi is worth mentioning in this context (Rhi 2008: 43-85). The five visual types he circumscribes across Gandhāra are treated by Rhi as 'synchronic units'. The identification of such units is, according to the author, a preliminary step to any investigation regarding the mutual relationships between productions.

<sup>34</sup> For additional contributions to the study of the treatment of space, and more specifically perspective, on Gandhāran reliefs see di Pascale Piccolino 1981: 12-25 and Bussagli 1984: 404-427.

communicated, Dehejia identifies seven modes of visual narration (Dehejia 1997: 3-35).<sup>35</sup> Although these are not strictly specific to South Asian art and equally found in other geographical contexts, the seven-part typology provides a valuable tool to deal with the corpus of ancient Buddhist art.<sup>36</sup> As for Stoye, her aim was to ascertain the source of inspiration for the visual formulation of Buddhist legends and more specifically of the ‘iconographic nucleus’, defined as the ‘basic and compulsory constellation to the depiction’ of the episode. She opposes the latter to the ‘picture periphery’ which includes optional sets of motifs which the artists may introduce according to their taste. These methodological tools not only enable the viewer to understand the artistic principles which lie beneath the visual rendering of Buddhist episodes, they also bring norms and codes in this rendering to light. By contrast, iconographic solutions which break away from these norms and codes become apparent and regional preferences discernible.

### **Material analysis**

Several petrographic surveys carried out since the 1990s have built upon the research by Liliane Courtois, David R. C. Kempe and Richard Newman (Courtois 1962: 107-13; Kempe 1982: 25-8; 1986: 79-88; Newman 1984; 1992: 163-4). The analyses of a selection of sculptures in the British Museum and the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Musée Guimet and the Museo Nazionale d’Arte Orientale ‘Giuseppe Tucci’ (Reedy 1992: 264-77; Cambon & Leclaire 1999: 135-47; Guida et al. 2015: 46-51) as well as well the survey of rock outcroppings and quarries in Buner and Swat (Di Florio et al. 1993: 63-74; Faccenna et al. 1993b: 257-70) have complemented the typology of lithotypes and the map of their potential quarry sites or zones. These analyses having been conducted on a limited number of sculptures (just under 230 objects in total), their results represent only a small portion of the true range of Gandhāran lithotypes and possible sources of supply. Nevertheless, they demonstrate their potential for the identification of workshops and of exchange patterns across Gandhāra. For instance, the analyses of the pieces kept in Rome show a correlation between the stylistic groups of Saidu Sharif and the types of stones employed. Incidentally, they point to an evolution – in this case a reduction – in the range of stone types used at this site. The same petrographic investigation also suggests that sculptural materials are not necessarily homogeneous within a cluster of sites. In fact, those found at Pānṛ and Saidu Sharif seem to differ to some extent (Guida et al. 2015: 46-51; Giuliano 2015: 17-20). Furthermore, the investigations carried out on the English and French collections have highlighted lithotypes specific to each region. The sculptures from Kāpiśā excavated by the DAFA (Délégation Archéologique Française en Afghanistan) for example, are made in a ‘schist quartzeux, calcaire et chloriteux’ (quartz-calcite-chlorite schist) and are clearly distinguishable from those excavated at Haḍḍa. These are made in dark chloritoid schist (Cambon & Leclaire 1999: 141), common for sculptures from the Peshawar basin. Additional analysis on this latter group and their comparison with local extraction quarries on the one hand and with pieces from the Peshawar Basin on the other hand would help determine whether these sculptures were produced locally or – as it was long-assumed – imported from another region (Dagens 1964: 11-39). The map of Gandhāran lithic materials deserves to be complemented by the data that investigations on other collections of sculptures from known archaeological contexts would yield. This would not only shed light on issues of intra-regional distinctions and on the networks of exchanges across Gandhāra, it would also provide a tool to ascertain the provenance of undocumented pieces.

### **Production techniques**

Several studies dedicated to tool marks and assemblage techniques published in the last decade have shed light on manufacturing processes on a micro level. In his careful reassessment of the unfinished

<sup>35</sup> Dehejia’s seven modes of visual narration are: monoscenic narrative: theme of action; monoscenic narrative: being in state versus being in action; continuous narrative; sequential narrative; synoptic narrative; conflated narrative; narrative networks.

<sup>36</sup> For critical discussion of Dehejia’s methodological approach see Brown 2001: 355-358.



panel from Takht-i-Bāhī, Peter Rockwell identified several stages of carving, progressing from laying out the outline of the composition to finishing the panel (Rockwell 2006: 157-79). He observes that different craftsmen were respectively in charge of the overall design, chiselling the panel, and carving out the final details, a task for which they enjoyed relative freedom. According to Rockwell, '[t]he work crew would then be a group with different specializations' (Rockwell 2006: 177). The hypothesis that Gandhāran sculptors were not only diversified but also specialized in certain tasks or techniques is confirmed by the study of tool marks left on thirty sculptures from Saidu Sharif, Pānṛ, and Butkara I (Vidale et al. 2015: 45). This provides evidence on the organization of labour both within specialized workshops and on the building yard. The identification of the marks left by different types of chisels, burin, caliper or compass, and drill points to a standardization of the carving technique into a sequence of steps carried out by distinct craftsmen, some of whom were specialized in the production of luxurious items. This division of labour enabled artists to meet a demand for different types of objects that was rapidly increasing during the first centuries of the Common Era. The results that these analyses yielded are of enormous potential not only for understanding the manufacturing processes of Gandhāran sculptures but also for the identification of workshops. As the contribution by Pia Brancaccio and Luca Maria Olivieri in this volume demonstrates, technical expertise sometimes went hand in hand with a specialization in depicting a selection of subjects or scenes. This correlation points to the existence of workshops – in this case on the left bank of the Upper Swat – dedicated to the production of specific reliefs.

### **Formal treatment**

Formal treatment is a delicate matter. Opinions about the quality of a piece having largely dominated the debate around the chronology of Gandhāran art during the first half of the twentieth century, one may mistrust the appliance of this essentially value-based judgment in an analysis which strives for objectivity. The proportion of figures, the rendering of their anatomy and physiognomy, the treatment of the drapery in relation to the volumes of the body have often been interpreted as tokens of the antiquity or the maturity of a piece.<sup>37</sup> As demonstrated by Faccenna's meticulous examination of the sculptures from Saidu Sharif and Butkara I, these features are paramount to discern the mark of an artisan and situate a sculpture or a group of sculptures in their larger artistic context. Reviewing in detail the stylistic vocabulary he employs would be unnecessarily cumbersome in this context and one can only refer to Faccenna's analysis, a true literary *tour de force*. Rather, in the following, I would like to show how a method inspired by the contributions of the scholars mentioned above can help to highlight local specificities in the treatment of narrative episodes. I will concentrate on one case-study drawn from my doctoral research, namely depictions of the Mahāparinirvāṇa. In this respect, I will attempt to situate in its broader stylistic context a relief from Marjanai (Figure 4),<sup>38</sup> a site located in the Middle Swat Valley, on the right bank of the River Swat about 21 km northwest of Mingora.

### **Application**

The image carved on the right of the frieze depicts the Buddha completely wrapped in a shroud, lying on his right side on a bed with turned legs. The mode of portrayal is also found on a relief from Butkara I (Figure 5) where the Buddha is seen from the back. By virtue of this motif, the scene may evoke the Buddha's obsequies rather than his passing. However, the relief from Marjanai differs from other visual renderings of this episode, at least on reliefs for which the provenance is ascertained. Another relief from Butkara I (Figure 6) shows the Buddha wrapped in the shroud and lying on a bed or a table which

<sup>37</sup> I have dealt elsewhere, in connection to the sculptures from Sikri, how stylistic features have had variable chronological implications for different authors (Pons 2017: 206-09).

<sup>38</sup> For a photograph of the piece see Khan 1995: 55, pl. 17a.

is lifted by two figures. On other reliefs from Koī Tangi (Figure 7)<sup>39</sup> and Sanghao (Figure 8), the Buddha is replaced by the closed coffin and the bed or table is on the ground. Neither of these illustrations depicts a group of figures in the foreground as is the case at Marjanai. In fact, the position of the protagonist, assumed to be Ānanda, lying on the ground, is found in most representations of the Mahāparinirvāṇa. The rest of the composition arranged in superimposed registers is also comparable to other illustrations of the Buddha's passing. Based on what precedes, one may suggest that the relief from Marjanai either gives an original rendering of the Mahāparinirvāṇa following the monoscenic mode of narration or it conflates the Mahāparinirvāṇa and the Buddha's obsequies (i.e. conflated narrative). It would achieve this by simultaneously depicting the Buddha wrapped in the shroud and Ānanda grieving.

From a formal point of view, the relief from Marjanai belongs to the 'drawing style' identified at sites in the Jambil-Saidu zone. It is characterized by the prevalence of a feeling for line over volume, a treatment of drapery folds in parallels grooves and angular faces (see also the contributions by Naiki and Lone in this volume). Yet the resemblance goes beyond the affiliation to a same stylistic group. As a matter of fact, some of the reliefs from Butkara I seem to be directly quoted in the dividing frames of reliefs belonging to the same narrative sequence as the panel under consideration. The donors dressed in a long jacket and in trousers of the Central Asian type (Figure 9) or in a *paridhāna* and an *uttarīya* (Figure 4) recall the masculine figures typical of the drawing style at Butkara I (Figures 10 and 11). As for the donors and devotees sculpted on the reliefs depicting the bath of Siddhārtha Gautama (Figure 12)<sup>40</sup> and the infant going to school (Figure 13), their jackets and trousers with decorated bands and their



Figure 4. The Mahāparinirvāṇa; relief from Marjanai. Peshawar, University Museum (15). (Drawing: Jessie Pons.)

<sup>39</sup> For a good reproduction of the piece see Klimburg-Salter 1995: no. 180.

<sup>40</sup> For a photography of the piece see Khan 1995: pl. 10b.



Figure 5. *The Mahāparinirvāṇa*; relief from Butkara I. Saidu Sharif, Swat Museum (B3591). (Photo: after Faccenna 1962: II.2, pl. CCLXXXVIIIa. Courtesy of ISMEO – Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan.)



Figure 6. *The Buddha's obsequies*; relief from Butkara I. Saidu Sharif, Swat Museum (B2549 and B7136). (Photo: after Faccenna 1962: II.2, pl. CCLXXXVIIIb. Courtesy of ISMEO – Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan.)

Phrygian caps display striking similarities with those worn by a dancer on a fragment from Butkara I (Figure 14). The position of the devotee on Figure 12 undoubtedly draws from the latter image. The imitation is however maladroit, and these reliefs depart from Butkara I in their bad management of space and their crammed compositions. The awkward treatment of foreshortening and of perspective is visible in the representation in the exaggerated elongation of human figures stretched across the height of the relief. The positions of the figures with the hip depicted in front view and the legs in three-quarter view bespeak clumsy craftsmanship.

The filiation between the reliefs from Marjanai and the models from Butkara I was previously noted by Filigenzi. According to her, the group from Marjanai represents a 'local variant' of the drawing style identified at Butkara I (Filigenzi 2006: 68, n. 2). But how to make sense of this 'local variant' and position the production of Marjanai in relation to that of Butkara I? Do these borrowings speak of 'provincial streams' whose models are those of the main artistic centres of Butkara I and Saidu Sharif, as Filigenzi suggests? Or do they simply bear testimony to the vivid impression that the images from Butkara I left on an unskilful craftsman? In truth, the exact dynamics which underlay the filiation between Marjanai and Butkara I may never fully unfold. However partial our grasp of the ties between artistic production in different places will always be, it is important to ponder a terminology to name and classify the numerous sculptural languages.

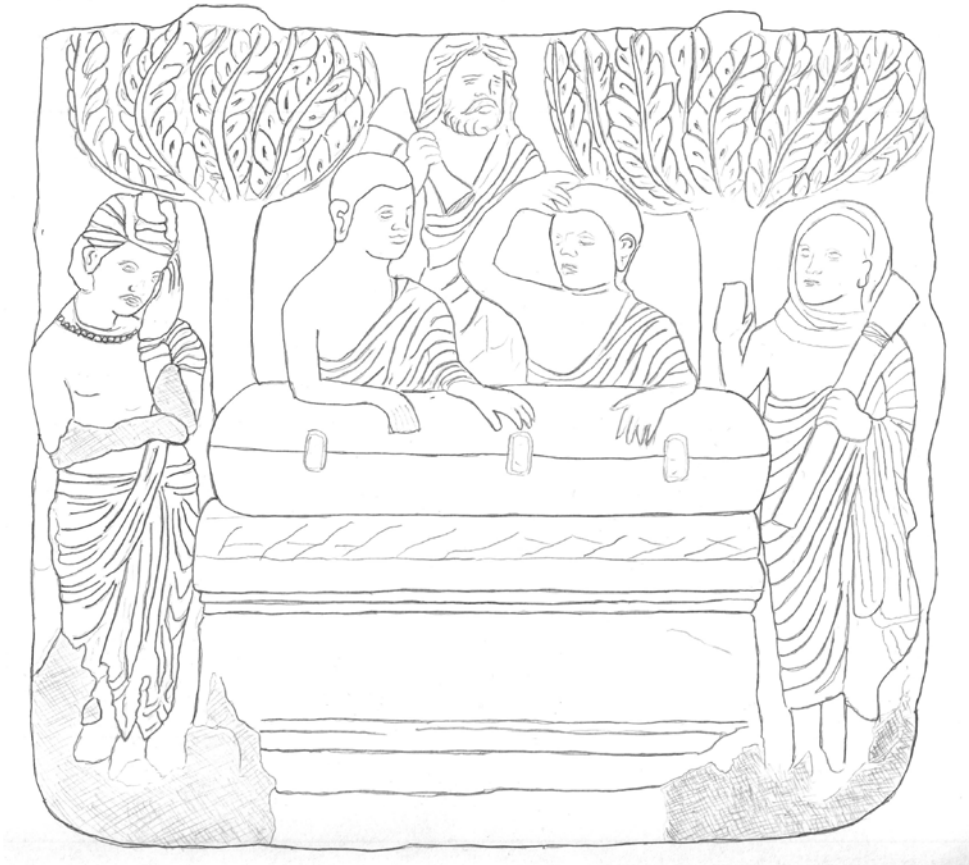


Figure 7. The Buddha's obsequies; relief from Kōi Tangi. Calcutta, Indian Museum (2402).  
(Drawing: Jessie Pons.)



Figure 8. The Buddha's obsequies, relief from Sanghao, Lahore Museum (1111).  
(Photo: after Foucher 1905-1951: I, fig. 285.)



Figure 9. *The return to Kapilavastu; relief from Marjanai. Peshawar, University Museum (MJN-1983-1-86). (Photo: after Drachenfels & Luczanits 2008: no. 150; P. Oszvald © KAH Bonn and Peshawar University Museum.)*



Figure 10. *Donor; statue from Butkara I. Saidu Sharif, Swat Museum (B2598). (Photo: after Faccenna 1962: I.3, pl. CDXXX. Courtesy of ISMEO - Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan.)*



Figure 11. *Donor; statue from Butkara I. Rome, Museo Nazionale d'Arte Orientale (539). (Photo: after Faccenna 2001: pl. XCIIIa. Courtesy of ISMEO - Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan.)*



Figure 12. *Detail of a devotee on a relief of the bath of Siddhārtha Gautama; relief from Marjanai. Peshawar, University Museum (11). (Drawing: Jessie Pons.)*



Figure 13. The young Siddhārtha Gautama going to school, relief from Marjanai; Peshawar, University Museum (MJN-1983-1-87). (Photo: after Drachenfels & Luczanits 2008: no. 152; P. Oszvald © KAH Bonn and Peshawar University Museum.)



### Naming and categorizing the different sculptural languages

According to the procedure laid out by Faccenna, the step subsequent to the definition of the various artistic productions is to determine the relatedness of the diverse styles circumscribed. The reconstruction of these sculptural language families – to draw a parallel with the field of comparative linguistics – is a prerequisite for understanding the dynamics of the production both at a local level (i.e. a site) and a regional level (i.e. across clusters of sites). But the issue at hand is not only the reconstruction of the different levels of relatedness; the difficulty is also to communicate them. To reiterate the question formulated above: how to name and categorize the sculptural languages reflected in the iconographic and formal variations and, one may add, in the modes of production? Faccenna and Swāti have proposed terminologies designating these types of relationship (Swāti 1997: 1-60). That of Faccenna is now familiar to all: the various stages of the stylistic analysis of the material from Butkara I allow him to identify three stylistic ‘groups’ (i.e. ‘drawing’, ‘naturalistic’, ‘stereometric’) and several ‘series’ within each group.

Figure 14. Dancer; relief from Butkara I. Saidu Sharif, Swat Museum (B5938). (Photo: after Drachenfels & Luczanits 2008: no. 185; P. Oszvald © KAH Bonn and Swat Museum, Saidu Sharif.)

Swāti's terminology offers the regional counterpart to the local study by Faccenna. It must also be added that his classification system is already interpretive. Scholars probably being less aware of the latter, I will discuss it in more detail (it is revisited in Lone's paper in this volume).

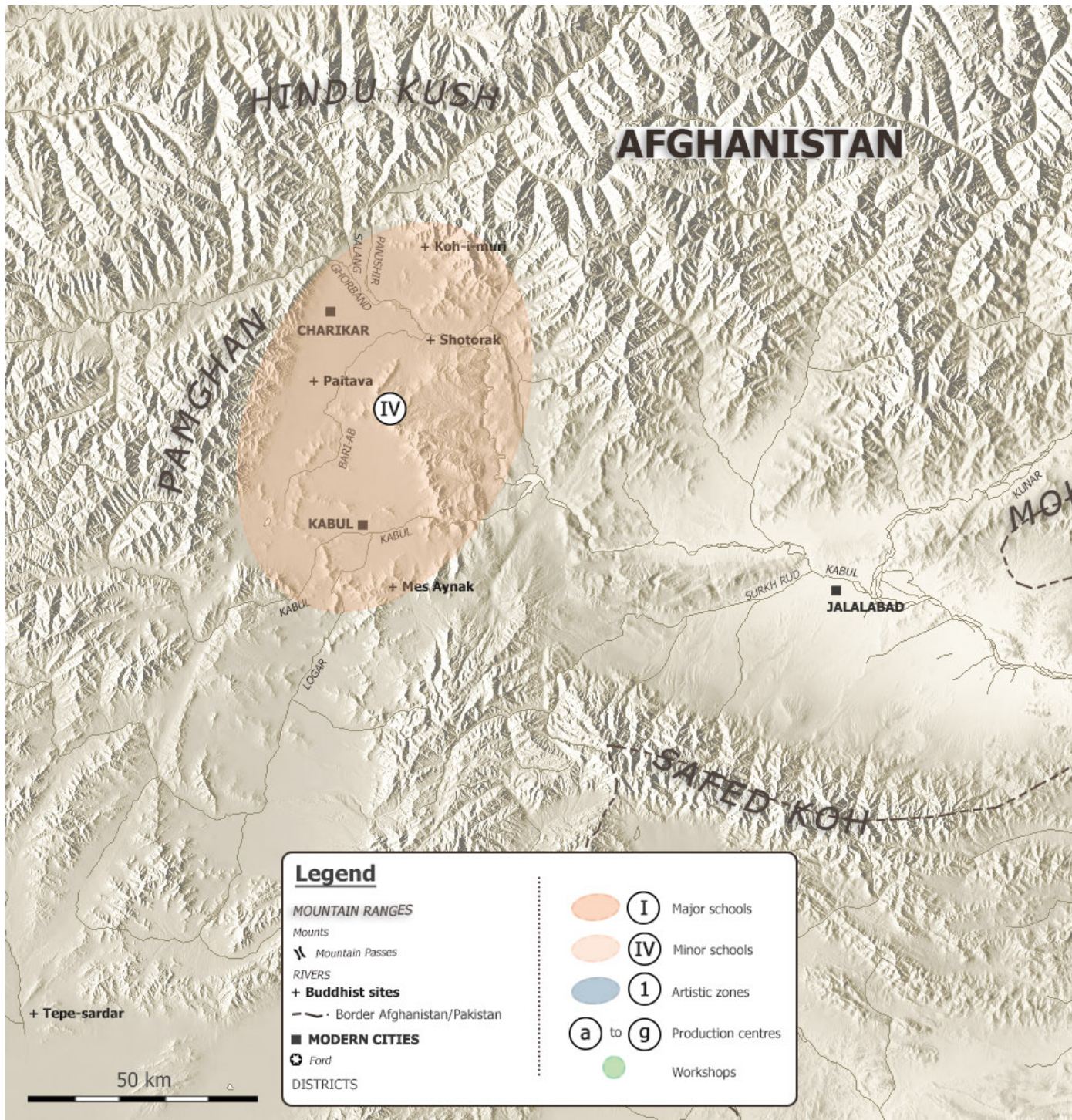
In his examination of the sculptural production from the Swat valley, Swāti isolates three stylistic levels. He differentiates a common style which encompasses all the regional styles which he names 'School of Indus-Oxus Buddhist Art' (equivalent to the Gandhāran School), 'regional styles', such as that of the Swat valley, then 'zonal styles' and 'zonal workshops'. The term 'zonal workshops' corresponds to a cluster of workshops located within each sub-valley of tributaries to the Swat River (see Appendix) and which each produces sculptures with distinct features. However divergent their respective productions are from that of the neighbouring workshops, they also share similarities. It is the sum of these shared traits which constitutes the 'zonal style'. While these similarities bear testimony to interactions and mutual contacts among these workshops, Swāti rejects the possibility that a single industrial site supplied sculptures for all sites in the region. The author remains ambiguous on one point. Indeed, it is difficult to determine whether he equates a 'zonal workshop' with one site or whether several workshops could be located at a single site. While one might not entirely agree with the terms chosen and despite the shortcomings of Swāti's contribution,<sup>41</sup> the latter has the merit of offering a rational alternative to the somewhat opaque 'school', 'style', and 'sub-style'.

I have partially adopted these terminologies and adjusted them to underline their correlation with Gandhāran geography. The 'regional school' corresponds to the style of a region (e.g. the Peshawar Basin or the Swat valley). The 'artistic zone' refers to that of a geographical unit or cluster of sites (e.g. the Middle Gadar Valley or the Jambil-Saidu zone). For instance, the examination of sculptures discovered across the sites located within a single cluster allows the recognition of common iconographic and formal motifs. These common features circumscribe and characterize an artistic zone and, in this sense, correspond to Swāti's zonal style. Finally, the terms 'production centre' and 'workshop' respectively designate a site (e.g. Jamālgarhī or Butkara I) and one of the artistic traditions within that site. Some motifs are endemic to a site. I have considered these particularisms as the mark of a workshop when they appear on one delimited group – or 'series', to refer to Faccenna's terminology – of sculptures, or as the mark of a centre of production when they occur on the majority or the totality of sculptures from one site.

### ***Application***

The analysis of the corpus of provenanced sculptures carried out for my doctoral research allowed identification and localising of a multiplicity of sculptural languages. These first results will have to be refined in the light of a systematic examination of other aspects, such as production techniques and lithotypes, naturally difficult to conduct within the frame of an individual project of research. Therefore, it would be more appropriate to speak of geographical tendencies in the distribution of iconographic and formal motifs. This cautionary notice aside, I would like to propose a map of the sculptural languages that can be sketched (Map 1). A full account of these languages is outside of the scope of this article and for the present purpose, I will limit myself to delineating a first outline of a 'geography of Gandhāran arts'. It is possible to circumscribe two major regional schools, those of the Swat valley and of the Peshawar basin. Across both schools, one can recognize three artistic zones located in: 1. the Jambil-Saidu zone 2. the Middle Kalpani Valley and 3. the Middle Gadar Valley. Several important production centres are situated in these artistic zones: a. Butkara I b. Saidu Sharif c. Sahrī Bāhlol d. Takht-i-Bāhī e. Jamālgarhī f. Thareli and

<sup>41</sup> Although not devoid of interest, Swāti's contributions are undermined by the author's whimsical dating and regionalist orientation. The author presents the Swat Valley as the origin of all Gandhāran schools. According to Swāti, the development of Buddhist art in Swat dates back to the last quarter of the second century BC. Faccenna had attributed the oldest sculptures of Butkara I to the first century BC but F. Swāti states that the style and historical context compel a revision to this date without further substantiating his claims (Swāti 1997: 5).



Map 1. Overview of Gandhāran regional schools, artistic





zones, production centres and workshops. (Jessie Pons).

g. Sikrī. Two minor schools can also be identified, that of the Northern Passes and that of Kāpisā. Finally, a series of workshops with their unique languages can be located in each of these regions, as well as at Zar Dherī, in the Haro-Tamra zone and the Lower Swat Valley zone.

This reconstruction comes with three disclaimers. Firstly, these four terms do not stand for concrete material entities. Workshops (in the sense of studios where craftsmen worked) certainly existed but aside from the results of the studies previously discussed, archaeological traces thereof are still scarce. Secondly, this hierarchic classification is not always possible. For instance, some of the monasteries have yielded sculptures reflecting heterogeneous styles which contradict the idea of an artistic zone.<sup>42</sup> In other cases, the coherence within one artistic zone is such that local specificities are absent.<sup>43</sup> One is left to wonder whether one or several workshops had to comply with strict formal and iconographic norms or whether, contrary to what Swāti argued, one workshop supplied several monasteries. This hypothesis is in fact corroborated by the contribution by Brancaccio and Olivieri. Thirdly, this map may give the impression that these visual languages developed simultaneously and that the various workshops were coeval. This is not the intention. Nevertheless, it is my contention that to shed light on the diachronic dimension of Gandhāran art, one should first reconstruct its synchronic dimension, albeit an ideal one. It is precisely phenomena such as that observed in the production of Marjanai that can help decode diachronic ties and, progressively, restore a more dynamic image of Gandhāran art.

### Some avenues for future research

By way of conclusion, I would like to propose a few avenues for future research, or strategies which, if implemented, could substantially advance our understanding of the geography of Gandhāran art(s). These have already been mentioned in this contribution.

To this day, no archeological gazetteer or archaeological map exists for the region of Gandhāra. Recently, DAFA has initiated in collaboration with the Government of Afghanistan a vast programme aimed at the creation of a Geographic Information System for the discovery, the study, and the management of archaeological sites. Likewise, the Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan has produced an Archaeological Map of the Swat valley which takes sites spanning from the pre-historical to the historical period into account. Other regions however, such as the Peshawar basin, have been neglected. Our understanding of the geography of Gandhāran art would benefit from similar cartographic projects. In consequence, there exists no standard map that includes the totality of Buddhist sites from the western slopes of the Hindu Kush to the Siran valley, albeit the most important ones. One might also recommend that the creation of an archaeological gazetteer be carried out alongside the normalization of the terminology used to refer to sites and to their corresponding geographic units. In the long run, the latter could perhaps integrate historical toponyms such as place-names identified by Stefan Baums in Gāndhārī inscriptions or those mentioned by Chinese pilgrims in relation to the Buddhist legends discussed by Jason Neelis in this volume.

The expansion of ontologies related to the description, naming, and categorizing of sculptural languages also appears a necessity. The Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan has achieved substantial work in this domain. One may only invite new initiatives to supplement the *Repertory of Terms* with terminologies related to motifs which are non-Swat-specific, to the titles of Buddhist narratives and to the designations of generic scenes.

<sup>42</sup> This can be observed at the sites around Taxila, in the Haro-Tamra zone where the sculptural production can be broadly divided into two trends: heterogeneous local idioms on the one hand and models from the Swat valley and the Peshawar basin on the other hand (Marshall 1951: I, 228-29; Faccenna 2005: 81-102; Pons 2011: 217-30).

<sup>43</sup> This is to some extent what the representation of bodhisattvas, triads, and intricate stele from Takht-i-Bāhī, Sarhī Bāhlol, and Muhammad Nāri suggest. The close iconographic and stylistic similarities have been discussed by Rhi in the context of the development of Mahāyāna imageries (Rhi 2003: 152-90; 2006: 151-82).

As demonstrated by the results of the study of tool-marks and of the petrographic examinations mentioned above, these types of analyses hold significant potential for understanding manufacturing processes. What is more, they bring additional data for the identification of intra- and inter-regional distinctions beyond the study of iconographic and formal variations. While the heavy logistics of such surveys preclude them from being conducted outside an institutional frame, the study of assembly-techniques that Satoshi Naiki contributes to this volume shows that individual researchers can also efficiently contribute to this issue.

This is a vast programme! The focus on specific case-studies on single collections and/or sites can cover several of these aspects at once and collectively contribute to other desiderata such as the update of terminologies. This contribution presents some of the challenges with which I was confronted and some of the methods that I have opted for in my attempt to shed light on geographical tendencies in the distribution of iconographic and formal motifs in Gandhāran stones sculptures. These reflections on methodological difficulties and the solutions that are proposed here will hopefully provide a springboard for the community of scholars of Gandhāran art and Gandhāran studies to develop other, better tuned tools that can enhance our understanding of Gandhāran art, its geography, and its history.

### Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Osmund Boppearachchi, Max Deeg, Anna Filigenzi and Luca Maria Olivieri for their encouragement and invaluable comments and help in improving this paper. My thanks also go to Antonio Amato and Frederik Elwert, researchers within the DiGA project, who have enthusiastically discussed the difficult problem of nomenclatures applied to the study of Gandhāran art or of cultural heritage in general. I am also very grateful to Kay Rienjang and Peter Stewart for their editing work on this article and for organizing, since 2016, the series of events which have both promoted and advanced research on Gandhāra and its art.

### Explanatory note on the appendix

The table below provides an inventory of archaeological sites which have yielded Buddhist material. The inventory results from a methodical review of published excavation reports and archaeological surveys undertaken by official institutions in Pakistan and Afghanistan. However, it does not claim to be exhaustive.

The layout and classification system have been elaborated following an initial concept by Luca Maria Olivieri. The structure represents the broad geographical and political divisions and can be thought of as a ‘tabulated map’. The grey columns schematically stand for the mountain ranges and rivers which separate the different regions of Gandhāra with from left to right – or rather from west to east – the mountain ranges of the Mohmand, the Malakand and south of it the Safed Koh, the Mount Ilam and the Indus. Within each section or region, the list of sites proceeds in a north → east → south → west direction following a two-fold classification which integrates two types of information:

1. Political and administrative divisions. This includes: the country (Pakistan and Afghanistan); the modern district (e.g. Buner, Mardan, etc.) and well as the modern city in the vicinity of the sites (i.e. zone).
2. Physical geography. This includes: river valleys (e.g. Swat, Kabul, etc.), their stretch and bank as well as their tributary. Information regarding these last three categories is only given for the larger regions of Swat and the Peshawar basin.



Map 2. Archaeological sites which



have yielded Buddhist material

AFGHANISTAN												
WESTERN SIDE DURAND LINE				EASTERN SIDE DURAND LINE				NORTHERN SIDE				
SITE	ZONE	VALLEY	DISTRICT	DISTRICT	VALLEY	ZONE	SITE	DISTRICT	VALLEY	STRETCH	ZONE	BANK
			KUNAR	BAJAUR				SWAT				
		Kunar			Panjkora				Indus			
Tchaghasarai						Utmarkhel					Besham	
			NANGARHAR				Balakot					
		Kabul					Bam-pukha					
	Jalalabad						Bando-dheri-bagh		Swat			
Tepe-shotor							Barghalai-dheri-spin-ragai			Upper Swat		
Deh-goundi							Chinar-tangai					Right bank
Top-e-kalan/Bordji-kafariha							Chorai					
Tepe-kafariha							Sar-gurgura					Left bank
Tepe-kalan							Tangu				Manglawar	
Bagh-gai					Barang							
Gar-nao						Barang						
Tepe-safed							Dherai-sar					
Tapa-e-top-e-khalan							Kotkai					
		Surkh-rud					Wrana-manai					
Gudara							Takhat			Middle Swat		
Fil-khana caves							Tito-bai					Right bank
Kajikut caves							Warana-manai					
Bahrabad							Zaga					
Tapakhwajalahoree					Panjkora (Tributary 1)							
Tapa-ashrak						Khar						
Chahar-bagh							Charkaro (Chingazer)					
Sultanpur-tope							Khazani-sangar				Mingora	
Allahnazar caves							Shinkot					Left bank
Kotpur					Panjkora (Tributary 2)							
Passani						Mamund						
							Aporai					
Bimaran							Gulmah					
Surkh-tope							Khara-dheri					
Deh-rahman							Mianz-umarai					
Nandara							Niag-zangal					
			PARWAN/KABUL				Nakhtar-shah					
		Kabul				Charmang						
	Kabul						Nawagai					
Tepe-maranjan							Nawagai					
Burj-hulaku							Badshahighat					
Tepe-narenj							Khara					

PAKISTAN												
		SOUTHERN SIDE							EASTERN SIDE			
TRIBUTARY	SITE	SITE	TRIBUTARY	BANK	ZONE	STRETCH	VALLEY	DISTRICT	DISTRICT	VALLEY	ZONE	SITE
								MALAKAND	MANSHERA			
							Kharkai			Allai		
		Kharkai										Pokal stupa
Lusesar		Dargai								Nandihar		
	Mandona-kander	Kalgarga										Zar-dheri (Batgram)
								BUNER		Sarai		
							Sandas					Zar-dheri (Kuza-banda)
				Right						Siran		
	Jare	Gokand										Zar-dheri
		Kandar										Zar-dheri 2
		Top-dara										
Ugad		Bingalai										
	Banjot						Surkhao					
	Jahanabad			Right								Baba-pongori
	Nangrial	Kafero Gumbatuna								Haro		
	Malam-jabba	Kot stupa										Dokhar
							Burbura					Chutto-dheri
				Right								Injel-sur
	Marjanai	Bagh										Khoi-khazana
	Dodeharra	Gumbatuna (Dherai-kaly)							HARIPUR			
	Parrai						Girarai-dara			Haro		
	Gumbatuna	Ali Khan-kote										Bhamala
	Nimogram						Legwanai-jowar		RAWALPINDI			
		Tangai								Damra/Lundikas		
							Kawga-balokhan – Bhai Kalai					Mohra-moradu
Jambil		Bhai										Pippala
	Panr						Barandu					Jaulian
	Butkara (I and III)	Tursak								Tamra		
	Leobanr	Sunigram										Sirkap
	Jurjurai	Gumbatai										Kunala
	Garasa	Panjkotai										Dharmarajika
Saidu		Takhta-band										Kalawan
	Saidu-sharif						Naranji					Giri
	Bologram	Naranji								Riwat-ka-san		Mera-ka-dheri
	Katelai						Badri					Sonala-pind
	Kukrai	Ranigat										Kota-ka-dheri
	Shahneshah							SWABI				Pari-ki-dheri
	Katelai						Yaro					Syadon-ka-mora

AFGHANISTAN												
WESTERN SIDE DURAND LINE				EASTERN SIDE DURAND LINE				NORTHERN SIDE				
SITE	ZONE	VALLEY	DISTRICT	DISTRICT	VALLEY	ZONE	SITE	DISTRICT	VALLEY	STRETCH	ZONE	BANK
Qol-e-tut							Mohmad-ghat				Ghalegai	
Chechme-e-kandhariyan							Swara-gata					
Ziarat-i Saxi							Jarando-kamar					
Tepe-khazana					Babukara							
Khwaja-safa						Salarzai						
Pai-minar							Chal-ghaze				Barikot	
		Logar					Chara-ghundai					
Shevaki (1-12)							Gagra					
Minar-e Chakri							Ghundai-chinar					
Gul-dara							Kherai					
Kamari (1-3)							Kotkai					
Seh-topan (1-4; 6)							Tabai					
			LOGAR				Tarala					
Mes-aynak				TRIBAL AREA								
			PARWAN/KAPISA		Khyber							
		Salang				Khyber						
	Gul-bahar						Sphola-stupa					
Jabal-us-seraj												
		Panjshir										
Gul-bahar												
Koh-e-muri												
Koh-e-muri bis?												
								SHANGLA				
Kuratas?												
	Begram											
Borj-e Abdallah												
Begram												
Karratcha?								MALAKAND				
Shotorak?											Thana	
Tope												
Ruin X												
Qol-i-nader												
Ruin Z												
Kafir-kala												
		Bari-ab										
	Tepe-skandar											
Sarai-khuja (bazar)												
Kurrindar												
	Istalif							DIR				
Paitava											Chakdara	



PAKISTAN												
		SOUTHERN SIDE							EASTERN SIDE			
TRIBUTARY	SITE	SITE	TRIBUTARY	BANK	ZONE	STRETCH	VALLEY	DISTRICT	DISTRICT	VALLEY	ZONE	SITE
		Aziz-dheri										Kotera-kadheri
	Gog-dara						Kandah/Guntal					Rozi-ki-mera
	Balogram	Banr-dheri (Maini)										Mahal
	Shingardar	Muradu-dheri (Maini)										Katyal
	Manyar	Shado-dheri (Maini)										Manikyala
		Ajumair hill (Maini)										Makam-kapind
Karakar		Sale-dheri										
	Nawagai						Polal					
	Amluk-dara	Momani-garai										
	Tok-dara	Banj										
	Kanderai							NOWSHERA				
Najigram							Kalpani					
	Tokar-dara					Lower						
	Najigram			Left								
	Abbasah-china	Raees-dheri										
Kandak		Mashrang-dheri										
	Kanjar-kote			Right								
	Gumbat	Khkari-dheri III										
	Amluk-dara	Gandheri-payan										
	China-bara						Shahidam					
Kotah		Attock stupa										
	Sandoka	Shah-pinda										
		Gudi										
Itai		Pindi site										
	Bunerwal						Urmanda & Shahkot					
	Kafir-dheri	Kafirano-dheri (Jalozai)										
	Choga	Kafirano-dheri (Otai)										
		Banda-patai										
		Kurkai										
Cherat		Safare-adokeh										
	Kafir-kot						Kabul					
Gunyar		Sikano-dheri										
	Gunyar	Butano-dheri										
Shah-kot		Zagai-dheri										
	Allahdand-dheri							PESHAWAR				
	Zalam-kot						Kabul					
	Loriyan-tangai			Right								
	Chatpat		Bara									
		Takhal										
		Shahjiki-dheri										



PAKISTAN												
		SOUTHERN SIDE							EASTERN SIDE			
TRIBUTARY	SITE	SITE	TRIBUTARY	BANK	ZONE	STRETCH	VALLEY	DISTRICT	DISTRICT	VALLEY	ZONE	SITE
		Pipal-mandir										
Talash								CHARSADDA				
	Bambolai						Swat					
	Ramora					Lower						
	Damkot				Charsadda							
	Andand-dheri			Left								
Jandul		Skarah-dheri										
	Gumbatuna	Tarnab										
		Shaikhandheri										
		Kula-dheri										
		Palatu-dheri										
		Dur-marjan										
		Sare-mekhedheri										
		Mra-dheri										
								MARDAN				
							Gadar					
						Upper						
		Sanghao										
		Nathu										
		Nullah										
		Rhode-tope										
		Koi-tangi										
		Mian-khan										
		Jao										
						Middle						
		Jamalgarhi										
		Sikri										
		Thareli										
							Badra					
						Upper						
		Rustam										
						Middle						
		Shahbazgarhi										
		Mekha-sanda										
		Chanakadheri										
							Kalpani					
						Middle						
				Right								
		Takht-i-bahi										
		Sahri-bahlol										
		Muhammadnari										
		Mamane-dheri										

Geographical units or clusters of sites such as those of Takht-i-Bāhī, Sahrī Bāhloḷ, Muhammad-Nāri and Mamāne-Ḍherī in the Middle Kalpani Valley appear more immediately.

The format used for the transliteration of toponyms in Pashto (not applied in the article) follows the recommendation by Matteo de Chiara, lecturer in Pashto at the Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales in Paris who has recently completed his habilitation at INALCO on Swat toponyms. In accordance with his remarks, the format uses:

- a hyphenated form to indicate that the two elements of the toponym form a single name.
- a non-capitalized second element which, in most cases, is a generic geonym (ex: dheri).

This format was utilized for Swat in the publications where data from the AMSV (Archaeological Map of the Swat Valley) fieldwork were incorporated (Olivieri & Vidale 2006; Olivieri 2015a; 2015b; Filigenzi 2015).

These decisions with respect to the classification system and the transliteration might generate some discrepancies with other standards used in literature such as by D. Faccenna and P. Spagnesi (Faccenna & Spagnesi 2014) and Gérard Fussman (Fussman 2008). In these studies, sites are grouped differently, and the toponyms (whether in Pashto or Dari) are not hyphenated and both terms are capitalized. Readers will decide for themselves which system they prefer to use. I have only sought to explain the logics behind that which is proposed here and which strives for coherence.

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# Geographical differences and similarities in Gandhāran sculptures<sup>1</sup>

Satoshi Naiki

## Introduction

Both chronology and geography are essential for understanding the material cultures of the past. This is true of the consideration of Buddhist culture through the analysis of Gandhāran sculptures (Figure 1).<sup>2</sup> If we ignore the chronological position of the sculptures, we cannot explain the geographical differences and similarities amongst regions because we lack contemporaneous material. It is unreliable to compare sculptures made in different periods. Similarly, if we do not attend sufficiently to geography, our view of the chronology is distorted. In this sense, the themes of the Gandhāra Connections project's two workshops – 'Problems of Chronology in Gandhāran Art' and 'The Geography of Gandhāran Art' correlate closely with one another.

The present author has previously discussed the dating of Gandhāran sculptures found in archaeological excavations, as well as the chronology of stylistic features in sculptures excavated in the Gandhāra and Uḍḍiyāna regions (cf. Naiki 2016).<sup>3</sup> The results of these analyses might be helpful for considering the geographical differences and similarities of Gandhāran sculptures among regions in this area. In this paper, I would like to present some of the results of my earlier research and give some additional data.

Comparison of stylistic features among regions is not in itself sufficient for considering the geography of Gandhāran sculptures. Several perspectives are needed to compare the material in this respect. This is why the present author shall be considering technical characteristics in addition to style in this paper, in order to understand the production of Gandhāran sculpture better.<sup>4</sup>

## Stylistic features of Gandhāran sculptures in the Uḍḍiyāna region

First, we will review the chronology of stylistic features in Gandhāran sculptures found in the Uḍḍiyāna region – the Swat valley (see also the contribution by Abdul Ghafoor Lone in the present volume). Archaeological sites in this region have been intensively researched by the Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan (under the auspices of IsMEO, the Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente) since the 1950s. These include well-known sites such as Butkara I, Udegram, Saidu Sharif I, Panr, Bīrkoṭ-ghwaṇḍai, and Amluk-dara.

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<sup>1</sup> I would like to express my gratitude to Prof Peter Stewart and Dr Wannaporn Kay Rienjang for inviting me to the workshop, 'The Geography of Gandhāran Art' (University of Oxford, 22 and 23 March 2018). This paper is based on my talk and subsequent discussion with scholars attending the workshop. In respect to the figures in this paper, I thank Prof Pierfrancesco Callieri, Prof Koji Nishikawa, Prof Hidenori Okamura, Dr Luca Maria Olivieri, and Mr Abdul Nasir for allowing me to use pictures, and Dr Mario Mineo and Dr Laura Giuliano for helping me to get permission to use pictures.

<sup>2</sup> In this paper, the following geographical terminology will be used: the Gandhāra region to refer to the present day Peshawar basin; the Uḍḍiyāna region to refer to the present day Swat valley to the north; and the Taxila region to refer to the area on the south-east of the Peshawar basin across the Indus river. I use this terminology based on the accounts by Xuanzang, the Chinese Buddhist monk who travelled around this area at the beginning of the seventh century AD. When I need to describe this whole area, I shall call it the north-western Indian subcontinent.

<sup>3</sup> My paper discussing the chronology of stylistic features of Gandhāran sculpture is provisionally expected to appear in the proceedings of the 22nd conference of the European Association for South Asian Archaeology and Art held in Stockholm in 2014 (Naiki forthcoming a).

<sup>4</sup> Terms for Gandhāran sculptures used in this paper mainly follow the work by Domenico Faccenna and Anna Filigenzi (Faccenna & Filigenzi 2007).

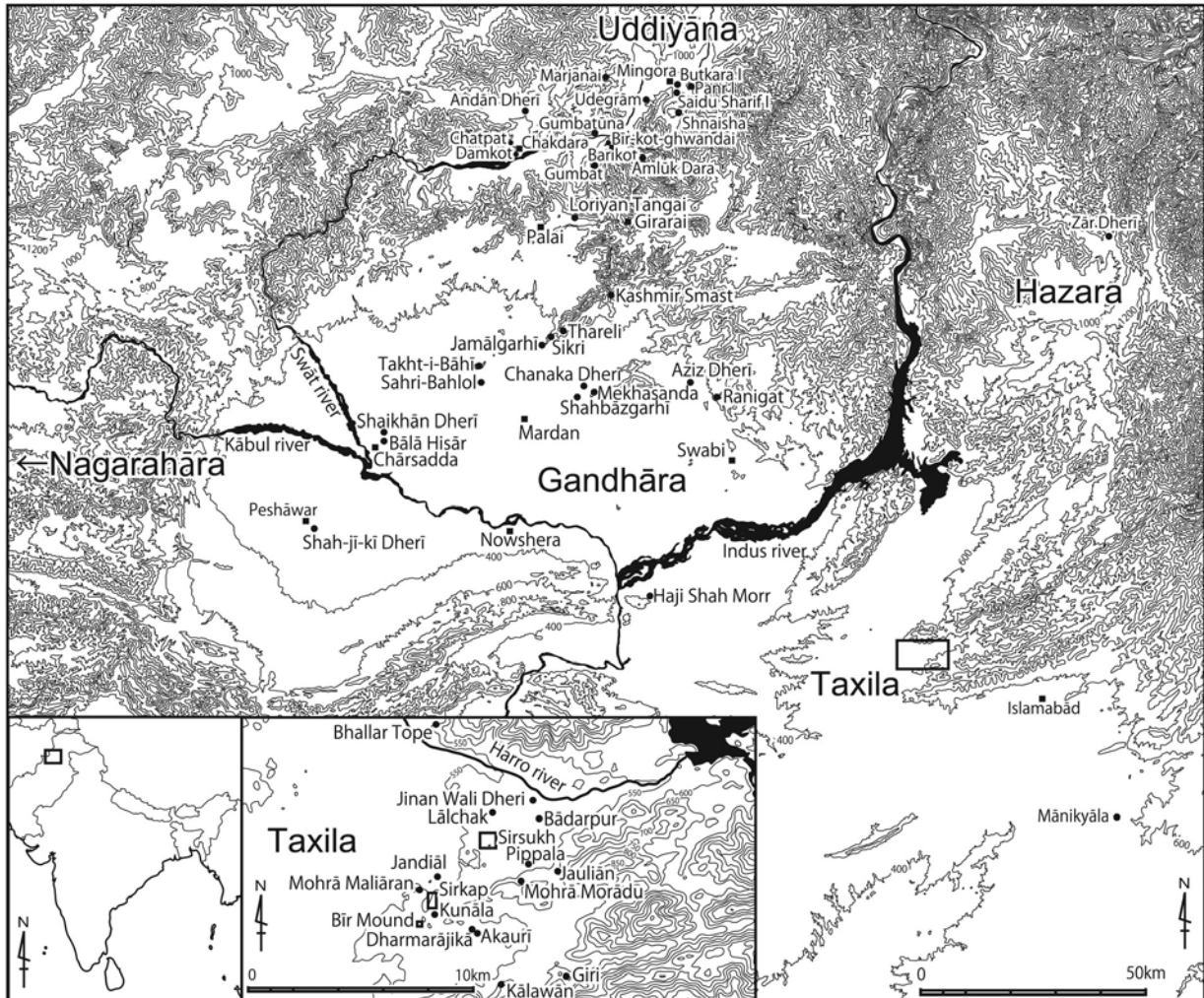


Figure 1. Map of the north-western Indian subcontinent (Drawing: S. Naiki).

Among excavation results from these sites, those in Butkara I gave us fundamental information for considering the chronology of style in the Uddiyāna region. Butkara I was excavated from 1956 to 1964 by the Italian Mission led by Domenico Faccenna (e.g. Faccenna & Gullini 1962; Faccenna 1962; 1980–81). The site is thought to have been the central Buddhist sacred place in this region, and to have been established in the Mauryan period in the third century BC, or slightly later.<sup>5</sup>

Plenty of sculptures were found at Butkara I (Faccenna 1964). One of Faccenna’s prominent achievements was to divide sculptures excavated there into stylistic groups on the basis of the manner in which they rendered their subjects. He divided them into three stylistic groups: the ‘drawing’ group, with rigid but detailed renderings such as multiple parallel lines in drapery and hair, or pupils in eyes (Figure 2); the ‘naturalistic’ group, with realistic and fluent features (Figure 3); and the ‘stereometric’ group, with voluminous and simplified renderings (Figure 4) (Faccenna 1974: 174; Faccenna et al. 2003: 290).

<sup>5</sup> This dating is based on a coin of Chandragupta (See Errington 1999/2000: 191–192 where she argues that this so-called Chandragupta coin found at Butkara I was likely to have been issued during the reign of Asoka.). It is problematic to date the establishment of the sacred site on the basis of one single coin. However, when we take into account the fact that inscriptions with the name of ‘Dharmarajika’ were found in this site, I consider it plausible that the origin of the site can be dated back to the Mauryan period (Faccenna et al. 2003: 279).



Figure 2. Sculpture belonging to the drawing group found at Butkara I (Photo: © Museo delle Civiltà - MAO 'G. Tucci', Piazzale G. Marconi 14, 00144 Rome).



Figure 3. Sculpture belonging to the naturalistic group found at Butkara I (Photo: © Museo delle Civiltà - MAO 'G. Tucci', Piazzale G. Marconi 14, 00144 Rome).

Faccenna focused on reused sculptural materials found in the site when explaining the meanings of stylistic difference among sculptures (Faccenna et al. 2003: 290). There were sculptures which had been used on both sides of the stone, with each side exhibiting different stylistic features. One side was original, and its figures and motifs were represented in an older style. After the sculpture



Figure 4. Sculpture belonging to the stereometric group found at Butkara I (Photo: © Museo delle Civiltà - MAO 'G. Tucci', Piazzale G. Marconi 14, 00144 Rome).



Figure 5. One side of reused sculpture found at Butkara I (Photo: S. Naiki, courtesy of the Museo delle Civiltà - MAO 'G. Tucci', Piazzale G. Marconi 14, 00144 Rome).



Figure 6. Another side of reused sculpture found at Butkara I (Photo: S. Naiki, courtesy of the Museo delle Civiltà - MAO 'G. Tucci', Piazzale G. Marconi 14, 00144 Rome).

was broken, the other side was reused for carving in another, newer style. For example, one side of a sculpture could be allocated to the naturalistic group (Figure 5), while the other side of the stone had been used later for sculpture belonging to the stereometric group (Figure 6). By explaining the phenomenon of reuse, Faccenna demonstrated that the stylistic differences were a function of chronology.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Faccenna shows us several examples of reused material in the catalogue of sculptures found in Butkara I other than one introduced here (Faccenna 1964: pls. CDLXXXVIII-DXIX).



Figure 7. Relief seemingly attached to the Main Stūpa in Saidu Sharif I (1) (Photo: © Museo delle Civiltà - MAO 'G. Tucci', Piazzale G. Marconi 14, 00144 Rome).



Figure 8. Relief seemingly attached to the Main Stūpa in Saidu Sharif I (2) (Photo: © Museo delle Civiltà - MAO 'G. Tucci', Piazzale G. Marconi 14, 00144 Rome).

Additionally, Faccenna considered the context of architectural layers to which sculptures were attached. The Main Stūpa of Butkara I was enlarged several times and five structural phases were recognized (Faccenna et al. 2003: 278). These structural phases correspond with the floor levels of other architectural structures. A cornice sculpture found in situ could be assigned to the drawing group. The cornice was part of a stūpa that could be assigned to phase 3 of the Main Stūpa, datable to the first quarter of the first century AD on the basis of coins of Azes II (Faccenna et al. 2003: 283-286; Göbl 1976: coin nos. 15, 20, 24, 25, 62).<sup>7</sup> Now it could be said that sculptures belonging to the first group, the drawing group, had been already made in around the first half of the first century AD in the Uḍḍiyāna region.

A chronological benchmark for the first group, the drawing group, can also be obtained from excavations at another site in the Uḍḍiyāna region, Saidu Sharif I. Saidu Sharif I was excavated by the Italian Mission, led again by Faccenna, from 1963 to 1982 (Callieri 1989; Faccenna 1995). This site is also a Buddhist sacred site, but its size is much smaller than that of Butkara I.

In Saidu Sharif I, a series of reliefs was found (Figures 7 and 8). These reliefs seem to have been attached to the same storey of architecture because their original heights were similar. Faccenna explained from a technical perspective that these reliefs were originally attached to the cylindrical body of the Main Stūpa in this site (Faccenna et al. 2003: 324-327). Tenons which can be seen on the upper and lower faces of reliefs correspond to sockets in the architectural materials of the Main Stūpa. He believed that the Main Stūpa in Saidu Sharif I could be dated to the second quarter of the first century AD (Faccenna et al. 2003: 314). This meant that reliefs attached to the body of the Main Stūpa could be dated to the same period. The reliefs have similar characteristics to the sculptures belonging to the drawing group found

<sup>7</sup> The present author follows the dating by Faccenna. However, the absolute date for Azes II is not stable. For example, Robert Senior insists that there was only one king who was named 'Azes' and his reign was around the middle of the first century BC (Senior 2005).

in Butkara I. Consequently, sculptures of the drawing group were apparently still flourished around the middle of the first century AD.

We already know that sculptures belonging to the naturalistic group followed the drawing group sculptures because of the phenomenon of reuse at Butkara I. However unfortunately, there is no clear archaeological information that directly indicates the date of the naturalistic group. On the other hand, we have good clues for considering the date of the last group, the stereometric group, in this region. These can be obtained from archaeological results from excavations at Bīr-koṭ-ghwaṇḍai.

Bīr-koṭ-ghwaṇḍai is an urban site which has been excavated by the Italian Mission since 1978, when Giorgio Stacul started excavation. Their excavation still continues today, now led by Luca Maria Olivieri (Stacul 1978; Callieri et al. 1992; Olivieri 2003; 2014). Although this is not a Buddhist sacred site, some religious precincts have been detected in excavated areas such as BKG 4-5 and BKG 11.

In trench BKG 4-5 at this site, two stelae of bodhisattvas were found (Figures 9 and 10) (Callieri 2006: 67). Pierfrancesco Callieri mentions that the stratigraphic unit in which these stelae were found can be dated to the third century AD. Recently, Olivieri has improved research on the stratigraphy and states that the stratigraphic unit in which the stelae were found can be assigned to Period VII, the first half of the third century AD (Olivieri 2014: 8, 11). These stelae have similar stylistic features such as almond shaped eyes and the rendering of drapery with pairs of parallel lines. Similar stylistic features can also be detected in sculptures found in another trench, BKG 11 at the same site, in layers of Period VIII which can be dated to the second half of the third century AD (Figure 11) (Olivieri 2014: 8, figs. 66, 75, 85).



*Figures 9 and 10. Stelae of bodhisattvas found at Bīr-koṭ-ghwaṇḍai (Photo: after Callieri 2006: figs. 3.7, 8).*

The typical stylistic feature of drapery rendered with pairs of parallel lines can also be seen on sculptures in the stereometric group found in Butkara I (Faccenna 1962: pls. CCCII, CCCXa, etc.). So these sculptures found in Bīr-koṭ-ghwaṇḍai are helpful for consideration of the group's date. From the archaeological results at Bīr-koṭ-ghwaṇḍai, it can be safely supposed that the stereometric group sculptures already made their appearance in the first half of the third century AD.

To summarize: in the Uḍḍiyāna region, three stylistic groups can be recognized in sculpture – the drawing group, the naturalistic group, and the stereometric group – and these three can be ordered chronologically and approximate dates can be hypothesized, allowing for the likelihood that the actual progression of styles was less clearcut and schematic in reality. Among them, the drawing group sculptures were already being made in the first half of the first century AD and were still being produced in the middle of the century. We cannot know directly from archaeological data when the naturalistic group sculptures were made, but the following stereometric group had already appeared in the first half of the third century AD. So it can be assumed that the naturalistic group sculptures were made some time between the second half of the first century AD and the beginning of the third century AD, i.e. around the second century AD.



Figure 11. Sculpture of the bodhisattva Maitreya found at Bīr-koṭ-ghwaṇḍai (Photo: after Olivieri 2014: fig. 66).

### Stylistic features of Gandhāran sculptures in the Gandhāra region

So far we have looked at the relatively well known chronology of stylistic features in the Uḍḍiyāna region. But of course, we should not regard the situation in the Uḍḍiyāna region as a comprehensive phenomenon which is applicable to the whole area of the north-western Indian subcontinent. In order to understand the geographical differentiation of sculptures, we have to analyse stylistic features in other specific regions. Therefore, the stylistic features in the Gandhāra region proper, the modern Peshawar basin, will be examined here.

The first site which we shall examine is Ranigat. Ranigat is a large Buddhist sacred site excavated by Kyoto University Mission from Japan between 1983 and 1992 (Nishikawa [ed] 1994/2011). The Buddhist sacred site in Ranigat had a long history, and architectural research there showed us that *stūpas* and shrines had been constructed during several periods in this long history (Masui & Koga 2011: 526-531). Numerous sculptures, likely having decorated architectures built during several periods, were found at this site. However, most of them were unearthed from surface soil or layers disturbed by looting (Namba 2011: 666). From these data, we assume that sculptures were made in several phases in the long history of the sacred site, and that they had been used until the abandonment of the site, when they were buried in relatively shallow layers. On the other hand, very few pieces of sculpture were found in lower layers of the sacred site (Figures 12, 13, 15) (Odani 2011a: 561-562). These older materials at



Figure 12. False-bracket (garland-holder) from Ranigat (Photo: after Nishikawa [ed] 2011: fig. 6.12.1).

the site might be helpful in considering the chronology of Gandhāran stylistic features.

A false-bracket (garland-holder) found in a lower layer is the only example found in Ranigat (Figure 12). This kind of bracket was found also in Butkara I in the Uḍḍiyāna region and the Dharmarājikā site in the Taxila region, both of which are thought to be relatively old specimens of Gandhāran sculptures (Nehru 1989: 89, pls. 123, 149, 150; Faccenna 1962: pl. DLXVII-DLXXXI).

Another significant piece from the lower layers is a small, male head with wide open eyes (Figure 13). It is not clear whether these eyes have pupils. The face is rather elongated. This kind of rendering can also be seen in other sculptures found in surface soil at the site. In a relief which may depict the scene of ‘great departure of Siddhārtha’, a god taking the hoofs of a horse, Kanthaka, has similarly wide open eyes and elongated face (Figure 14). From its similarity, it can be assumed that this relief was also originally made in an earlier period and continued to be used for a long time until abandonment of the site. On this relief the drapery of the coachman is rendered with multiple parallel lines, just as we saw with the drawing group sculptures from Butkara I. It is important to note that similar stylistic characteristics were being used in sculptures from different regions.

A small piece from the bottom of a relief was found inside the Main Stūpa of Ranigat (Figure 15). During the excavation in 1984, the excavators found some traces of the existence of inner stūpas on the plinth of the Main Stūpa and they ultimately detected a smaller stūpa



Figure 13. Sculptural fragment from Ranigat (Photo: after Nishikawa [ed] 2011: fig. 6.12.5).



Figure 14. Relief representing the Great Departure, from Ranigat (Photo: after Nishikawa [ed] 1994: pl. 119.1).





Figure 15. Fragment from the bottom of a relief found at Ranigat  
(Photo: after Nishikawa [ed] 2011: fig. 6.12.11).

inside the Main Stūpa (Masui et al. 2011: 398). This means that the smaller stūpa in the core was original and was enlarged with additional layers on the body at some point in time. On the basis of its find spot and context, the small relief fragment appears to have belonged to the period of the core stūpa.



Figure 16. Relief with decorated base from Ranigat  
(Photo: after Nishikawa [ed] 2011: pl. 126.7).

This tiny piece, seemingly of no importance, actually gives us helpful information concerning stylistic features. It is a base of a relief and some decorations can be seen on it. It is not usual for reliefs in Ranigat to have these decorations on bases.<sup>8</sup> However, a few pieces from the site do have this kind of decoration (Figure 16) (Nishikawa [ed] 1994: pls. 122.15, 128.13, etc.). They were unearthed from surface soil, but it seems that reliefs with these similar decorations on their bases also belonged to the period of the core stūpa. These reliefs also represent drapery with the multiple parallel lines.

Eight copper coins of Wima Kadphises (c. AD 113-27)<sup>9</sup> were found on the upper face of mouldings found in situ at the base of cylindrical body of the core stūpa (Odani 2011b: 571). So construction of the core stūpa might date back to the time of this Kushan king in the early second century AD or slightly later. The reliefs with decorated bases may also have been made in that period.

In an excavation report on Ranigat, the possibility that this site's establishment can be dated back even earlier to the second half of the first century AD is argued for on the basis of several bits of evidence (Namba 2011: 662-664). Apart from the eight coins of Wima Kadphises placed on moldings, as mentioned above, a copper coin of Azes II (first half of the first century AD) found in a layer of Period 2 in a trench (the West Trench), whose relationship with the core stūpa formerly mentioned is unfortunately unclear, scripts which have characteristics older than those in the reign of Kaniška I (the first half of the second century AD) scratched on pottery found in a layer of Period 2, and the fact that some older types of pottery found in the 19th layer of Bālā Hisār (Ch. 19) in Chārsadda (the second to first century BC) excavated by Mortimer Wheeler (Wheeler 1962) and pottery of Phase II in Sirkap (the first half of the first century AD) excavated by Amalananda Ghosh (Ghosh 1948) were not found in layers of Period 1 and 2 in Ranigat, are given as clues to consider the date of establishment.

From these sculptures found in lower layers in Ranigat, it seems that sculptures with the early features such as multiple parallel lines, elongated faces, and wide opened eyes were also made in the Gandhāra

<sup>8</sup> Decoration on the bases of reliefs is not common in Gandhāran sculptures found at other Buddhist sacred sites either. It is worth referring here to an example allegedly found in Loriyān Tangai (Lohuizen-de Leeuw 1981: fig. 6). This example is thought by Lohuizen-de Leeuw to be one of the oldest Gandhāran sculptures (Lohuizen-de Leeuw 1981: 381).

<sup>9</sup> See Cribb 2018: 14, table 3 for the list of the Kushan kings and the proposed associated dates.

region proper at a relatively early stage, at the beginning of the second century AD or even earlier – perhaps the second half of the first century AD.

In considering the date of early sculpture made in the Gandhāra region, schist sculptures found at Sirkap in the Taxila region give us a clue. Of course, Taxila is different from the Gandhāra region as defined above, and we should not simply lump them together. However, it is worth noting an interesting observation by John Marshall, who researched archaeological sites in this area intensively. He claims that there are no schist quarries in the Taxila region and therefore schist sculptures found in this region seem to have had been imported from the Gandhāra region (Marshall 1951: 691-692).<sup>10</sup>

Some schist sculptures were found at Sirkap (Figure 17). They have the same characteristics as the sculptures found in the lower layers in Ranigat, such as renderings with multiple



Figure 17. Piece of relief found at Sirkap (Photo: S. Naiki).

parallel lines. Marshall called them ‘proto-Gandhāran sculptures’ (Marshall 1951: 693-694). According to research by Shoshin Kuwayama, religious buildings in Sirkap were built after the city was abandoned in the middle of the first century AD (Kuwayama 2007: 224).<sup>11</sup> If we accept Marshall’s claim about the importation of schist sculptures and Kuwayama’s dating of the buildings, these sculptures with primitive renderings were made in the Gandhāra region in around the middle of the first century AD.

From archaeological information provided by Ranigat and Sirkap, we can say that sculptures with early characteristics such as the multiple parallel-line drapery were made in around the middle of the first century AD and the beginning of the second century AD in the Gandhāra region.

The next archaeological sites in the Gandhāra region, which can be used in order to consider the chronology of stylistic features are the ruins of city at Bālā Hisār and Shaikhān Dherī in the Chārsadda district. These two sites are thought to be the ancient city of Pushkalāvati (Wheeler 1962: 3). Bālā Hisār was excavated by the Pakistan Department of Archaeology with the help of Mortimer Wheeler in 1958 (Wheeler 1962), and recently researched by Robin Coningham and Ihsan Ali between 1993 and 2000 (Coningham & Ali 2007). Shaikhān Dherī was excavated by Peshāwar University under the direction of Ahmad Hasan Dani in 1963 and 1964 (Dani 1965/66).

Wheeler excavated Bālā Hisār using a stratigraphic method, so objects or artefacts unearthed from this site can be distributed to each stratigraphic layer. In the 14th layer of the trench Ch. 1 in Bālā Hisār,

<sup>10</sup> According to Faccenna, there are some sculptures found at the Dharmarājikā site in the Taxila region made of chlorite schist which is typical of Swat or the ancient Uḍḍiyāna region (Faccenna 2005: 92). These sculptures are also thought to be imported objects. I owe this information to Prof Pons’s presentation at the 24th conference of the European Association for South Asian Archaeology and Art held in Naples in July 2018 (Pons 2018).

<sup>11</sup> There are many ideas on the date for the abandonment of the city of Sirkap, from 60 AD (Marshall 1960) to the reign of Vāsudeva, i.e. the first half of the third century AD (Erdosy 1990; cf. Rienjang 2018). However, the present author adopted the idea from the conclusion of research on masonry types correlated with numismatic evidence by Kuwayama that Sirkap was abandoned in the time of Kujula Kadphises, or in the middle of the first century AD.

small pieces of Gandhāran sculptures were found (Wheeler 1962: 22, 123-124). The drapery of an attendant figure is rendered with a pair parallel lines (Figure 18). This rendering is the same as that of sculptures in the stereometric group found in Butkara I and Bīrkoṭ-ghwaṇḍai in the Uḍḍiyāna region (Figures 4, 9, 10, 11).

Wheeler believed the 14th layer to have been formed in the period between the second and the fourth century AD, because Gandhāran sculptures were found in this layer (Wheeler 1962: 35). His dating for the layer cannot be accepted, because he relied on sculptures as a clue for the dating. However, recently, Yozo Namba, a member of Kyoto University Mission who excavated Ranigat, reconsidered when the 14th layer in Bālā Hisār was accumulated. On the basis of the pottery chronology which he constructed in his research, he insisted that the 14th layer in Bālā Hisār was formed in the period after the abandonment of the Buddhist sacred site in Ranigat (Namba 2011: 646-651). Citing Kuwayama's observation that the Gandhāra region was ignored by the Western Turks after they took possession of Tokharistan from the Hephthalites around the middle of the sixth century AD (Kuwayama 1995: 29),<sup>12</sup> Namba suggested that the Buddhist sacred site in Ranigat was abandoned at a certain point of time after the middle of the sixth century AD (Namba 2011: 664-665). It can be maintained that Gandhāran sculptures with simplified renderings such as paired parallel lines were found in a relatively newer layers in the Gandhāra region.

We can consider when the simplified manner appeared in the Gandhāra region by using archaeological data obtained in Shaikhān Ḍherī. According to Dani, in a house of a Buddhist teacher Naradakha at this site,<sup>13</sup> several pieces of Gandhāran sculptures were found. Dani tried to consider when these sculptures were made. He argued that the sculptures were made in the first century AD based on carbon 14 dating and numismatic evidence (Dani 1965/66: 28-29). However, many scholars have criticized his explanations of the dating. For example, Raymond Allchin indicated that Dani was relying upon an incorrect interpretation of the radiocarbon dates and did not take numismatic evidence into proper consideration (Allchin 1972: 15-16). And Maurizio Taddei and Callieri also made the criticism that Dani did not describe exact conditions or stratigraphic provenances in which sculptures were found in his report (Taddei 2006: 50; Callieri 2006: 77). So it is not easy for us to deal with archaeological data of Shaikhān Ḍherī.

However, Dani's report of excavations at Shaikhān Ḍherī is still helpful. In this urban site, plenty of coins, 475 in total, were found (Dani 1965/66: 24, 35). Among 291 coins which they could have clearly identified, the last issued coins were eight copper coins of Vāsudeva I (Dani 1965/66: 35 and chart 2). From this fact, we can safely say that this city, at least parts of the city at the trench dug by Peshawar University, was abandoned during the reign of Vāsudeva I or slightly later, around the first half of the third century AD. This means that sculptures found in this site were made earlier than the third century AD.

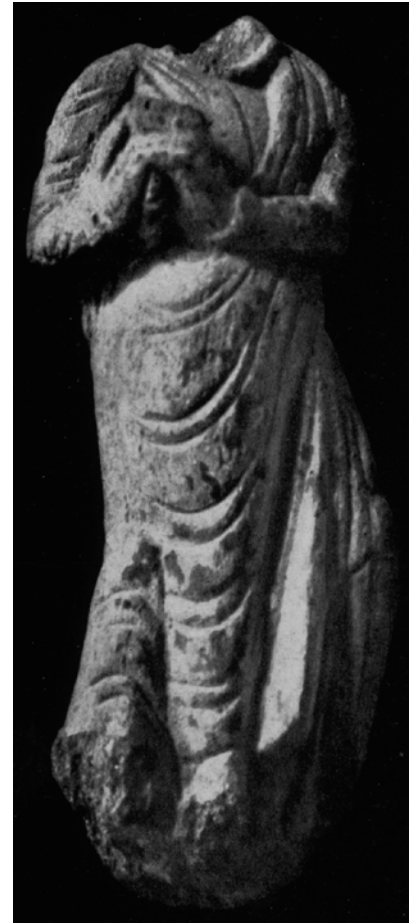


Figure 18. Schist sculpture found at Bālā Hisār (Photo: after Wheeler 1962: pl. XLIII.A).

<sup>12</sup> See also Kuwayama 1997: 36-37 for his account of the decline of Buddhist culture in the Gandhāra region in the middle of the sixth century AD.

<sup>13</sup> According to Gregory Schopen (2014: 21), this might have been a house for a Buddhist community of nuns. Prof Jason Neelis kindly informed me this.



Figure 19. Bodhisattva statue found at Shaikhān Dherī (Photo: after Dani 1965/66: pl. XIX.2).



Figure 20. Devotee found at Shaikhān Dherī (Photo: after Dani 1965/66: pl. XXI.1).

Most of the sculptures found at Shaikhān Dherī were rendered naturalistically (Figure 19). Buddha or bodhisattva images found at this site have freely rendered drapery (Dani 1965/66: pls. XVI, XVII and etc.). On the other hand, an attendant figure has drapery rendered with pairs of parallel lines (Figure 20). This figure is the only example in the simplified style. From these facts, it can be suggested that around the first half of the third century AD, simplified renderings appeared in the Gandhāra region.

To summarize: in the Gandhāra region, we can say that early features such as the multiple parallel lines in drapery had already appeared around the middle of the first century AD and were still in use in the beginning of the second century AD. After a certain point of time, sculptures with naturalistic features began to

be made. And after that, around the first half of the third century AD, simplified style with its pairs of parallel lines appeared.

Here we should refer again to the chronological order of stylistic features in the Uḍḍiyāna region. It can be suggested that similar stylistic changes happened at similar times in the Uḍḍiyāna region and the Gandhāra region. In the first century AD or so, primitive renderings were used in both regions. There is no archaeological evidence that directly demonstrates the period of the naturalistic style, but it may have flourished in the second century AD. After the first half of the third century AD, simplified renderings appeared in both regions. It should be noted that some aspects of all three styles were shared in the first half of the first millennium AD across the north-western Indian subcontinent.

### The geography of Gandhāran sculptures from a technical perspective

In light of these observations, does the fact that stylistic features were shared among regions tell us that the same sculptors travelled in the north-western Indian subcontinent and made sculptures across the regions? In order to get an answer to the question, we have to analyse the sculptures not only in respect to style but also from a technical perspective, for technical features have the potential to reveal information belied by general stylistic characteristics, which may be more easily imitated.

The arms of some Gandhāran statues were made separately from their bodies (Figures 21-24). They were joined to the bodies using several different techniques, including mortises and tenons, iron or wooden dowels, clamps, and dovetail tenons with sockets (Figure 25). Figure 23 illustrates a tenon on the



Figure 21. Buddha statue found at Sahrī-Bahlol (Photo: S. Naiki).



Figure 22. Bodhisattva statue found at Mekhasanda (Photo: after Mizuno [ed] 1969: pl. 37.2).



Figure 23. Piece of hand found at Thareli (1) (Photo: S. Naiki).



Figure 24. Piece of hand found at Thareli (2) (Photo: S. Naiki).

wrist of a bodhisattva statue. The tenon correspond with mortise on the body of statue (Figure 25.2). It should be noted that some short statues with small holes might have been used with dowels made of iron or wood instead of tenons (Figure 25.1).

Oblong sockets with a depressed end on a surface of a statue indicate the use of clamps (Figures 21 and 24), in which case adhesives may have been applied on the clamps and adjoining surfaces (Figure 25.3).<sup>14</sup> Some statues have v-shaped sockets on their joining surface, suggestive of the use of a dovetail tenon (Figures 22 and 25.4). In fact, there are some examples of arms which have dovetail tenons on their joining surface, corresponding to the v-shaped sockets (e. g. Nishikawa [ed] 1994: pls. 109-38, 39). Curiously a combination of techniques could be employed on a single statue. For example, cuttings for clamps are sometimes seen with mortise or v-shaped sockets (Figure 26). Why were several techniques used for joining arms?

<sup>14</sup> There are sometimes nicks on the joining surfaces of bodies. These incisions might have prepared the surfaces for secure adhesion between arms and bodies.

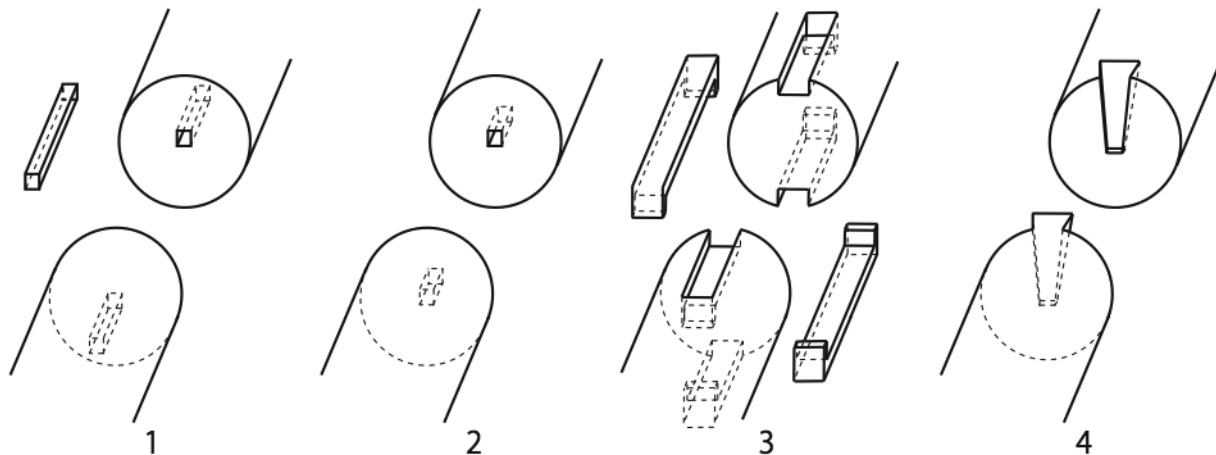


Figure 25. Techniques of obtaining joints in Gandhāran statuary. (Drawing by S. Naiki).



Figure 26. Buddha statue found at Ranigat  
(Photo: after Nishikawa [ed] 1994: pl. 99.4).

obtained in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.<sup>15</sup> There is no report of statues whose arms were made separately from body in the sites of Butkara I or Saidu Sharif I, both sites excavated intensively by the Italian Archaeological Mission. It appears therefore that making arms separately from bodies was not common in this region.

<sup>15</sup> For example, a Buddha statue with a socket for dovetail tenon, stored in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, was allegedly found in the Swat Valley (Uḍḍiyāna region) (Ackermann 1975: 139-140, pl. LXIII).

If it were the case that these techniques were shared widely across the north-western Indian subcontinent, this might support the hypothesis that the same sculptors were active in using them across this large area. But that is not so. A vast number of statues made of two parts, bodies and arms, have been found only in the Gandhāra region. The joints in these sculptures were made using different techniques. The Buddhist site of Thareli, excavated by Kyoto University Mission from 1963 to 1967, is an important example where all the above techniques were used to join arms to statues' bodies (Figures 23 and 24; Mizuno & Higuchi 1978: pls. 90-1, 137-1).

Strictly speaking, a few schist statues made of two parts joined together with some of these techniques (clamps and their combination with mortises and tenons: Marshall 1951: nos. 142 & 158) have been found in the Taxila region. However, as we have already acknowledged, schist sculptures are thought to have been brought into that region from the Gandhāra proper because of the lack of schist quarries. No trace of dovetail technique is known in this region.

In contrast, in the Uḍḍiyāna region statues with traces of arm joints are known only in the collections

## Conclusion

As we have seen above, while stylistic features on sculptures were shared among regions, the techniques employed in making statues were not so obviously shared among regions. We can tentatively say that sculptors in each region worked with their own techniques, but were prepared to use similar stylistic approaches which somehow circulated more broadly across regions. If we want to know what these two different tendencies mean, we will need to continue comparison of sculptures among regions using other perspectives and points of comparison.

Another curious regional tendency can also be seen in Gandhāran sculptures with dated inscriptions.<sup>16</sup> There are only five sculptures with such inscriptions. However, if we consider the provenance of each sculpture, an interesting pattern emerges.

Four of them were found in the Gandhāra region. They were found at Mamāne Ḍherī, Loriyān Tangai, Pālātū Ḍherī in Hashtnagar, and Skārah Ḍherī. Among them, Mamāne Ḍherī, Pālātū Ḍherī and Skārah Ḍherī are situated near Chārsadda in the western part of the Gandhāra region, and Loriyān Tangai is located at the northern end of the region.

The provenance of another example inscribed with a reference to 'year 5', now in a private collection, is not known, but the iconographical similarity with a relief found in Sahrī-Bahlol in the Gandhāra region has always been noted (Harle 1974: 133, pl. 74). So it is entirely possible that this piece also comes from the region.

Four or five pieces are not sufficient to reach a firm conclusion, but we may say at least that dated donative inscriptions on sculptures are likely to have been made in the Gandhāra region, since they are not so far attested in other regions such as Uḍḍiyāna region.<sup>17</sup>

As well, the author is currently engaged in reassembling groups of relief panels which decorated the same *stūpa* at certain Buddhist sacred sites in the Gandhāra region.<sup>18</sup> In the course of analysis, some tendencies in the selection of scenes depicted on panels in each period emerge. If this research continues and its results are compared with the situation in other regions such as Uḍḍiyāna, we may be able to find some regional similarities or differences also in this selection process.

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<sup>16</sup> The author talked about these Gandhāran sculptures with dated inscriptions at the 23rd conference of the European Association for South Asian Archaeology and Art held in Cardiff in 2016. It is hoped that the proceedings with the paper may be published soon (Naiki forthcoming b).

<sup>17</sup> It is worth referring here to the fact that there are a few dated inscriptions on gold plates which seem to have been found in the Uḍḍiyāna region (Bailey 1980; Fussman 1986). The use of dated donative inscriptions may not have been uncommon in itself in the Uḍḍiyāna region.

<sup>18</sup> The author talked about parts of this research on relief panels at the 24th conference of European Association for South Asian Archaeology and Art held in Naples, July 2018 (Naiki 2018).

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**Part 2**  
**Provenances and Localities**



# **Sources of acquisition for the Gandhāran Buddhist sculptures in the former S.R.O. collection of the Department of Archaeology and Museums, Government of Pakistan, in the light of archival documents**

Zarawar Khan

An impressive collection of Buddhist sculptures and other important antiquities, recently received by the Directorate of Archaeology and Museums, Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province, from the former Sub-Regional Office, Peshawar, of the Federal Department of Archaeology and Museums, is commonly known as the S.R.O. collection of the DoAM (those abbreviations will be used hereafter). After its transfer to the DoAM in the light of the eighteenth Constitutional Amendment of 2011, the collection became the subject of different academic debates.

In the initial stage of our research on this hitherto ignored collection, we were informed that all Buddhist sculptures in this collection had arrived after the establishment of the S.R.O Peshawar in 1972, from confiscations made by the Custom and Police Departments. However, it was found that the collection has its roots from the former office of the Archaeological Survey of India, Frontier Circle (A.S.I.F.C) at Peshawar, which was functional from 1904 to 1938 (Khan 2016). After the creation of Pakistan in 1947, the antiquities store of the former A.S.I.F.C. came under the control of the Federal Department of Archaeology and Museums and fresh antiquities from the excavations of the Japanese Archaeological Mission to Pakistan were also added to its collection. Meanwhile, in 1972, a Sub-Regional Office (S.R.O) of the Federal Department of Archaeology and Museums was established in the same building, which did also acquire additional Buddhist sculptures, chiefly from confiscation (Khan 2016).

Although the S.R.O. collection preserves some excellent examples of Buddhist iconography, most of its works of art are difficult to study for different reasons. First, the whole collection is a mixture of inherited, excavated, and confiscated material which can hardly be differentiated from each other owing to the absence of relevant acquisition records. Similarly, the attribution of a sculpture to a particular Buddhist site is also made problematic by many abbreviated Roman letters and accession numbers added to individual objects (Khan 2015). Moreover, the existing computerized inventory of the collection, which is the only source of information, unfortunately, does not throw sufficient light on the authenticity of the objects and their archaeological contexts. In addition, there is a group of sculptures on which the original accession numbers are effaced and hence their acquisition information is lost forever.

The main problem posed by the collection is its unrecorded acquisition history, which we have tried to establish in the light of the published reports of the Archaeological Survey of India, the narrative of Sir Aurel Stein, the publications of the foreign Archaeological Missions to Pakistan, and a group of archival documents preserved in different Police Stations, the Customs Department, Judicial Courts, and the record files of the S.R.O. Peshawar, as well as those received from the retired officers of the former S.R.O. Peshawar.<sup>1</sup> Elucidating the specific origins of this substantial and varied collection adds to the corpus of provenanced sculptures and so contributes to a finer-grained picture of Gandhāran artistic geography.

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<sup>1</sup> I am very grateful to Mr Arshad Mughal, former Deputy Director of the S.R.O. Peshawar, for sharing with me photocopies of important documents dealing with the confiscation of Buddhist sculptures by the Police and Customs Departments.

## The inherited Collection of the S.R.O. Peshawar

Among the inherited collection, there is a group of some hundred Buddhist sculptures. The majority of them are either damaged or are very fragmentary pieces. Although the original registration numbers and abbreviated letters marked on some of them are effaced, it can be guessed that these were either acquired from the excavations of different archaeological mounds of Charsadda by Sir John Marshall in 1902,<sup>2</sup> or else part of the bulk of 227 stone and stucco sculptures received by Sir Aurel Stein from Mr P.J.G. Pippon, the then Assistant Commissioner of Mardan, along with a mixture of twenty-six sculptures donated by Colonel H.A. Dean, Chief Commissioner, Major Rawlinson, the Deputy Commissioner, and Mr J. Wilson-Johnson, Assistant Commissioner Mardan, for the future Peshawar Museum between 1903 and 1904 (Stein 1905: 5-6).<sup>3</sup>

Similarly, the Buddhist sculptures excavated from the site of Shāh-jī-kī-ḍherī, Sahrī Bahlol, Jamālgarhī and Takht-i-Bāhī were also first deposited in the godowns of the Superintendent A.S.I.F.C office at Peshawar (Spooner 1911: 135, n.1), from which selected pieces were later on moved to the Peshawar Museum.<sup>4</sup> The surplus pieces left in the godowns were so numerous that the majority of them were left lying on the ground due to the lack of space. In this connection, one of the then superintending officers urged the government to provide wall-shelves on which to place the Buddhist sculptures, claiming that if these artefacts remained on the ground, the numbers marked on them would be completely effaced with the passage of time and their provenance would be lost to the scholars forever (Natesa Aiyar 1915: 4). Exactly this fate did befall most of the sculptures.

As far as detection of the inherited sculptures of the S.R.O. Peshawar is concerned, some of them have been successfully identified and our list includes thirty-one stucco and four stone sculptures from Takht-i-Bāhī, two stone and eighty-six stucco figures from Sahrī Bahlol and twenty stucco heads from the site of Jamālgarhī. In addition, 377 stone and stucco sculptures labelled with abbreviation 'WU' have been also separated from the bulk of inherited sculptures of the S.R.O.<sup>5</sup>

## Sculptures from the excavations of foreign archaeological missions

The Buddhist sculptures received from the Foreign Archaeological Mission to Pakistan<sup>6</sup> are those that came from sites excavated by the Japanese Archaeological Mission to Pakistan from 1959 to 1967 (Mizuno 1969, Mizuno and Higuchi 1978) and 1994 to 1999 (Yoshihide et al. 2011: 233-43) which include Mekhasanda, Thareli, and Zar Dheri.<sup>7</sup> Like the inherited sculptures, the excavated material from

<sup>2</sup> For the excavations at Charsadda see Marshall & Vogel 1904.

<sup>3</sup> I could not find any detail about the first placement of sculptures discovered by Marshall in Charsadda. Probably the Peshawar Office was soon established after he inaugurated the excavation at Charsadda and later on selected sculptures and relic caskets were shifted to the Victoria Memorial Hall, now Peshawar Museum, for display along with those received by Stein from Pippon and others

<sup>4</sup> At that stage the Peshawar Museum was yet to be established.

<sup>5</sup> 'WU' corresponds to the name of Mr Waliullah Khan, the former Sub-Overseer of the A.S.I.F.C who worked in the Peshawar antiquities store between 1931 and 1938 and prepared an inventory of the reserve antiquities. Unfortunately, that important list has not yet been found and hence the provenance of these sculptures is not known. For detail about 'WU' and other abbreviations marked on the S.R.O. material see Khan 2015, 2016 and Saeed & Khan 2016.

<sup>6</sup> Before the coming of the Japanese Archaeological Mission, Sir Mortimer Wheeler had conducted excavations in Charsadda in 1958, but the material recovered is believed to have been transferred to the Southern Circle Office of the Department of Archaeology & Museums, Government of Pakistan, then situated in the Mughal Fort at Lahore. There are some terracotta figurines of 'Baroque lady' type in the S.R.O. Collection from an unknown provenance, which is unlikely to be Wheeler's excavations of Charsadda.

<sup>7</sup> The Japanese Mission also conducted excavations at Kashmir Smast and Chanaka Dheri but no sculptures from these sites have yet been identified in the S.R.O. Collection. As far as the excavated sculptures from the Ranigat site are concerned, these were shifted to the S.R.O. Taxila instead of Peshawar

different sites was intermixed in the former S.R.O. Peshawar, but after their transfer to the DoAM, these have now been re-arranged on steel shelves and with the exception of a few pieces whose identification has been erased, the sculptures are in a good state of preservation.

### **1. Sculptures from the Site of Thareli**

Before the move of the S.R.O. Peshawar assets to the DoAM in 2011, it was believed that all the Buddhist sculptures from the site of Thareli were deposited in the Taxila Archaeological Museum; some of them are still on display there. However, during our documentation work it was revealed that 201 stone sculptures and twenty stucco figures from Thareli were added to the collection of the former antiquities store of the A.S.I.F.C. in Peshawar, probably in 1970. These were later on taken over by the S.R.O. Peshawar. The sculptures from the Thareli site are marked with abbreviated letters 'TR' and 'TH', with the addition of 'SRD', 'SRP' and 'SRO' respectively. The unmarked pieces can be identified with the help of photographs published in the excavation report.<sup>8</sup>

### **2. Sculptures from Mekhasanda Site**

Mekhasanda Buddhist site was also excavated by the Japanese Archaeological Mission to Pakistan between 1962 and 1967. The antiquities recovered from the site include pottery specimens, terracotta figurines, and a collection of stone and stucco sculptures of which 107 have been identified. These sculptures have the abbreviated letters 'MS' on them and most of them were included in the published report (see Mizuno 1969).

### **3. Sculptures from Zar Dheri**

Zar Dheri Buddhist site in the Mansehra district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province was excavated between 1994 and 1999 under a joint venture programme of the Tokyo National Museum Mission and the Department of Archaeology & Museums, Government of Pakistan. The site has produced a substantial number of stone sculptures and *chaitya* arch-shaped narrative relief panels. All of these Buddhist sculptures were deposited in the S.R.O. Peshawar (Yoshihide et al. 2011: 233-43), however after the transfer of the S.R.O. assets to the DoAM, most of the sculptures of this site were displayed in the Peshawar Museum.

## **Confiscated sculptures and their acquisition history in the light of archival documents**

Apart from the inherited and excavated sculptures, the S.R.O. collection was also enriched by a large number of seized and confiscated antiquities captured by the Custom and Police Department from antique dealers, foreign tourists, and unauthorized collectors. Confiscations occur at Peshawar Airport, railway stations, antique markets, and even at road-side search operations. Although the acquisition history of this group of sculptures is not properly recorded in the existing inventory register, the discovery of a set of archival documents testifies how many precious antiquities have been added to the S.R.O. collection at different occasions. Thanks to the new data, we can now differentiate many sculptures among the confiscated material from each other on the basis of old numbers and abbreviated letters marked on them, such as SRD and SRP, before these artworks were labelled as SRO. We would therefore like to incorporate a few of them in the present study.

<sup>8</sup> For the Thareli excavation report, see Mizuno & Higuchi 1978.

**Document No.1**

File No. 29/1/72-76-SRP<sup>9</sup>

Letter No. 85.

Dated 23.11.1971

Subject: Complaint under the Antiquities Act

The document records the confiscation of 172 Buddhist sculptures by the Kabuli Police Station, Peshawar, from two shopkeepers in the Andar Shahr goldsmith market on 8th June 1973. The collection consisted of stucco heads, stone sculptures, and terracotta figurines. All of this material reached the S.R.O. Peshawar on 16th November 1973 after the decision of the judicial court in favour of the Department of Archaeology and Museums, Government of Pakistan. During the process of our documentation research, thirty-two narrative relief panels from this collection were identified and separated from the bulk of other confiscated sculptures.

Most of these narrative relief panels illustrate scenes from the biography of the Buddha such as *Dīpaṅkara jātaka*; the birth of Siddhārtha; his first bath; the return to the royal palace; the horoscope of the child; Siddhārtha goes to school and the learning of writing; the renunciation of palace life; the exchange of clothes with hunters; the Buddha sheltered by the *nāga* Muchalinda; the approach of the two merchants to Buddha; the visit of the ascetics; the Buddha inside the Indraśaila cave; preparation



Figure 1. Relief panel showing the Parinirvāṇa scene. Sculpture confiscated by the Kabuli Police Station at Andhr Shahr Bazar. (Photo: courtesy of the Directorate of Archaeology and Museums, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province, Peshawar.)

<sup>9</sup> SRP is the abbreviated form of Sub-Regional Peshawar, later on changed to S.R.O. Peshawar. Many files under this heading were moved from the S.R.O. Peshawar to the DoAM.



for the first sermon; the giving of the black serpent to Kaśyapa; miracles performed at Śrāvastī; the visit to the grave of the dead nursing woman; the presentation of a handful of dust to Buddha; King Udyāna presents the Buddha's image; the death and cremation of the Buddha (Figures 1 and 2), the enshrined relic container (Figure 3) and adoration of the relic container and the Buddha (Figure 4).



Figure 2. Relief panel showing the cremation of the Buddha. Sculpture confiscated by the Kabuli Police Station at Andhr Shahr Bazar. (Photo: courtesy of the Directorate of Archaeology and Museums, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province, Peshawar.)



Figure 3. Relief panel showing the enshrined relic container of the Buddha(?). Sculpture confiscated by the Kabuli Police Station at Andhr Shahr Bazar. (Photo: courtesy of the Directorate of Archaeology and Museums, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province, Peshawar.)



Figure 4. Relief panel showing the adoration of relics and the Buddha's image(?). Sculpture confiscated by the Kabuli Police Station at Andhr Shahr Bazar. (Photo: courtesy of the Directorate of Archaeology and Museums, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province, Peshawar.)

**Document No.2**

File No. 29/1/73-SRP

Letter No. 20

Dated 16.03.1973

Subject: Summary of the smuggling case of antiquities

The document records the summary of twelve stone and stucco sculptures captured by the Dabgari Police Station, Peshawar, from Mst. Sirki Khela, an Afghan caste woman, who was taking them from Torkham to the Andhar Shehr market, Peshawar on 16th March, 1973.

**Document No.3**

File No. 29/1/73-SRP

Letter No. 50

Dated 02. 07. 1973

Subject: Receipt of sculptures

This document records the receipt of twelve confiscated sculptures stated in our document no.2, received by the S.R.O. Peshawar. Among the sculptures of this group, one partially preserved relief panel shows the dream of Queen Maya and its interpretation.<sup>10</sup>

**Document No. 4**

File No. 29/1/73-SRP

Letter No. 68

Dated 03.09.1973

From: The Stenographer S.R.O. Peshawar

To: Superintendent Archaeology, Lahore

Subject: Nil

<sup>10</sup> This narrative relief panel is of iconographic importance and will be published soon.

The letter informs probably the Northern Circle Office of Archaeology, Lahore, about the recovery of thirty small pieces (mostly damaged heads) and thirty big pieces of stone sculpture as well as one stucco figure of an elephant, captured by the police from two antique collectors of Shaikhabad, Peshawar. It is also mentioned that all these confiscated sculptures have been handed over by the police to the stenographer against a receipt and are preserved in the wooden cupboard of the S.R.O. Peshawar.

**Document No. 5**

Case file No. 29/4/76-SRP

Letter No.1

Dated 13.03.1976

From: The Assistant Superintendent of Archaeology, S.R.O. Peshawar

To: The Superintendent of Archaeology, Northern Circle of Archaeology, Lahore

Subject: Case against Mr. Ugo Francini, under Antiquities Act, 1975

The letter informs the Lahore Office that fourteen sculptures were captured by the Railway Police, at Peshawar Railway Station, from the possession of Mr Ugo Francini, an Italian National on 29th February, 1976. The accused was just starting for Karachi through the Khyber Mail express, when the police arrested him with the antiquities. It is also mentioned in the same letter that all the sculptures and papers of the case have been handed over to the S.R.O. Peshawar.

**Document No. 6**

Case file No. 29/4/76-SRP

Letter No.40

Dated 06.08.1976

From: The Assistant Superintendent of Archaeology, S.R.O. Peshawar

To: The Superintendent of Archaeology, Northern Circle of Archaeology, Lahore

Subject: Seizure of fourteen stone sculptures from Mr Ugo Francini, an Italian National, at the Peshawar Railway Station.



Figure 5. Relief panel showing a distribution and transportation of the relics and adoration of stūpa. Sculpture confiscated by the Peshawar Railway Police. (Photo: courtesy of the Directorate of Archaeology and Museums, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province, Peshawar.)

Further to the document no.5, this letter is with reference to a previous correspondence no.27/8/76-Arch, dated 31st July 1976, and narrates that the all of the fourteen sculptures were received by the S.R.O. Peshawar on 13th July, 1976, after the confiscation order by the first class Magistrate, Peshawar. These objects have been entered in the relevant register against No. SRP 668 to 681.<sup>11</sup> One interesting relief panel in this collection depicts the distribution and transportation of relics and the adoration of *stūpa* by devotees (Figure 5)



Figure 6. Fragment of a relief panel showing a lioness carrying a corpse(?). Sculpture probably confiscated by the Excise Police at Shergarh. (Photo: courtesy of the Directorate of Archaeology and Museums, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province, Peshawar.)

**Document No. 7**

Case file No. 29/11/77-SRP

Letter No. Nil

Dated: Nil

Subject: Summary of Case No. 4/75, State VS. Mohib Gul.

The document is part of a case file dealing with four stone and stucco sculptures confiscated by the Excise Police from Mr Mohib Gul, son of Tor Gul, a resident of Malakand, while he was travelling on a bus. The police arrested him at the custom check point at Shergarh and confiscated all the sculptures from him which subsequently reached the S.R.O. Peshawar. Among these sculptures, one broken piece of relief panel shows a lioness carrying a corpse to an unknown destination (Figure 6).

**Document No. 8**

Case file No. Nil

Dated: 18.10.1978

Subject: Case under Antiquities Act of 1975. Government of Pakistan VS Muhammad Yousaf and others



Figure 7. Relief panel showing a wine-carrier(?) under arch. Sculpture confiscated by the Shāhbāz Garhī Police (Photo: courtesy of the Directorate of Archaeology and Museums, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province, Peshawar.)

<sup>11</sup> The register for the series starting 'SRP' (for Sub-Regional Peshawar) no longer exists in the S.R.O. collection stored in the DoAM.

The Shāhbāz Garhī Police Station, Mardan, recovered from the motorcar of Muhammad Yousaf, Khalid Khan and Gulzada, residents of Peshawar, eighteen small Gandhāran sculptures on 18.10.1978, and filed a case against the culprits. After the decision of the Judicial Court in favour of the Government, all the confiscated objects were given to the S.R.O. Peshawar. Except one partially preserved relief panel showing a wine bag carrier under arch (Figure 7), the rest of the sculptures are damaged and worn.

## Conclusion

The Buddhist sculptures in the collection of the former S.R.O. Peshawar have been discovered in different Buddhist sites located in the geographical sphere of ancient Gandhāra, such as Takht-i-Bāhī, Sahri Bahlol, Jamālgarhī, MekhaSanda, Thareli and Shāhbāz Garhī. However, unfortunately, this collection of precious materials remained out of the focus of scholars and researchers for a long time until 2011, when I was able to study them for academic research. Although the majority of sculptures discovered from known archaeological sites are intermixed with confiscated sculptures, it is hoped that with the help of archival materials and the photographic records preserved in the Archaeological Survey of India and elsewhere, the issue of the provenance and site attribution of these sculptures will soon be solved. Moreover, the decipherment of many ancient inscriptions preserved in the S.R.O. collection would add a new chapter to our geographical information about Gandhāra and its Buddhist heritage, for they are engraved in Kharoṣṭhī, Brāhmī and Sharad scripts and obtained from different parts of ancient Gandhāra.

## Acknowledgement

The author expresses gratitude to Professor Dr Shah Nazar Khan and Professor Dr Muhammad Nasim Khan, the former Directors, and Dr Abdul Samad, the present Director, of DoAM, Peshawar, for granting permission to study the S.R.O. collection and archival documents dealing with its acquisition history. I am also thankful to Mr Amanullah Afridi, the custodian of the S.R.O. collection for facilitating me during the course of my research. I am also grateful to Dr Peter Stewart, Director of the Classical Art Research Centre, University of Oxford, for his invitation to participate and present this paper in the conference on 'The Geography of Gandhāra Art'. I also appreciate the encouragement of Wannaporn Kay Rienjang, Joe Cribb, Pia Brancaccio, Stefan Baums, Jason Neelis, Jessie Pons, Dr M. Ashraf Khan, Mr Habibullah Khan Khattak, Abdul Ghafoor Lone and all the participants of the conference.

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# Fresh discoveries at the Buddhist Monastic Complex Bādālpur, Taxila valley

Muhammad Ashraf Khan

## Introduction

The Taxila valley has a unique geographic location, being on the crossroads of civilizations, cultures, and trade routes, owing to which it has been the focus of regional and international powers since time immemorial. The Silk Road from China to the heartland of the Punjab and onward to mainland India and the Arabian Sea passed through the Taxila Valley, which further enhanced its importance. Taxila also remained the centre of learning and contained many famous universities including the famous Jaulian Monastic Complex. It rose to prominence as the seat of many regional powers and was the abode of many famous scholars and specialists of different disciplines including medicine, surgery, mathematics, and chemistry.

The valley derived its name from the historic city of *Takshashila* or Taxila. In the puranic verses, the name is spelt as *Takhasila* or Takshasila in Prakrit epigraphs, but in the Besnagar inscriptions of the Greek ambassador Heliodorus, it is spelt *Takkhasila* (Dani 1999: 1). According to Marshall, the present spelling Taxila 'was the abbreviated form used by Greeks and Romans and from them commonly adopted by European writers' (Marshall 1951: I, 1). The correct Sanskrit spelling is *Takshasila*. Albaruni is the only scholar who gives the Persian equivalent of *Takshasila* as Mar-i-Kala (Sachau 1910: 302). The name in its corrupt form still survives in the name of the southern hills of Margalla.

The literal meaning of the word *Taksha* in Sanskrit is 'to cut' or 'split' and *sila* means 'stone, rock or hill'. This etymology led Marshall to suggest that 'it is not unlikely that *Takshasila* signifies the city of cut stones' (Marshall 1951, I: 1; Dani 1999: 1). The faithful Chinese pilgrims attributed the name *Tathagata*, according to the Xuanzang's accounts: 'this is the place where *Tathagata* formally dwelled when he was practicing the discipline of Bodhisattva; he was then the king of a great country and was called Chen-ta-lo-po-la-po (Chandraprabha); he cut off his head, earnestly seeking the acquirement of Bodhi' (Beal 1884:138). Xuanzang gives a glowing account of the fertility of the valley 'the land is renowned for its fertility and produces rich harvest. It is full of streams and fountains. Flowers and fruits are abundant. The climate is agreeably temperate' (Beal 1884: 137).

The Taxila valley is extensively dotted with the Buddhist establishments including monasteries, *stūpas* and secular buildings, apart from remains of other cultures. Though it was for a long time the focus of attention by scholars, Sir John Marshall was the first archaeologist to pioneer large-scale systematic archaeological excavations in the valley (Figure 1). Apart from unveiling the remains of a large number of monasteries and *stūpas*, he also retrieved a wealth of sculptures from these Buddhist sanctuaries. He stayed at Taxila for a considerable period of time and ensured that all important archaeological sites of the valley were properly surveyed, documented, and published for the benefit of archaeologists and other scholars, providing a basis for reference and the development of further research.

## Bādālpur: An enchanting Buddhist monastic complex

Spread over an area of 2.9 acres (1.17 hectares), the monastic complex of Bādālpur derived its name from the nearby modern settlement of Bādālpur. It lies between 35°46' 56" N and 72°52' 09" E with an altitude of 534 m above sea level. It is situated on the left bank of the Haro River in the Taxila Valley between orange orchards (Figure 2). The site is 10 km north-east of Taxila Museum and 2.5 km north-west of Jaulian village.

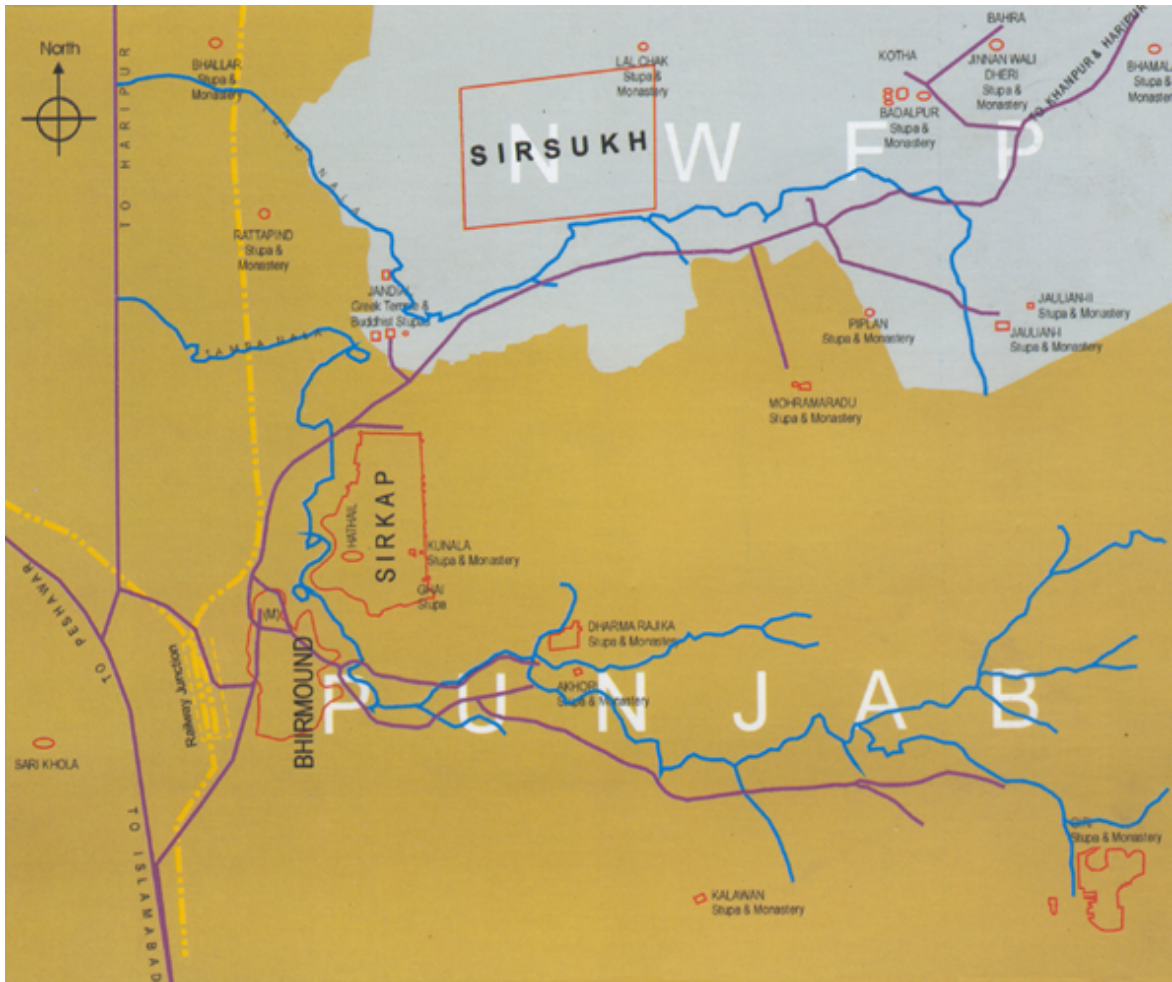


Figure 1. Map showing major excavated sites of the Taxila Valley. (Photo: Abdul Ghafoor).

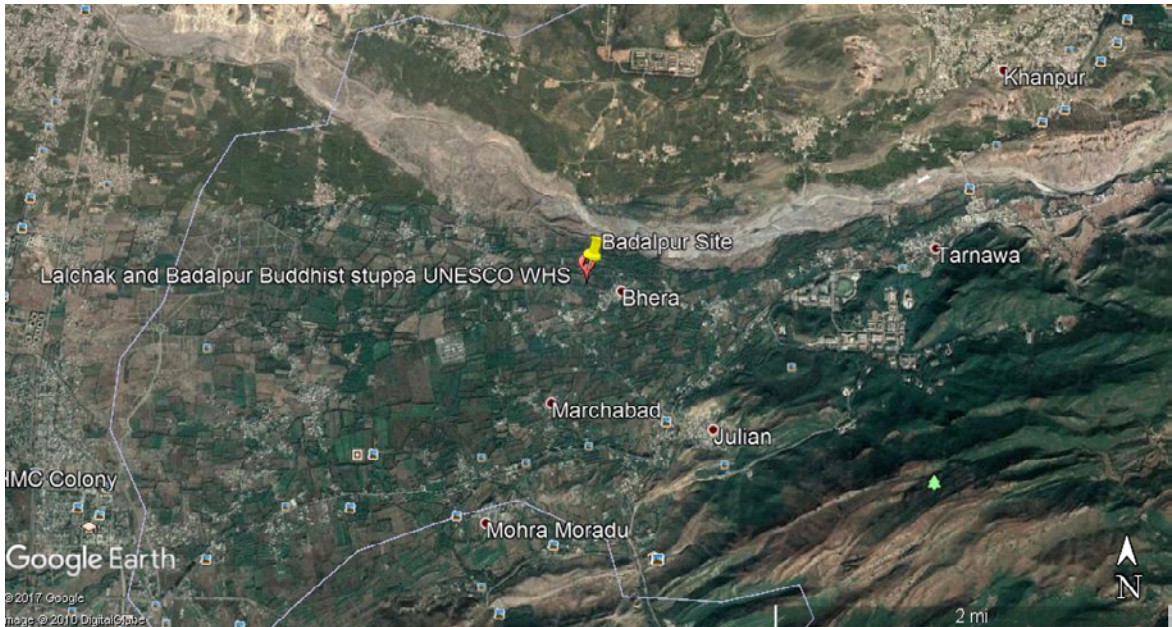


Figure 2. Satellite image showing the location of Bādālpur monastery. (Image: Google Earth.)



Sir Alexander Cunningham was the first researcher to document Bādālpur site during his archaeological survey in 1863-64. According to him the *stūpa* was completely denuded of its facing stones and there was nothing left (Cunningham 1871, II: 144-46). A salvage excavation at the *stūpa* complex of the Bādālpur site was first carried out by V. Natesa Aiyar, superintendent of Archaeological Survey of India during 1916-17. During the course of excavation, ten copper coins of the Kushan period, sealings, and pottery were recovered (Marshall 1960: 400-445). In view of the importance of the site, the Department of Archaeology and Museums, Government of Pakistan, started excavations there from January to August 2005 (Khan et al. 2009: 26). During the first season of excavation at Bādālpur the structural remains of eight cells on the western and southern sides of the ruined monastery were exposed (Khan et al 2007: 41). Excavations were resumed in 2006 and 2007 by the Department, which continued through 2007 and 2008, during which copper door hooks and iron clamps were discovered from the store room with a small number of pots (Khan et al. 2007: 49-50; 2009: 41).

It was during 2008 and 2009 that the author, after having taken over as Director of the Exploration and Excavation Branch of the Department, started excavations that led to fascinating discoveries. Apart from many other antiquities, the most important discovery from the site included the Buddha statue in *Dhyanamudrā* in red sandstone that might have been transported to Taxila from Mathurā – another highly important Buddhist centre of knowledge and art. It was during that season of excavations that a statue of Maitreya, a relic casket, terracotta oil lamps, and grinding stones were also found at this site. The excavations remained in progress during 2009 and 2010.

### Recent Research

After such important discoveries, the author, after taking over as the Director of Taxila Institute of Asian Civilizations, resumed further research at the site and finally succeeded in continuing the excavations during 2012 and 2013 from the point where they were left in 2009-10, with a team of students. A wide variety of pottery, iron nails, bones, terracotta bangles, storage jars, bowls, plates, oil lamps, water condensers (Figure 3), and potsherds were recovered and preserved (Khan et al. 2013: 65-80).

The structural remains of the site consist of one main *stūpa* and two votive *stūpas*, enclosed by chapels of different sizes. In these chapels were placed individual images of the Buddha. A huge monastery consisting of forty cells and two gateways was also found at the eastern side of Main *Stūpa* (Khan et al 2009: 42). However, a unique discovery resulted in the form of an additional monastery situated in the southern side of the main monastery, with assembly hall, kitchen, and store (Figures 4 and 5). This additional monastery has twelve monks' cells, each measuring 2.5 x 2.9 m.. In the center of this additional monastery is a water tank measuring 5 x 5 m, while the size of the monastery is 10 x 10 m. The tank is 95cm deep. The construction materials used in this monastery are the same as those of the main monastery. All walls of this monastery have mud plaster internally and stucco plaster externally. Traces of some of it could still be observed in some of the monastery cells.

The excavations at the site continued for three years, from 2013 to 2016, under the author's guidance and close supervision. A large number of terracotta objects were found. A large number of copper coins, (pots including complete bowls), oil lamps, dishes and plates were recovered in the northwestern corner cell (Figures 6-7).



Figure 3. Water condensers from the Bādālpur site. (Photo: Ashraf Khan.)

The pottery recovered from Bādālpur shows close similarities to the material culture of the Taxila Valley known from sites such as Jaulian, Sirkap, Bhir Mound, and Dharmarajika. Overall it is culturally related to different periods: Bhir Mound II, Sirkap II, III, IV, VI.

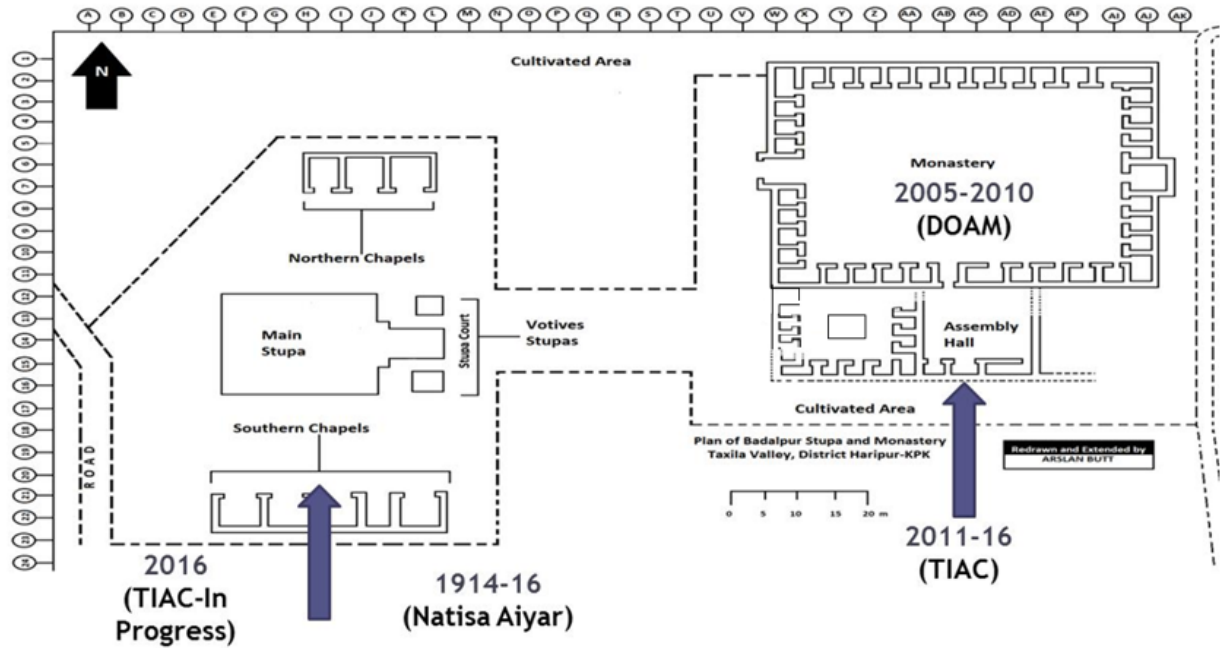


Figure 4. Plan of the additional monastery, showing assembly hall, kitchen, and store. (Photo: Muhammad Nazir.)



Figure 5. View of the additional monastery from the north-west. (Photo: Ashraf Khan.)



Figure 6. Selection of pottery from the site: small open-mouthed bowls and dishes. (Photo: Muhammad Arif.)



Figure 7. Oil lamps from the site. (Photo: Muhammad Arif.)



Figure 8. Clay sealing showing running deer, season 2005. (Photo: Muhammad Arif)



Figure 9. Clay sealing showing a bull facing left, season 2005 (Photo: Muhammad Arif)



Figure 10. Clay sealing showing a human figure driving a two-horse chariot, season 2005. (Photo: Muhammad Arif)

During the 1916-17 excavations, Natisa Aiyar found copper coins and terracotta/clay sealings and a lot of potsherds in the stūpa court (Marshall 1960: 181). The subsequent excavations conducted by the Federal Department of Archaeology and the Taxila Institute of Asian Civilizations between 2005 and 2016 also led to the



Figure 11. Chatras of a votive stūpa made of copper, season 2005. (Photo: Muhammad Arif)



Figure 12. Kushan gold coin of Kaniska I, season 2005 (Photo: Muhammad Arif)



Figure 13. Kushan copper coins, season 2005 (Photo: Ashraf Khan)



Figure 14. Decorative fragments of copper: (a) with leaf motif; (b) door decoration, season 2005 (Photo: Muhammad Arif)



Figure 15. Copper pendants, season 2005 (Photo: Muhammad Arif)

discovery of a large number of seals and sealings (Figures 8-10), which are being studied separately. Cult objects (Figure 11), a gold coin (Figure 12), copper coins, metal objects (Figures 13 a-f), copper objects including door decorations and pendants were also found (Figures 14 and 15) (Arif et al. 2011: 27-42).



Figure 16. Schist sculpture of the Bodhisattva Maitreya from Bādalpur excavations. (Photo: Ashraf Khan.)

Coming to important discoveries concerning Buddhist sculptures from the site, the excavation resulted in discovery of three sculptures: a Maitreya, a seated Buddha in red sandstone, and a *stūpa* model. The bodhisattva Maitreya was recovered in front of the cell No. 22 in the Main monastery (Figure 16), it is standing on a pedestal, in front of which is embellished by three rosettes with four petals. He holds a flask (*kamaṇḍalu*) between the forefinger and middle fingers which contains *amṛita*, the *elixir* of life and a symbol of salvation in the future. His long hair is partly bound on top of his head and has two loops tightened by a central knot, resembling the Greek *krobylos*.<sup>1</sup> Right hand of Maitreya is missing, however, he would have been making the gesture of reassurance, *abhayamudrā*. He is dressed in *parihāna* and *uttariya*, like an Indian prince, and wears a long necklace which is defaced but usually it contains animals that have long snouts and ears, resembling dragons and sometimes necklaces with flying *putti* or monsters. He had also a Brahmanic cordon, bracelets and armlets, which are also missing in this figure. He also wears traditional sandals adorned with lion head (*kīrtimukha*). The large halo is broken, and his right arm and leg missing. Figures of Maitreya with similar iconography are documented at other sites of the Taxila valley and also from other regions of Gandhāra such as Peshawar, Swat, and Mardan (Marshall 1951, II: 772; III: 140, pl. 223; Bussagli 1984:103, no. 2; Rehman 1993: 67, 77, pls. XXIIB, XXIII B; Dani 1966:17-24, pl. XIX, no. 2).

Another important discovery from Bādalpur Monastery is a red sandstone Buddha figurine in Mathurān style (Figure 17) recovered in veranda in front of cell No. 22 of the Main Monastery. The Buddha is seated on a high throne decorated with two back-to-back lions. He has a long nose, protruding eyes, thick lips and an oval shaped chin. He is wearing a transparent garment (*sanghāti*) covering his left shoulder while the right is bare. He has a spiral hairstyle. His right hand is in *abhayamudrā* with a *chakra* (wheel of the law) on his palm, while his left hand is touching his knee. On both soles of his feet is a depiction of the *chakra*. The navel is shown prominently. The back of the sculpture depicts a pipal tree. On the left side of the Buddha is a broken female figure. A similar Buddha sculpture in red sand stone with a *nāga stūpa* at the back was discovered at the site of Bari Dherī in the Taxila Valley by Sir John Marshall (Marshall 1951: II, 717-18, no. 119; III, pl. 220, no. 119; Khan Ishtaiq 1966: 41-55, fig. 1; Foucher 1905: 51:1, 4-7, 35).

The third important discovery is a relic casket in the shape of a *stūpa* model in soft stone (Figure 18). The casket was found in the veranda of the main monastery in front of cell no. 22. Its *harmika* and *chatras* are now missing. This relic casket was found with the bodhisattva Maitreya mentioned above. Similar relic caskets were found by Sir John Marshall at Dharmarājikā and Sirkap (Marshall 1951, III: pl. 35, figs.g, h).

<sup>1</sup> A conventional term for the motif of hair fastened high on the head in Greek sculpture.



Figure 17. Sandstone figure of the Buddha in abhaya mudrā with a pipal (bodhi) tree on the reverse. (Photo: Ashraf Khan.)



Figure 18. Relic casket in the form of a model stūpa. (Photo: Ashraf Khan.)

situated in the transitional area between the highlands of Central Asia and Afghanistan on one side and alluvial plains of the Indus and Ganga river systems on the other. Taxila was also a meeting point of three great trade routes of ancient times which have come to be known as ‘Silk Routes’. Consequently, this area’s material remains provide a witness to influences on Gandhāra from both the west and also southern India. The sculptures discussed here might serve as illustrations of these connections, for the image of the the bodhisattva Maitreya recovered from the Bādālpur monastery is a blend of local and western art, while the Buddha in red sandstone is a typical specimen of Mathurān art.

In closing, I would like set Bādālpur in the broader geographical framework explored by this book. Taxila is

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# Fresh research on the Buddhist monastic complex of Takht-i-Bāhī

M.H. Khan Khattak

## Introduction

Gandhāra has unique and diverse characteristics, distinctions, and peculiarities which cannot be encompassed or summarized easily. It has been identified as the second holy land of Buddhism and Buddhist religious practices. The historic Buddha never visited this land (Khan 1998: 53-64; Khan: 1994: 11), but many places have been identified with him during his previous births, thus making this land sacred for followers of the faith. Gandhāra has a unique and strategic location transforming it into the meeting place of divergent cultures as a result of interactions through trade, invasions, and religion. Several roads branched out from Gandhāra which provided access from Bactria in the west to Magadha (Bihar) in the east. Trade and commerce flourished owing to its remarkable geographical location that linked it with all the other important trade centers, east and west. It was connected with all the important towns of ancient India on the one hand and China, Central Asia, Western Asia, Persia, and Eastern Europe on the other. The large number of Buddhist centres of learning attracted students from the surrounding lands and far-off regions. It is famous for its unique artistic and architectural excellence, mainly relating to the Buddhist pantheon but simultaneously containing important elements of Greek, Roman, and Persian traditions, which were closely tuned, customized, and mingled with the local and indigenous artistic traditions. Gandhāra had the distinction, perhaps uniquely to begin with, of portraying the Buddha in human form and producing episodes from his life, from birth to his passing, in soft stone very well suited for sculpting (Siddiqui 2011: 65-73).

Chongfeng Li has given an interesting account of 'Jibin' or Gandhāra on the basis of accounts of the Chinese pilgrims (Li 2012: 13-54).

From the 3rd to the 6th century CE, 'Jibin abounds with saints and wise men'. There were frequent exchanges between Jibin and China during this period... Those who went to Jibin from China during the 4th and 5th centuries CE, either in quest of Buddhist sutras and images or simply on pilgrimages, include Fayong, Zhimeng and Zhiyan among many others. Kumarajiva (344-413 CE), a great translator and eminent monk, is recorded as having travelled back and forth between Jibin and Kucha several times. Thus, a close relationship existed between Jibin and China as far as Buddhist cultural exchange was concerned... Jibin or the Greater Gandhāra is rich of the Buddhist sites and remains... Jibin in ancient Chinese literature basically corresponds to the Greater Gandhāra.

He also mentions the number of monks who accompanied the three prominent Chinese pilgrims: 'Fayong is said to have led a group of about 25 monks, Zhimeng led 15, and Zhiyan led 4 monks from China to Jibin respectively. There are also other lists of monks in Chinese documents. So the number was considerable' (Li 2012: 13-54, n. 25).

According to Ihsan Ali, 'In the 7th century A.D. Xuan Zang (Watters 1904: I, 198-224) provides an account of the religious geography of the Peshawar Plain, as he found it. In the Peshawar area he alluded to more than 1000 Buddhist monasteries, "but they were utterly dilapidated and untenanted". He also found many stūpas in ruins. On the other hand, there were more than 100 Hindu temples, "and the various sects lived pell-mell"' (Ali 2003: 35-42). He further states that, 'Among more than 800 known Kushan sites of the Vale of Peshawar, 520 are Buddhist sites' (Ali 1999:1-29).

Coming to the topic of our discussions here, I would say that Takht-i-Bāhī is one of the most imposing, gigantic and famous of Gandhāran sites in the greater Peshawar valley, which is at the heart of the ancient Gandhāra. The site was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1980 because of the unique attributes of this great complex. This paper will address four main issues:

1. the absence of any reference to this huge Buddhist monastic complex in the accounts of the renowned Chinese pilgrims who visited Gandhāra between the fifth and eighth centuries AD;
2. controversy about the very name of the important world heritage site;
3. the unscientific approach adopted for the chronology of the huge complex;
4. the residential status of the Takht-i-Bāhī monastery.

In addition, I shall briefly highlight the importance of discoveries made during 2002-2005 and some interesting objects retrieved during the cleaning and clearance process for conservation activities from August, 2017 to February, 2018. Let us take up these issues one by one and explore how they may be resolved.

### **The absence of any reference to Takht-i-Bāhī in the accounts of Chinese pilgrims**

We know from different sources that a large number of Chinese pilgrims visited India and Gandhāra between the fifth and eighth centuries AD. However, the following are the most prominent who left highly valuable accounts of their visits (Grünwedel 1901: 81):

1. Faxian (Fa-hien/Fa Hian/Fa-hsien) (AD 399-414);
2. Songyun (Sung Yun/Huisheng) (AD 518-521);
3. Xuanzang (Hiuen Tsang/Hsuan-tsang) (AD 629-645);
4. Yijing (AD 671-695); he does not seem to have visited Gandhāra as he had taken the sea route for his journey to India and return;
5. I-tsing (AD 671-695); no information about his visit to Gandhāra;
6. U-K'ong (AD 757-764).

As Professor Sehrai observes, 'Hiuen Tsang mentions that there were about one thousand monasteries in Gandhāra'. He also refers to the popular view that 'the barbaric Huns from Central Asia destroyed it. Their king Mihiragula the Hun is charged with the destruction of sixteen hundred stūpas and monasteries of Gandhāra and slaying two third of its inhabitants' (Sehrai 2001: 52). This statement reinforces the idea that at least before the alleged destruction of a large number of stūpas and monasteries and the killing of such a large number of Buddhists by Mihirakula (Mahiragula; AD 502-530) (Grousset 1970: 7) there must have been flourishing monasteries in the region.

According to Alia Jawad (Jawad 2010:85-98),

The Chinese chronicles reveal that the Gandhāran monasteries possessed the unique architecture and art, the expensive fresco, paintings and inscriptions, the statues and relief. It must have had proclaimed the wealthy status of the monasteries, that was instrumental in maintaining their prestige and patronage in a highly competitive religious arena, created by different rival sects of Buddhism. Many monasteries relied on the reputation of the sacred objects to attract patrons and to build prestige among common masses. The possession and display of the religious artifacts had become a potent source of power and competition with the rival monasteries. This religious kit had attracted the pilgrims from faraway lands. The Royal patronage and crowds of pilgrims had reinforced the power flow.

This statement invites us to ponder upon two important aspects. Firstly, patronage from royalty or rich donors was essential for the building, maintenance, and survival of religious establishments, particularly monasteries. 'The scriptural legends reveal that right from its onset, the Buddhist Vihara was developed into a self sufficient colony, growing its own food and dairy farming, its own agricultural grounds, which came into its possession as gifts from its supporters' (Jawad 2010: 85-98; Swati 1996: 12; 1997: 29). Secondly, the pious Chinese pilgrims preferred to visit those places that contained important relics or were associated with events during previous births of the founder of the faith.

We might presume that the monastery of Takht-i-Bāhī had lost royal patronage by the time the Chinese pilgrims started arriving in Gandhāra and probably the local people had also forgotten much about this otherwise important place. Further, the other sources of sustenance of the monastic complex as referred to above might also have gradually dried up for different reasons, pushing it into oblivion. A second plausible assumption might be that this gigantic complex did not contain any major holy relic or remain associated with any event in the past lives of the Buddha. If so, it would have had little or no attraction for these pilgrims and thus they would not have considered making any reference to it, though this monastery must have been included in the number of religious establishments to which the pilgrims referred. We shall return presently to the possible reasons for the omission of Takht-i-Bāhī from the Chinese accounts.

Dr Abdur Rahman has commented on a very interesting historical phenomenon in these terms (Rahman 2010:17-27):

A mere glance over the pages of history is enough to establish the fact that place-names had in the past enjoyed a longer span of life than that of the rapidly changing human characters on the stage of history. Cities may change their masters every now and then with every new turn of history, but their names, being stuck in human memory, often stay for centuries. The force of tradition in such matters is so persistent that even when rulers of the time, high handedly or otherwise, tried to change place-names in their own favour, they very often failed to do so.

This phenomenon must also apply to Takht-i-Bāhī, but what ultimately caused the break up of this centuries-old tradition is yet to be discovered. The name of Gandhāra was also lost for centuries. 'It was from the notes regarding the valley of Peshawar left behind by Chinese pilgrims and by some classical writers that scholars early in the 19th century came to know that the Peshawar valley in ancient times was known as Gandhāra' (Rahman 2010: 17-27).

Had there been systematic and scientific archaeological excavations here before large scale plunder of the site in the nineteenth century, there would have been greater possibilities of placing this important site in a proper historic context through its rich finds. And again the obliviousness of the excavators to the importance of accurate and authentic recording of the finds from all parts of the huge complex during the so-called scientific archaeological excavations of the first two decades of twentieth century facilitated loss of whatever evidence had survived the earlier plunderers. I am confident that the actual name of this important place must have been inscribed prominently at more than one place, but such vital evidence was lost before it could be retrieved and deciphered.

Takht-i-Bāhī is located in the heart of ancient Gandhāra in the Mardan district, where 415 archaeological sites (mostly Buddhist religious/secular buildings/complexes and settlements) have been identified by the Department of Archaeology, University of Peshawar (Ali 2001: 56-172). This fact speaks loudly and clearly about Takht-i-Bāhī's being the centre of very lively and

hectic Buddhist activities during the peak period of Gandhāran civilization. As already indicated, scholars generally believe that this important Buddhist establishment was missed out by the Chinese pilgrims visiting Gandhāra, but have found no reason for the omission. Dr Taj Ali opines that (Ali 2001: 56-172),

In the flourishing days of the Buddhist Civilisation, Mardan, the heartland of Gandhāra, thrived with numerous villages, fortified towns and Buddhist establishments. This is fully substantiated by the archaeological remains of Takht-i-Bāhī (enrolled on the World Heritage list), Jamal Garhi, Sahri-Bahlol, Chanaka Dheri, Tareli, Mekha-Sanda and the Kashmir Smast. The famous sculpture of fasting Siddharta (the Buddha) preserved in the Lahore Museum comes from the Shikrai village near Jamal Garhi.

The modern road to Malakand from Peshawar goes around Paja Hill. At its eastern end we have the rock edicts of Aśoka at Shāhbāzgarhi; in the middle are the remains of Jamālgarhī; and at the western end is the Takht-i-Bāhī monastic establishment (Dani 1964).

Though the Chinese pilgrims mentioned the number of Buddhist monasteries in different parts of Pakistan and India, they give few names. They had not come for collecting information about Buddhist monasteries but with the clear intention of ‘learning more about Buddhism in India, and of bringing back those all-important Buddhist texts’ (Weerawardane 2009: 14-18, at 14). More specific, hypothetical reasons for the absence of the name Takht-i-Bāhī could be as follows.

1. They did not render each and every account of their visit in writing;
2. They visited very few Buddhist monasteries and *stūpas* themselves and in most cases based their opinion on hearsay from the local people with whom they came in contact. Presumably the monastery of Takht-i-Bāhī was included anonymously in the number of such establishments given by them.
3. They recorded their observations some time after their return to China. Obviously they depended upon their memories for recording their observations, which may not be considered reliable for a variety of reasons. They thus might have missed much important information while recording their memory-based observations.
4. Language barriers might have played a very important role in restricting their intercourse with many Gandhāran Buddhists, who included both monks and the laity. As a result, their information could not be termed truly comprehensive.
5. Their stay in Gandhāra was not for an extended period of time. They had visited Gandhāra for a short period before going to India proper, where they stayed for years. Consequently, their minds were occupied by India instead of Gandhāra and they had better knowledge about the prevailing situation and religious establishments of the former.
6. It is also possible that the Chinese pilgrims may indeed have identified Takht-i-Bāhī by its real name, but that this has not been recognized yet by scholars. Many names mentioned by these pilgrims have not yet been fully or correctly identified, while scholars hold different opinions about particular names. It is also possible that they simply did not consider this place worthy of mentioning by name in light of information provided to them by the people with whom they came in contact.
7. They were more interested in the Buddhist scriptures and pilgrimage to shrines associated in some way with the Buddha (Li 2012: 13-54; Legge 1886: 28-29; Falk 2001: 445-452) and obviously showed little interest in shrines that had no connection with the events of the previous lives of the Buddha or his personal belongings, such as his alms bowl at Shāhjī-kī-ḍherī, Peshawar. Since there was no such attraction for them at Takht-i-Bāhī, they ignored it during their visit, hence the omission from their accounts.

As Harry Falk very pertinently comments (Falk 2001: 445-452);

Chinese pilgrims started to tour Gandhāra in the middle of the first millennium. They were shown places the Buddha supposedly had visited and they went to see monasteries housing famous body parts of the Buddha – such as hair, teeth, eyeballs, bone – or items he had used – such as his robe or staff. The Chinese pilgrims never doubted the authenticity of the Buddha’s visits and items, although to our eyes the stories as well as the relics are plain forgeries.

We shall turn now to the ancient name of Takht-i-Bāhī, attempting to identify possibilities from Chinese pilgrims’ accounts, particularly Xuanzang, and epigraphic evidence from the site.

### Controversy about the name of the site

General Court, a French officer of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, mentioned in 1836 the mountain of *Behhi* (Takht-i-Bāhī) and the ruins of an ancient castle close to it which is attributed to Raja *Vara* – an ancient sovereign of this country (Shakoor 1946: 8; Sehrai 2001: 52; quotation from 55-56).

‘The name of *Bahi* or *Bahai*, which means a *reservoir* or *baori*, has been applied to the hill on account of its possession of two small artificial tanks’. Both these tanks were mentioned by Sir Alexander Cunningham and Dr Henry Walter Bellew in their reports more than a hundred years ago (Sehrai 2001: 55-56; quotation from Cunningham 1875: 35).

The name Takht-i-Bāhī appears to have been given to this site after the Muslims settled here. However, *Bahi* or *Behhi* is neither a Pashto nor Persian word. Today we find *Bahi* (‘beautiful’, ‘brilliant’) in Arabic, used as a Muslim personal name. I am not going to suggest that this elegant site might have been named *Bahi* after a beautiful or graceful girl, but this also does not mean that I am completely rejecting this idea. Similarly, *bahhi* is also the name of a fruit with medicinal properties and a lovely aroma when mature, in English the quince (*Cydonia oblonga*), which was originally grown on rocky slopes in Asia. It is called *safarjal* in Arabic. It is possible that *bahhi* might once have grown abundantly here and the place might have been named after this fruit. I have been informed that it is still grown in the hills of Kohat on a very limited scale and only sold to the *hakims* (herbalists) at high prices.

I also suppose that the name Takht-i-Bāhī was interpreted as a ‘well on the flat surface of hills’ after the discovery of the Kaladarra inscription, found on a stone in Kaladarra Nadi near Dargai, to the south of Malakand Pass, and deciphered by the Norwegian Indologist Professor Sten Konow (Konow 1929: 65). It reveals the donation of a water tank and water dam to the monasteries. As Jawad describes (Jawad 2010:85-98),

The Ara inscription, the Marghuz inscription, the Peshawar Museum inscription, the Zeda inscription, Shakardarra inscription, all refer to the donation of wells possibly to the renowned monasteries. Such wells were dug in honour of the mother and father, or other relatives, or to get merit in this life and also hereafter (*cf.* Dani 1995: 41; Konow 1929: 79, 145, 157, 162 & 165). The donative formulae on such inscriptions were considered to be so important, that sometimes their forgeries were reported.

Probably this was the reason why scholars after Dr Henry Walter Bellew (1834 - 1892) and Sir Alexander Cunningham (1814 - 1893) attempted to justify the present name of Takht-i-Bāhī by identifying the two *stūpas* on the top with artificial water tanks or wells – though wells cannot be dug at such a height. Furthermore, building artificial water tanks on a peak close to each other and away from the main monastic complex housing the core Buddhist *sangha* and the huge population on the west, east, and south of the main complex would make hardly any sense. If we take a glance at the possible provision

of such facilities close to the main complex and the core population around it, we see many convenient locations on the water channels on either side of the main complex, i.e. the east and west, where such facilities could have been easily and conveniently built at different spots and even at the catchment area below, where all runoff water could have been stored in huge quantities for both drinking and irrigation purposes. Keeping in view the strong building skills of the people of the time and the availability of building material on the spot, the creation of such facilities was not a difficult job.

In Dr. Abdul Azeem’s preliminary report submitted after excavations during 2002-2005, concerning the structures on top of the hill identified as wells or artificial water tanks, he writes:<sup>1</sup>

Before excavations this court was covered with wild growth, bushes and debris. This court in the shape of a level mound and no structural remains were visible except a few standing walls and a portion of a round structure in the east thought to be a water well or water reservoir. After removing the wild growth and bushes, the mound was properly surveyed and included in the main grid, divided into 5x5 meter squares... The excavation work was started from the eastern side, where the so-called round well / reservoir was located... The most important discovery in this area is the exposing of two round stupa on the top court i.e. Court 1. One stupa is located on the western side while the other is on eastern side. Both the stupas are round in shape and regular made from inner and outer side. Before the excavation a portion of the round drum of the eastern

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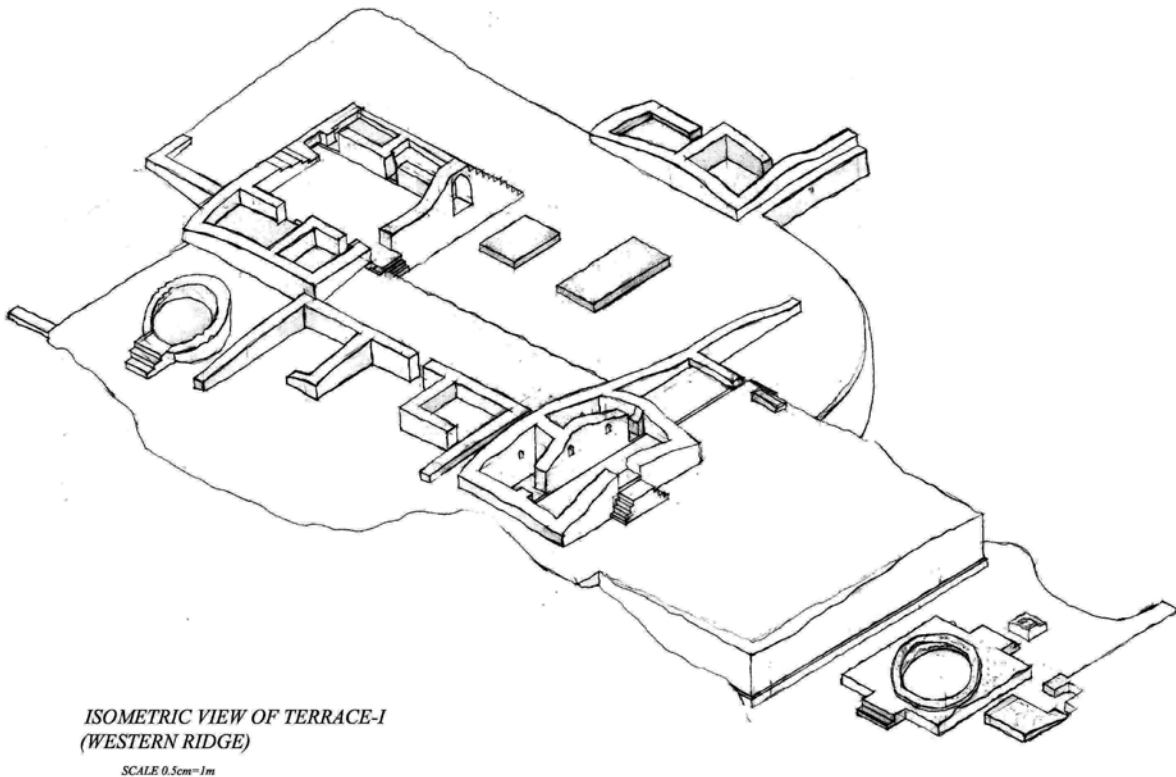


Figure 1. Isometric view of Terrace I (Western Ridge) showing the two stūpas one on the west, on an elevated part of the hill, and the other on the east, at a lower position and very close to the entrance of the ancient route to the site from Sahri Bahlol. (Plan: courtesy of Dr Abdul Azeem.)

<sup>1</sup> Unpublished draft report. I am grateful to Dr Azeem for allowing me to consult this report and use it for my research for this paper.

stupa was seen made regular from inner and outer side owing to which some scholars, visitors were in the opinion that this is either a round well or water reservoir. This kind of stupa is located near Jamal Garhi named Torabaz Banda stupa partially excavated during British time... After excavation now it is clear that the structure which was considered a well or reservoir is actually a stupa which has a unique type drum made in regular shape from both sides. In Gandhara it is a very rare type stupa, as few were recorded and the one which is located near Jamal Garhi known as Tora Baz Banda stupa.

The area where the excavations were conducted is located at the end of the old route from Sahri Bahlol to Takht-i-Bāhī, immediately where one reaches the top, and can be better understood from the isometric view (Figure 1). The photographs of the area before and after excavations give a better idea of the actual position (Figure 2-4). Thus the theory on which an edifice was built to justify the existing name of Takht-i-Bāhī has already lost its very foundation.

According to Professor Fidaullah Sehrai, 'Not a complete historical inscription was found at the site which could throw light on the monastery except the Gondophares inscription from Shahbaz Garha village which is believed to have originally come from Takht-i-Bāhī' (Sehrai 2001: 52-53). The present name was obviously given by the Muslims, who came to this area after the Ghaznavid invasions at the dawn of the eleventh century AD. The original name appears to have been lost before the arrival of the



Figure 2. Photograph from the eastern side showing the area where the two so-called wells or water tanks were identified. In this picture the remains of the stūpa on the eastern side, which was earlier identified as a well or water tank, can also be seen. (Photo: courtesy of Dr Abdul Azeem.)



Figure 3. Photograph showing the stūpa along with other buildings on the west after excavations. (Photo: courtesy of Dr Abdul Azeem.)



Figure 4. Photograph showing remains of the stūpa on the east below the top structures on the west. The remains of the stūpa on the west on the extreme south-western corner of the buildings on the top is not visible, being at a relatively low level. (Photo: courtesy of Dr Abdul Azeem.)





Figure 5. Photograph showing the very clear position of the stūpa on the east, with stairs from south and north to the square platform for circumambulation. (Photo: courtesy of Dr Abdul Azeem.)



Figure 6. Recent photograph of the stūpa on the east taken by the author's son, Muhammad Yousuf Habib on March 3, 2018. The original entrance for visitors from Sahrī Bahlol to Takht-i-Bāhī can also be seen behind the stūpa. This stūpa was the first to be encountered by visitors before proceeding to the main monastic complex.

Muslims who occupied the heartland of Gandhāra. As we have seen, this has also posed a difficulty in trying to identify the monastery in the chronicles of the Chinese pilgrims.

However, we find one interesting name Tan-to-lo-ka (Dantaloka) mountain in the accounts of Xuanzang a distance of above twenty *li* (10 km) north-east from Palusha (Palo Dheri) – ‘a monastery with above 50 Brethren all Mahayanists’ (Watters 1904: 219). Watters has designated it as the ‘Mountain of punishment’ and assumes that the distance is 2000 *li* (1000 km) instead of 20 *li* (10 km). He therefore looks for it somewhere in Uḍḍiyāna or in Magadha (Watters 1904: 219-20).

An identification based on a re-reading of the distance in the Chinese pilgrim’s text must be in serious doubt. Furthermore, the identification of *Palusha* with *Palo Dheri* by Cunningham and Watters (Watters 1904: 217) merely on the basis of a correspondence in distances is also unreliable.

Elizabeth Errington proposes the following alternative interpretation (Errington 1993: 63):

a note should perhaps be added regarding the *Tan-to-lo-ka* mountain visited by Xuanzang ‘above twenty *li*’ (4 miles/6.4 km) to the northeast of *Pa-lu-sha...*, for if the latter is identified as Sahri Bahlol, it seems that the former must be equated with the Takht-i-Bāhi hill. The slight discrepancies in distance and direction may possibly be explained by the fact that after travelling 2½ miles/3.4 km to the foot of the ridge, the pilgrim then would have had to turn east to reach the Buddhist site on its northern slopes. The foundation of the monastery here appears to predate the reign of Agathocles ca. 190-180 B.C., for a corroded copper coin of this ruler was excavated from the subterranean vaulted chambers on the east side of the site. It is thus feasible that the stūpa may be associated with Aśoka, as intimated by Hsüan-tsang. Perhaps, with a little imagination, the subterranean cells can even be identified as the cave associated with the Viśvantara Jātaka? The site suffered extensively from the depredations of nineteenth-century diggings, and the only tenuous evidence for occupation later than the Gandhāra period comes from Bellew. He records in the early 1860s that ‘Hindu relics in abundance are met with in the ruins, such as small copper coins, with a rampant lion on one side and an elephant, superscribed with Sanskrit letters on the other,’ and that, according to a local tradition, the site was said to have been abandoned after it had been sacked and burned by Mahmud of Ghazni.

Though still far from certain, Errington’s proposals are logical, but I tend to disagree with her tentative identification of the subterranean vaulted chambers as ‘the cave associated with the Viśvantara Jātaka’. If we have to look for this so-called cave, it can be seen not very far away from the sacred area of the Takht-i-Bāhi Buddhist complex, to the west across two peaks of the mountain at a distance of about two km or so (Figure 7). This cave might have been originally a little smaller and appears to have been expanded by chiselling the rock to provide more accommodation inside. There are remains just below this cave and extensive Buddhist structures on top of the ridge.

Without getting immersed in controversy about the distances and the stories associated with the area, I would like to mention the definition of *danta* in Sanskrit.<sup>2</sup> *Dānta* (दन्त) means ‘peak or ridge of a mountain’, while *dāntā* (दान्त) is a spiritual name and can mean *mild, peaceful*. It has been used as a religious epithet. ‘Lokā (लोक) means ‘world’ in Hindu cosmography – the universe or any particular division of it.<sup>3</sup> *Lokas* are often associated with particular divinities, a linkage that is also found in Buddhism, with the deities replaced by buddhas or bodhisattvas’. If we take the holistic meaning of the name, it could signify the

<sup>2</sup> Monier Williams Sanskrit-English Dictionary, 2008 revision accessed online: <<https://www.sanskrit-lexicon.uni-koeln.de/monier/>> (last accessed 13th February 2019).

<sup>3</sup> Explanation from <<https://www.britannica.com/topic/loka>> (last accessed 13th February 2019).



Figure 7. A cave at Takht-i-Bāhī that could have been the potential place associated with the Viśvantara Jātaka.  
(Photo: courtesy of Dr Abdul Azeem.)

‘peaceful world or calm world’, or alternatively it may have some connection with the name of certain divinity. I do not exclude either Buddhism or Hinduism as a possibility, as we know from the accounts of the Chinese Pilgrim that Hinduism had already gained hold against Buddhism in the seventh century AD. The name could have been given to this place in view of its very peaceful environment at an isolated place location away from populated areas.

Coming to the epigraphical evidence, Konow has identified three Kharoṣṭhī inscriptions from Takht-i-Bāhī (Konow 1929: 62-66). He refers to the so-called Takht-i-Bāhī inscription of the year 103, which is in Lahore Museum. He has translated this inscription as follows (Konow 1929: 62):

(During the reign) of the maharaja Guduvhara in the 26 year, in the one-hundred-and-three, 103, year, on the first, I, day of the month Vaisakha, at this auspicious Paksha (this) chapel (is) the religious gift of Balasami (Balasvamin?) the Saviour, together with his son and daughter, in house of Mira the Saviour (and) of Prince Kapa, in honour of mother and father.

Obviously, this inscription does not include any name that can be given to the site and the other inscriptions are similarly unhelpful in this regard. One found by Vogel on a damaged Buddha figure and presently in Peshawar Museum reads as *Harashadasa* (‘Gift of Harashada’; Konow, 1929: 63). The other, found on a piece of black pottery and preserved in Peshawar Museum, has been translated as ‘In the Samgha of the four quarters of...’ (Konow 1929: 63).

Ihsan H. Nadiem also retrieved a piece of green schist which was found by some clandestine diggers in 1977 and is currently in Taxila Museum (Nadiem 1989: 209-216). This piece of stone measuring 6.8 cm in height and from 4.6 to 5.9 cm in width, contained an entire line of Kharoṣṭhi inscription. The whole reading is given below (Nadiem 1989: 209-216):

Udakabhadre Dharma Vadha havi (viha) re bha (bhi?) khuna Sibena  
Iphano-putrena iha.

Here in Udakabhadra at the Dharma-Vadha monastery (was established)  
by the bhikhu Siva, son of Iphano.

Stefan Baums has re-read this inscription as follows:<sup>4</sup>

Udayabhadreṇa [ca ṭha va vi re] Bhadraśīleṇa Iphaṇ[o]putreṇa saha.

He has translated this as:

By Udayabhadra ... together with Bhadraśīla, son of Iphaṇa.



Figure 8. Stone bowl found in four pieces on back side (south) of the Main Stūpa Court in an area containing some important buildings that might have remained the abodes of some very important personality (a local lord?). It was in four pieces and was restored as shown. (Photo: courtesy of Dr Abdul Azeem.)

<sup>4</sup> Baums 2018: 33-46 and online Catalog of Gāndhāri Texts <[https://gandhari.org/a\\_catalog.php](https://gandhari.org/a_catalog.php)> CKI 0596 (last accessed 17th February 2019). The author is grateful to Dr Peter Stewart for drawing attention to the fresh reading of the inscription from Takht-i-Bāhi by Dr Stefan Baums. The author is also greatly indebted to Dr Baums for providing a published copy of his paper and the Gāndhāri Dictionary being maintained and updated on a regular basis by Dr Andrew Glass and himself.

Nadiem has tentatively identified the *Udakabhadrā* of his reading with Takht-i-Bāhī and has tried to relate this somehow with the current name: 'Our present inscription should also in all probability be in commemoration of establishing some tank, well, a religious building or even a wall as a noble act. According to M. Barth, these pious works were aimed at a certain amount of publicity, but a publicity intended specially for the next world.' (Barth 1908: 246; Nadiem 1989: 209-216.)

*Udaka* carries different meanings including water in Sanskrit and Brahmi (Levman 2014: 145-180; Monier-Williams 1888: 183) and *bhadra* means 'auspicious' (Scherman 1945: 133-144); thus the meaning of *Udakabhadrā* could be the 'auspicious water'.

During excavations from 2002 to 2005 at Takht-i-Bāhī by the Department of Archaeology and Museums, Government of Pakistan, the excavators found a stone bowl in fragmentary condition comprising four pieces, which were restored (Figure 8). The ornamented bowl contains Kharoṣṭhī inscriptions on the inner and outer sides. Harry Falk has published it (Falk 2009: 68-72). According to Falk (2009: 69):

on the inside we read without spaces:

bhavai raevasami nigadaka kha///.

And on the exterior:

[?][?] *nigadaka kha rarakṣidasa vavamukhe*.

The closing *vavamukhe* must have been copied from a very carelessly written *danamukhe*, a standard term occasionally experiencing strange graphical realisations.

The combined text should have read:

*bhavai raevasami nigadaka khararakṣidasa \*danamukhe*

'At Bhava, at the residence of the king, (this) *nigadaka* is the pious donation of Khararakṣita.'

The term behind the spelling *bhava* could have led to the present name of Takht-i Bāhī.

Falk incorrectly mentions that this bowl was found to the north-east of the monastery on the adjoining spur. It was in fact found to the south of the monastery – an area studded with secular buildings on terraces, suggested to be abodes of some important people. According to Falk (2009: 71):

The crucial term *nigadaka* is unknown in Sanskrit or Prakrit dictionaries. There can be little doubt that the term is to be split into the prefix *ni* and *gadaka*. Given the licenses of the Gāndhārī language, *ni-* can also stand for *nir-*. A plain *nigada*, together with the constant variant reading *nirgada*, is found in the medical literature, and there it almost always occurs to qualify inebriating beverages. One case is different: Ānandakanda in his *Rasavādagrantha* tells us in 1.15,120 that after drinking a certain concoction the patient will be healthy after three months. The term for 'healthy' is *nirgada*, composed of *gada*, 'sickness,' preceded by the privative *nir-*. An identical formation produces *nīroga* (*nir + roga*) with the same meaning.

### **Problematic approaches to the chronology of the site**

According to Dr Saifur Rahman Dar, who was the first Officer-in-charge of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Circle of Archaeology in the early 1970s and then served as Director, Lahore Museum for a considerable period of time, 'the beginning of the archaeological research was made by non-professionals and in non-

professional ways with least regard for scientific information. In most cases the sites were disturbed much to the detriment for future scientific digging.’ (Dar 1998: 71-118.) Pierfrancesco Callieri, the Italian professor who worked for decades in Swat, states that, ‘The archaeological activities carried out in the sanctuaries located in the plain of Gandhara and the piedmont surroundings – Sahri-Bahlol, Takht-i-Bāhī, Jamalgarhi, etc. had indeed produced ample architectural and structural evidence, but did not offer scholars firm data on their historical and cultural frame’ (Callieri: 2008: 58-63).

As Professor Sehrai describes, D.B. Spooner, the Curator of the Peshawar Museum, was the first to excavate the monastery scientifically in January 1907 and continued this work during 1908-10. Later his successor, H. Hargreaves, resumed excavations during 1910-11 and 1912-13’ (Sehrai 2001: 56-57). However, the excavators were not able to construct a chronological for the site. Professor Sehrai himself attempted the following chronology on the basis of the structures and their inter-relationship (Sehrai 2001: 58-59):

- a. The first period extends from the first century BC to the second century AD. The earliest phase of the first period belongs to the time of Gondophares, the Parthian ruler whose inscription was supposed to have come from Takht-i-Bāhī. The second phase of this first period includes the Kushan era including the reign of Kaniṣka. In this period are included the structures of the Court of Many Stūpas, the monastery and its kitchen and refectory.
- b. The second period lasts from the third century to fourth century AD, which covers the reign of the Later Kushan rulers including Kaniṣka III and Vāsudeva II. The Main Stūpa and the assembly hall are built in this period.
- c. The third period lasts from the fourth century to fifth century AD and covers the reign of the Kidar Kushan. The Court of Three Stūpas has been included in this period.
- d. The fourth period starts from the sixth century and covers the post-Hun period. The low level chambers and its open courtyard in the west are included in this period.

Professor Sehrai’s dates are highly faulty and hypothetical. For instance, he assigns three centuries (first century BC to second century AD) to the first period and at the same time assigns the earliest phase of the first period of structures to the rule of Gondophares. Professor Sehrai himself considers the rule of the Parthian King Gondophares to be precisely AD 21-46 (Sehrai 2001: 8). If his first phase of the first period begins with the rule of Gondophares then a question arises as to how this period began in the first century BC as he claims. He also does not assign any building to the period of Gondophares or the first century BC. Indeed he does not clearly assign any of the buildings to the second phase of the first period and uses vague terms such as ‘includes the Kushan era including the reign of Kanishka’. Consequently his notion does not have a firm foundation. The remaining periods, the second to fourth periods, have also been assigned hypothetically to different eras without any supporting evidence.

Ahmad Hasan Dani writing about Takht-i-Bāhī states (Dani 1995: 246):

Unfortunately the excavators have not given us a definite clue to the proper dating of the constructions. One inscription of the time of the Parthian ruler, Gondophares is said to have been found here. It is dated in the year 103, probably equivalent to A.D. 45. If this date could be taken as a near proximity to the beginning of the monastic settlement, here, the main development phase must be placed in the peak period of the Great Kushanas, 1st-2nd centuries A.D. The third stage must be placed in the later Kushana period, 3rd -4th centuries A.D. Finally the underground monastic cell complex should probably belong to 5th-6th centuries A.D.

The periods given by Dani are thus also purely hypothetical.

The period of the Parthian King Gondophares has been assigned by scholars in the past to the first century of the current era and specifically between AD 21 and 46 (Sehrai 2001: 8), while more recently

it had been placed between AD 32 and c. 57 (Cribb 2018: 15). Professor Dani used the earlier dating and equated the year 103 in the inscription with AD 45. He took Gondophares to have died in AD 46. However, he has ignored the remaining part of the text, which states, 'this auspicious Paksha (this) chapel (is) the religious gift of Balasami [Balasvamin?]'. It is very clear from the text of the inscription that the chapel had already been built when the plaque was fixed to it and it was dedicated. Thus an important building was already constructed at Takhti-i-Bāhī by AD 45, in the reign of Gondophares; it could have been a chapel or group of chapels. This tends to undermine Dani's hypothesis that the settlement only started then. Beside this, Professor Dani does not associate any of the surviving buildings with a specific king or dynasty i.e. Parthian, Early Kushan, etc. He only places the 'underground monastic cell complex' in the fifth to sixth centuries AD. Thus no scientific or other evidence has been given by Dani in support of his dating the site.

I personally believe that there are very good reasons to differ from both these scholars and look for alternative periods of construction for different buildings of Takht-i-Bāhī. Saeed-ur-Rehman, former Director General of Archaeology, Pakistan, who also remained the Head of the Regional Office of the Archaeology Department, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province from 1982 to 1996 (he was thus also in charge of the Takht-i-Bāhī Monastery and held practically all the records pertaining to the site), states that proper records and inventories are lacking for the large number of sculptures unearthed from the site and presently stored in Peshawar or museums abroad, as no scientific records were kept during excavation (Rehman 1997: 10). Similarly, he observes (Rehman 1997: 11),

The pottery received even lesser attention than sculptures. It has been stored unceremoniously, without taking pain to label or record it properly. The pottery, if recorded decorously, would have proved to be significant *vinculum* in abridging the missing cultural links of the site, and to place it in a scientific chronological framework.

Rehman proceeds to describe why the history of the site is still shrouded in darkness:

There is no proper record of the excavations, nor any reference or inventory available to the excavated material. The excavators did not place the site in a safe chronological framework. The site has been dated by Dr. A. H. Dani from 2nd to 5th century A.D., on basis of constructional phases. The remains are scattered all over the surrounding hills at Takht-i-Bāhī, right up to the famous site of Sahri Bahlol, but the boundary of the World Heritage site encloses less than half of the hill, because the excavations in Colonial Period (as no excavation was conducted after partition) were concentrated on one cluster of courtyard monasteries found on lower elevation of the hill. This cluster was labelled 'Main Monastery'. Outside of this cluster area (which represents less than one percent of the entire hill), there has been no documentation of additional and scattered sites. The only reference material available today is a small top plan of votive stupa court together with monastic stupa court (i.e. clusters of stupas exposed along with monastic cells), perhaps prepared by Mr. Hargreaves. The plan covers less than one percent of the total size of the site, and moreover, it was prepared on 1:2000 scale. A scientific report of the 'Main Monastery' excavation was never published. Excavation and mapping activities were subsequently abandoned until a repair and restoration scheme was developed and implemented over the year 1920-27 by the ASI. This work consisted of the partial restoration of the 'Main Monastery' and was supervised out of the then ASI headquarters at Peshawar.

This explanation by Saeed-ur-Rehman tells much about the current state of affairs and creates doubts even about the so-called 'scientific excavations' of Spooner and Hargreaves, as they neither published scientific reports of their excavations at the site nor properly documented the sculptures retrieved by them from different spots within the huge complex. Pottery was never given any attention and it was dumped at one place with no indication as to the area(s) from where they were found. Further, the

important restoration works carried out during 1920-1927 were executed by the then Public Works Department practically without on-site supervision by a professional archaeologist and thus vital evidence that might have helped in proper dating of the different portions of the main complex was probably lost. Moreover, after independence in August 1947, the successor department of the ASI – i.e. the Department of Archaeology and Museums, Government of Pakistan – failed to undertake any scientific archaeological excavations at the site, of which only less than one percent had been excavated during the colonial period. Archaeological excavations were, however, carried out from 2002 to 2005 by the Federal Department of Archaeology and again in 2012 by the Directorate of Archaeology and Museums, Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, but no scientific reports of these excavations have been published to this day.

A further problem is that no distinction has been made between the structures of the Gondophares era and those of the Kushan period. Attributing the monastery and the Court of Many Stūpas to the first period is also doubtful. Chongfeng Li and Domenico Faccenna on the basis of research at Saidu Sharif I, have established beyond doubt that there the monastery court and the *stūpa* court are contemporary. They further established that the monastery was founded together with the *stūpa* court as part of a unified scheme. According to Domenico Faccenna ‘the earliest construction stage of the sacred building probably dates to the 1st century CE’ (Faccenna 1995: 143-163). He further states that, ‘This kind of layout, however, not only was very prevalent in Gandhāra proper and Uddiyana, but also in Taksasila, such as the monastic complex at Jaulian, Taxila’ (Faccenna 1995: 143-163). As Li comments (Li 2012: 24): ‘In other words, the scheme of the free-standing monastery like this had been in vogue in Jibin/the Greater Gandhara from the second century C.E. onwards.’ On the basis of the notes of the Chinese pilgrims and particular reference to Song Yun and Huisheng, Li states that ‘The *futu* [... *stūpa*] is high and large, and *sengfang* [... *vihāra*] is crowded off to the side’ and this ‘indicates clearly that the *stūpa* was the centre of a *saṃghārāma*’ (Li 2012: 25). Li further states that, ‘On the basis of *Fayuan zhulin* [... *Forest of Gems in the Garden of the Law*] by Daoshi [... ?-668 CE], “when a Buddhist monastery begins to be designed, *foyuan* [... the Buddha’s court] and *sengyuan* [... *vihāra* court] have to be built separately; each has its own courtyard”’ (Li 2012: 25). On the basis of the study of different Buddhist sutras and accounts of the pious Chinese pilgrims, Li confirms the traditional idea, that ‘to worship a stupa is to worship the Buddha’ and further states that ‘Because the *stūpa* and the *vihāra* were so important components in a scheme of the Indian *saṃghārāma*, such a monastic complex was also translated or commonly called *tasi* [... *stūpa*-cum-*vihāra* / *stupa* and *vihara*] in Chinese’ (Li 2012: 26, 28). He further states that, from the accounts of Song Yun and Huisheng, it can be easily gleaned that wherever they visited Buddhist monasteries, they found *stūpas* as an integral part of the same (Li 2012: 28). Consequently, the notion that the monastery and the so-called ‘Court of Many Stupas’ belong to the earliest period of construction does not seem to accord with established Buddhist traditions.

This analysis produces important answers to many questions relating to the chronology of Takht-i-Bāhī that result from the analysis of the structures by Dani and Sehrai. Firstly, a close relationship exists between a monastery court and a *stūpa* court (Hassan 1998: 165-177). Secondly, both were founded together as part of a unified scheme, connected with each other, and the *stūpa* was the centre of a monastery (Li 2012: 13-54). Thirdly, the earliest construction stage of the sacred buildings dates to the first century AD. Finally, to worship a *stūpa* is to worship the Buddha (Kuwayama 2008: 170-178; Bautze-Picron 2008: 164-169). It had been a firm tradition that all important and sacred monasteries contained a *stūpa* as an integral part, as confirmed by the Chinese pilgrims when they found the *tasi* (*stūpa*-cum-*vihara*) at all sacred Buddhist places. This also confirms beyond doubt that construction of a *stūpa* was an integral part of any monastery without which the concept of a monastery would be meaningless. *Stūpas* always remained a priority for the Buddhists and no monastery can be constructed without it – the *stūpa* is venerated as a representation of the Buddha himself.



Furthermore, it does not make any sense that the devout Buddhist waited for a century or more to think about construction of the main *stūpa* and its complex, when the *stūpa* was more important and revered than the rest of the monastery. It was more probable that the main *stūpa* was erected before constructing the monastery. It is also possible that construction of both the main *stūpa* and the monastery started side by side. Thus the monastery and the main *stūpa* courts might have been constructed simultaneously in the first period and certainly in the first century AD. The so-called ‘Court of Many Stūpas’ does not appear to have been constructed with the monastery proper, as the southern walls of the monastery are neither shared nor common with the northern walls of the ‘Court of Many Stūpas’, but both walls had been separately and independently constructed. It seems very likely that the so-called Court of Many Stūpas was originally an open space between the monastery and the main *stūpa* courts, used by the Buddhist fraternity for meeting and other important occasions before the Assembly Hall was built and the court had to be used for housing votive *stūpas* and the chapels on the north, south and east for housing images of the Buddha for worship of the devotees at a later stage. The Assembly Hall was obviously a later development after the monastery and the *stūpa* courts were completed. It was independently built as the walls of the monastery running east-west or the wall of the monastery adjacent to the Assembly Hall running north-south are not connected with its walls.

Dates cannot be assigned on the basis of the masonry of these buildings, which is diaper and does not enable chronological distinctions. Sir John Marshall maintained on the basis of his extensive research at Taxila that diaper masonry was introduced by the Parthians in the first century AD (Marshall 1960; Jansen 2008: 282-293). Thus if we accept the criteria laid down by Marshall, then most of the buildings go back to the Parthian period, which is obviously not the case at Takht-i-Bāhī. The origin of diaper masonry during the Parthian period does not at all mean that it was not in vogue in the subsequent periods. The dating techniques of both Marshall and Behrendt (Jansen 2008: 282-293; Behrendt 2004: 7) are mainly based on their study of Taxilan monuments and cannot be conclusively applied to Takht-i-Bāhī. Much care has to be taken while comparing the material and building techniques in the two places. The building material was abundantly available in the hills of Takht-i-Bāhī and the builders had not to bring different kinds of stone from other places. Further, the periods have been fixed on the basis of only one percent of the total area studded with buildings associated with this monastic complex, which can hardly be reliable, especially when based on visual observations. It is also noteworthy that Pia Brancaccio and Kurt Behrendt have opened yet another debate on the basis of epigraphic evidence from Takht-i-Bāhī that needs to be taken seriously (Brancaccio & Behrendt 2006: 175, 180).

According to Michael Jansen, ‘the traditional dating of architecture is still achieved by observing masonry techniques established by Marshall’ (Jansen 2008: 282-293):

1. c. first century BC: rubble dressed with kanjur;
2. c. first century AD: diaper masonry is introduced by the Parthians;
3. late second century AD: Kushan, traditional masonry with kanjur;
4. fourth to fifth century AD: semi-ashlar masonry.

The chronology or periods fixed by Marshall were based on his observations during his long stay and excavations of a large number of sites in Taxila valley. This chronology based purely on technology and visual appearance was opposed by Behrendt, who presented a new typology (2004: 7; Jansen 2008: 282-293):

1. Phase I: c. 200 BC. The end of the first century AD.
2. Early sacred areas in and around Sirkap, Taxila, earliest sections at the Dharmarajika complex, earliest buildings at Butkara I.

3. Phase II: c. end of the first century AD to the early third century AD.
4. Phase III: c. early third century AD to late fifth century AD.<sup>5</sup>
5. Phase IV: c. fifth century AD to c. eighth century AD.

Michael Jansen emphasizes the importance of developing a new chronology for Gandhāran buildings such as Behrendt has attempted, but at the same time he disagrees with Behrendt's technique when he states that, 'Even most recent attempts at chronological dating (Behrendt 2004) of monastic installations relating to their temporal and spatial distribution not only in the region but also just for individual monastic complexes still remain, largely speculative' (Jansen 2008: 282-293). The monastery (*vihāra*) was usually rectangular and surrounded by high walls. It developed much later than the *stūpa* and seems to originate in the canonical form of the North-West Indian tradition in Gandhāra around the beginning of the Common Era, from where this tradition spread to the Indian subcontinent (Marshall 1960; Jansen 2008: 282-293). While the early monasteries of the Indian subcontinent were rather exposed and open to the public, the monasteries belonging to Gandhāra civilization used strong walls for protection (Fergusson 1910: 211).

According to Behrendt ( 2004: 158; 2018: 149-164):

Consistently the micro-chronologies of Gandharan sites indicate that the earliest shrines are relatively small, as can be observed at Takht-i-Bāhī, Jamal Garhi, Mekhasanda, and Thareli. In contrast, shrines large enough to house monumental images are the latest additions to a given sacred area, as is the case at Jaulian with shrines C14 – C16 that were done in double course semi-ashlar masonry.

He further states (Behrendt 2004: 155, 159, 160):

Jauliāñ is crucially important because the form of its sacred area can be linked to complex architectural developments in Peshawar Basin. The Jaulian phase III semi-ashlar image shrines can be directly compared to those found at the Peshawar Basin sites of Mekhasanda, Takht-i-Bāhī, Jamāl Garhī, Thareli, Ranigat, and Sikri. This is important because at Taxila the masonry development from rubble, to diaper to semi-ashlar and ultimately to double semi-ashlar provides a relative chronology... Let us start with the Dharmarājikā complex, as the changing masonry allows for early and late structures to be readily distinguished... The rubble and diaper masonry structures of phase I and II immediately give us a sense for the organization of this site from the time of its foundation through that of the great Kushans... The Peshawar Basin site of Takht-i-Bāhī... would appear to be somewhat later than the Dharmarājikā complex and Butkara I. The earliest part of the sacred area in the lower court is defined by the P1 main *stūpa* and a tight cluster of small *stūpas*, which in turn are enclosed by banks of image shrines built during phase III. There are also late phase III monumental image shrines in this area. The lower court at Takht-i-Bāhī is most comparable to the late sacred area of Mekhasanda... or Jauliāñ.

Behrendt's critical analysis of Marshall's dating and proposal of new dates for the Buddhist monastic buildings in Taxila valley seems interesting and logical. However, his notion about dating different components of the sacred area of Takht-i-Bāhī complex does not appear so compelling. His conclusion that the earliest shrines of the Gandhāran sites, with particular reference to Takht-i-Bāhī, are small conflicts with the physical evidence. Whether in the so-called 'Court of Many Stūpas' or in the main *stūpa* complex, the earliest shrines were visibly large and meant to accommodate big statues. The construction of small shrines particularly in the main *stūpa* court clearly appears to be a later idea to use the voids between the large shrines for accommodating small statues and to cater to the demands

<sup>5</sup> In technical terms Behrendt also uses the semi-ashlar masonry for dating in architecture (Behrendt 2004: 8)

of small donors. Even if this were not so, it appears illogical that small shrines were constructed earlier and the large shrines built later. If we accept this notion even for the sake of argument, it assumes that the early small chapels had to be dismantled first to construct large ones (ultimately with more small ones between them) which leaves no extant evidence to support Behrendt's chronology. Furthermore, Behrendt has named the Court of Many Stūpas the lower court and considered the big *stūpa* therein as the main *stūpa* (P1). While Behrendt is silent about Phase I at Takht-i-Bāhī, he has assigned the lower *stūpa* court (the so-called Court of Many Stūpas including P1 – the main *stūpa* – surrounded by many small votive *stūpas* on the eastern half of this court) to Phase II or earlier. Similarly, he has included the main monastery, including the refectory and kitchen (which he called Grid Monastery) and the south court X with small niches (what I treat as the main *stūpa* court) in Phase III-Early. Behrendt's Phase II-Middle includes shrines (chapels on north and south of the Court of Many Stūpas), some votive *stūpas*, and the entrance to the court and adjoining buildings. Finally, he assigns the Assembly Hall, underground chambers, the Three Stūpa Court, the wall of colossi, the covered passage on the south-west near Court of Three Stūpas, and the chapels on the east and south-west of the Court of Many Stūpas, to Late Phase III and Phase IV.

Let us have a cursory look at this chronology. Behrendt has assigned no part of the complex to Phase I, a period from c. 200 BC until the end of the first century AD, based on rubble masonry (corresponding to Marshall's first century BC). According to Shakoore (Shakoore 1946: 11-12), 'The coins of the rulers of these dynasties (Indo-Parthians, Kushans and the Little Kushans) are however rarely found in the ruins at Takht-i-Bāhī, for a religious establishment of this type is the least prolific of such finds. Yet the surrounding country has yielded a large number of these.' He further states, 'A few corroded copper coins, among which one of the Indo-Greek king Apollodotus is of particular interest; a few fragments of sculptures and some pieces of black and red pottery inscribed in Kharoshti... and with a human figure... respectively, were found in this area (so-called underground cells) in the course of excavations' (Shakoore 1946: 26).

We find reference to two kings of the Indo-Greek dynasty by the name Apollodotus, i.e. Apollodotus I Soter who ruled between 180 and 160 BC or between 174 and 165 BC (Bopearachchi 1998; 1991: 453) in the western and southern parts of the Indo-Greek kingdom, from Taxila in Punjab to the areas of Sindh and possibly Gujarat, and Apollodotus II, another Indo-Greek king who ruled in the western and eastern parts of Punjab. Bopearachchi dates him to c. 80–60 BC, and R.C. Senior to c. 85–65 BC (Bopearachchi 1998; Senior 2004). Shakoore does not mention the king to whom these eroded copper coins belonged, except in one case. However, it seems probable that they belonged to Apollodotus II (80-65 BC). The coins were found in the lowest portion of the main complex (underground cells) under more than 9 feet of debris. The extant structures of this area have already been assigned by Dani and Behrendt to the fifth-sixth centuries AD onward (Dani 1995: 246; Behrendt 2004: 7-9). This discovery opens yet another debate. How did these coins reach the site of Takht-i-Bāhī? Did some kind of buildings already exist during the second or the first centuries BC? The presence of these coins may suggest that there was some kind of human activity at this place during the Indo-Greek period (second to first centuries BC) and there must have been some buildings here. It does not seem likely that the coins came here after a gap of seven or eight centuries, when the rule of the Indo-Scythians and Indo-Parthians, Kushans, Sassanians, Kushano-Sassanians, and Huns had passed.

We also need to pay attention to Huu Phuoc Le's notion about dating at Takht-i-Bāhī. He writes (Le 2010: 57-58):

There are two main approaches to the site from the southwest (A) and southeast (M)... The pointed arch in the vaulted passages in area (B) and (D) as already stated... was among the earliest instances of its structural employment in Gandhāra architecture after pointed arch in the vault...

The earliest constructions (First century CE) were likely around entrances or (A), (B), (G), and (M)<sup>6</sup> where isolated vihara cells, a caityagriha chapel, and various protimagrihas are located. The remaining structures in the upper areas were constructed from the second century CE on from their well organized plans.

We shall also examine this aspect, keeping in view the discovery of coins of the Indo-Greeks and some epigraphic evidence near the entrance on the south-west, close to the so-called underground meditation cells.

During the course of recent research at Takht-i-Bāhī we came across surviving underground structures in rubble masonry in the north-western corner of Block 1 (Figure 9) on the west of the sacred area across the dry stream, while some structures in rubble, dressed masonry, and diaper masonry were also identified. Since the conservation and clearance activities are still continuing, we are looking for some concrete evidence to support our hypothesis that the history of construction at Takht-i-Bāhī may go back to the second to first centuries BC or even to the third century BC, during the reign of Aśoka.<sup>7</sup> The final results relating to this issue will be published soon after completion of the ongoing work.



Figure 9. The buildings on the right from top down have been named Block B for the present conservation activities under the US-Funded Project titled ‘To support the Preservation and Conservation of Buddhist Ruins of Takht-i-Bāhī’. The first block from the bottom has been named B-1, where the roughly built rubble masonry wall was exposed during investigation for the reconstruction of the retaining wall on the north-western corner of the block. (Photo: author.)

<sup>6</sup> In Le’s terms (A) is the entrance on the south-west, (B) is the area of the three *stūpa* court, and (G) and (M) are the areas on the south and south-east of the main *stūpa* court.

<sup>7</sup> See also the most recent article on Mauryan chronology by Joe Cribb (2017).



*Figure 10. Rubble masonry wall at the north-western corner of Block B1. Due to the threat of potential collapse of the entire retaining wall on the north and west of the corner, it was not possible to go deep to expose clearly the whole wall for proper photography. (Photo: author.)*

### **The residential status of Takht-i-Bāhī monastery**

As Jonathan Silk has observed, we are relatively badly informed about the mundane details of ancient Buddhist monasticism, not to mention the lives of non-monastic Buddhists (Silk 2008: esp. 11-13). From the sources we can safely deduce that the monks opting to reside in the monastery purely for meditation strictly avoided matrimonial relationships while there and were not supposed to have their families and children with them in the monastic areas during this period. However, this strict criterion cannot be applied to others staying at the monastery for the provision of services and facilities, for teaching and learning, and in the course of travelling. The extensive secular structures on tops and peaks of different ridges and terraces of the mountain range suggest the presence of a large population around the main monastic complex at Takht-i-Bāhī. We have found concrete evidence that apart from meeting the spiritual needs of the people, this religious establishment had a huge built-up area on the west, east, and south of the main monastic complex, where students receiving education presumably resided. We can infer that there were residences for the teachers imparting education to the students and monks, and officials responsible for management of the huge complex. The secular buildings (mostly two storeyed) stand scattered on the hill on the east, south, and west of the monastic complex proper, where the monks, students, visitors and pilgrims also lived. The teachers and the administrators lived on the site along with their families and there were proper arrangements for cooking and serving food to the monks, resident students, travellers and so on. An effort is made here to share the fresh knowledge gained through the recent archaeological excavations and study of the surviving buildings.

During the process of removal of debris from the earlier excavations for conservation activities, between August 2017 and February 2018, from the ten blocks of secular buildings on the west and south-west of the main monastic complex of Takht-i-Bāhī (Figure 9) across the dry water channel built



Figure 11. Terracotta markers for games found in the new excavations. (Photo: author.)

on a relatively narrow ridge extending from the southern top of the hill down towards north, we found amongst other objects, some terracotta markers made from broken pieces of potsherds (Figures 11). The labourers working with us informed us that a significant number of the same kinds of markers were also found during excavations from 2002 to 2005. Since the pottery from that excavation has not been preserved, it was not possible to trace them. We can hypothesize that the markers were used at Takht-i-Bāhī for a form of hopscotch or the game known in Urdu and Hindi respectively as *pittu* or *pittu garam* and *lagori*. But counters like this have been used for many games in different cultures and periods so caution is necessary. Gaming counters need not be associated exclusively with children, but the evidence for such games reinforces the idea that families used to reside in these secular buildings.



Figure 12. Iron knitting needles found in the new excavations. (Photo: author.)



Figure 13. Fragments of toy animal figurines found in the new excavations. (Photo: author.)

There is other evidence as well for the presence of families within this area, including women, young boys and girls, and small children. We have found what appear to be two iron knitting needles of the kind used by women today in the area (Figure 12).

Furthermore, we have found a significant number of terracotta animal figurines from the site during the clearing and cleaning process (Figure 13), which were presumably used as toys. These were found from the debris of the previous excavations left at the site and tons of debris thrown down into the water channels on the west and east and washed away by flood waters over the period of 10 to 12 years might have contained more such figurines. In this context no other possible usage of these figures could be visualized or suggested. Obviously, small boys and girls could not have stayed at this huge monastic facility without their parents. These buildings, while serving as residences of the teachers, administrators, and other functionaries related to the huge complex along with their families also might have sheltered a large number of students receiving religious education. The research in this very area is still continuing and we may be able to add more to the existing knowledge once clearance work resumes. The reappraisal of Takht-i-Bāhī given in this paper offers a fuller account of the origins, development, and social life of this centrally important site. In doing so it presents a glimpse of the complexity of individual Buddhist sites as contexts for the production of Gandhāran art within the wider ancient geography of the region.

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# The scope of the Buddhist 'workshops' and artistic 'centres' in the Swat Valley, ancient Uḍḍiyāna, in Pakistan

Abdul Ghafoor Lone

In Buddhist traditions Swat is known as Uḍḍiyāna (Stein 1927: 417; 1930: 418; Crindle 1992: 69; Filigenzi 2014: 16).<sup>1</sup> Generally speaking, the term, 'Gandhara art', is applied beyond the core area (the historical region, centred on the city of Peshawar in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan) to a wider region from Kabul to Islamabad, which includes the Swat valley (Luczanits 2008: 16; see also Jessie Pons in this volume) (Figure 1). Longstanding research conducted by IsMEO established the unbroken cultural evolution of ancient Swat, from prehistory to the advent of Islam (Vidale 2016:1). The Swat valley was the main north-south transit route, connecting the most important monastic settlements in the northern valleys and mountains with the large east-west trade route in the Kabul valley (Figure 2; Jansen 2008: 28).<sup>2</sup> The ancient Buddhist art of the Swat Valley was cosmopolitan, liberal, dynamic, and trans-cultural in outlook. With the passage of time and the development of skills and patronage, that perspective contributed to the spiritual character of this artistic tradition. The Buddhist art of the Swat valley developed through devotional legends, mostly based on the traditions practised by the Buddhists. The regional sculptural styles of Swat (ancient Uḍḍiyāna), Gandhāra proper (the Peshawar valley, henceforth Gandhāra, Taxila valley, Kapisa (Panjshir-Gorband valley), and Bactria in Afghanistan are slightly distinct from each other. Buddhist art being at the service of human-centred myth, was for the most part concerned with representing natural forms, either in idealized form or rendered realistically. Particularly in its later stages, it was closely associated with the ruling political power (Ackermann 1975: 5).

## The emergence and development of Buddhist art in the Swat valley

The Indus-Oxus School of Buddhist art developed a hybrid culture drawing elements from Persia, India, Central Asia, Greece, and Rome (Swati 1998: 29). Buddhism did not become a culturally formative mass movement in its own right until the beginning of the Common Era. The Buddhist pantheon was not uniform through time (Dani 1968: 27). The 'Uḍḍiyāna' or Swat style is quite distinct from other contemporary regional styles of the Indus-Oxus region. It seems that this early style spread westward to Bactria and south-east to Gandhara and Taxila respectively (Swati 1998: 32). The Buddhist sculpture of the Indus region was not adopted in Swat and its distinctive style was eventually transmitted to neighboring regions of Gandhara, the Peshawar valley, Mansehra, and Taxila valley. That sculptors worked on the site is evidenced, for example, by the discovery of unfinished stone panels from the site of Butkara III (Swati 1997: 17; Rahman 1990: 706). It has also been ascertained that no single source supplied sculptures for all sites in the Swat Valley. No evidence came to light to suggest that there was a single industrial site or complex that was supplying or manufacturing sculptures for all the monastic complexes in the whole area, but there must have been collaboration between sculptors of different kinds and skills. Such groups of sculptors were producing the required and desired stone sculptures on the spot, i.e. monastic complexes. It is quite possible that most of the construction of monastic complexes and production of sculptures was simultaneous. A group of sculptors produced Buddhist sculptures accordingly and after completing the task, move to their next destination.

<sup>1</sup> The Chinese pilgrims Faxian and Xuanzang referred to Swat as Su-ho-to and Su-po-fa-su (equating to Subhavastu and Suvastu/Suvastu respectively in Sanskrit and Soastus [Crindle 1992: 69]).

<sup>2</sup> The close resemblance between the Buddhist reliquaries unearthed in the Taxila valley and the Swat valley is sufficient evidence that there were deep connections between Dharmarājīkā *stūpa* and Butkara I in the Swat valley. Van Lohuizen-de Leeuw also noticed such a resemblance and the influence between the stone sculptures unearthed in the Swat valley and Taxila valley (Lohuizen 1949: 38).

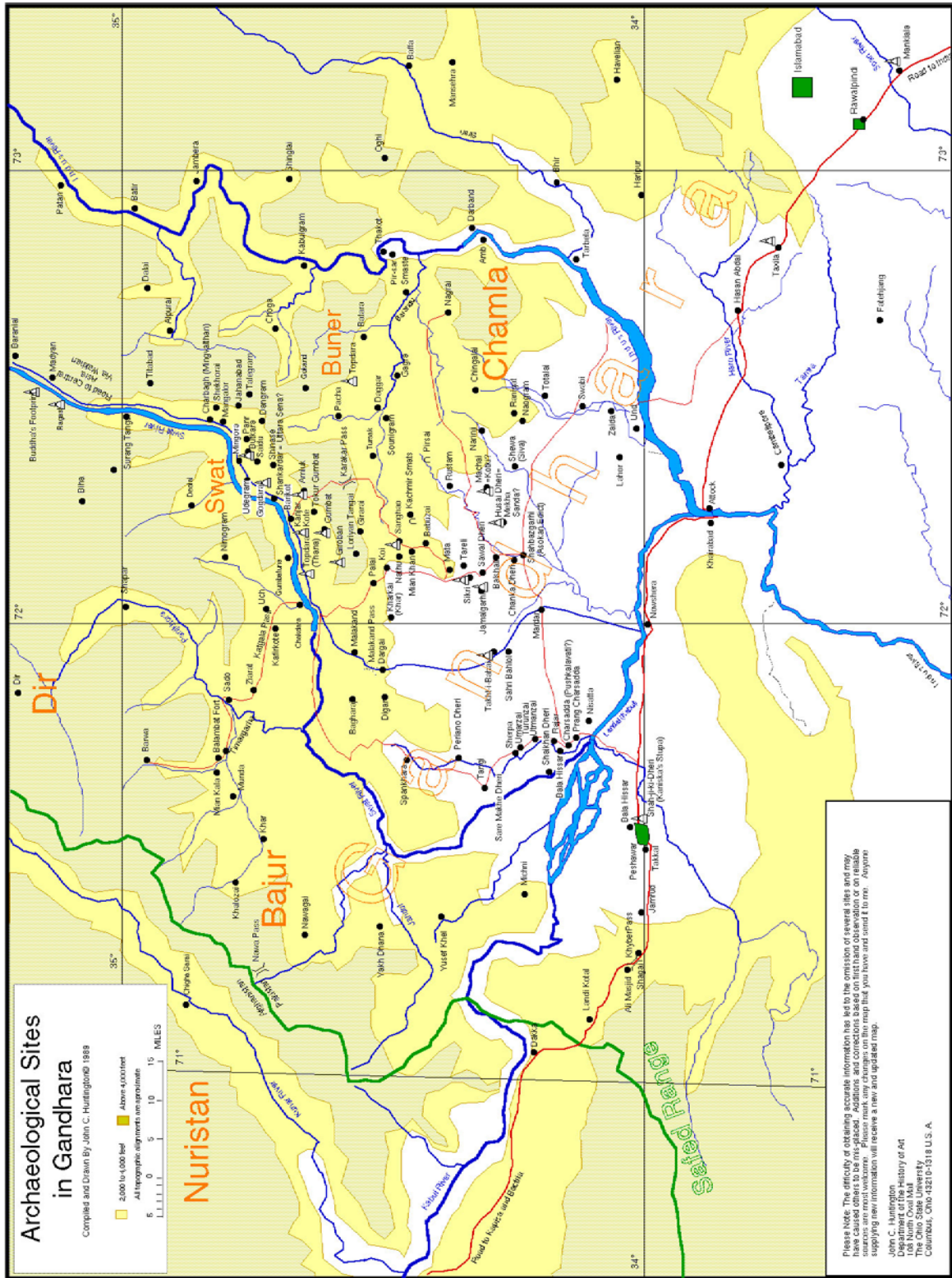


Figure 1. Map of archaeological sites in Gandhāra. (© Map compiled and drawn by John C. Huntington, 1989.)



Figure 2. Administrative map of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province in north-west Pakistan, showing the location of Swat (author).

The Italian Archaeological Mission has established a sound chronology for some key sites in the Swat valley such as Butkara I, Saidu Sharif, Pāṇṛ and Barikot (Olivieri 2006: 29; 2011: 23; 2016: 1; Callieri 2006: 11; Tanweer 2010: 42).<sup>3</sup> The earliest Buddhist sacred areas appear to have been established in Swat as early as the third century BC, or slightly after, at the Buddhist site of Butkara I (Olivieri 2006:23; Errington 1999/2000). Errington (1999/2000) remarks that the punch-marked coin on which the foundation date

<sup>3</sup> In 1956 the Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan, headed by Tucci, unearthed larger monastic complexes in the Swat Valley and the substantial ancient city of Barikot. Large-scale excavations and their results strengthened the efforts of researchers to unravel the trans-cultural Buddhist art of the region. The most important and richest artistic centre of the region, Butkara I, was excavated and recorded by Domenico Faccenna from 1956 to 1962 (Faccenna 1980-81:41; Olivieri 2006: 23; 2011: 62; Callieri 2006: 11).

of Butkara I is based belongs to the type (GH305) which was probably issued towards the end of Aśoka but this coin-type continued to circulate until at least the early second century BC. The coin found at Butkara I is extremely worn and so it provides a *terminus post quem* of end of the 3rd to early 2nd century BC for the foundation of Butkara I.<sup>4</sup> Systematic and scientific excavations have helped us to review and study the development of Buddhist art in this part of the region. Most of archaeological sites situated on the ancient trade routes in the valley, exhibit long-distance culture influences, while the sites located on the border of Gandhāra display the influence of Gandhāran style. Characteristic of the material from Butkara I is a large amount of sculpture discovered through the Italian excavations in which



Figure 3. The descent of the Buddha from Trāyatrimśa Heaven. Relief from Butkara I. Swat Museum, no. Bk2524. (Photo: author.)

excavators distinguished characteristic styles (Zwalf 1996: 69). The mature figural style is characterized in sculpture by a longer or more oval head with very even transitions of the planes integrating the features and, in contrast with the earlier ringed treatment, often a narrower eye with a heavier upper lid. The full volumes of the body do not protrude under drapery, which is given spaced and often dynamic and prominent folds, the key ridges or ribs with rounded edges usually somewhat undercut, mainly from above. This vitality is also found on the reliefs with folds shown varying in density and depth. The late period is characterized by fleshy and globular heads and expansive volumes of the figures. Many significant archaeological sites like Butkara I, Pāṇṇ and Butkara III, located in Jambil valley, exhibit the typical features of the figures (Figure 3; Swati 1997: 18).<sup>5</sup> The figures are active and are shown performing certain activities. Striking features of the Buddhist sculptures reported from Nimogram, Marjanai, and Chatpat, located in Shamozaï valley, are the well rendered but short figures and the obvious mobility in their execution. Facial features of the sculpture are generally flat and tend towards elongation but the typical round faces with the elongated noses are prominent.<sup>6</sup> The Ilam Khwar Sub Valley Zone including narrative reliefs from Shahnasha, situated in Saidu valley, has figures of normal stature, robust with long, beautiful, fleshy faces, executed in Central Asian and western styles and Indian drapery. The most interesting feature of sculptures, from the Swat valley, is the so-called 'drawing style', already mentioned, which Faccenna named, along with the 'naturalistic' and 'stereometric' styles. The drawing style was first identified in the artistic production of the major centre at Butkara I, on the basis of the stratigraphic sequence of the site and further detailed by comparison with other sites such as Saidu

<sup>4</sup> The long archaeological sequence at Butkara I, stretching from the third century BC, or slightly after, to the tenth/eleventh century AD, was divided into five main structural periods, corresponding to the construction and four successive reconstructions of the Main Stūpa, which evidenced the changes in sculptural and architectural patterns.

<sup>5</sup> Figures are depicted with their small statures, broad round and prominent faces, and bold and heavy physical make up. The drapery of the figures is in Indian style.

<sup>6</sup> The figures were dressed with typical Indian and Central Asian costumes. The heavy folded draperies with clear, deep lines and curve of Gandhāran style are frequently depicted.

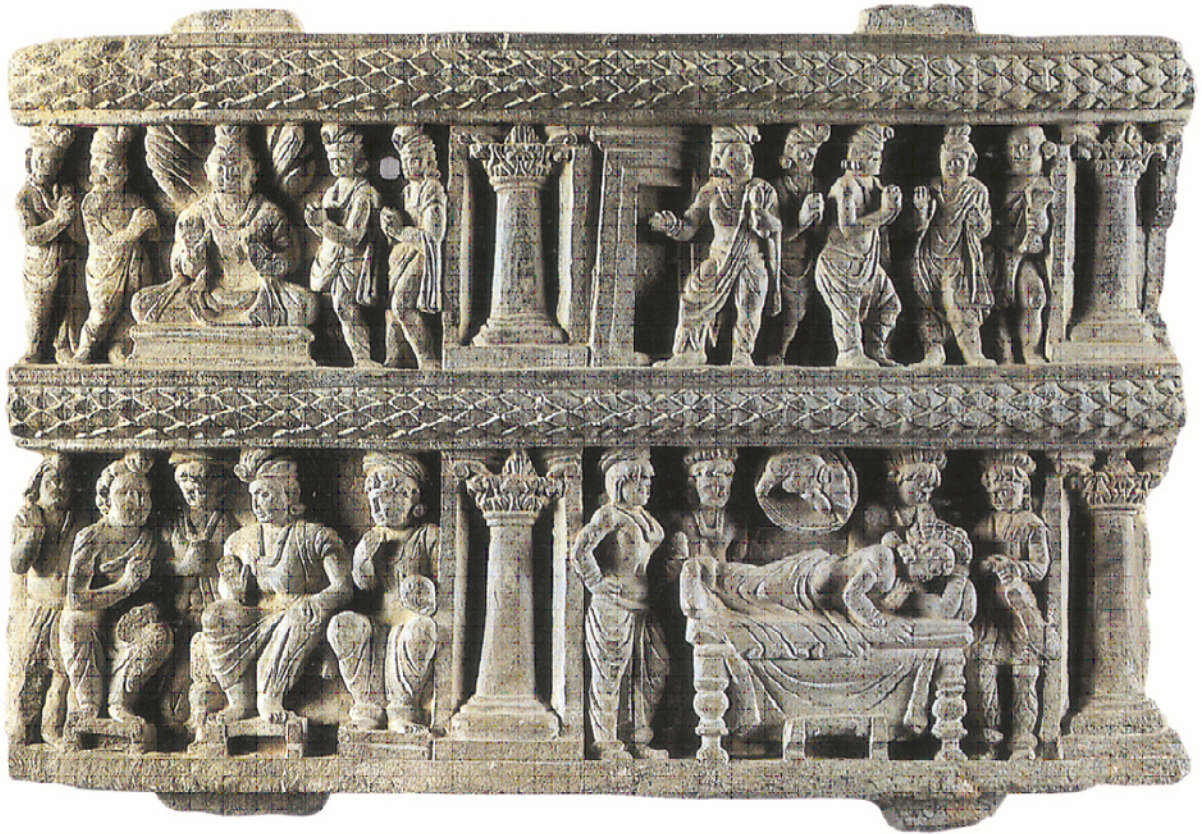


Figure 4. Scenes from the life of the Buddha. (no. SS 563) from Saidu Sharif. Swat Museum. (Photo: author.)

Sharif I and Pānṛ (Figure 4; Faccenna 2007: 165-199; Filigenzi 2008: 297). What was identified was a 'drawing (disegnativo)' group, characterized by dense and thin grooves, sometimes of quite primitive execution, angularity, summary and flat treatment of volumes, and a developed narrative convention which exhibits a distinctive artistic character quite different from that of later work. Broadly speaking, the bodies of the Swati figures are somewhat shorter and normally have broad, round or square, flatter faces than the standard 'Gandhāran' ones (Swati 1997: 6).<sup>7</sup>

Prof Swati devised zonal divisions of the Swat valley to designate the local peculiarities of its Buddhist Art. He divided the valley into three 'zonal workshops', each of which sub-valleys has common, characteristic features and a distinctive 'zonal style' (Figure 5; Swati 1997: 20; cf. Rahman 1993: 7).<sup>8</sup> Dr Tahira Tanweer claimed another zonal workshop of the Buner valley as part of the Swat valley and Dr Amjid Perviaz identified the zonal workshop of Malakand (Tanweer 2010: 235).<sup>9</sup> The traditions of the

<sup>7</sup> Broader chins and straight, high-bridged noses are characteristic features of Swati sculptures while those of Gandhāra have oval or triangular faces with smaller chins and slightly curved, beaked noses with sharp ends, besides other distinctive features. The eyes of the figures in the Swat valley are mostly shallow and prominent. The eye ridges of figures are boldly defined, which differs from the sharply marked Gandhāran ones. Eyes are wide and prominent, eye sockets shallow, and the eyeballs not deeply embedded as is apparently the norm in the Gandhāran figures. In some cases irises are marked by incised circles and pupils by a dint. Swati figures are naturalistic in style, not idealized.

<sup>8</sup> The analytical data provided by Prof Dr Swati, concluded that in the Swat valley there were multiple zonal styles, each of which was based in a geographical unit or sub-valley. Each style was the outcome of a few workshops with a common origin, though might be fashioned by different hands. They share some technical and physical features. Based on stylistic study of sculptures particularly from Butkara III and then from Shansha, Chat Pat, and Marjanai, he concluded that each locality probably had its own group of sculptors or a workshop.

<sup>9</sup> Dr Amjid Perviaz has studied the Malakand collection, comprising stone sculptures and narrative reliefs in Swat Museum. On the basis of comparative artistic study of the sculptures he claims the fifth zonal workshop of Malakand. In 2016 he submitted

‘zonal workshops’ either continued from one period to another or were completely absorbed into others in the subsequent period, when a site needed any sculptural replenishment, or when new construction necessitated it at any later date (Swati 1997: 21). Although, owing to the customary religious system in the whole region to the north-west of India, iconography was consistent, the anatomy of the Swati figures, the composition, and the schematic arrangement of the reliefs are different from the rest of Gandhāra (Swati 1997). A complete change in a workshop’s traditions was often caused by the coming of a new population group and their patrons, with a different cultural background, into the sub-valley, either subduing or displacing the old one (Olivieri 2014). The use of schist as a material, remained a major and almost constant element but the demand for sculpture in schist, fluctuated from time to time even within the same artistic group or zonal workshop.<sup>10</sup> In each sub-valley, Buddhist art had its own, distinct artistic features. The regional divisions and groupings of Buddhist art in the Swat valley does not reflect the variation in opinions among those Buddhist communities so much as different levels of skill among artistic groups. Nevertheless, new settlers always contributed some of their traditions to the Buddhist pantheon (Tucci 1958: 281). For example, there might have been Greek artists and craftsmen, refugees no doubt from the abandoned Greek cities of Bactria, available to establish the workshops, to design the typical motifs of the new style, and above all to develop the highly original draped image of the Buddha.

The dating of sculpture from Gandhāra and other contemporary regions is complicated.<sup>11</sup> Sculptures were largely recovered without documentation over generations, whether through crude, earlier excavation, purposeful looting, or as the result of more casual finds and we have ended up relying heavily on numismatic evidence (Rienjang & Stewart 2018). The attempt at such dating has relied on a series of understandings based on archaeological contexts, material and stylistic analysis, and iconographic developments, which led the great *maestro* of Buddhist archaeology, Faccenna, to determine the three styles

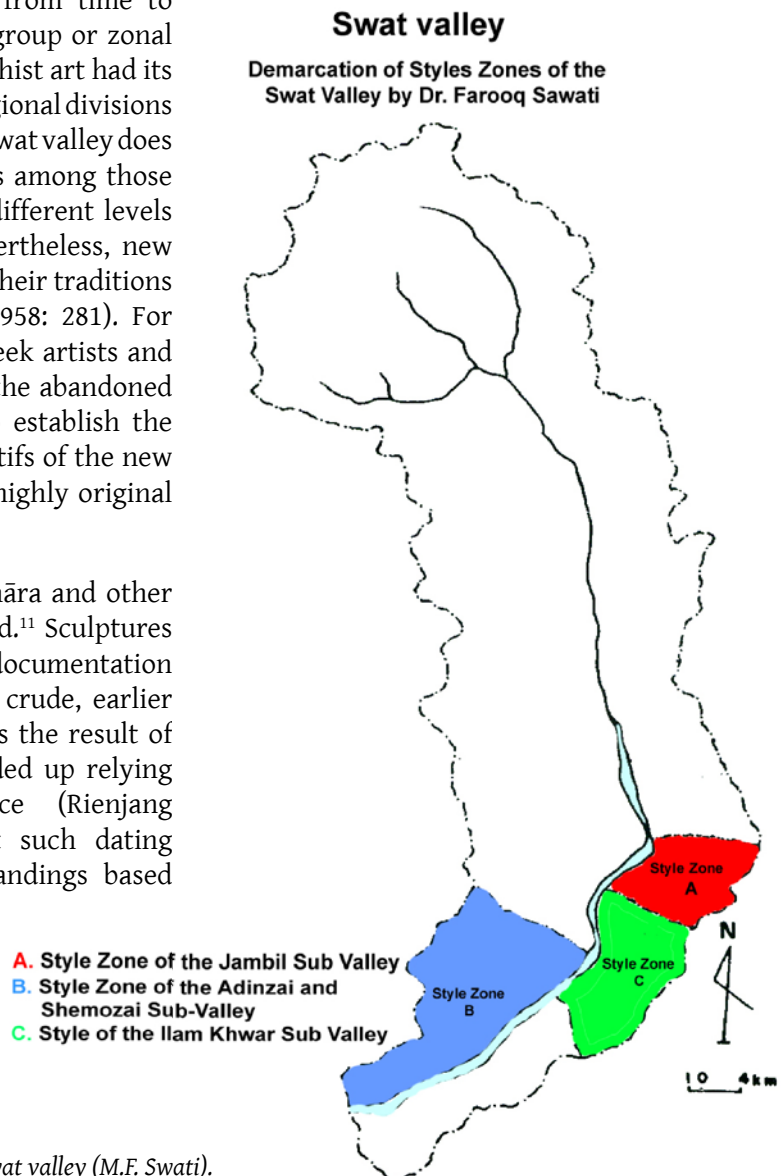


Figure 5. Map of style zones of the Swat valley (M.F. Swati).

his unpublished PhD dissertation at Taxila Institute of Asian Civilizations, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad.

<sup>10</sup> Recently Olivieri has published comprehensive reports on the excavations in Gumbat, Amlukdara, and Barikot, to determine the chronology of stone sculptures in the Swat valley (Olivieri 2014). The archaeological sequence documented at those sites also offers much food for thought with regard to the shift from schist to stucco in sculptural decoration, and to the related production chain towards the end of the third century AD.

<sup>11</sup> See Cribb (2018) where he discusses the importance of numismatic evidence in the dating of Kaniška I, and its relevance on the dating of Gandhāran sculptures.



mentioned above, extending from the beginning of the first century AD to the end of the third century AD (Faccenna et al. 2003: 294; Filigenzi 2003: 350). Certain broad assumptions are generally accepted, for example that the narrative reliefs which attract so much attention within the study of Gandhāran art are a comparatively early phenomenon (Rienjang & Stewart 2018: 6). The new chronology, as well as the early chronology of Kushano-Sasanian governors proposed by Joe Cribb and M. Carter, not only contracted the historical sequence, which in the tradition of earlier numismatics (developed by scholars such as Robert Göbl) considered them to last until the late fourth or fifth century AD, but finally made Faccenna's chronology of Butkara I, fully compatible with the overall picture (Rienjang & Stewart 2018: 6). The final touch was given by the excavations at Barikot and Amluk-dara with their long and reliable set of C-14 dating and numismatic data (Olivieri 2014). Evidence from the excavations at both Barikot and Amluk-dara proved that the climax of schist production was already over towards the end of third century AD.<sup>12</sup> Evidence from outside Gandhāra, preserved in India, Central Asia, and China can be useful to determine the importance and nature of the post-Kushan period. In turn, considerable architectural evidence provides a picture of late Buddhist activity in Gandhāra (Behrendt 2018: 149). In contrast, archaeological research in Gandhāra notably at Sahrī Bahlol, Takht-i-Bāhī, Jamāl Garhī, Swat, and Taxila certainly has sufficient monumental and sculptural evidence but has not offered solid data about their historical and cultural frame. We can categorize developing stages of Buddhist art and so-called zonal workshops through their emergence, transformation, climax, decline, and then refuge in China, Korea, and Japan. Circumstances put pressure on Buddhism in the region at the stage of its subordination and Buddhist art deserted this region, only to reappear in indigenous forms and styles in the Far East. Against this background the Buddhist art of stone sculpting in Swat itself passed through different stages of development.

### **Emergence of zonal workshops**

Around 190 BC Greeks rulers from Bactria conquered and annexed the Indus region including Swat, Gandhāra, and Taxila. This Macedonian presence in Swat lasted long enough to have an effect on the material culture as has been demonstrated by archaeological work (Callieri 2008). Hellenistic crafts had already started in the Swat valley in the Indo-Greek period. Work at Barikot has supported the evidence from the Buddhist sanctuary at Butkara I, where the second century BC sees the introduction of stone moulded elements in the architecture of the Main Stūpa. Besides, this must be integrated into the broader context of artefacts of Hellenistic inspiration datable to the Greek period: the coins and toilet-trays, but also the seals, as well as the Hellenistic architectonic elements, mouldings of bases and capitals present in other sites of the region such as Jandial and Mohra Maliaran near Sirkap, Taxila (Faccenna 2007). Most of the subjects depicted in toilet-trays recovered at Taxila are clearly Hellenistic in style, and there can be no doubt that this kind of art was introduced from Hellenistic cultures from the West (Marshall 1951: 493). At the early stage of emergence, each locality in the Swat valley probably had its own group of sculptors and therefore independent workshops. The Swat valley has provided researchers with the much anticipated discovery of at least one major artistic centre where the sculptures of that school were produced and archaeology has finally entered the stage of studies on Gandhāran art in this early period (Callieri 2008: 60). The Italian Mission not only yielded the first secure chronological indications for the art of Gandhāra but also unearthed well defined evidence of an artistic centre in its cultural setting, as was brought to light at Butkara I (Olivieri 2015: 365; Brancaccio & Behrendt 2004: 4).<sup>13</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Schist was widely available and quarried in the Swat valley. Until the third century AD, schist was widely used in the Buddhist monastic complexes. Subsequently kanjur and stucco came into use together in the Swat valley. The large-scale use of stucco decorations during the course of the third century AD both at Barikot (e.g. in the shrines of Units B and K) and at Amluk-dara and Gumbat finds a chronological comparison in recent data from coeval Kushano-Sasanian evidence found at Termez (Ferrerias et al. 2014: 736).

<sup>13</sup> Fortunately Swat remained secure from the raids of classic art-collectors in the early nineteenth century because until 1926 this region was not under the administrative control of British Empire. British army personnel and chief political officers like Major Deane extended access to art-collectors so they were able to extract what they could. The European antique collectors

It should be noted that Buddhist sacred areas could have been established in Swat as early as the third century BC (at Butkara I; Olivieri 2016: 35).<sup>14</sup> This is confirmed by both archaeological and radiocarbon data. The fortified urban settlement at Barikot (lower area and acropolis) was established around the mid first millennium BC on the ruins of an Early Iron Age village dated to the eleventh to eighth centuries BC (Olivieri & Filigenzi 2018: 71).<sup>15</sup>

### Integration of Buddhist Art in different zonal workshops

Different tribes of the Scythian (Śakas) pushed by the Kushan from Bactria, entered the Indus region, settled there and further east in the Ganges Jamuna plains (Swati 1997: 6). Śakas and Parthians were familiar to Greek culture. Thus, they developed a synthesis. This is the reason that an astonishing art, mixing all the styles – those of the Bactrians, Pahlavas, and Śakas – emerged in this period. By the beginning of the Common Era, Buddhism in Gandhāra had turned into a mass movement (Luczanits 2008: 75). At an early stage, the stone sculptors were demonstrating their distinctive skills working in different zonal workshops. After the arrival of the Parthians in the Indus region at about the end of the first century BC, the workshops became more refined, though still within the indigenous style. During this period, large-scale monastic complexes in the Swat valley developed their regional workshops on a larger scale, which have distinct artistic features. Such regional workshops remained active till the integration of sub-valleys and developed into an Uḍḍiyāna School of Art or ‘Workshop’. As long as Buddhist art expanded and its demand increased, sculptors moved from one zone to another in quest of inspiration and appreciation. Such movements enable them to adopt and borrow multiple features from other art groups, so-called ‘workshops’. During the period, Greek, Roman, and Pahlava features are dominant in the sculptures. Green schist was mainly used for the execution of stone sculptures. The carving represents the high skill-level of the workshops, which flourished probably in the second quarter of the first century AD.

Contemporary Buddhist art centres such as Gandhāra and Taxila were also contributing Buddhist sculptures with an identical style. At the end of first century AD, Buddhism started using the great international trade routes connecting China with the Mediterranean (Jansen 2008: 30). There is evidence that during the first century BC and first century AD in Swat and Taxila there were some stone crafts, making use of various features, motifs, and designs in common, i.e relic caskets (Figures 6 and 7). It indicates that there were some deep relations, connections among contemporary Buddhist art centres of Swat, Gandhāra, and Taxila. Significant movements of artisans from one regional centre to another beyond geographical boundaries was usual too. Kurt Behrendt regards as characteristic of this period of expansion, the fact that most structures abounded with narrative reliefs, and there was a regional religious development that emphasized the life-story of the Buddha and the worship of relics associated with the Buddha. Behrendt observes that image-shrines started to appear after the second century AD (Behrendt 2003; Rienjang 2018: 99). *Stūpa* Shrines for holy relics and monasteries, in the Swat Valley, were fashioned out of locally available schist in the first to second centuries AD. Dr Swati emphasized

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were involved in the smuggling of Gandhāran sculptures from Swat to abroad. The then local administration considered it a harmless hobby and relaxed border security for the transportation of the antiques (Brancaccio & Behrendt 2006: 1). Barger and Wright took the bulk of their sculptures to Peshawar and thence consigned them to the Victoria and Albert Museum in London (Barger & Wright 1941: 13).

<sup>14</sup> A possible hint of an even earlier Buddhist presence in the city is afforded by the recent discovery of a fine black-ware bowl from the Śaka-Parthian levels bearing a Kharoṣṭhī inscription which has been studied by Stefan Baums (Olivieri & Filigenzi 2018: 72).

<sup>15</sup> Previously the excavations of the rock-shelter at Ghaleygai, in Swat, established a chronological sequence for the Swat Valley. Twenty-four cultural strata were exposed, which were divided into seven periods by the Italian Archeological Mission (Swati 1997: 2). The C<sup>14</sup> (radiocarbon) date of Periods I-IV is (2400-1400 BC), which correlates to the Chalcolithic periods of Central Asia (Turkmenistan), the Indus Valley (Harappan Cultures), and Neolithic period of Burzahom in Kashmir. Periods V to VII belong to various phases of Gandhāra Grave Culture dated from thirteenth century to fourth century BC (Stacul 1969: 82-85).



Figures 6-7. Reliquary lids from the Taxila and Swat valleys. Taxila Museum (reserve collection); Swat Museum (inv. 0781). (Photos: author.)

that workshops established during the Scytho-Parthian rule in the Swat Valley continued until the advent of the Kushan dynasty. This period he termed a transitional phase of Buddhist art in the Indus region which developed from zonal styles.

### Expansion of regional Buddhist workshops

The Indus-Oxus school of Buddhist art was divided into a number of small kingdoms regions such as Uḍḍiyāna, Gandhāra, Taxila, Kapisa, Bactria, and others.<sup>16</sup> The history and culture of these ancient small kingdoms, to some extent a hub of the Buddhist active zones, overlapped to a greater extent for various reasons, i.e. social, political, religious, economic, etc. Schist was widely available and quarried in Swat till the third century AD and it was widely used in the Buddhist monastic complexes. At a later stage, kanjur and stucco came into use together in Swat. At Butkara I, a shift towards plastic materials and related techniques can be observed on a large scale during the period of the Great Stūpa, which covers a long time-span, from the end of the second/early third century to seventh century AD, and encompasses crucial moments of change, enrichment, and embellishment. Stone Sculptures became rare and perhaps costly in the third century AD as demand for them increased with the spread of Buddhism (Sehrai 2017: 132).

This stage saw a lot of similarities among different Buddhist art centres in the different regions, that is to say Uḍḍiyāna (Swat), Gandhāra, and Taxila. These connections give clues of intermixing and interchanging of the skills of craftsmen from different production centres, the different workshops in Indus-Oxus. In them we encounter celestial beings floating like birds; the youthful Brahmācārin type of Vajrapāṇi; palmette-like lotus plants; Sala trees; large haloes; column shafts. Herald Ingholt associated this group with other specific features such as, *dhyānamudrā* with the Buddha's hands uncovered and *dharmacakramudrā*: scalloping of the edge of the halo; the use of a shell-shaped the *uṣṇīṣa*; the bare right shoulder and feet; and diaphanous drapery. The throne is flanked by a pair of lions, in profile looking outward. A 'sleeve over knee' formula is employed; the hair has an almond-shaped form just over the centre of forehead. The Buddha has a large very halo, and the edge of the halo is decorated with rays. Therefore the Buddhist stone sculptures from Swat and their style are also connected to other production centres such as Gandhāra and Taxila.

<sup>16</sup> These different states mostly remained under the administrative or authoritative control of one authority or ruler which united them in all aspects of life, including art. Such unification encouraged the movement of craftsmen attracted to other areas.

### Decline of Buddhist art in the Swat valley

In the absence of royal patronage, Buddhist art centres in the Swat valley followed the gradual disintegration and disappearance of significant Buddhist iconography on stone sculptures, becoming dominated by the contemporary religious art centres of non-Buddhist cults. Sculptures executed on rock walls as well as on roughly cut stelae, represent the last artistic expression of Buddhism in Swat (Figure 8; Olivieri et al. 2011: 67). The Buddhist art of narrative reliefs was substituted by the production of large-scale rock-carving such as the Jehanabad Buddha and Ghaleyge Buddha. During the time of Great Stūpa 4 at Butkara I, there was a major shift towards plastic material and related techniques. A decrease in the demand of fresh stone sculptures in this period is obvious at Butkara I. The use of stucco for sculptures and decoration of monastic complexes increased. The period of Great Stūpa 4, precisely demonstrates a dramatic change of taste, techniques and materials, which is most clearly traceable in phases 4 and 5, when dynamic building activity and striking sculptural and pictorial embellishment is documented by the scanty and yet most telling surviving evidence. The fifth century saw a decline of stone sculpture.<sup>17</sup> After the invasion of Huns in Swat, Chinese pilgrims mentioned 1400 desolated



Figure 8. Late period stelae from the Swat valley. Swat Museum. (Photos: author.)

<sup>17</sup> Disintegration is reflected when stone from collapsed monuments was re-used, often as filling material, sometimes re-cut and reworked; less frequently it was re-employed in the decoration of the monument, with the missing parts reintegrated by means of stucco additions. Use of local soapstone, kanjur, and stucco has significant correlations with periods of economic distress, which may have favoured the adoption of cheaper building options based on low-cost materials and processing techniques. Overlapping of masonry layers, reconstruction, and renovations sometimes prevented the preservation of the early evidence. This may put our reconstructions of the Gandhāran phenomenon at risk and prevent it from filling all the gaps completely.

Buddhist monastic complexes on both sides of the Swat River (Beal 1906: 120). Chinese records also clarify that the Buddhist monastic complexes had already declined and were desolate quite early before the Muslim invasions in the region (Barger & Wright 1941: 32). According to the Chinese pilgrim Faxian, who came to the Swat valley in the fifth century AD, there were at that time 500 Buddhist monasteries in Swat all belonging to Hīnayāna, or little vehicle (Beal 1906: ix; Khan 2004: 1). It seems that at the time of Great Stūpa 4, at Butkara I, the most important and the richest artistic centre of the region was not able, or not inclined, to obtain newly made stone sculptures. Side by side with the increasing use of calcareous stone as building material, stucco sculptures and decorations began to predominate, while stone sculptures became an ever rarer commodity.

### Status of zonal workshops in the Swat Valley

The Buddhist art of stone sculptures in the Swat valley appears to be the earliest of its kind in all the Buddhist monastic complexes of the region and this kind of art may in fact have begun in Swat. Invasions and large-scale migrations from Western and Central Asia caused the cultural and social setup of the Swat Valley to evolve. Distinctive styles of Buddhist stone sculptures were eventually transmitted to neighboring regions of Gandhāra, Taxila, and Afghanistan. A 'transitional phase' of Buddhist art in the Indus region, which developed during Scytho-Parthian rule in the Swat Valley, continued until the advent of the Kushan dynasty. In the transitional phase there was a demarcation line between zonal workshops of Swat and contemporary regional centres of Indus-Oxus Buddhist art. The chronology created by the discovery and analysis of ancient coins in Gandhāra provides a framework for its political history and a relative dating system for its archaeology (Cribb 2008: 64). Fresh archaeological excavations may enable us to connect and interpret Buddhist art and the scope of workshops not only in the Swat valley but also within a larger context. However, a change of cultural mentality and bias towards certain kinds of material will also be advisable for archaeologists and art historians, so as to avoid overemphasizing and somehow canonizing the 'classical' in Gandhāran art and architecture in stone at the expense of its still little-known, and perhaps under-evaluated, cultural, aesthetic and technical dynamism.

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# Regional workshops and small *stūpas* in the Swat Valley: an analysis of the evidence from Gumbat, Saidu Sharif, and Pānṛ

Pia Brancaccio and Luca Maria Olivieri

*Examination of this manifold, complex material calls for reconstruction of the various possible art centres, starting from the Butkara I centre, then going on to Swat and the adjacent valleys and from here proceeding in ever widening circles in the region of Gandhara. Each centre should be considered first in itself, in terms of its own production, and then in terms of the synchronic and diachronic connection, taking great care not to impose our own schemes and theories on the individuality of the work [...].* (D. Faccenna 2003: 305)

## Introduction

Our understanding of the geography of Gandhāran sculpture is still modest even though we can access a vast amount of artistic evidence dating to the first four centuries of the Common Era. In fact, the presence of a visual language that is relatively consistent across Gandhāra with shared iconographies, materials, and carving techniques does not facilitate the process of singling out stone working centres and workshops. This study focuses on a series of friezes associated with votive *stūpas* uncovered at the Buddhist sites of Gumbat/Balo Kale, Saidu Sharif and Pānṛ in the Swat valley (Figure 1). These centres were located in proximity to the ancient town of Bazira/Vajīrasthāna (Barikot) and were excavated by the Italian Archaeological Mission in collaboration with the Department of Archaeology, Pakistan respectively in 1960-64 (Pānṛ), 1963-66 (Saidu), and 2011-2012 (Gumbat/Balo Kale), the latter with the Directorate of Archaeology and Museums, Government of Khyber-Pakhtunkwa (Faccenna, Khan, and Nadiem 1993; Faccenna 1995; Olivieri et al. 2014). A comparative analysis of sculptural fragments associated with minor monuments erected at these sites reveals that in the surroundings of Barikot existed a regional ‘workshop’ manufacturing sculpture destined for the minor *stūpas* of the nearby sacred areas of Gumbat, Abbasaheb-china, Pānṛ, and Saidu. This paper will also suggest that a zonal workshop of this kind included artists specializing in the representation of themes of classical inspiration for which distinctive carving practices were also occasionally employed.

## Gumbat: the archaeological context

The springboard for this study is a small group of fragmentary friezes and cornices uncovered in 2011-12 at the site of Gumbat/Balo Kale located in the central part of the Kandak river valley, a tributary to the Swat. Gumbat is best known for its imposing Buddhist shrine that still stands today (Figure 2). The first report on the site dates back to Sir Aurel Stein who, in 1926, already noticed looting activities around the monument (Stein 1930: 13). In 1938, Evert Barger, Lecturer in Medieval History at the University of Bristol and Philip Wright of the Victoria and Albert Museum (hereafter V&A) conducted a brief archaeological campaign in Swat, in the areas of Barikot and Charbagh. Their main focus at Barikot, where they also established camp, was to explore the remains in the Karakar and Kandak valleys. In Kandak, in addition to the documentation of the Buddhist sites of Amluk and China-bara located the upper valley (Olivieri et al. 2006), they also carried out a quick excavation at Gumbat, located 5 km south of Barikot. The discoveries were announced the same year (Barger 1938), while the archaeological report was published in the memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India in 1941 (Barger & Wright 1941; Olivieri, forthcoming).

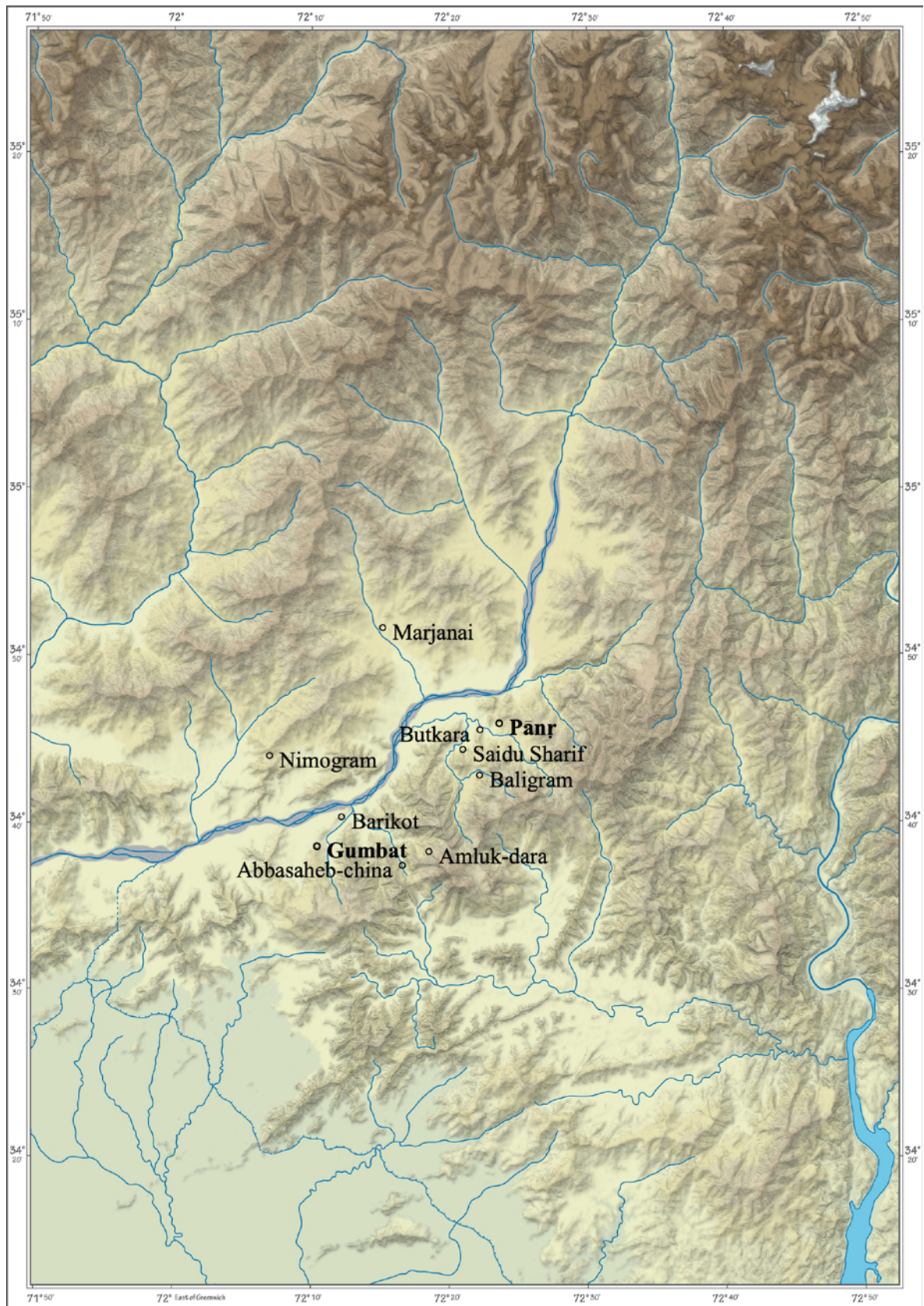


Figure 1. Map of Swat. (Courtesy ISMEO Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan; Map by K. Kriz an D. Nell, University of Vienna, Department of Geography and Regional Research.)



Figure 2. A view of Gumbat and Kandak valley from east. (Courtesy ISMEO Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan; Photo by E. Loliva.)

Several sculptures were uncovered at this time: Barger and Wright brought to England forty pieces from Gumbat, sixteen of which are currently in the holdings of the V&A. The latest archaeological investigation at Gumbat was conducted in 2011-12 by Luca M. Olivieri within the framework of the ACT Project (Meister 2011; Meister & Olivieri 2012; Olivieri et al. 2014; Meister, Olivieri & Vidale 2016; Olivieri & Filigenzi 2018). During the two campaigns, Olivieri and his Pakistani collaborators conserved the monumental shrine at Gumbat referred to in the archaeological reports as the Great Shrine, conducted technical analysis on the wooden elements still embedded within the architectural structure of the monument, and excavated the terrace on which the shrine was erected. In the sector of the terrace a N-S trench measuring 10 by 50 meters revealed a partly disturbed archaeological sequence (Olivieri et al. 2014: 269). The excavation confirmed the existence of two large *stūpas* flanking the Great Shrine, a feature previously suggested by Barger and Wright in 1938 (Figures 3-4); in addition, twenty small *stūpas* erected in proximity of the Great Shrine were documented. In 1938, Barger and Wright already commented on the large number of sculptural pieces uncovered at Gumbat; the artistic richness of the site was confirmed by Olivieri who recorded hundreds of fragments of gray schist sculpture during the latest excavation campaigns. Most of the pieces, however, were found in extremely fragmentary conditions and were uncovered in disturbed archaeological contexts due to extensive illegal diggings.

[PB]

### **An archaeological overview of the monuments at Gumbat/Balo Kale**

In order to understand better the chronology of the artistic material uncovered at Gumbat, one must address the structural periodization of the site (Olivieri et al. 2014: 300-303). All the archaeological remains from Gumbat rest on three terraces stepping southwards on a ridge of phyllitic outcrops

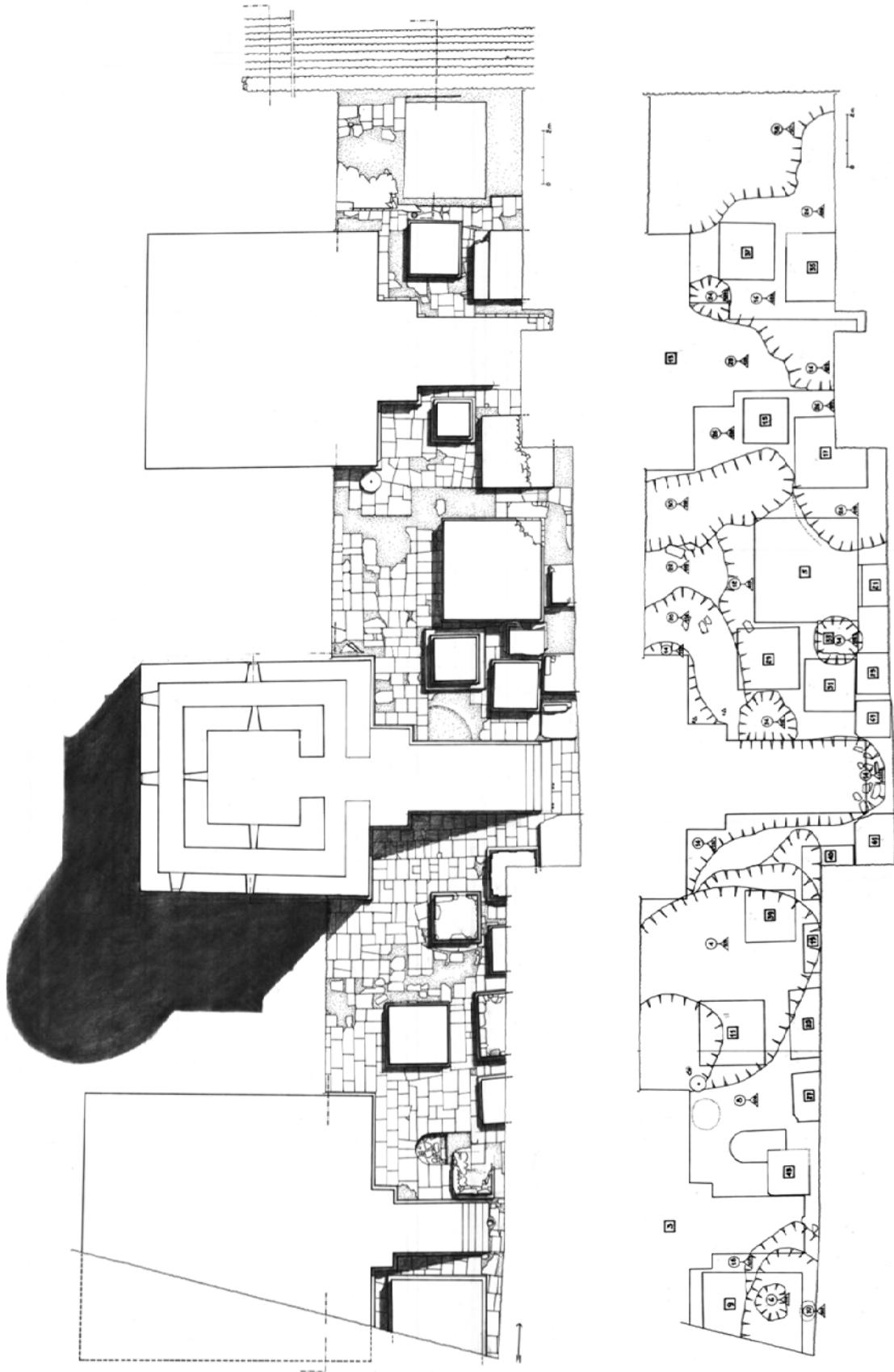


Figure 3. Plan of the excavated area (top) and robbing pits (bottom). (Courtesy ISMEO Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan; Drawings by F. Martore.)

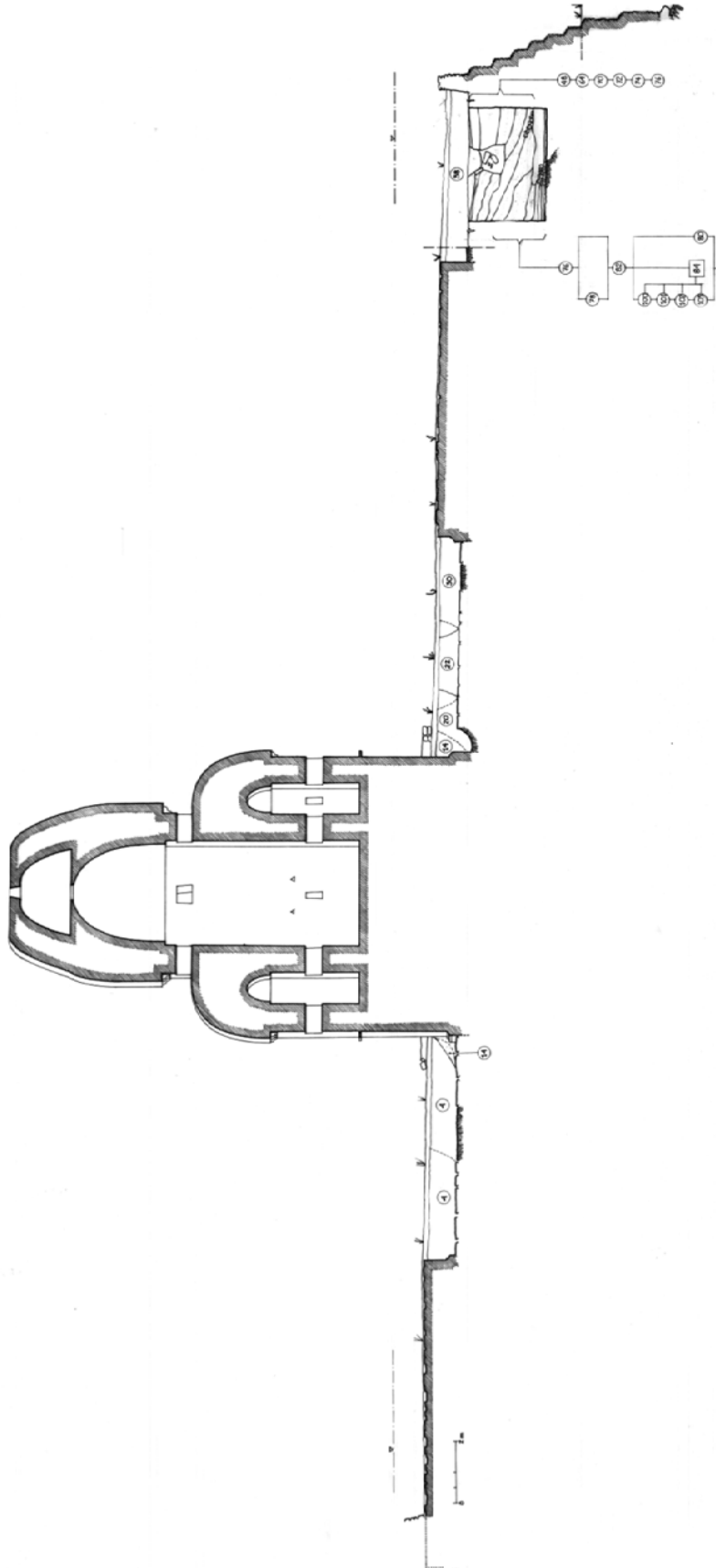


Figure 4. Section of the excavated area. (Courtesy ISMEO Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan; Drawings by F. Martore.)

flanked to the north by a perennial stream. The rocky area still carries extensive traces of ancient quarrying for the extraction of building material. Traces of what must have been the main *stūpa* were detected on Terrace II located in the southern part of the site on a flat plateau supported to the east by three retaining walls. The monastery was located a bit uphill on Terrace III, in the south-western area of the site, while the lower part of Terrace I, literally projecting over the Kandak valley like a balcony (in Pashto *balō*), is the place where the impressive Great Shrine still stands today. While the area excavated at Gumbat corresponds only to 1/3 of the ancient terrace, one can still get a sense of the original monumentality of Terrace I and its three buildings. The following is the periodization sequence, i.e. the sequence of major artificial interventions or building phases of the Buddhist sacred area (Periods II-IV).

Excavations of Terrace I conducted in 2011-2012 revealed that the Great Shrine was built during Period II of activity at Gumbat. The building was erected on top of an abandoned artificial surface sealing the remains of an earlier protohistoric settlement (Period I = c. 1200-900 BC). During Period II the walls supporting the north and the east side of the artificial terrace were raised and a platform was created by filling the space with layers of pounded earth (Figure 5). The ancient filling included earlier protohistoric waste materials. During Period III the first stone floor of Terrace I was completed<sup>1</sup> and three large buildings were erected, each with a frontal stairway facing east. The three buildings, from the south, are identified as Building [3], [30], [13]. They were similar in size, with the central one being only slightly taller. <sup>2</sup> The Great Shrine (Building [30], c. 9x9 m), the central one on the terrace, still stands today while the features of the two flanking buildings remain unknown as only the podia of these structures are preserved; Building [3] to the south of the Great Shrine was rectangular in shape (w: 10.34 m; l: 11.34 m)<sup>3</sup> while Building [13] to the north was square (w: 8.9 m).<sup>4</sup> A similar architectural set up has been documented at the sites of Nimogram (Raducha 2009-),<sup>5</sup> Baligram (Ashraf Khan 1993), and Marjanai (Shah Nazar Khan 1995) in Swat. It is likely that both Building [3] and Building [13] were *stūpas* (see Olivieri and Filigenzi 2018: fig. 17);<sup>6</sup> we may hypothesize the existence on Terrace III of a layout consisting of *stūpa*-shrine-*stūpa* pattern.<sup>7</sup> Lastly, it should be mentioned that on the same terrace a small *stūpa* was erected in Period III between Building [13] and the Great Shrine, identified in the excavation report as Building [5] (w.: 3.73 m).<sup>8</sup>

Most of the small *stūpa* monuments crowding the space around the three major buildings were built during Period IV (Figures 6-7) while a new paved floor (layer 91), a few minor structures, and the re-building of the dome of the Great Shrine, were set in place during Period V. Later pits and cuts almost completely obliterated the paved floor (91), and only a few square centimeters of it are visible today in proximity to Monument [31]. Period VI corresponds to the late occupation of the site (post-Buddhist? fourteenth to fifteenth century AD) and is represented by pit <58> and its contents (for its radiocarbon dating, see Olivieri et al. 2014: 314). This period was followed by the abandonment of the site. Unfortunately, the original stratigraphy at Gumbat has been partly destroyed by looting that had started

<sup>1</sup> Layer (47) still visible today across the excavated surface.

<sup>2</sup> Based on the length of the staircases attached to Buildings [3] and [13] (respectively 5 and 6 m vs. 6.6 m of the Great Shrine) one can surmise that the podia of these two buildings were slightly lower than the central monument (h.: 3.7 m). Since Building [13] is rectangular in plan and has a pronounced landing, it is possible that it also had a second stairway and had a height comparable or bigger to the one of the Great Shrine (see the 'shadow-temples' discussed in Meister 2011).

<sup>3</sup> The base is decorated with plinth, torus and cavetto and shows traces of plaster.

<sup>4</sup> The base is decorated with plinth, two tori and cavetto and shows traces of plaster.

<sup>5</sup> Here the excavations also documented three square major monuments, aligned and facing WSW; from N: a *stūpa*-chapel (I), a *stūpa* (II), a shrine (III).

<sup>6</sup> At Nimogram the sequence (from N.) is shrine-*stūpa*-shrine. The monument at Nimogram is open to W.

<sup>7</sup> Note also the recovery of an alm/offering pottery jar fixed at the right of the staircase of Building [3] (Olivieri et al. 2014: 305, figs. 45-46) like at Saidu Sharif I (Main *Stūpa*) (and Pānṛ I, *Stūpa* 1) (ibid. for ref.). The association of jars at the sides of the staircase of shrines is rarer but also attested (Great Vihara 57 at Butkara I, ibid. for ref.).

<sup>8</sup> The base is decorated with plinth, scotia, carinated (?) torus and cavetto, with traces of plaster.

before Stein's visit to the site in 1926 (Stein 1930: 13), and lasted until 2009.<sup>9</sup> Pits <119>, <120>, <121>, <123>, <126> and their fillings (layer 26) represent the early excavations conducted by Barger and Wright in 1938 to the north of the Great Shrine (Figure 8).

### The architectural context and its chronology

Barger and Wright proposed a date of the second century AD for the Great Shrine (ibid.: 35),<sup>10</sup> while Faccenna suggested that the Great Shrine at Gumbat and the so-called 'Great Vihāra' of Butkara I (i.e. Great Stūpa Phase 3) were contemporary, both dating to the early first century (Faccenna 2006: 189-190, n. 4). On the basis of the available data, it appears that the Great Shrine had two building phases (Olivieri et al. 2014: 302).<sup>11</sup> The Great Shrine and Buildings [3] and [13] (= Period III) were erected in the early second century AD as suggested by conventional 14C analysis of the wooden lintel of the upper south clerestory window of the Great Shrine (1840 +/-30 BP = AD 110).<sup>12</sup> A second phase (= Period V) which should have included the reconstruction of the Great Shrine double dome took place in the middle part of the third century.<sup>13</sup>

As far as the sculptural material from Gumbat is concerned, it should be remarked that in Swat the schist sculptural production drastically diminished by the end of the third century, especially in the Barikot area but also at Pānṛ, Saidu Sharif and Butkara I (Olivieri & Filigenzi 2018). Coeval evidence (dating to the mid/end of third century AD) from Amluk-dara, the Buddhist shrines at Barikot, and Butkara I (Olivieri & Filigenzi 2018) suggests



Figure 5. The filling of the terrace. At the bottom, traces of protohistoric structures and original rocky outcrops. (Courtesy ISMEO Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan; Photo by M. Vidale.)

<sup>9</sup> To which may be ascribed the pits <110> and <111>.

<sup>10</sup> H.C. Ackermann came to a similar conclusion: six reliefs were attributed by him to an early 'Hellenistic group' dated to around mid-1st century AD, and four to a 'late Hellenistic group' he dated to the 2nd half of the 1st century AD (Ackermann 1975: 19, 23).

<sup>11</sup> We refer here to the chronology and data presented at the First International Workshop of the Gandhāra Connections Project (see Olivieri and Filigenzi 2018).

<sup>12</sup> M. Meister, L.M. Olivieri and M. Vidale agree that 'the clerestory's wooden beam is structurally consistent with erection of the masonry structure and would seem to belong to the earliest phase of construction' (Meister, Olivieri, and Vidale 2016: 555). Of course, theoretically, both the wooden lintel used in the upper south clerestory window, and the crossing corner planks, could have been reused older timbers (*Acacia modesta*: see Olivieri et al. 2014: 315-319), which might even have been utilized in the same moment (which means post-240 AD). However, on the basis of the overall archaeological and chronological data, it is likely that the building of the Great Shrine occurred not later than mid-second century AD, and that the double-dome – rather than in Period IV (as previously thought) – was probably rebuilt in Period V (dated to mid-third century AD), when other major interventions occurred on Terrace I (i.e. the layering of a new paved floor, see above).

<sup>13</sup> According to R.E. Hatfield (Beta Analytic) the identical  $2\sigma$  statistics of the three surviving planks of the lower dome mean that they appear to represent the same time (median age c. 240 AD; Olivieri et al. 2014: 311; Meister, Olivieri, and Vidale 2016: 556). The dating suggests the possibility that the dome might have been reconstructed after one of those two destructive earthquakes that shook Barikot and Amluk-dara (see Olivieri and Filigenzi 2018: 80).



Figure 6. Terrace I: S. side and Building [3]. (Courtesy ISMEO Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan; Photo by E. Loliva.)



Figure 7. Terrace I: N. side and Building [13]. (Courtesy ISMEO Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan; Photo by E. Loliva.)





Figure 8. Fragments excavated by Barger and Wright at Gumbat, now in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London.  
(After Barger and Wright (1941) pl. II.)

that by this time stucco had largely replaced schist in the sculptural production. Therefore, it is highly possible that the material excavated by Barger and Wright and re-excavated in 2011-2012 belonged to small *stūpas* erected in the northern section of the terrace during Period IV. Dimensions here clearly speak of small decorative assemblages. For example, the elements of friezes GBK 4-6 and GBK 7, if complete, might not have exceeded 40 cm in length. We can imagine here an average sequence of 4-8 elements which, including the corner elements, would have been fitting *stūpas* of an average width of 2.5-4 m and smaller. The decorative material discussed in this article seems to belong to the beginning of Period IV: the smaller *stūpas* were erected around the larger monuments sometime after the AD 110.

The larger and earlier monuments at Gumbat were decorated with pieces sculpted using a different type of stone (that is greenish in color), and altogether show a different kind of workmanship. They also display very different decorative patterns from the smaller architectural fragments discussed in this paper. These are illustrated by the rather plain panels decorated with almost rigid vegetal motifs (e.g. GBK 52 and 54 in Olivieri et al. 2014: fig. 61-62) or by the fragment of a panel depicting a throne GBK 42 fallen in front of Building [3] (Olivieri et al. 2014: fig. 60) (Figures 16-18).

[LMO]

### The sculptures

The present study will focus only a small selection of sculptures from Gumbat excavated in 2011-12. These are friezes originally decorating small *stūpas* erected by individual donors in proximity to the three main monuments. The pieces in questions are:

- A. GBK 4, 5 and 6 (Figure 9) – fragments of linear friezes depicting a series of two male figures dressed in classical garb, framed by Corinthian columns. The pieces were found near votive *stūpa* 3 and probably belonged to the same small monument.
- B. GBK 7, 10 and 11 (Figure 10) – fragments of linear friezes depicting series of two male figures dressed in classical garb, this time framed by Corinthian pillars. These friezes were reported as being surface finds.
- C. GBK 22 (Figure 11) – a multi-tiered curvilinear frieze depicting scenes from the life of the Buddha. The bottom register depicts scenes from the life of the Buddha, the middle register has a running vine scroll, while the top register, the best preserved today, depicts a series of male figures dressed in western garb interacting with each other. This multi-register piece was found to the SE of the monumental shrine.

Remarkably a few pieces uncovered by Barger and Wright in 1938, now in the holdings of the Victoria and Albert Museum (Ackermann 1975), seem to be segments of the same friezes uncovered by Olivieri about seventy years later, in 2011-12 (Olivieri et al. 2014: 306).

1. IM 87-1939 appears to be part of the same frieze as GBK 4, 5, 6 (Figure 12). All of these fragments may have formed the decoration of votive *stūpa* no. 3 (see above A.).
2. IM 88-1939 appears to be part of the same frieze as GBK 7 (Figure 13) (see above B.).
3. IS 136-1961 and GBK 22 were probably part of the same *stūpa* frieze; they can also be stylistically compared to sculptures I.M. 78-1939 and 79-1939 from Kanjar Kote also given by Barger and Wright to the Victoria and Albert collection (Figure 14) (see above C.).
4. The frieze IM 86-1939 and A-1939 in the V&A (Ackermann 1975: pl. Va) and the fragments GBK 24, 28, 30, 31 (Olivieri et al. 2014: figs. 53-56) may come from the same monument (Figure 9).
5. The friezes IM. 90-1939 and GBK 88 both decorated with flying amorini belonged without doubt to the same cornice (Figure 15 and cf. Figure 8).



Figure 9 a, b, and c. GBK 4, 5, 6. Fragments excavated at Gumbat by the Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan (2011-2012), Swat Museum. (Courtesy ISMEO Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan; Photo by E. Loliva.)



Figure 10 a, b, and c. GBK 7, 10, 11. Fragments excavated at Gumbat by the Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan (2011-2012), Swat Museum. (Courtesy ISMEO Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan; Photo by E. Loliva.)



Figure 11. GBK 22. Fragment excavated at Gumbat by the Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan (2011-2012), Swat Museum. (Courtesy ISMEO Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan; Photo by E. Loliva.)



Figure 12. Fragment excavated at Gumbat by Barger and Wright in 1938, V&A Museum, IM 87-1939 (Copyright Victoria and Albert Museum, London).



Figure 13. Fragment excavated at Gumbat by Barger and Wright in 1938, V&A Museum, IM 88-1939 (Copyright Victoria and Albert Museum, London).

To this list can be added other three pieces, whose integration with some pieces in the V&A are for the time being just presumptive:

6. IM 89-1939 (Ackermann 1975: pl. Vc) with GBK 4, 5, 6 (Olivieri et al. 2014: 306) (see above A.).
7. IM 111-1939 (Ackermann 1975: pl. XXII a-b) with GBK 19 (Olivieri et al. 2014: 306).
8. IM 79-139 (Ackermann 1975: pl. XIIb) with GBK 22 (Olivieri et al. 2014: fig. 52) (see above C.).



Figure 14. Fragment excavated at Gumbat by Barger and Wright in 1938, V&A Museum, IS 136-1961 (Copyright Victoria and Albert Museum, London).



Figure 15 a and b. Fragments excavated at Gumbat by the Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan (2011-2012), Swat Museum, GBK 88, and by Barger and Wright in 1938, V&A Museum, IM 90-1939. (Courtesy ISMEO Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan; Photo by E. Loliva; copyright Victoria and Albert Museum, London).

### The art and the artists

The friezes and cornices presented here were all part of the decoration of minor monuments like votive *stūpas*; linear friezes decorated square *stūpa* podia while curvilinear friezes such as GBK 22 encircled the lower part of the domes. Among the many sculptural fragments collected at the site, it appears that subjects inspired by the classical repertoire were most popular at Gumbat. The individual patrons of votive monuments at the site seem to have favoured non-Indic genre scenes and the carvers responsible for such commissions were surely well versed in the depiction of classically inspired themes. Good examples are the cornices IM. 80-1939 and GBK 88 depicting a series of flying amorini. The motif, clearly lifted from the iconographic repertoire of Roman sarcophagi, is represented at Gumbat with such fluidity and naturalism that it appears to capture the stylistic form of the original prototypes. Reliefs with similar decorations from Butkara I show how the carvers who worked at Gumbat were very conversant not only with the classical repertoire but also with western carving modes (Faccenna 1980-1981).



Figures 16-18. Fragments excavated at Gumbat by the Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan (2011-2012). Swat Museum, GBK 52, 54, and 42. (Courtesy ISMEO Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan; Photo by E. Loliva.)



Figure 19. Fragments found at Abbasah-china (Rome, Museo Nazionale ‘Giuseppe Tucci’, V 739) and excavated at Gumbat by the Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan (2011-2012), Swat Museum, GBK 22. (Courtesy Museo Nazionale ‘Giuseppe Tucci’/ISMEO Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan; Photos by P. Brancaccio and E. Loliva.)



Figure 20 a and b. Fragments found at Pānṛ by the Italian Archaeological Mission between 1960-64 (Rome, Museo Nazionale ‘Giuseppe Tucci’, V 411) and by Barger and Wright at Gumbat in 1938 (IM 89-1939, V&A Museum). (Courtesy Museo Nazionale ‘Giuseppe Tucci’/ISMEO Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan, photo by F. Bonardi; copyright Victoria and Albert Museum, London.)

A closer look at fragments from Gumbat confirms our impression. The pieces illustrated depict a series of non-Indic figures framed by Corinthian columns and pillars. The characters all dressed in Graeco-Roman tunics appear to engage in different types of confrontations – they may be battling each other, or they may be simply intent on verbal exchanges. One particular fragment shows a figure whose body position reminds us of conventional ways used in Roman art to represent characters involved in dramatic performances. This makes us wonder if the characters illustrated may actually hint at re-enactment of dramatic performances, even where the figures appear to be engaging in armed confrontations. I





Figure 21. Roman mosaic of doves, from Pompeii. First century AD. (Naples, Museo Nazionale Romano, inv. 114281; photo: P. Brancaccio.)

have already discussed elsewhere the relevance that drama may have played within the Gandhāran world (Brancaccio & Liu 2009). Such imagery, often represented in association with drinking scenes, was loaded with connotations of royalty and festivity deemed appropriate for honouring the Buddha. Further, it formed a language system used to refer to the world of the local aristocracy, most likely the patrons of the votive *stūpas*.

In comparing the friezes from Gumbat with fragments V 739 and V 178 now in the holdings of the ‘G. Tucci’ Museum of Oriental Art in Rome (Figure 19; cf. Figure 11), it becomes apparent that the same group of artists responsible for the Gumbat friezes may have worked on the decoration of votive *stūpas* at other Buddhist sites on the left bank of the middle Swat. Pieces collected in the sixties by the Italian

Archaeological Mission at several sacred areas in the surroundings of Barikot (including also Pānṛ) display a surprising formal and technical affinity with the ones uncovered at Gumbat.<sup>14</sup> In addition to the most obvious iconographic similarities, they appear to be so closely related in terms of style that they may have been products of the same atelier, or possibly the same hands. The overall treatment of the figures, their gestural and spatial relationships, the way of carving the heads and especially the tunics with a characteristic handling of the drapery, reflect surprisingly similar designs and carving processes. It should be noted that the two pieces shown here measure exactly the same height and are also made of the same stone type – a common, ordinary grey schist. It is likely that in Swat, around the second century AD, existed a workshop or a group of sculptors who specialized exclusively in carving classically inspired genre scenes. The sculptors worked at various Buddhist sites in the Barikot area on commissions of minor monuments such as votive *stūpas* paid for by the local aristocracy. The proposed hypothesis aims at revising the current interpretive model for the production of Gandhāran art maintaining that the whole sculptural production at any given Buddhist centre was the creation of a specific site workshop. Instead the evidence presented here strongly suggests the existence of specialized regional groups of artists conversant in particular themes working simultaneously at different sites on individual commissions. A comparison between the cornice IM 89-1939 in the V&A museum uncovered by Barger and Wright in Gumbat, originally in two pieces (nos. 62 and 63; Ackermann 1975: pl. Vc) and the V 411 fragment from Pānṛ I now in the Swat Museum seem to confirm this hypothesis (Figure 20). The two pieces share critical iconographic and stylistic features that could well be attributed to the same workshop.

The cornice IM.89-1939 from Gumbat depicts two main scenes: a drinking couple and birds sipping from a vessel, separated by acanthus leaves; the fragment from Pānṛ represents the same birds and vessel motif, this time associated with an amorous couple, while vines are carved to separate the vignettes. Birds drinking from a water basin are also reproduced in the Gumbat frieze IM.87-1939 (Ackermann 1975: pl. Vc.). The birds and basin motif was very popular in the Roman world and is especially well attested in the mosaic tradition. The best known examples come from Hadrian's Villa in Tivoli and from several houses in Pompeii (Figure 21). Pliny the Elder elucidates us on the Hellenistic origin of such an artistic theme: apparently the subject was first represented in the famous 'Unswept House' mosaic from Pergamon attributed to the artist Sosus in the second century BC (Dunbabin 1998: 270). Such a celebrated image-type from the Hellenistic and Roman world came to be assimilated into the Gandhāran tradition and incorporated within the repertoire of classically inspired themes such as wine-drinking, grapes, and satyrs.

This formula appears to be replicated in a consistent way in several sculptures from different sites in Swat. One wonders if the stone-carvers who executed the images were in fact looking at specific models – separate designs of the motif that they then transferred onto stone. The technical study carried out by Peter Rockwell, the study by Faccenna and Filigenzi, and the analysis performed by Vidale and Olivieri on thirty pieces from Swat, are particularly helpful to this regard. Peter Rockwell remarks that 'the carver begins with a carefully worked out pattern. Once this has been carved, however, he works freely and by eye' (Rockwell 2006: 175).<sup>15</sup> This is of special relevance as it argues for a certain degree of artistic freedom on behalf of the sculptor – in essence groups of artists had to have great familiarity with selected types of subjects. While Rockwell remarks the tremendous adaptability of Gandhāran stone workers, the mastery and consistency observed in the representation of genre scene of classical inspiration at selected sites in middle Swat supports the notion that a workshop specializing only in carving these

<sup>14</sup> Also known as the 'Varia Collection' now in the holdings of the Swat Museum and the Museo Nazionale di Arte Orientale 'G. Tucci' in Rome.

<sup>15</sup> Analysis of unfinished materials were also performed by D. Faccenna and M. Taddei in two pioneering studies (Faccenna 1997; Faccenna & Taddei 1997). Recently Luca M. Olivieri addressed again the topic in a paper presented in memory of Harald Hauptmann (Olivieri, forthcoming.).

kinds of subjects may have existed in the region. The information provided by most recent studies gives us a valuable insight into a sculptor's atelier in Swat across the first two centuries AD (Vidale, Olivieri, Ferrari, and Loliva 2015). From the tool and chattering marks analyzed, the study deduced that the range of tools at disposal was the following: a standard series of flat chisels (from <5 to >11 mm), a burin (with arc-shaped edge like a gouge), point chisels (3 mm), caliber/compass, and drill (two types, each with two different metal head: pointed, 2 mm; cylindrical, 4-5 mm).<sup>16</sup> The series of tools confirms the series presented in Faccenna and Filigenzi 2007: pls. 1-6.<sup>17</sup> The presence of the drill has been recognized with certainty in three pieces from Saidu Sharif I (two from the frieze of the Main Stūpa; Vidale, Olivieri, Ferrari and Loliva 2015: 40-41, figures 13-17).<sup>18</sup> That means that drilling is attested in Swat in pieces dated from the mid first century AD (the Main Stūpa at Saidu) to the second century.

The presence of artists focusing exclusively on the depiction of selected themes is a feature common to many sculptural workshops in antiquity. Unfortunately, we know very little about the organization of sculptural production in ancient Gandhāra. However, we can still envision that specialization formed an important part of the training of Gandhāran sculptors and that familiarity with specific repertoires and in some cases specific carving methods, played an important role in the process of artistic creation. A closer look at the carving techniques employed by Gandhāran artists in a few reliefs depicting genre scenes with grapes and drinking, indicates that direct connections can be traced between the subjects represented and the tools and techniques employed by the carvers. The study of Vidale, Olivieri et al. has *inter alia* demonstrated that, (1) drill at Saidu Sharif was used with parsimony by specialized workers, always when the scenes were in their final stage;<sup>19</sup> (2) that there were separated working chains within the same atelier, based on different degrees of specialization (and associated tools); (3) that there were evident traces of disconnections between the work of the ateliers and the building-yards where the elements were assembled on the architecture. Such evidence of 'discontinuity' between the ateliers and the building yards has been interpreted as a side effect of a serial production (Vidale et al. 2015: 41, 43, 45).<sup>20</sup>

Two votive *stūpa* reliefs are especially relevant from this perspective – the V545 cornice from the site of Pratangai and the curvilinear frieze S 704 from the sacred area of Saidu Sharif I (Figure 22). One can note the distinctive treatment of the vine-leaves on both reliefs. In particular the area between the protruding parts of the vine-leaf, is rendered by the artists as a perfectly circular hole. The same treatment of the vine leaf is visible also in several cornices from the Wali of Swat collection (Lone 2018). In order to carve this particular feature, the sculptors used a drill, a tool that was employed in Gandhāran sculpture, as it has been said, 'with parsimony'. Not that the drilling technology was unknown in the region – fine bow drills were regularly used in the thriving bead industry, however the drill never became a staple tool in the sculptors' ateliers. The reason, as noted by Vidale and Olivieri, is that drill was considered a highly specialized tool, only used by the masters to give, wherever necessary a finishing touch to the sculpture, or to execute conventional figures like grape leaves (see n. 21). It

<sup>16</sup> Bow-drill and strap-drill were both used as discussed

<sup>17</sup> Rockwell suggested that stone-carvers from Swat used only a small selection of tools consisting of flat chisels of various width; he also maintained that tooth chisels, rasps and drills were not employed (Rockwell 2006: 168-169). While tooth-chisel marks remain absent from the sculptural production from Swat, it is possible that traces of rasps were obliterated by the application of a polishing powder.

<sup>18</sup> Inv. N. SI 246+263+277, SI 1128, SI 704. For the latter see below.

<sup>19</sup> According to L.M. Olivieri, a bow-drill with cylindrical flat head or bit measuring 4-5 mm was used to carve details such as holes on grape leaves on the sculpture once it was completed and before it was set in place (*fuori opera*). A strap-drill was used instead during the final stages of completion of the work once the sculpture was mounted on the monument (*in opera*); this type of drill was used to finish carving details such as small hair curls of the figures so that they could be viewed at the proper angle by devotees circumambulating the *stūpa*.

<sup>20</sup> It also appears that some pieces were prefabricated and included a number of sockets larger than needed so that they could be mounted in a variety of architectural settings. This aspect suggests a serial production for some Gandhāran reliefs (Vidale et al. 2015: 41, 43, 45).



Figure 22 a and b. Fragments found at Pratangai by the Italian Archaeological Mission in the 1960s (Rome, Museo Nazionale 'Giuseppe Tucci', V 545), and excavated at Saidu Sharifi in 1964-1966 (Rome, Museo Nazionale 'Giuseppe Tucci', S 704). (Courtesy Museo Nazionale 'Giuseppe Tucci'/ISMEO Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan; photo by F. Bonardi).

is possible that amongst the few ateliers that used the drill in Gandhāra, there were some from Swat. Amongst these ateliers we can certainly count the one of the 'Maestro di Saidu' (responsible for the Frieze of the Main Stūpa) (Faccenna 2001), and a few others working in the following decades and specialized in Western repertoires.

What prompted the sculptors to introduce the use of drills in the carving process of these friezes and cornices? It is likely that given the extensive use of drills in Roman sculpture at the beginning of the Common Era, the mechanical innovation presented here could be read as a technical citation enhancing the authenticity of the Graeco-Roman repertoires represented by Gandhāran artists. The specialized carvers who worked in the Barikot area on genre scenes of Classical inspiration were probably aware of this particular Western carving technique; they may have intentionally employed the drill in the final stages of their work to reinforce the non-Indic look and the feel of the subject represented. The drill was first used in Greek sculpture in the fifth century BC, then became widely employed by Roman stone carvers during the first and second centuries but was never employed in Indian sculpture.<sup>21</sup> Its introduction as a plastic tool in Gandhāra can be most certainly ascribed to exchanges with the Graeco-Roman world. To conclude, this brief comparative analysis of sculptural material from minor monuments erected at Buddhist sites in the Barikot area offers a slightly different viewpoint on the geography of sculptural production in ancient Swat. The model of a regional workshop or group of artists specializing in Western subjects and familiar with western carving techniques, active at different sites in the valley during the second century AD, may be better suited to explain the complexity and coherence characteristic of so much sculptural production from votive *stūpas* in the Swat valley.

[PB]

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<sup>21</sup> On the use of the drill in the Graeco-Roman world see: Palagia 2006; Hollinshead 1998 and Stewart 1978. For stone-carving techniques in the Indic world see Dehejia 2016.

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## Differences and similarities in Gandhāran art production: the case of the modelling school of Haḍḍa (Afghanistan)

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During the earliest centuries of the Christian era, the territories of north-western India, the current states of Pakistan and Afghanistan, developed, along the Silk Road, a branch of Buddhist art with complex and fascinating aesthetics and stylistic characteristics: the art of Gandhāra. The expression of this sacred art in the service of the hagiography of the Buddha varies according to the regions where it developed. Thus, Gandhāran art is a result of so many artistic influences, peculiar executions, and iconographic specificities, that the sharing of academic ideas and cross-cutting research are essential for casting light on the problems, by pooling specialist knowledge and different perspectives. How were the ancient artistic workshops organized? Were there itinerant artists? Which paths were taken by the various artistic influences? Did they come in several successive waves? In which direction were they propagated? How can we explain their liveliness and longevity? It appears necessary to deal with our observations both individually and holistically in order to understand the evolutions, exchanges, and interactions that make Gandhāran art so alive. To this purpose, we will consider the case of the modelling school of Haḍḍa in Afghanistan – a ‘modelling school’ as opposed to a sculpture school, though it also expressed itself through sculpture in stone and painting, of which we will present some examples. The profusion of artistic production in Haḍḍa is such that many masterpieces could be used to examine the theme of the differences and similarities in Gandhāran art production. However, in this paper we will focus on selected examples which are both eloquent and representative.

Let us introduce the monastery of Haḍḍa and some general considerations about its associated school of art. Haḍḍa is a modern village in Afghanistan, located near Jalalabad and built on the ruins of a pre-Islamic city, on which a great Buddhist monastic complex depended, which flourished during the earliest centuries of Christian era. From the nineteenth century, the successive explorations and research of General Claude-Auguste Court (Tarzi 1976: 381), Charles Masson of the East India Company (Masson 1841), and William Simpson (Simpson 1879) lead to the discovery of many artefacts and ancient coins, from the Graeco-Bactrian to Huna periods, revealing that the monasteries had had a very long period of activity.

The first excavation was carried out in 1923 by Alfred Foucher at Tape Kalān, ‘the Great Hill’, for the French Archaeological Mission in Afghanistan. The excavation unearthed many *stūpas*, and revealed a little known aspect of the art of Gandhāra: stucco modelling (Hackin 1928). From this moment, Foucher established a link between the sites of Taxila and Haḍḍa, to which we will return. In order to extend the research, Foucher commissioned Jules Barthoux to undertake further archaeological surveys in the area. Between 1926 and 1928, he almost completely excavated Tape Kalān and twelve other sites, including six important monasteries: Bāgh Gaï, Gār Naō, Pratès, Chakhil-i Ghoundi, Deh-i Ghoundi and Tapa-i Kafarihā. Adorning the *stūpas*, the chapels and the monasteries, Barthoux discovered a whole population of statues modelled in clay and stucco, more than 15,000 sculptures, apparently testimonies of Hellenistic-Buddhist art in its maturity, as well as limestone and schist sculptures (Dagens 1964) and a few paintings (Barthoux 1930; 1933).

After Barthoux’s mission, archaeological excavations in Haḍḍa stopped and did not resume until 1965, with the survey of Lalma by the Japanese team of Seiichi Mizuno (Mizuno 1968). The newly established Afghan Institute of Archaeology also commissioned Shaïbaï Mostamindi to survey Tapa-e Shotor, ‘Camel Hill’, where he conducted seven campaigns from 1965 to 1972 (Mostamindi 1968; 1969; 1971; 1973).



Figure 1. Stucco heads of bodhisattvas and 'geniuses' found at Haḍḍa in the 1920s. (Photo: after Barthoux 1930: pls. 31, 33, 35a, 38, 54d, 56a and 79d.)

Following him, Zémarylai Tarzi continued the study of Tapa-e-Shotor during six campaigns from 1973 to 1979, and carried out two campaigns of excavation in Tapa Tope Kalān from 1977 to 1979 (Tarzi 1976; 1990; 1991). The successive archaeological projects have established that the earliest remains dated to the second century AD and that a generalized fire destroyed the site around the ninth century AD, during the Islamic conquest.

The art of Haḍḍa is one of high quality. It bears the mark of many local and foreign artistic influences, Indian, Graeco-Roman but also Central Asian (Figure 1), and it depicted local and foreign figure types (Figure 3). Little by little, the technical choices of modellers



turned out to be daring and original, as we will see with Niche XIII, which was decorated with statues in the round, detached from the wall. It should be noted that, because of the predominance of modelling, it was first necessary for the early investigators to prove that the art of Haḍḍa was an integral part of the art of Gandhāra, which was mostly known through its schools of schist sculpture. The first assumption of Foucher and Barthoux in regard to this substitution of materials was that it was necessitated by the absence of stone in the region. However, specific studies later found that several quarries existed near the sites (Courtois 1962; see also Cambon & Leclaire 1999). Thus, the use of modelling seems to be a deliberate choice, an affirmed preference.

Modelled sculpture is now reported on Pakistani sites: at Taxila of course (Marshall 1918; 1951), but also Ranigat (Nishikawa 1994), Chārsadda (Marshall & Vogel 1904), Rokri (Cunningham 1881), Sahrī Bahlol (Spooner 1914; see also Stein 1915), as well as Takht-i Sangin in Tajikistan (Spooner 1909). It has also been found in many Afghan excavations, around Kabul at Tape Marandjān (Hackin, Carl & Meunié 1959: 49-58; Tarzi 2001: 41), Tape Narenj (Païman 2005; 2006), Xwāja Safā (Païman 2005), Qol-e Tut (Païman 2018), Mes Aynak and Goldara (Fussman & Le Berre 1976) in Logar Province, Tapa Sardār near Ghazni (Taddei 1968; Taddei & Verardi 1978; Filigenzi 2008; 2009), Bāmiyān (Tarzi 2006 ; 2007), Fondoqestan, Pāitava and Karracha (Cambon 1996), Surkh Kotal (Schlumberger, Le Berre & Fussman 1983); many sites in Uzbekistan: Dalverzin Tepe (Pugačenkova 1978), Xalčajan (Pugačenkova 1965 & 1966, see also Staviskij 1986), and Kara Tepe (Staviskij 1996); and in Chinese Central Asia, at Kucha and Qarachahr (Stein 1912). Nowadays, we consider that there were not just one but several manifestations of Gandhāran art, which is precisely the subject of the 2018 Gandhāra Connections workshop. The diversity that we can observe may result from many factors: the nature of materials, the origin of artistic influences, but also aesthetic choices, new compositional modes, and individual iconographic choices.

Most of the time, the composition of sculpted scenes discovered in Haḍḍa is quite similar to those found on Gandhāran stone reliefs. However, iconographic choices highlight regional preferences. There are indeed specific episodes that were widespread because of a regional predilection, such as for example the *Dīpaṃkara Jātaka*.<sup>1</sup> From our iconographic examination of the whole decoration of Haḍḍa's monasteries, it appears that the most represented canonical episodes of the Buddha's hagiography are scenes of *jātakas* on the one hand, miracles and conversions on the other hand (Vanleene 2011). In short, episodes from the 'third' part of his life, from the First Sermon (which seems to be by far the favourite subject) until the *Mahāparinirvāṇa*. As in the rest of Gandhāran production, protagonists of Buddhist legends are mostly represented with the familiar idealized appearance: an attitude of meditation, half-closed almond-shaped eyes, a placid expression, an *uṣṇiṣa*, and an *ūrṇa* for the Buddha and bodhisattvas (Figure 1).

Tarzi conducted a detailed study of modelling techniques with regard to the different materials used (unbaked clay, clay covered with stucco, lime stucco, and plaster stucco) and the settings and cores of the sculptures (Tarzi 1986). The discovery of the clay sculptures of Nisa by Ariela Bollati, dating back to the Arsacids around the middle of the second century AD, allows us to observe the continuity of this technique from the Hellenistic period to the Kushan period, which then developed in the direction of Gandhāra (Bollati 2005).

Tarzi has shown that some smaller heads discovered in Haḍḍa resulted from a moulding technique, obtained through the pressure of a mask on the clay/stucco (Tarzi 1986). Could these masks have been copied, or did they travel in the suitcase of itinerant artists? Pursuing this idea, we said earlier that from its first discovery, the artistic production of Haḍḍa was viewed in parallel with that of Taxila, in spite of the geographical distance between them. Foucher went so far as to declare that the excavations

<sup>1</sup> *Dīpaṃkara Jātaka* takes place in part in Afghanistan. In this episode, the devotee Sumegha spread out his hair spontaneously over a puddle, so that *Dīpaṃkara*, the *Buddha* of the past, will not get his feet dirty. Thus, Sumegha receives the prediction of his next incarnation under the appearance of the Buddha Śakyamuni.

of Sir John Marshall laid the foundation for the interpretation of Haḍḍa and that ‘from Djellalabad to Rawalpindi, we were dealing with the same school of art’ (Foucher 1942: 155). We will return to the issues and implications of such links for travelling workshops and artists. Note that the excavations of Tape Narenj, Xwāja Safā and Qol-e Tut around Kabul, and Mes Ayak in Logar Province, have recently brought to light examples of populated niches similar to those of Haḍḍa and Taxila (Païman 2005; 2006).

What strikes the spectator in Haḍḍa’s art is the apparent opposition between idealized canonical figures and characters full of vitality and realism. The faces of secondary figures were certainly sometimes executed with a mould, but every detail of the face and the hair was reworked while the material was still soft, thus offering an astonishing variety of types as a result. Stucco allowed the coroplasts to give free rein to their imagination and to take the liberty of representing donors, monks, and demons with increasingly individualized or caricatured faces (Figure 2).

Note that the confidence of the artist-modellers allowed them to marry in the same space idealized and realistic types. Their works reflected the desire to capture and touch the viewer through an exaggeration of feelings, by accentuating the violence of the facial expression. The variety of physical ethnic types echoes



Figure 2. Stucco heads of monks and demons from Haḍḍa. (Photo: after Barthoux 1930: pls. 45, 60c, 60d, 100a, 100b, 100d.)



Figure 3. Modelled stucco sculptures representing donors and a Brahmin. (Photo: after Barthoux 1930: pls. 42, 64b; author; Barthoux 1930: pl. 48a.)



the variety of artistic influences: local/Afghan, Indian (Figure 3), and Chinese Central Asian (Figure 1). In the same way, artists did not hesitate to mix in the same place figures from various artistic traditions.

Let us take a closer look at some eloquent examples of the original and unique artistic expression of the Haḍḍa modelling school. They belong to a stucco niche representing the Renunciation, also called the Sleep of Women, the episode preceding the Great Departure (Figure 4). This scene is extremely refined, reduced to its main actors. The sleeping Yaśodharā/Gopa supports her head with one hand, wearing a necklace and bracelets. Her moon and solar disc headdress emphasizes a Sasanian influence, perhaps Hephthalite. Behind her is the squire Chandaka. He wears an unusual-shaped cap, a turban that goes back and forth on the front of the forehead. His features are highly

individualized. His depressed eyes and emaciated face give him a tormented expression, as he presents his helmet to Siddhārtha. The hairstyle of the prince is peculiar. It is neither a turban nor a diadem but a helmet with a circular ornament incised with concentric circles. This type of headdress is often encountered in representations from Mathūra (Hackin 1928: 73). Siddhārtha is in the position of relaxation, *lalitasāna*, ready to get up. Unfortunately his head and part of his arm are missing. He is shirtless, his lean body wrapped in an *uttariya* that rolls up and back around his shoulder. The faces, the jewels and the rendering of the bodies testify to an Indian and local influence more than of a Graeco-Roman one, and the torso of the prince, round and hunching forwards, is reminiscent of the later art of Fardoqestan.

The composition of this niche is resolutely unconventional, reduced to its main protagonists. Furthermore, in Buddhist composition, it is usually the Buddha who occupies the centre of the scene. Here, however, it is Siddhārtha's headdress that occupies the main spot, and catches the viewer's eye. It is an original dramatic device, which focuses not only on the depicted scene - that decisive and heart-breaking moment in which Siddhārtha will abandon his family - but also on a symbolic object, the turban, whose worship was widespread in Gandhāra. We will discuss a painted representation of this cult a little further on. Note that this tendency towards simplification is found



Figure 4. Scene of the Renunciation, TK71, stucco niche.  
(Photo: after Barthoux 1930: fig. 46.)



Figure 5. Scene of the First Sermon at Benares, Tapa-e Shotor, Niche V2  
(1.25 x 1.40 m), clay. (Photo: Z. Tarzi, personal photographic archive.)

on several reliefs and constitutes an original characteristic of Haḍḍa.

Little by little, the artistic audacity of the school also becomes evident through the modelling technique itself, giving birth to works almost completely detached from their support, in very high relief, and more and more monumental. Many examples of three-dimensional representations occur in niches and *caityas*, depicting characters marked by a strong Graeco-Roman heritage. Decorating the courtyard of *Vihāra* I in Tapa-e Shotor, niches V2 and V3 represent the First Sermon at Benares. The Buddha is enthroned with colossal proportions, surrounded by acolytes (Figures 5 and 7).

Excavations and study of these niches were conducted by Zemaryalai Tarzi. 1.40 m wide for 1.30 m deep, *caitya* V2 is dated to period TSh II (second half of the second century AD) (Tarzi 1991: 27). The centre is occupied by the Buddha seated on a high base covered with foliage while other figures are standing on a low bench leaning against the side walls: five monks, tutelary guardians, deities, and donors. On each side of the Buddha, the bottom corners of the niche feature two particularly interesting protagonists.

On his right is Vajrapāṇi represented as Herakles (Figure 6) (Tarzi 2000). Bearded and wearing a mustache and short curls, his face exudes gravity. He sits on a rock, his torso pivoting to present him three-quarter view and his face turned to the Buddha. With one hand, he holds the *vajra* on his knee. He is dressed with the lionskin, knotted at the hips and covering his thighs, while the head of the animal lies on his shoulder. The Herakles who lent his type to this Vajrapāṇi was identified by Tarzi: 'It is about the reappearance of a type that goes back to the Herakles Epitrapezios of Lysippus, and more particularly to its greco-bactrian variant that we found on Euthydemus coins<sup>2</sup> (last third of the third

<sup>2</sup> In this connection, and concerning a comparative study of this type of Herakles in Hellenistico-Buddhist art, see Tarzi 1976: 396; 1991: 29-30.

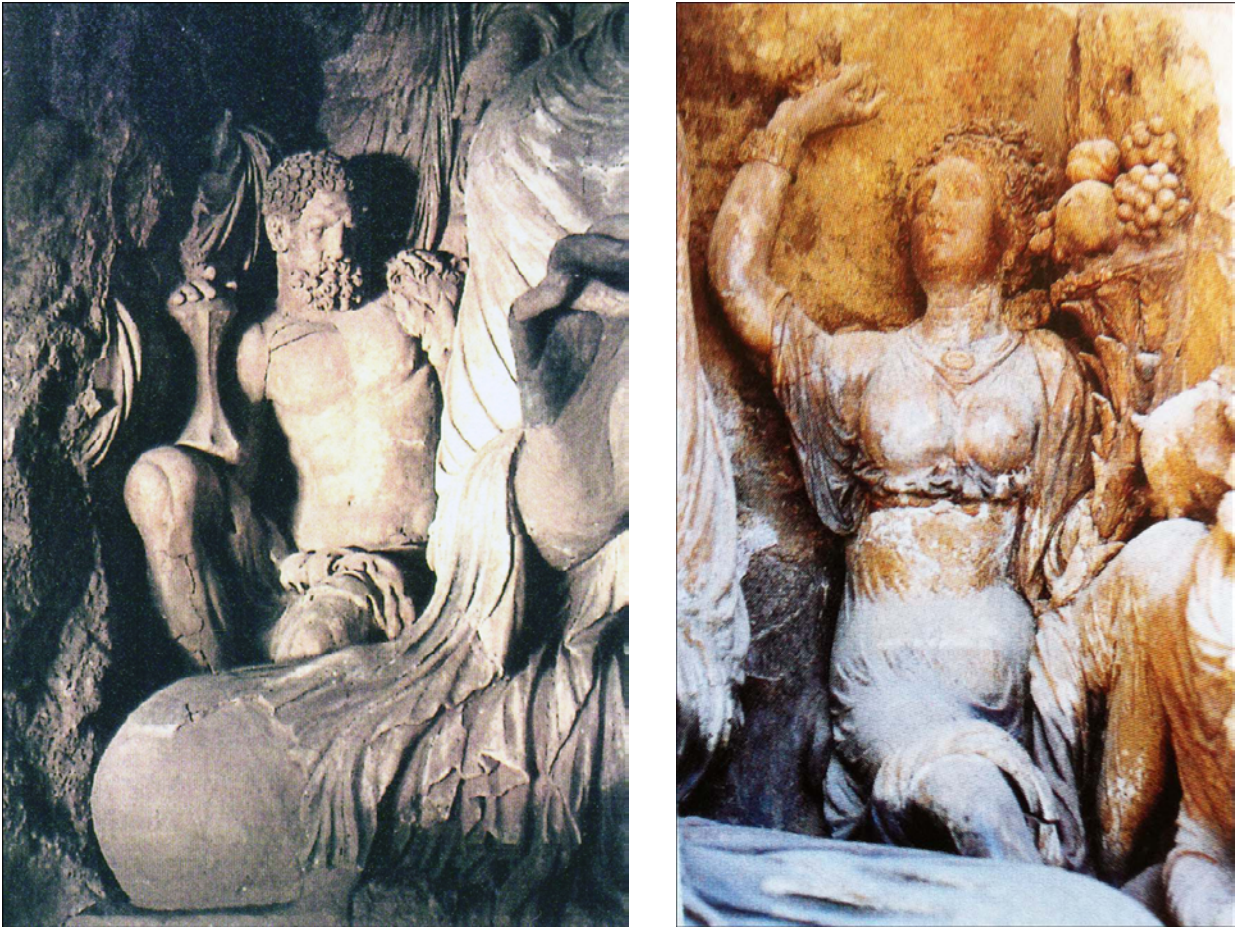


Figure 6. *Vajrapāṇi-Herakles and Hārītī-Tychē, Niche V2, clay.* (Photos: after Tarzi 1991, unnumbered fig.; Z. Tarzi, personal photographic archive.)

century BC)'. The representation of the anatomy, both in proportions and musculature, the flexibility of the garment, and the serious expression of the face make it a masterpiece of the art of Haḍḍa (Tarzi 1991: 30). The female figure arranged symmetrically, mirroring Vajrapāṇi, reveals the same degree of classical influence (Figure 6). Her head, slightly inclined backward, looks towards the Buddha. With one hand raised, she throws flowers at him, while her other hand holds a vegetal cornucopia overflowing with fruit. She is wearing a long *chiton*, knotted under the chest by a belt and a mantle covering her legs and back rests on her shoulder. The style of this woman is that of Tychē<sup>3</sup> or Fortuna, who lends her type to representations of Hārītī, deity of abundance and fertility. The drapery is of Greek or Roman influence while the necklace and the bracelet are of Kushano-Parthian type.<sup>4</sup>

*Caitya V3* is similar to the previous one, but Vajrapāṇi is represented like a Hellenistic king<sup>5</sup> (Figure 7). His long curly hair, adorned by a diadem, frames a beardless but virile face, marked by *pathos*.

The adaptation of tutelary guardians reveals the virtuosity of the artists of Haḍḍa, borrowing foreign motives at leisure to adapt them to Buddhist legend. Note that in no case are we dealing with the

<sup>3</sup> Concerning the Greek type of Hārītī, see Tarzi 1976: 400.

<sup>4</sup> For indepth comparison in respect to Hārītī's jewels and ornaments, see Tarzi 1991: 37.

<sup>5</sup> On the different types of Vajrapāṇi ('Alexander', Herakles, Zeus) and more on the similarities between the representation of Vajrapāṇi and Herakles, represented sometimes mature and bearded age, sometimes younger and beardless, see Foucher 1918: 48-63.



Figure 7. *The First Sermon, Vajrapāṇi-Alexander, Tapa-e Shotor, Niche V3, Clay (1.20 x 1.30 m).* (Photos: Z. Tarzi, personal photographic archive; after Tarzi 1991, unnumbered fig.; Tarzi, personal photographic archive.)

phenomenon of *interpretatio*. Although the artists make comparisons with the classical figures by analogies between attributes and functions, it is indeed the Indian characters of Buddhist legend who are represented with these features.

The realization of populated niches reaches its most successful state in the niche of the *nāga* (Figure 8). A jewel from the campaign of Mostamindi, Niche XIII was executed during TSh II but was remodelled during the TSh V period (second half of the third and first half of the fourth century AD): the floor was elevated by 40 cm and all surfaces were fully decorated. It is 2.40 m wide by 2.90 m deep. The entire niche was badly damaged by a fire that caused the roof to fall down, and the disintegration of statues by the internal combustion of their wooden core; however, it is preserved to a height of about 2 m. Of the thirteen or fourteen characters measuring about 1.50 m, and modelled in-the-round or in very high relief, six were still partially preserved: the Buddha, the *nāgaraja*, Vajrapāṇi, and a few *devas* or *bodhisattvas*.

The scene was set in an aquatic context: the walls and floors were covered in sinuous waves, representing swirls from which emerged flowers, lotuses and wriggling fish, associated with their monstrous marine relatives: serpentine fish with double heads and formidable teeth. Clothes seem 'wet' and the hair 'waved' under the effect of water. This is an innovation: the scene is taking place underwater and not just near the basin where *nāgas* live, as is it usually the case. The *nāgaraja* occupied the middle of the composition, off centered to the left. Dressed in a long wet *uttarāsaṅga*, clinging to his body, he is kneeling, and a snake is climbing up his back, revealing his nature.

The location of the Buddha is not certain but I agree with Tarzi's demonstration that he was probably standing in front of the *nāgaraja*.<sup>6</sup> Several interpretations have been made to identify this scene. It could be the representation of the Tribute of the *nāgaraja* Kālikā to the Buddha, but another view supported by Mostamindi is that the scene depicted a local adaptation of the legend of *nāga* Gopāla, reported by Xuanzang in his *Si-Yu-Ki* around AD 629 (Beal 1906), Songyun around AD 518 (Beal 1869) and Shih Faxien, c. AD 400 in the *Fo-wo-ki* (Beal 1869).<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> On this subject and the identification of characters see Kuwayama 1987; Mostamindi 1969 and Tarzi 1991: 166.

<sup>7</sup> This legend, supposed to take place near Nagarāhāra, is about a destructive dragon inhabiting a cave seeping with water,



Figure 8. Niche XIII of Tapa-e Shotor (2.40 x 2.90 m), clay. (Photo: after Mostamindi S. & Mostamindi M. 1969: fig. 13.)

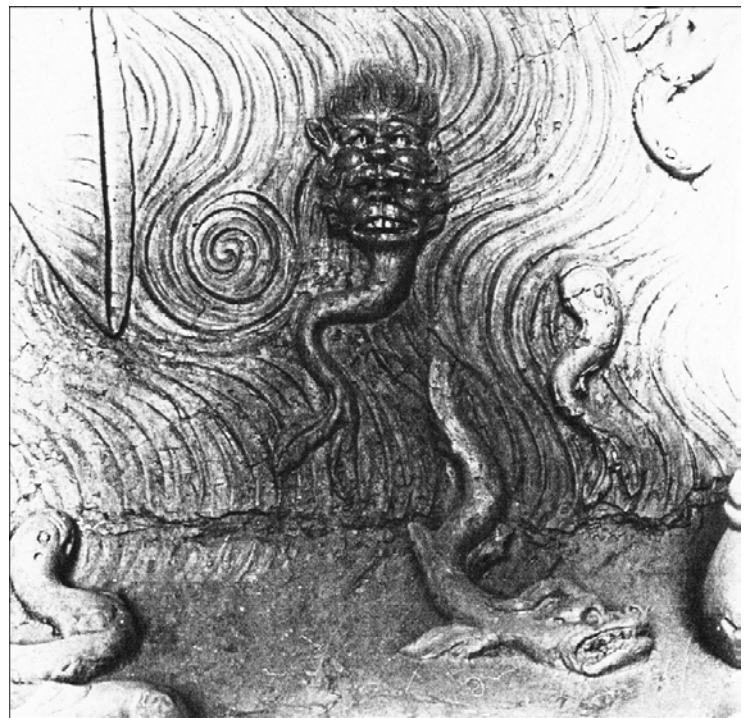


Figure 9. Characters in very high relief and monstrous fishes, Tapa-e Shotor, Niche XIII, clay. (Photos: Z. Tarzi, personal photographic archive; after Mostamindi & Mostamindi 1969.)

In addition to its iconographic interest, the artistic quality of this niche is remarkable. The undertaking is very bold, and is an accomplishment in itself. It involves populating a three-dimensional space with life-size statues, arranging them on several planes in respect to depth. The artists have invented various attitudes. Kneeling is represented at different moments of the act. Mostamindi writes of a 'supremely refined art', an 'attentive realism of human forms', a 'science of drapery' with 'sets of fabrics falling in masses dripping or plated' on bodies that we might think naked (Mostamindi 1969: 22). These features, again, will be found later in the art of Fondoqkestan. According to Mostamindi, this niche is to be considered under the direct influence of Hellenistic art.

The composition of niche XIII is still unparalleled in Gandhāran art. As our iconographic investigation, intended to search for precedents and correlations cannot be presented in detail here, we will summarize it through three examples.

The aquatic element represented by sinuous waves is not new. The relief of the eastern *Toraṇa* of Sanchi (third panel of the east side of the east face) depicts the Miracle of the Walk on the Water, during which the Buddha saves instruments of worship that the Kāśyapa had left behind, from Nairāñjanā in flood. We can note the similarity between the representation of the lotus profile on this relief and in the niche XIII: the long, sinuous stem emerging from the water and the blossomed flower, triangular in shape.

We also find this type of waves out of the Buddhist religious context: for example, on the *iwān* of Pendjikent, whose date was lowered by Giovanni Verardi to the fourth century AD, executed with the same material and technique (Verardi 1982). The scene features *nāgas* represented as fish-tailed men in an aquatic environment. The sinuous, modelled waves evoke swirls of water, as in the niche XIII.

Cave number 5 of the Udayagiri complex, located in Bhilsā, not far from Sanchi, and studied by Arthur Basham, also presents many similarities with niche XIII. Cave No. 5 is dated to the fifth century AD. It is decorated with a large carved relief about 4 m wide. The scene also unfolds on the side panels, which gives it a depth although it remains in low relief. It is a representation of Varāha, the incarnation of Vishnu as a wild boar, rescuing the goddess of the earth (Bhūdevī, also called Prithvi) from being engulfed by the Ocean. Varāha stands with his left foot resting on a rock. A female figure stands to his right, carrying a lotus stem that wraps around him, and a little Bhūdevī is holding onto the flower at the boar's shoulder-level. In the lower register, in front of them, stands the *nāgaraja*. Water is depicted by sinuous lines representing the swirl of waves, and flowers and lotus stems decorate the scene. On the left side panel, the goddesses Yamunā and Gaṅgā stand in the middle of waters, represented by undulating lines converging and separating to meet again. According to Basham, the imagery of the aquatic world and the way of representing water by incised undulating lines has a classical western origin, as was suggested for niche XIII (Basham 1976: 132).

To conclude this short comparative iconographic study of aquatic representations, we can mention the Buddhas of Mathurā and their 'wet' drapery echoing the outfits of the characters of niche XIII.

How to determine the path taken by artistic influences? Did they travel from Bactria to Gandhāra and then India, or from India to Gandhāra and then Bactria? Or in many directions, back and forth? Based on the oldest dating of the aquatic niche of Tapa-e Shotor and of the *iwān* of Pendjikent, it would be tempting to think that this type of composition was the result of a Graeco-Bactrian influence. So why, then, have we not found more? We perhaps just have to keep in mind the fragility of such niches

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defeated by the Buddha who left his shadow there. This interpretation raises several objections: on the one hand, the absence of what could evoke a rocky setting; on the other hand, as Tarzi points out, it is legitimate to ask whether it was necessary to illustrate a scene when the faithful had the possibility of visiting the place. On this subject, see Mostamindi 1969 and Tarzi, 1991: 166. Unfortunately, more than half of the characters in this scene are missing, so it is not possible to identify clearly the legendary episode depicted.



decorated in high relief. They might have existed in large numbers, but have not survived the passage of time. We can only hope that future discoveries will help to answer these questions. Let us go back to the composition of niche XIII in a more general way. To our knowledge, there are no parallels for three-dimensional representations populated by statues in-the-round from the same period and geographic area. The caves of Mogao at Dunhuang, discovered by Sir Aurel Stein (Stein 1912) and dated to the fourth century AD, have undoubtedly been inspired by this type of three-dimensional representation. Numerous artistic influences travelled from Bactria to the Central Asian regions, and Stein very early established a parallel between the stucco-work of Qarachahr (the Black City) in Xinjiang and the stucco-work of Haḍḍa, which deserved to be examined more closely.

Let us consider an enigmatic iconographic choice: the unfinished painted representation of the Conversion of Aṅgulimāla, discovered by Barthoux. Vihāra 56 of Bāgh Gai, containing *stūpa* B55 and dating to TSh V/TSh VI (second half of the fourth century AD until beginning of the fifth century AD), was entirely decorated with paintings and modelled sculptures, from the retaining walls to the enclosure and from the inside to the outside. Its iconography is dedicated to the *mokṣa* ceremony, a ritual of giving and redemption during which the king, the prince, or the noble donates all of his wealth before redeeming everything by prayer. On the exterior facade, the spaces between the pilasters were painted. The first bore a sketch of the Conversion of Aṅgulimāla, literally ‘wreath of fingers’ or ‘necklace of fingers’. We do not have any photography, but fortunately a drawing by Barthoux exists (Figure 10).

Tradition presents Aṅgulimāla as being inclined to violence. In his previous life, he was a man-eating *yakṣa* and in the ones before, he was mostly characterized by his strength and lack of compassion. This highwayman killed travellers and mutilated their bodies, keeping their fingers mounted in a necklace as a trophy. When the numbers of his victims reached 999, the inhabitants of the region, in revolt, asked the king of Kośala for the death of Aṅgulimāla. While his own mother was trying to save his life, he conceived the idea of making her his thousandth victim. Thanks to his omniscience, the Buddha became aware of his intention and went to the scene. As soon as he appeared, Aṅgulimāla tried to kill the



Figure 10. Unfinished painted representation of the Conversion of Aṅgulimāla. Exterior facade of Vihāra 56 at Bāgh Gai. (Drawing by Barthoux 1933: fig. 142.)

Buddha. A pursuit and a verbal battle ensued, from which the Buddha came out victorious. Confused, Aṅgulimāla embraced the *Dharma* and joined the community. He was then called Ahimsaha, the non-violent, and quickly reached awakening despite his heavy karmic charge.

In this sketch drawn in red ochre, the Buddha in motion stands at the centre of the scene. Aṅgulimāla, wearing a simple *dhotī*, is ready for the attack, his left hand raised and the right hand firmly clutching his sword. As often, this episode is represented through the process of continuous storytelling. At his feet, the same Aṅgulimāla prostrates himself after his conversion. His mother stands on the far left, her arm raised as if to stop the murderous gesture. Vajrapāṇi is represented standing behind the Buddha, the *vajra* leaning on his shoulder. At his feet, a haloed figure kneels in *anjālimudrā* towards a *Buddha* seated in meditation on a throne, probably Aṅgulimāla once again, after he joined the *Samgha*. Figures are lean, their graceful attitudes are tilted. The proportions and physiognomy are faithfully rendered, the body of Aṅgulimāla carried forward, leaning on one leg, and the torsion of Vajrapāṇi are delicately represented.

Barthoux writes that the location of the wreath of fingers was indicated by painted dots. He emphasizes the skill of the artist who realized this drawing with a confident and fast hand, without retouching or resumption of work. The sketching stage was probably intended to represent proportions and positions effectively. In a second version of the scene the protagonists would have been dressed. Unfortunately in this case, the work was never finished (Barthoux 1933: 163-164).

Let us finally ask ourselves about the symbolic significance of the decoration of *Vihāra* 56. It is necessary to wonder about the iconographic choice of the Conversion of Aṅgulimāla, which is enigmatic to say the least. How should we understand the symbolic association of these two themes, the *mokṣa* ceremony and the conversion of a murderer saved by the Buddha? Because of the extreme nature of this conversion, at the height of Aṅgulimāla's violence, it would be ambitious to imagine that this episode could have had a particular renown for a powerful family of kings or princes. And yet... maybe they did compare themselves with Aṅgulimāla. Indeed, who can deny this down-to-earth and very human observation: after all, if the worst of criminals can attain awakening, why not me? A fortiori, why not a king, having committed some slight misdemeanours, perhaps responsible for a few murders, certainly unfortunate, but inherent to his function? Anyhow, the choice of this scene is quite original.

Further examples of painted scenes unfold in the cave A (Figure 11). Situated next to the watertank of Tapa-e Shotor, discovered and studied by Tarzi (Tarzi 1976), its construction dates back to TSh IV (second half of the third century AD). The painting was executed around TSh VI, during a repair following a collapse. It was located in a vaulted gallery 9.60 m long by 2.85 m wide and 2.20 m high. The lower part of the room was decorated with drapes of alternating colors surmounted by a vegetal frieze made of leaves and fruits to which were suspended pairs of phalluses.<sup>8</sup> Ten monks were depicted in the upper part of the walls, dressed in *saṃghātī* and seated in meditation, each under a tree and on a flower bed, their names written in *brahmi*. Flames were bursting from the shoulders of eight of them.

The wall facing the entrance was occupied by a skeleton standing within a black frame, between two monks, Śariputra and Maudgalyāyana. According to Tarzi, this cave was most likely a place of meditation where the monks came to ponder the cycle of life and death. The scene depicts the Protecting Monks of the Law, ten great saints of Buddhism. According to literary tradition, these *arhats* were direct followers of the Buddha and the Protectors of the Law after his *Mahāparinirvāṇa*. Depending on various sources their number and names vary, but the personalities common to these different 'lists' are those of Mahākāśyapa, Ananda, and Rahula, the son of Śakyamuni.

<sup>8</sup> Note that several scenes of 'bacchanalia' were found in Haḍḍa. Like the motif of the phallus, surprising in our context, or the cornucopia held by Hārīti, they are supposed to reinforce the dimension of fertile renewal. Nevertheless, it is difficult to understand their presence in this place. This iconographical point remains to be clarified.



Figure 11. Tapa-e Shotor, Cave A. (Photo: after Tarzi 1991, unnumbered fig.)

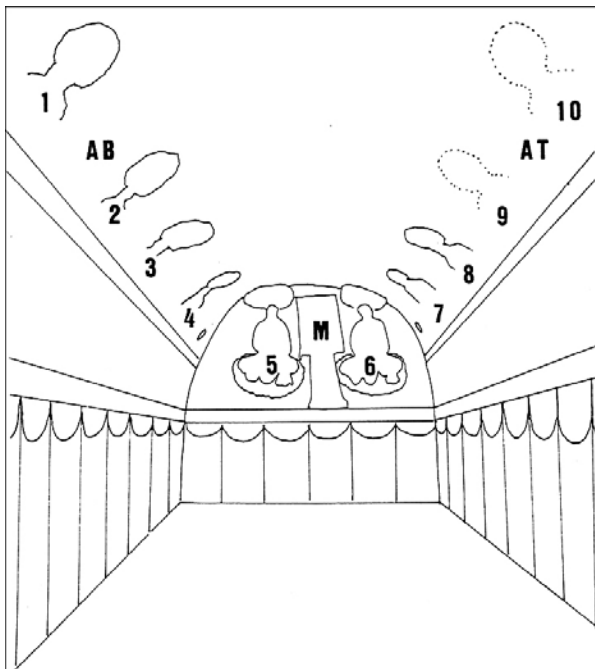


Figure 12. Drawing of Cave A. (After Tarzi 1988.)

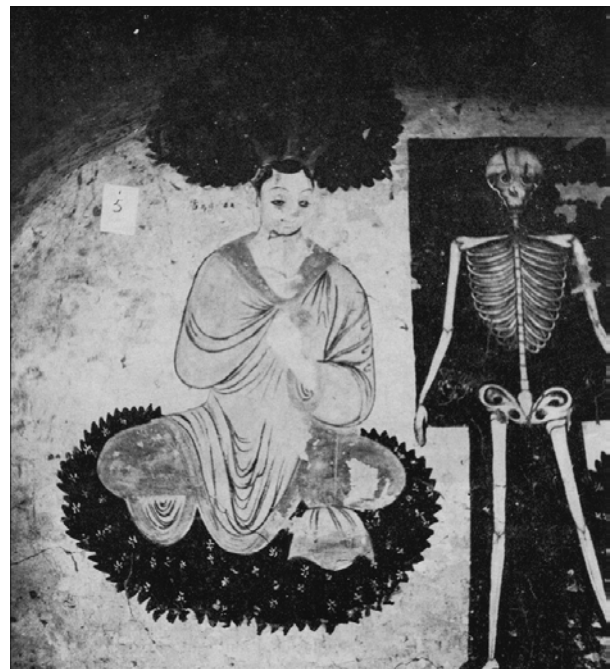


Figure 13. Tapa-e Shotor, Cave A. (After Tarzi 1976: fig. 21.)

In his article on the subject, Greene questions the identification as a meditation hall. He notes that according to Sarvāstivādin treatises, the *aśubha bhāvanā*, the contemplation of foulness and impurity, regardless of how it was practised, did not necessarily take place in a meditation hall (Greene 2013: 268). He adds that according to the *Mūlasārvastivāda-vinaya*, skeleton representations were not reserved to

meditation places but appeared in other type of rooms, notably toilets and monastic living quarters, and he put forward the hypothesis of a usual figure to inspire dispassion. He further notes that in cave A, Śariputra and Maudgalyāyana are not in *dhyānamudrā* but in *dharmacakramudrā*. It seems like they are not meditating about the skeleton, but discoursing about him. He advances the possibility of a Cloister of Impermanence, a room which could have housed deathbed ritual practice, and puts forward an argument concerning the flames burning from the shoulders of the great saints. He relates these to the concept of *tejodhātu samādhi*, the ability of *arhats* to end their lives and enter *mahāparinirvāna* in a self-generated fireball (Greene 2013: 291). Thus, this room decorated with the Great Monks entering *mahāparinirvāna* could have been the accompaniment for dying monks in their final contemplation. As Greene concludes, one function does not exclude the other.<sup>9</sup>

We notice immediately that the representation of the skeleton is quite approximate: the anatomy is doubtful, especially in terms of the proportions of the bones, with the skull, pelvis, and joints (Figure 13). But the virtuosity is exhibited better in the faces of the monks. Tarzi makes various observations about the technique: first, the drawing was sketched in red ochre, then the artist applied solid colors that he diluted to create shades, and finally he completed it through the addition of black touches (Tarzi 1991: 223).

Between Monks 1 and 2 was a scene depicting the Adoration of the Buddha's *Pātra* (AB on Tarzi's drawing, Figure 12). We know the importance of the bowl, which symbolizes the basis of the *dharma*.<sup>10</sup> The *pātra* was decorated with four incisions at its neck, reminiscent of the Offering of the *Cāturmahārājika*, and contained a reddish protruding element, identified as flowers by Tarzi (Tarzi 1991: 225). The *pātra* was flanked by two banners ending in curious winged disks and decorated with flying ribbons. At least three characters were represented on each side of the bowl, under this banner. The best preserved is a man painted in profile, of which only the face remains. He is moustached, and a large tonsure leaves the top of his head bare. From the presence of the other characters, the scene could probably be identified as the representation of the presentation ceremony of the 'true' Buddha's *pātra*, as reported by Xuanzang.

Symmetrically, between monks 9 and 10, was the scene of the Adoration of the Turban (AT on the drawing of Tarzi, Figure 12), which we can put in parallel with the representation of the Renunciation that we saw previously, itself focused on the Turban. A fragment depicts three female devotees, coming to pay homage to the Turban, which consisted of a huge winged crown adorned with beaded crescents (Tarzi 1991: 227). Represented in profile, they all had large almond-shaped eyes, and prominent noses. They were wearing long red dresses, and their curly black hair was coiffed in such a way that ringlets framed their faces, leaving the ears visible, a hairstyle often found on Haḍḍa's female donors. A diadem of white pearls was placed on their hair and they were also wearing large red earrings and necklaces. It may be noted that the style of these figures is quite different from that of the monks and donors, and more reminiscent of artistic influence from painting of the Hellenized East.

It is unfortunately difficult to apprehend painted works, as they are under-represented, often unfinished, and poorly preserved. As it in the case of modelling, we can observe several styles and influences mixed in the scenes. In Cave A, monks and donors seem to reproduce a local or Indian type, female donors echo Graeco-Oriental painting, and the guardian deity can be compared to the paintings of Bāmiyān and those of Xinjiang, Mirān, and Bezekli in the region of Turfan and Kucha. Michael Rostovtzeff noted that the painting technique of Haḍḍa was similar to the one used in

<sup>9</sup> See further Greene 2013: 293.

<sup>10</sup> According to Chinese testimonies, the Buddha's *pātra* was exhibited in Puruṣapura. At the time of Xuanzang's passage, it had disappeared, taken to Persia by a Ta-Yuezhi king. According to Kuwayama, the establishment of the *pātra* in Gandhāra by the Kushan is perhaps the *raison d'être* of Buddhism in this region. It had become the symbol of the *Dharma*. Because of its imperishable character, it represents the basis of the Law that will be transmitted to the future (Kuwayama 1990: 963).



Figure 14. Symbolism of Atlas-like figures: Tapa-e Shotor, Stūpa 26; Tapa Kalān, Stūpa 95 (Photo: Barthoux from personal photographic archive of Z. Tarzi.)

Palmyra and Dura Europos (Rostovtzeff 1935: 242; 1938). According to him, these works could thus be dated from the period of the last Parthians or the first Sasanids. Hellenistic influence through the Parthians seems a possible origin. However, India also had its specific schools of painting. On this subject, everything remains to be determined.

Finally, I should like to introduce some considerations about the symbolism of Haḍḍa's monastic decoration, and the emergence of what I propose to consider as 'symbolic' or 'atmosphere' scenes.

I have hazarded an hypothesis about the representation of the warriors of Māra's army in the form of Atlas-like figures on stūpas (Figure 14). From the *Lalitavistara* sūtra passage describing the fight between the God of Pleasure and the Buddha, we know that cohorts of 'sons' of Māra, his warriors demons, successively submitted to the power of Śakyamuni. In this context, the representation of Māra's army on stūpas, in the form of Atlas-like figures, does not seem to me innocuous and purely decorative. Their situation of submission in the architectural role of support element for the stūpa, itself decorated to the glory of the Buddha with reliefs celebrating his life, or with the multiplication of his images, could symbolically recall the victory of the *Buddha* over these armies, and so the Enlightenment episode.

Ancient texts commonly refer to different metaphorical notions, all rather vague, such as Buddha's Lands, Buddha's Fields (*Buddhakṣetra*) and Worlds of Bodhisattva (*Bodhisattvabhūmi*), in which are integrated series of 'successions of Buddhas', the thousand Buddhas, or the seven Buddhas of the past, whose lists differ slightly according to different monastic schools (Kapani 1980: 264; Lamotte 1976: 759, 693; Robert 1990: 121; Baums, Glass & Matsuda 2016). These conceptual places and lists are part of a vertical Buddhist cosmology, giving rise to a very complex staged deployment of 'heavens' and 'worlds'. These notions exist from the beginning in the decoration of Buddhist monasteries, as evidenced by the representation of heavens observed in Sanchi (Marshall 1960: 13, pl. 7, fig. 9).

Considering the exuberance of the decoration of Haḍḍa, these descriptions find an echo in the multiplication and superposition of statues (Figure 15). Almost all the public parts of monasteries, stūpas, caityas, enclosures and niches, were decorated with Buddhas, bodhisattvas, devas, worshippers, and 'geniuses'. During the late repairs, artists added benches populated with large standing statues, sometimes elbow to shoulder, and did not hesitate to slip smaller Buddhas in meditation between two statues.



Figure 15. Buddha's Fields. Tapa Kalān, Stūpa 116 bis. (Photo: Barthoux from personal photographic archive of Z. Tarzi.)



Figure 16. Buddhist Heavens. Tapa-i Kafarihā, Gallery 45. (Photo: Barthoux from personal photographic archive of Z. Tarzi.)

Some instances of re-use show that, if necessary, artists did not hesitate to break a piece of modelling to place a figure elsewhere, in a more confined space (Figure 16). This artistic 'horror vacui' betrayed by such juxtaposition of figures appears to be a desire to represent symbolically the Buddhist cosmology. It seems that the decoration of the *saṅghārāma* considered as a whole, could thus be perceived as an atmosphere scene, which is not narrative but symbolic: here are Buddhist heavens, bodhisattva's worlds and Buddha's fields, sheltering *stūpas* in a kind of cosmological 'mise en abîme'.

We know Haḍḍa's monasteries were occupied by the *theravāda* Sarvāstivādin sect. Could we consider that its decoration attests to an evolution towards a *mahāyānist* iconography? The manuscripts of Bajaur (Khan & Khab 2004; see also Strauch 2008; 2009; 2010) revolutionized our ideas about the two great schools of Buddhism, for a long time considered opposite and incompatible. Indeed, in the Bajaur library, *theravāda* and *mahāyāna* documents existed side by side (Fussman, course in Collège de France, June 7, 2011).

The profusion of images refers to late speculations with their source in the development of the *mahāyāna* concept of *rasa*: the ‘aesthetic feeling’ capable of interrupting the *samsāra* cycle of the observer, throughout the duration of the aesthetic emotion.<sup>11</sup> As we saw in Haḍḍa, devotees were immersed in the Buddhist universe, no matter where they laid their eyes. If we refer to the concept of *rasa*, the more images there were, the longer the contemplation and interruption of the *samsāra*.

Nevertheless, I consider that the art of Haḍḍa is far from being repetitive and idolatrous, and that the narrative tendency does not disappear and is not replaced but, on the contrary, coexists with these ‘atmosphere scenes’, as attested by the narrative decoration of niche XIII, dated to TSh V, and the fresco of the Conversion of Aṅgulimāla of *Vihāra* B56, dated to TSH V/TSh VI. Thus, despite the repetition of the figures, one cannot speak of a radical transformation of sacred language, of a passage from a narrative art to an iconic decoration, since even later on, the art of Haḍḍa retains a narrative tendency, although it is expressed in a different representational mode from that of the schist sculpture of Gandhāra, a logical consequence of the generalization of stucco.

So many questions remain surrounding the issues of dating, Graeco-Roman influence, and ancient workshop operation. The work of Mostamindi, then Tarzi, established the chronology of Tapa-e Shotor and Tapa Tope Kalān. Unfortunately, Barthoux did not share his observations on stratigraphy.<sup>12</sup> The absence of these data prevents us from more clearly apprehending the different stages of construction, and establishing the dating of modelling from the monasteries he excavated. An alternative approach could be an aesthetic study, based on stylistic analogies, but this type of approach is always perilous. Our lack of knowledge concerning ancient workshops makes this solution complicated, since it is problematic for now to match a particular work to a specific workshop. Furthermore, idealized and realistic works that seem diametrically opposed to each other were often created side by side, while studies have shown that they could come from the same workshop and period (Tarzi 1991: 25).

<sup>11</sup> Note however that it is probably the multiplication of images that inspired the development of this concept and not the opposite. On this subject, see Bussagli 1996: 192.

<sup>12</sup> Circumstances led Barthoux to leave his work unfinished. At the time of the sharing of the finds, specified in the agreement signed in 1922 between France and Afghanistan, a large number of objects, about 90% stucco, was sent from the Kabul Museum to the Guimet Museum. Disagreements arose with Hackin, then chief curator of the Guimet Museum. Hostility grew among them until Hackin tried to keep Barthoux away from the objects he had discovered, by sending hundreds of stucco statues to museums around the world, deposited by ministerial order. An abbreviated list of these deposits is below:

- September 1934 : letter of thanks from the Director of the Istanbul Antiquities Museum for receiving four small stucco heads from the Barthoux excavations at Haḍḍa.

- 1935, order of 23 May, 25 stucco objects from the Barthoux excavations at the Royal Museums of Belgium are placed in storage.

- 1935, order of May 23, deposit of 20 stucco objects from the Barthoux excavations at the British Museum.

- 1935, decree of 23 May, deposit of 20 objects in the Musée du Grand-Ducal du Luxembourg.

- 1935, order of May 23, deposit of 20 stucco objects at the Yale Museum.

- 1935, June letter of thanks from the interim director to Hackin for the receipt by the Istanbul Museum of Antiquities of 7 stuccoes to complete the series already acquired.

- 1936, order of 17 January, 20 objects, most of them in stucco, were placed in storage at the Stockholm National Museum.

- 1936, order of January 17, 20 stucco and limestone objects deposited at the Nelson Gallery of Art in Kansas City.

- 1936, order of 17 January, 20 stucco and schist objects were placed in the Hermitage Museum.

- 1937, order of February 1st, removed from the Guimet Museum for the legation of Iran of 16 terracotta (actually stucco) and 2 schist sculptures.

- 1939, order of August 1st, 10 stucco objects placed in storage at the Buffalo Museum.

- 1939, order of November 28, deposit, without date limit, at the Buddhist Institute of Phnom Penh (Karpelès) of 13 objects including 12 in stucco.

- 1939, order of 28 November, 20 objects, most of them in stucco, were placed in storage at the Museum of the Thai-Thailand. Discouraged, Barthoux never wished to return the photographic album which illustrated the volume on *stūpas*, nor the text corresponding to the album of figures and figurines. On this subject, see Tarzi 1996. A *récolement* (collection audit) file was created thanks to the important photographic background collected by Pierre Cambon in 1994. None of the items on deposit had a Guimet Museum inventory number. They were sent with a handwritten red label glued to the back with the part number, in accordance with the ministerial order and its measures. Activity Reports of the Guimet Museum (available on their website <<http://www.guimet.fr/collections/documentation/rapports-dactivite/>>, last accessed 3rd March 2019) recount the progress of the *récolement* missions.

It appears that artists of Haḍḍa wanted to affect the lay faithful, marking their imagination with transcendent images of faith, and subjugating them with new and original representations. In addition to their talent and verve, they had a perfect knowledge of classical themes that led to creation of masterpieces. This vigorous Graeco-Roman heritage in Haḍḍa's monastic art could be explained by the existence of numerous Graeco-Bactrian workshops capable of transmitting a solid and lively Greek tradition, as supported by several bits of evidence, particularly Greek inscriptions testifying to a living Greek-speaking community and the presence and establishment of Greeks in Bactria (Bernard & Rougemont 2005: 134). Based on the similarity between Tapa-e Shotor and Sahrī-Bāhlol, Tarzi considers that the great activity of modellers can only correspond to a period of political stability and economic prosperity, allowing exchanges between workshops (Tarzi 1991).

Francine Tissot has written about this perspective. According to her, permanent demand drew artists to settle in Gandhāra for more than five centuries. We can assume that, in contact with travellers and travelling artists from India, China, or the West, Gandhāran artists remained aware of fashions, foreign models, and new techniques. Masters appeared among them, creating prototypes admired and reproduced, no doubt increasing the fame of some workshops. The number of monasteries and the incessant passage of pilgrims certainly led to a multiplication of workshops, which had to settle in the valleys and spread, consequently working on their own. Adding to this Greek heritage, it can be argued that there were later waves of Roman artistic influences, especially via art-objects and the circulation of coins. It is not easy to understand the vehicles of transmission. I agree with Tissot's view that we have to imagine a complete system, with patronage, projects, coordinated artists, and teams. The first works of art commissioned by the monks were probably subject to strict requirements. Then Gandhāran artists found inspiration in everyday life, that they combined with the exigency of the canonical narrative to create new reliefs, and other modes of composition (Tissot 2002). We have mentioned several times the similarities between the artistic production of Haḍḍa and Taxila. Should we consider that there might have been a special link between these two workshops, ignoring the intermediate school of arts situated along the way? If so, what could have been the form taken by these direct contacts? Perhaps exchanges of models, masks, and objects, perhaps even exchanges of artists and masters? Only a thorough comparative iconographic and stylistic study will allow us to judge.

In conclusion, we can assert that the vigour and autonomy of Haḍḍa's art is sufficient to explain its influence, which can be followed from Kapiṣa to Chinese Central Asia, through Bactria and Bāmiyān (Vanleene 2012: 285). These links, however, remain very imprecise. It is undeniable that a better understanding of stucco Buddhist statuary, a significant part of the varied identity of Gandhāran culture, would allow the more complete comprehension of Gandhāran art. Thanks to crosscutting studies and scientific exchange, and through working groups, we have the possibility to discuss and develop ways that could be put in place to facilitate multi-disciplinary research, in order to clarify these questions. What means could be put in place in order to help and improve fundamental archaeological research? I believe that a first step should be the establishment of archaeological databases, which would provide support for the examination of artistic influences and iconographic themes, and facilitate access to scientific data for researchers and students. The provision of all scientific data, for some unpublished, or difficult to access, would contribute to providing rich documentation and would allow authentication of new fundamental knowledge concerning the art of Gandhāra and its related problems. The transmission of all this valuable knowledge will allow a better understanding of the relationships and chronology of art production in the different regions of Gandhāra and can serve as a basis for more extensive comparative studies. In that respect, the establishment of a database of the archaeological material of Haḍḍa has been the focus of my work in recent years.



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**Part 3**  
**Geography and Text**



# A survey of place-names in Gāndhārī inscriptions and a new oil lamp from Malakand

Stefan Baums

## Introduction

Gāndhārī inscriptions were produced over a vast geographic range, stretching from Bamiyan in the west to Luoyang in the east, and from Mathura in the south to Kucha in the north.<sup>1</sup> Their chronological range is the third century BC until approximately the fourth century AD. A total of 1,163 published Gāndhārī inscriptions are documented in Baums & Glass 2002b.<sup>2</sup> Some of these are pottery fragments (such as those from Termiz) that can be reassembled, and others are parts of larger sets produced on the same occasion (such as the Aśokan edicts at Shahbazgarhi and Mansehra), so the total number of Gāndhārī inscriptions in the narrower sense of ‘distinct object bearing one or more texts’ is closer to one thousand. For approximately three hundred of them, their findspots remain unknown as they were unearthed in illicit diggings and reached their current collections and the desks of scholars through the art market. Unfortunately, this is especially true for inscriptions from the heartland of Gandhāra in the Peshawar valley and more broadly Pakistan and Afghanistan, much to the detriment of art-historical research as well as any philological work (such as dialectology) requiring precise geographic information.

The same problem afflicts the numerous Gāndhārī manuscripts that have come to light in recent years, and to an even greater extent. In theory, geographic information from inscriptions could be correlated with that from manuscript finds; in practice, the lack of documentation makes this impossible, and all one can do is group inscriptions and manuscripts among themselves and with each other using material evidence in the form of the writing support, palaeographic and orthographic observations, and especially the place-names that are mentioned in many donative inscriptions. The present article will provide a survey of the geographical information given in the inscriptions themselves, then discuss three previously unpublished Gāndhārī inscriptions with interesting place-names, and conclude with an addendum to my article on the chronology of Gandhāran inscriptions published in the proceedings of the first Gandhāra Connections workshop (Baums 2018a).

## Survey

The two sets of Aśokan rock edicts at Shahbazgarhi (CKI 1-14) and Mansehra (CKI 15-28) provide our first epigraphic witnesses for place-names in ancient Gandhāra. As the texts of these inscriptions are essentially identical, however, with the parallel versions from mainland India, and as they were ultimately composed at the court of Aśoka in Pāṭaliputra, their vantage point is eastern Indian rather than Gandhāran. The names of people and regions mentioned as recipients of Aśoka’s instruction thus include the Gaṃdhara themselves, as well as the Yona (Greeks, or more broadly western foreigners) and Kaṃboya<sup>3</sup> (Bactrians) from the northwest; the Nabhaka and Nabhapaṃti from the north; the Raṭhiga, Pitiniga and Bhoja from the west; the Kaliṃga from the East; the Keraḍa from the southwest; the Aṃdhra and Paliṃda from the southeast; the Coḍa and Paṃḍiya from the far south; and the Taṃbapaṃniya on Sri Lanka. The only group mentioned in Aśoka’s list that has resisted clear identification with one of the

<sup>1</sup> A single Gāndhārī inscription was even found as far afield as the island of Socotra off the coast of Yemen: the graffito of a merchant traveller leaving his name for posterity (*upal[i]sa*; CKI 595 in Baums & Glass 2002b; Strauch 2012: 205-206).

<sup>2</sup> Henceforth referred to by their ‘CKI’ numbers in that catalogue.

<sup>3</sup> It is possible that the epithet *kamuia-* on the Mathura Lion Capital (CKI 48) is ultimately the same ethnonym.

regions of classical India is the Satiya in CKI 2 and 15. In addition to these, Aśoka mentions Saṃbodhi as the place of the Buddha's birth to which he did pilgrimage. As we move forward in time, the ethnonyms Yona (CKI 405, 455) and Gaṃdhara (CKI 257) are met with again, and joined by the geographical designation Saḡastana – 'dominion of the Scythians' – (CKI 48) on the Mathura Lion Capital.

Two royal houses dominated the mountain regions north of the Peshawar valley in the first century AD and sponsored the production of a large number of inscribed objects (and in all likelihood also Buddhist manuscripts): the Apraca kings and the Oḡi kings (Salomon 2007). Spelling variants of the first name include Apaca, Apraca and Avaca in a total of nine currently known inscriptions (see Baums & Glass 2002: a, under those names), and it is at least likely from their reported findspots that the Apraca kings ruled in Bajaur.<sup>4</sup> The second name is consistently spelled Oḡi (in three inscriptions),<sup>5</sup> and can almost certainly be connected with Sanskrit Uḡḡiyāna, i.e. Swat. A third dynastic name, Kadama, is mentioned in only one inscription (CKI 249), but also occurs in two of the avadāna manuscripts in the British Library Kharoṣṡhī collection (Kadamaga in CKM 14 and Kaḡamaha in CKM 15) as well as in the form *kardamarāja* in the Rājatarāṅgiṅī.

The situation gets more complicated as we turn to the names of cities. Tira, attested in two inscriptions from Swat connected to the Oḡi royal house (CKI 334 and 401), appears to have been the capital or at least a major city of this dynasty. Similarly, Tramana appears to have been the main city of the Apraca royal line and is attested in five inscriptions, all with uncertain findspot, connected with this dynasty (CKI 255, 256, 266, 327, 332). Once (in CKI 256), Tramana is called an *atithaṅaṅagara* which – if indeed corresponding to the Sanskrit *adhiṣṡhānanagara* – would confirm its status as capital (Salomon 2007: 273-275). Three times (CKI 255, 327, 332), Tramana appears in a compound or with a suffix *-(o)s(p)a-*, the precise meaning of which remains unclear.<sup>6</sup>

Another major city just to the east of Gandhāra proper was Taxila, the name of which is amply attested in inscriptions as Takṣaśila (CKI 60, 66, 233), Takhaśila (46, 65, 99), and as the adjective Takṣaīlaa (CKI 68), all of which agree well with the Sanskrit form Takṣaśilā. They collectively contrast, however, with the trisyllabic Greek form of the name, which has been variously explained as a hypocoristic form on Greek linguistic grounds (Schwyzer 1939-60: I 485) or more loosely as a 'curious contraction [that] could perhaps be due to the careless spelling of a foreign name, perhaps already established by the Achaemenids and now adopted in Greek' (Karttunen 1997: 33). These explanations fail to take account of the fact that already on the Mathura Lion Capital (CKI 48), we encounter a trisyllabic form Takṣila referring to an inhabitant of this city. Salomon (2005: 269), in a detailed article devoted to the name of this city, considered the form Takṣaīla (now also attested in several of the Gāndhārī manuscripts) as a 'missing link that justifies an equation between Sanskrit Takṣaśilā and Takṣila of the lion capital.' After duly noting that the latter is not the name of the city itself, but a designation of one of its denizens, he claims that '[t]his adjectival form, presumably pronounced *tākṣila* (compare *tākṣaśila* 'Taxilan', prescribed by Pāṅini 4.3.93), presupposes a *takṣila* or *takṣilā* for the name of the city itself' (Salomon 2005: 270).

The fact remains, however, that in all our Indian sources, the name of the city always consists of four syllables, and I would like to suggest that instead another rule of Pāṅini's grammar (5.3.79) should be invoked that adds the suffix *-ila-* to the first part of a two-member compound in order to express *nīti* 'decorum' or *anukampā* 'compassion' (cf. Wackernagel & Debrunner 1896-1957: II, 2, §231aβ). This would explain how on the basis of the four-syllable compound name of the city Takṣaśilā (weakened but still four-syllable in Gāndhārī Takṣaīla), its inhabitants can be called not just Tākṣaśila, but also Tākṣila (i.e.,

<sup>4</sup> The difficult question of the seat of power of the Apraca rulers is now discussed in detail in Skinner & Rienjang forthcoming.

<sup>5</sup> Compare, however, also the somewhat obscure expressions [sa]haehi pida[pu](\*trehi) [u]ḡīliakehi (CKI 116), *siiharaḡsitaoḡreasva* (CKI 456) and *hoḡreana* (CKI 69).

<sup>6</sup> The place-name Damana on the Sui Vihar copper plate (CKI 147) is probably unrelated.



the first part of the larger compound, Tākṣa-, with the suffix -ila-, though here used as an abbreviatory device rather than in the specific meanings given by Pāṇini). It even seems likely that Tākṣila referred not just to any inhabitant, but to the ruler of the city in particular, in line with the Indian practice by which Aśoka refers to himself simply as Māgadha ‘the Māgadhan’ (a title born in later Buddhist texts by king Bimbisāra). On the Greek side, too, this is supported by the forms Ταξιλος and Ταξιλις referring to the king of Taxila (besides Τάξιλα referring to the city, which would then have to be considered an analogy within Greek). While the ultimate origin of the compound name Takṣaṣilā escapes us, it seems plausible to connect it with the Iranian naming pattern in toponyms such as Samar-kand and Tash-kent, which similarly contain a second member meaning ‘stone’.

Turning to place-names associated with Taxila, Chaḍaśila (CKI 172) clearly shares its second part with the name Takṣaṣila itself, while Cukhsa (CKI 46, 63) was a location close to Taxila. The case is less clear with Avrisara-patha-naara (CKI 109) on a seal that was found at Taxila, but could have been brought there from somewhere else. Similarly, the donor of a reliquary found at Taxila (CKI 60) is called a resident or citizen (*vastava*, Sanskrit *vāstavya*) of a city Ṇoacaa, but may have been visiting Taxila from another location. Falk (2000-01: 32-33) suggested that the word *śirae* in the difficult Taxila inscription CKI 64 (only known from an eye copy) could refer not to the donor (the usual interpretation) but the place at which the donation took place, and could then be connected with the *śeriana vihāra* ‘monastery of the Śeria’ in an inscription from Bagram (CKI 233) as well as with the Taxila toponyms Sir-kap and Sir-sukh.

Other settlements called ‘city’ (*nagara* or *pura*) in the epigraphic corpus include Ari-ṇayara in Swat (CKI 828), Avaśāura at Charsadda (CKI 178) and Kaniṣkapura at Peshawar (CKI 145). Among ‘villages’ (*grāma*), we have Aṭhayi-grama (CKI 257, findspot unknown), Kaṃti-grama and possibly identical Kuti-grama (CKI 243, findspot unknown, and CKI 251, Bajaur) as well as Hida-grama (CKI 139, Swabi). Three further settlements that are not explicitly called ‘city’ or ‘village,’ but that were probably substantial because their inhabitants were called *vāstavya*, ‘residents’, are Obhara (CKI 154, findspot unknown) and Oṇi (CKI 519, traveller’s graffito at Chilas), to which can be added Kaviśi (Sanskrit *Kāpiśi*), ruled by a satrap (referred to in CKI 150 from Manikyala). Gandhāran settlements mentioned without any indication of their significance are Khavada (CKI 159, 509, Wardak), Khudacia (CKI 61, 149, Manikyala), Radana (CKI 219, findspot unknown, and 510, Hadda), Rayagaha (CKI 371, findspot unknown) and Lova (CKI 735).

Avadānas in the British Library collection of Gāndhārī manuscripts also mention a number of cities by name. Some of these occur in stories set in India proper, such as Ujeṇi (Sanskrit *Ujjayinī*) in CKM 5 and Palaḍiputra (Sanskrit *Pāṭaliputra*) in CKM 1, 14 and 18, but we have also (in addition to Taxila, discussed above) mentions of Pokhaladi (Sanskrit *Puṣkalāvati*) in CKM 2 and 14.

As is apparent from the preceding survey, the majority of place-names in the Gāndhārī epigraphic corpus are etymologically obscure, and only a few names can clearly be derived from an Indo-Aryan linguistic base. Among the Indo-Aryan names (such as that of Taxila), we observed different degrees of Sanskritization side by side, which would appear to depend on the individual user and the formality of the context. It is instructive, in this connection, to consider the two different name forms transmitted for the city of Barikot (Bīr-koṭ-ghwaṇḍai) in the classical sources: Curtius Rufus calls the city Beira,<sup>7</sup> while Arrian refers to it as Bazira.<sup>8</sup> The latter form can be interpreted quite straightforwardly as Sanskrit *vajra* ‘thunderbolt’ with superficial epenthetic *i*. The compound name *Vajrakūṭa* ‘Thunderbolt Peak’ is attested not only in a Gāndhārī inscription (CKI 404: *vajrakuḍae ... thubami* ‘at the Thunderbolt-Peak Stūpa), but also as the name of a fabulous city in the story collection *Kathāsaritsāgara* (*vajrakūṭākhyam pṛṣṭhe himavataḥ puram* ‘the city behind the Himalaya called Thunderbolt Peak’) and in the modern place-

<sup>7</sup> *Coenon in obsidione urbis opulentae - Beira incolae vocant - reliquit* (Curtius Rufus, *Historiae* [ed. Koch] 8.10.22).

<sup>8</sup> Ἐνθὲν δὲ Κοῖνον μὲν ὡς ἐπὶ Βάζιρα ἐκπέμπει (*Anabasis* [ed. Wirth/von Hinüber] 4.27.5). I thank Luca Olivieri for raising this question and discussing the names of Barikot with me.

name Bajrakot in Orissa (Salomon 2000: 64-65).<sup>9</sup> The former form, Curtius' Beira, has, however, so far remained obscure. I would like to suggest that it reflects a vernacular, Middle Indo-Aryan pronunciation of the same place-name. As written, we would expect Beira to be based on a Greek spelling \*Βεῖρα with a pronunciation [vejira]. This then corresponds quite precisely to the Gāndhārī form of the word, spelt *vayira* in CKI 249 and 367, *vāira* in CKI 367, and likewise pronounced [vejirə]. In other words, the sources of Curtius Rufus on the one hand and of Ptolemy on the other appear to have ultimately drawn from two different sociolinguistic levels among their Indian informants (one using the vernacular, the other Sanskrit) when eliciting the name of the city of Barikot.

### A Buddha statue and halo from Daḍioseā

Our treasury of Gāndhārī place-names is enriched by the recent discovery of three new dedicatory inscriptions related to *stūpas*. Two of these inscriptions, on textual evidence, hail from the same findspot. A fully annotated edition and discussion on the background of the genre of Gandhāran image inscriptions is provided in Baums, forthcoming. Here only the basic facts of this pair of inscriptions and the place-name they contain are introduced.

The Brooklyn Museum houses, under the accession number 67.200.3, a small schist Buddha statue with missing head that was acquired as a gift from Arthur Wiesenberger in 1967. Its pedestal bears a short donative inscription (CKI 441) that I read and translate as follows:

*da[ḍ]io[sea]mi thubami budharakṣīdasa danamukhe*

(Donation of Budharakṣīda to [or at] the *stūpa daḍioseami*.)

The National Museum in New Delhi preserves, under the accession number 59.295, a small detached halo that was acquired from Indian Art Palace, New Delhi, in 1959. Around the upper part of its rim runs an inscription that I read and translate as follows:

*daḍio[sea]mi thubami [dhra](\*)i[la]sa [ṣama]nasa danamukh[a ]*

(Donation of the monk Dhramila to [or at] the *stūpa daḍioseami*.)

The sizes of these two pieces of sculpture do not appear to match, and we do not know of any case in Gandhāran sculpture where a single statue bears two different dedicatory inscriptions by two different donors. It therefore seems clear that both fragmentary pieces belonged to two separate, differently-sized statues installed by two different donors at the same unknown *stūpa*. The fact that they were acquired by their current holding institutions around the same time further supports the idea that they formed part of the same discovery.

The first word in both inscriptions identifies the *stūpa*. In general (see Baums, forthcoming for a detailed survey), *stūpas* in Gandhāra can bear names referring to their appearance or function, they can be named after their founder, or they can be specified with reference to the town or monastery in which they are located. In the above two inscriptions, the word *daḍioseami* is clearly not the name of a person, nor does it seem descriptive on the basis of Indo-Aryan vocabulary, nor does it contain a word for monastery (such as *vihāra*). By this process of elimination, it seems likely therefore that here we have to do with the place in which the *stūpa* was situated, and should translate as 'the Daḍioseā *stūpa*' or, equivalently, 'the *stūpa* in Daḍioseā'.

<sup>9</sup> In view of these parallels, it even seems plausible to interpret the -kot of Barikot (or -koṭ- of Bīr-koṭ-ghwaṇḍai) as a reflex of *kūṭa* 'peak.'

### A heart-shaped lamp from Malakand

The third new epigraphic discovery presented here is on a heart-shaped vessel of dark stone, apparently an oil lamp, without (or with missing) lid (Figures 1-7).<sup>10</sup> According to its current owner, the lamp was found in the village ‘Kharki’ (see below) in Malakand District of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. No precise measurements are available, but judging from the photographs, the object is approximately 12 cm in diameter and approximately 5 cm high, tapering slightly from top to bottom. The inscription begins and ends at the tip of the heart, running around the side of the lamp in counterclockwise direction when seen from above. The letters are deeply engraved and clear, measuring approximately 3 cm in height. Palaeographically, they are unremarkable; only the vowel mark *e* on the final *akṣara* is attached with a slight flourish. No *anusvāras* or footmarks are used, and the sign *ṇ* represents the coronal nasal. The shape of the *s*, written with a single line but maintaining a distinct, open head, allows a very rough dating to the middle period of Kharoṣṭhī palaeography (first century BC to first century AD).

My reading and translation of the inscription are as follows:

*aiḍami ghama[th]ubami K[a]ḍuasa daṇamukh[e]*

(Donation of Kaḍua at the Village Stūpa *aiḍami*.)

This reminds one immediately of another lamp inscription from Malakand district published in Chhabra 1935-36 (CKI 175):

*thuvami danamukhe gramathuvami Sagarakṣidasa danamukhe*

(Donation at the *stūpa*. Donation of Sagarakṣida at the Village Stūpa.)

The measurements given by Chhabra for his lamp (1.6 inches high, 4 inches in diameter) are almost identical to the ones I estimated for the heart-shaped lamp. The shape of Chhabra’s lamp is also pointed on one side, but it is not clear from his illustrations whether the opposite side was indented to form a proper heart. Like the heart-shaped lamp, Chhabra’s lamp is made from a dark stone. Finally, the location and direction of the inscription are identical with that on the heart-shaped lamp, starting at the pointed end and running around the side anti-clockwise. All this makes it likely that both lamps were produced in the same local tradition, and possibly in the same workshop, for deposit at the same *stūpa*. To clinch the argument, Chhabra reported the findspot of his lamp as ‘a place near Dargai in the Malakand Agency’. Now as it turns out, a village called Kharkai (خرکئی), apparently the same as the heart-shaped lamp’s ‘Kharki’) borders immediately to the north on the village Dargai, so even the reported findspots of both lamps may be identical.

The spelling *gramathuvami* on Chhabra’s lamp confirms the interpretation of *ghama[th]ubami* on the heart-shaped lamp as ‘Village Stūpa’. Chhabra (1935-36: 389, n. 9) expressed doubt whether this term simply meant ‘*stūpa* in the village’ or had acquired the value of a proper name. Ultimately, this cannot be decided, but the reoccurrence of the name in the new inscription makes it somewhat more likely that Village Stūpa was a proper name (just as Mahāthūpa ‘Great Stūpa’ had become the proper name of the structure in Anurādhapura (cf. also *mahathuba* in CKI 334). The name of the donor, Kaūḍa, appears to be local, or at any rate not Indo-Aryan. In contrast to the donor of Chhabra’s lamp, the donor of the heart-shaped lamp does not appear to have been a monastic.

<sup>10</sup> I am grateful to Osmund Bopearachchi for sending me images of this object on 28 November 2018 and providing further details on 5 December 2018.



Figures 1-7. Heart-shaped oil-lamp reportedly found in Malakand District, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province. Top view and side views of inscription. (Photos: courtesy of O. Bopearachchi.)

We are left with the enigmatic first word of the inscription, *aüḍami*. As in the case of the two sculptural pieces discussed above, this could *prima facie* either be a descriptive term or alternatively the ancient name of the place in which the *stūpa* was located. One is reminded of the descriptive *stūpa* name *Ekaüḍa* ‘One-Peak’ in the Senavarma inscription (CKI 249) as well as of the *stūpa* name *Vajrakuḍa* ‘Thunderbolt Peak’ (CKI 404, mentioned above). It would be strange, however, if the present *stūpa* was accordingly called ‘No-Peak,’ elevation being such an important characteristic of any *stūpa*. It therefore seems preferable, at least for the time being, to take *Aüḍa*, like *Daḍiosea*, as a place-name.

The story has not quite run its course, however, since the same name – whatever its meaning – also occurs in another recently discovered lamp inscription from *Dargai*, i.e., from almost exactly the same findspot as the *Chhabra* and heart-shaped lamps (CKI 465; Falk 2006: 406-410). This third lamp is oversized, at 13 cm high and 46-47 cm in diameter, and has a handle attached at the back. It is pointed on one side, but not indented on the opposite side, with adornment around the rim and a lotus rosette on the handle. In this case, the inscription is not on the side of the lamp, but on the upper side of the part of the rim near the handle. Falk reads:

*aya divhaliya aüḍiyami dhamaraiṇa malaśpaṇa*

He concedes that several of the words remain unclear. The beginning of the inscription, *aya divhaliya*, does seem to mean ‘this lamp,’ and *dhamaraiṇa* does appear to be a reference to a *Dharmarājika Stūpa*,

or (as Falk surmises) to monastics coming from such a *stūpa*. Whether a *stūpa* in Dargai or elsewhere is meant, the preceding word *āḍiyami* will again provide a further specification of the place in Dargai where the donation is made. It appears to be a suffixed form of *āḍa-* in the heart-shaped lamp, and is probably best interpreted as an adjective. While the heart-shaped lamp then speaks of the ‘Village Stūpa in Aūḍa,’ the oversized lamp most likely indicates a donation ‘at the X of Aūḍa,’ and it is quite likely that here too the word *thuba-* ‘*stūpa*’ is implied. If this interpretation as well as Falk’s surmise is correct, we may in the case of the oversize lamp be dealing with a donation by monks coming from one *stūpa* made while visiting another *stūpa*, and thus precious evidence for transregional exchange among Gandhāran Buddhist centers.

## Conclusion

As I hope the preceding discussion of new epigraphic finds from Gandhāra has shown, the place-names given in Gandhāran inscriptions are invaluable for connecting disparate and undocumented finds of inscribed artwork with each other. In those cases where at least one of the pieces does come from a known location, the others can then also be placed on a map, and the entire ensemble – as was the case with the three oil lamps from Dargai and Kharkai in Malakand – may begin to tell a larger story of local and translocal Buddhist practice. Even in those cases where a shared name links several pieces whose findspot remains unknown – such as the Buddha image and halo from Daḍiosea – the pieces can shine light on each other’s role in life, and the possibility always remains that one day, they are joined by a further, documented find definitively locating them, too, and filling another blank spot on our map of ancient Gandhāra.

## Addendum to Gandhāran chronology

One recently published item can be added to my framework for Gandhāran chronology based on relic inscriptions, published in the proceedings of the first Gandhāra Connections workshop (Baums 2018a). This is a fragmentary inscribed reliquary slab (CKI 558) that reads as follows (Strauch 2009: 213-215 with minor adjustments):

1. saṃvatsara[y](\*)e ///
2. ayasa vutraka///(\*lasa)
3. tha[va]re kurea ///
4. ṭhe śa[r]agaḍue ? ///
5. pa[t]igrahe śarira /// ... (\*sa)-
6. (\*r)vab(\*u)dhap(\*u)ya(\*)e ///

The editor of this inscription interpreted line 4 as a reference to a secondary donor and translated ‘the elder/excellent (?) Śaragaḍua’ (Strauch 2009: 214). In keeping with the theme of the second Gandhāra Connections workshop, I would like to suggest instead that at this position of the formula we rather expect a place-name.<sup>11</sup> This can be illustrated with the relic donation formula on the Śātruleka reliquary (CKI 257; Baums 2012: 216-217) which seems particularly close to that on the new relic slab. In the following, I reproduce the main part of the Śātruleka inscription, and add in parentheses numbers corresponding to the lines of the relic slab and the parts of the formula that they preserve (1: date, 2: era, 3: donor, 4: location, 5: recipients, 6: honoring of all buddhas):

1. (1) savatsaraye satasa{sa}tatimaye maharajasa (2) ayasa vurtakalasa śavaṇasa masasa divasaye catuśīsaye 20 4 (3) śātrulekeṇa kṣatraveṇa subhutikaputreṇa apracarajabhagineyeṇa

<sup>11</sup> I would also prefer to interpret the name Thavara of the primary donor as Greek Theōrós rather than related to Sanskrit *sthāvara* (cf. Baums 2018b: 37-38, with reference to CKI 88, 89, also compared in Strauch 2009: 215).

2. bhagavato śakamune dhātuve pratīḥavita (4) apratīḥavitapurvaṃmi pradeśaṃmi aṭhayigramāṃmi (5) kaśaviyana bhadaṃtana parigrahaṃmi (6) sarva budha pujayita sarva pracegasabudharahaṃtaṣavaka pujayita sarve
3. pujaraha puyayita ...

Since the number of the year is lost on the new relic slab, its precise position in the sequence of dated Gandhāran relic inscriptions (cf. Baums 2018a: 66) cannot be determined. As Strauch (2009: 214) points out, however, the expression *ayasa vutrika(\*lasa)* ‘of Azes who is deceased’ most likely places it at some point in or just outside the range from Azes year 63 (AD 16/17) to Azes year 126 (AD 79/80).

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# Making places for Buddhism in Gandhāra: stories of previous births in image and text

Jason Neelis

## Introduction

Gandhāran scribes and artists imagined places for Buddhism (Monius 2001) by emplacing narratives of the Buddha's past births in ritualized landscapes of Gandhāra and surrounding regions of the north-western borderlands. They used visual and written media to make Gandhāra a 'second holy land' (Foucher 1905, II: 416-7 'la seconde terre sainte').<sup>1</sup> While other South Asian Buddhist communities left traces of either literary production (in Pāli and Sanskrit texts redacted and transmitted in manuscripts belonging to later periods) or material culture of archaeological remains, images, coins, and inscriptions, scholars of 'Greater' Gandhāran Buddhism now have access to both types of sources from periods extending from the first century BC to third century AD (and later).<sup>2</sup> Only a relatively small selection of narratives drawn from a much broader tradition of oral storytelling has been preserved, and localizing past lives of the Buddha and previous Buddhas in the Northwest was not the only narrative strategy for translocating Buddhist sacred places outside of the 'greater Māghadhan' homeland of Śākyamuni (Shinohara 2003).

Artisans and scribes selected stories from separate repertoires of rebirth narrative genres and developed different techniques of localization (Neelis 2014). Two scribes composed over fifty terse summary stories labelled as Avadānas and Pūrvayogas as secondary texts in the British Library Gāndhārī manuscripts collection, with Avadānas focusing mostly on the present lives of characters with few 'karmic tales' about ripening of karma (*karmavipāka*), while Pūrvayogas explicitly connect previous-birth stories to the present lifetimes of Śākyamuni Buddha and to other figures who were his contemporary followers, such as Ānanda and Ājñāta Kauṇḍinya (Lenz 2003; 2010). Jātakas, a loosely defined term for birth stories often used interchangeably with Avadānas in Sanskrit and Pāli literature, have been identified in Gandhāran art by Foucher (1905, I: 270-285; 1919) and other art historians primarily on the basis of iconographic comparisons with other examples in Indian Buddhist art and the Pāli canonical compilation of 547 Jātakas.

In order to develop a more comprehensive understanding of Avadāna, Pūrvayoga, and Jātaka narratives in extant Gandhāran literary and visual media, textualists and art historians have collaborated in an interdisciplinary effort to study the corpora of stories written in Gāndhārī manuscripts and depicted in Gandhāran images.<sup>3</sup> A global survey of birth stories identifiable in Gandhāran imagery by a team

<sup>1</sup> Alfred Foucher, called the 'grandfather of Gandhāra Studies' (Zwalf 1996: 74), theorized that Buddhism in Gandhāra was '... véritablement mêlé à la vie et comme enraciné au sol' (Foucher 1905: II, 416) before Faxian's arrival, so that by the fifth century AD, Gandhāra had become 'la seconde terre sainte du Bouddhisme indien' (Foucher 1905, II: 417). The theme of 'acclimatization of legends' introduced by Foucher (1901/1915: 28) is further elaborated by Lamotte (1958: 365-369; 1988: 332-337, n. 145). Fussman (1994a) discusses localization of narratives, including the Buddha's previous lives (1994a: 43ff.) in the context of the 'implantation' of Buddhism in Gandhāra. Neelis (2011: 253-256) discusses processes of 'domestication' whereby Buddhist relics and events in the previous and present lives of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas were adopted to local settings in the north-western borderlands.

<sup>2</sup> As coined by Richard Salomon, 'Greater Gandhāra can be understood as a primarily linguistic rather than a political term, that is, as comprising the regions where Gāndhārī was the indigenous or adopted language' (2018: 11). The terminology of 'Greater Gandhāra' is useful for geographically extending the boundaries of Gandhāran art beyond the heartland of the Peshawar Basin, but philologists and art historians understand that the extent of materials with writing in the Gāndhārī language and Kharoṣṭhī script and provenanced and unprovenanced images with distinctive characteristics of Gandhāran art overlap, but are not necessarily coterminous.

<sup>3</sup> A collaborative research project with David Jongeward (Royal Ontario Museum) and Timothy Lenz (University of Washington)

of art historians found over 180 stone sculptures and paintings with fifteen recognizable stories (Figure 1).<sup>4</sup> Although the list is not yet final, this contribution to the proceedings of the 2018 Gandharan Connections workshop on ‘The Geography of Gandhāran Art’ is intended to share provisional results with the purpose of drawing scholarly attention to the significance of this relatively understudied visual and written repertoire of Buddhist narratives. While visual narratives of previous births are not as prominent in Gandhāran art as hagiographical episodes from the present lifetime of Śākyamuni Buddha, scribes and artisans purposefully appropriated different sets of Avadāna, Pūrvayoga and Jātaka stories to generate connections between multiple lives of the Buddha and the geography of Gandhāra.

### Narratives of past births in Gandhāran visual culture

Approximately 130 images of the so-called Dīpaṅkara Jātaka depicting a meeting between the previous Buddha Dīpaṅkara and a young Brahmin named Megha (*Mahāvastu* Dīpaṅkaravastu), Sumati (*Divyāvadāna* Dharmaruci Avadāna), or Sumedha (*Pāli Nidānakathā*) dominate the visual repertoire of rebirth narratives in Gandhāran art. This episode of the Bodhisattva’s encounter with Dīpaṅkara is not included in the Pāli Jātaka collection, so that the term ‘Dīpaṅkara Jātaka’ tends to be restricted to the conventions of Gandhāran art history. In Gandhāran

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<sup>4</sup> The survey was supervised by David Jongeward in consultation with Jessie Pons and the assistance of collaborators in the UK, Pakistan, and India, including Wannaporn Kay Rienjang who worked with Susmita Basu Majumdar in November 2015 in India. Abdul Samad generously provided valuable access to collections of the Peshawar Museum and Directorate of Archaeology and Museums, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, during my research visit to Pakistan in May 2016. During the Gandhāra Connections workshop in March 2018, Zarawar Khan drew our attention to additional images in the SRO collection in Peshawar.

Figure 1. Table of Gandhāran works of art containing recognizable Buddhist birth stories. Based on detailed catalogue list compiled by David Jongeward and Jessie Pons (last updated in February 2019).

### Dīpaṅkara (nos. 1-129)

No.	Provenance	Collection
<b>Aghanistan</b>		
1-6	Shotorak	Kabul Museum
7-8	Shotorak	Musée Guimet
9-10	Tapa-i-Kafariha	Kabul Museum
11	Khol Shams/ Tepe Narenj	Indian Museum
12	Mes Aynak	Kabul Museum
<b>Swat</b>		
13-16	Butkara I	Swat Museum
17-20	Butkara I	Rome MNAO
21	Butkara III	Univ. of Peshawar
22-23	Saidu Sharif	Rome MNAO
24	Katelai	Rome MNAO
25	Barikot	Swat Museum
26	Panr 1	Swat Museum
27	Nawagai	V & A Museum
28	Kani Sapar	Univ. of Peshawar
29	Matkani	Univ. of Peshawar
30	Charg Pati	Univ. of Peshawar
31	Bambolai	Dir Museum
32-33	Chatpat	Dir Museum
34	Nasafa	Dir Museum
35	Probably Swat Valley	Metropolitan Museum of Art
36-37	Probably Swat Valley	Silk Road Institute
<b>Peshawar</b>		
38-42	Loriyan Tangai	Indian Museum
43	Upper Nathu	Chandigarh Museum
44	Thareli	Kyoto Univ.
45-46	Thareli	DOAM Peshawar (SRO)
47	Sikri stūpa	Lahore Museum
48	Sikri	Lahore Museum
49	Sikri	Chandigarh Museum



50	Jamālgaṛhī	Indian Museum
51	Jamālgaṛhī	Peshawar Museum (?)
52	Takht-i-Bāhī (?)	Peshawar Museum
53	Takht-i-Bāhī	British Museum
54	Takht-i-Bāhī	Lost
55	Takht-i-Bāhī	unknown
56	Takht-i-Bāhī	Peshawar Museum
57-59	Sahr-i Bahlol	Peshawar Museum
60	Sahr-i Bahlol	unknown
61-62	Aziz Dheri	Univ. of Peshawar
63	Mekha Sanda	Kyoto Univ.
64-65	Mekha Sanda	DOAM Peshawar (SRO)
66	Shahbazgarhi	Peshawar Museum
67	Ranigat	Storage, Taxila (?)
68	Kalawan	Taxila Museum
69	Charsada (Bala Hisar)	Chandigarh Museum
70	Tordher, Swabi	Peshawar Museum
71	Mian Khan	Indian Museum
<b>Uncertain provenance</b>		
72-76	Lahore Museum	
77-81	Chandigarh Museum	
82-84	Peshawar Museum	
85-88	Peshawar DOAM (SRO)	
89-90	Indian Museum	
91	CSMVS Mumbai	
92	Mathura Museum 18.1543	
93	Lucknow Museum G 252	
94-97	British Museum	
98-99	Rome MNAO photo archives	
100-5	Berlin MAA	
106-7	V & A Museum	
108	Ashmolean Museum	
109	Scotland National Museum	
110	Musée Guimet	
111	Art Institute of Chicago Museum	
112	Virginia Museum of Fine Arts	
113	Miho Museum	

114	Matsuoka Museum
115	Glenbow Museum
116	Willard Clark Collection
117	Lewis Shaw collection
118	Private collection, U.S.
119	Private collection, Europe
120-7	Private Collection, Japan
128-9	Warburg Institute

**Śyāma jātaḥ (nos. 130-140)**

130	Jamālgaṛhī	British Museum
131	Takht-i-Bāhī	Peshawar Museum
132	Aziz Dheri	DOAM Peshawar
133	Taxila - Dharmarājikā	Taxila Museum
134	Swat Valley - Gumbat	V & A Museum
135	Mian Khan	Unknown
136	Thareli	DOAM Peshawar (SRO)
137	Possibly Swat Valley - Marghazar	Jimmy Bastian Pinto collection (Brazil)
138	Unknown	Naprstkovo Museum, Prague
139	Haḍḍa wall painting (fragment)	Ryukoku Museum
140	Unknown	Japan private collection

**Viśvantara/Sudaṣṇa (nos. 141-152)**

141	Jamālgaṛhī	British Museum
142-3	Sahr-i Bahlol	Peshawar Museum
144	Thareli	Taxila Museum
145-6	Shotorak	Kabul Museum
147	Haḍḍa wall painting (fragment)	Ryukoku Museum

148	unknown	British Museum
149	unknown	Boston M. Fine Arts
150	Marghazar (?)	Jimmy Bastian Pinto
151-2	unknown	Private collection, Pakistan

**Śibi's gift of flesh (nos. 152-156)**

153	Mardan district	British Museum
154	unknown	Peshawar Museum (Karachi loan)
155	unknown	Private collection, Peshawar
156	Haḍḍa wall painting	Ryukoku Museum

**Śibi's gift of eyes (no. 157)**

157	Chakhil-i Ghoundi (Haḍḍa)	Musée Guimet
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**Eka-/Ṛṣyaśṛṅga jātaka (nos. 158-161)**

158	Koi Tangi	Indian Museum
159-160	Private collection, Japan	
161	Private collection, Pakistan	

**Maitrakanyaka jātaka (nos. 162-166)**

162	Jamālgaṛhī	British Museum 1880.41
163	Sahr-i Bahlol	a. Peshawar Museum 03068
		b. Peshawar Museum 03703
		c. d. Peshawar Museum 03069, 03067
164	Sahr-i Bahlol	Peshawar Museum 02714
165	unknown	Peshawar Museum 02715
166	unknown	Private collection, Japan

**Candrakinnara jātaka (nos. 167-168)**

167	Jamālgaṛhī	British Museum 1880.39
168	Loriyan Tangai	Indian Museum 5130/A23243

**Vyāghrī jātaka (nos. 169-171)**

169	Shotorak	Kabul Museum
170	unknown	Chandigarh 1658
171	unknown	Private collection, Portugal

**Ruru jātaka (nos. 172-173)**

172	unknown	MNAO Rome 18965
173	unknown	MAA Berlin 160

**Hasti/Naga [Indasamānagotta jātaka] (nos. 174-175)**

174	Thareli	DOAM Peshawar
175	Hashtnagar	Peshawar Museum 00914 (on loan to Hund Museum)

**Candraprabha (nos. 176-177)**

176	Marghazar?	Jimmy Bastian Pinto collection, Brazil
177	Jamālgaṛhī	Indian Museum G 60

**Amarādevī in Mahoṣadha jātaka ? (no. 178)**

178	Sahr-i Bahlol	Peshawar Museum 02716
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**Ṣaḍdanta jātaka (nos. 179-180)**

179	Karamar	Lahore Museum 1156
180	unknown	Private collection, Japan

**Naḷapāna jātaka**

181	unknown	Rome MNAO archives 1129
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**Śaśa jātaka**

182	unknown	Private collection, Japan
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art, this episode commonly prefaces the events of Śākyamuni's present birth as Siddhārtha, making its position in the iconographic programme of Gandhāran stūpas extraordinary. Since the Bodhisattva makes an aspirational vow (*praṇidhāna*) to be reborn as one who seeks to attain Buddhahood and Dīpaṅkara gives a prediction (*vyākaraṇa*) of his future birth, the extended lifestory of Śākyamuni Buddha essentially begins with this encounter. While other Gandhāran jātakas are typically featured in small panels on architectural

elements such as stair risers leading up to the *stūpa*, the meeting with Dīpaṅkara is often (but not always) integrated into the present lifestory of Śākyamuni. Depending on how narrative elements in ‘false gables’ are counted, the Dīpaṅkara episode is among the five most widely depicted narratives in Gandhāran art along with Śākyamuni’s birth, departure from Kapilavastu, and Parinirvāṇa, easily exceeding representations of Śākyamuni’s awakening under the Bodhi tree at Bodh Gaya, first teaching in the deer park at Sarnath, and other pivotal events in Śākyamuni’s hagiography.<sup>5</sup> Despite numerous depictions of this episode in the visual corpus of Gandhāran rebirth narratives, the encounter with Dīpaṅkara is not summarized in extant Avadānas or Pūrvayogas in the British Library collection. However, Dīpaṅkara (Divakara) is listed first in a list of the characteristics of fifteen previous Buddhas in a Gāndhārī version of the \*Bahubuddhaka-sutra in a scroll in the US Library of Congress (Salomon 2018: 265-93), which Vincent Tournier (2017: 129ff.) identifies as the earliest version of Bahubuddhaka-sūtras incorporated into the *Mahāvastu* and other Buddhist texts. Thus, the genealogy of previous Buddhas essentially begins with Dīpaṅkara, whose meeting with the Bodhisattva was localized in ancient Nāgarāhāra (modern Nangarhar in eastern Afghanistan), where there was also a shrine for the relic of the Buddha’s begging bowl, according to the accounts of Chinese visitors beginning with Faxian in the early fifth century.<sup>6</sup> By associating this place with Dīpaṅkara, the first in the lineage of the previous Buddhas, and the encounter with the Bodhisattva who aspires and is predicted to be reborn as Śākyamuni, Gandhāran Buddhists stake a strong claim that the extended life-story of the Buddha of the present age begins in their own land.

A version of the Viśvantara (Pāli Vessantara) story is the only ‘Jātaka’ identified in Gandhāran art which is also tersely summarized as the story of Sudaṣṇa in a set of Gāndhārī Pūrvayogas (Lenz 2003: 157-65; Salomon 2018: 240-45). Visual narrative sequences with a dozen images of the Viśvantara /Sudaṣṇa story in stair-risers from Jamālgarhī (in the British Museum), Sahrī-Bahlol (in the Peshawar Museum), and other sites place this story a distant second after the Dīpaṅkara episode in Gandhāran art. It is not at all surprising that this is the only previous-birth story identifiable in Gandhāran imagery which is also preserved in summary form in extant summaries of Pūrvayogas or Avadānas in the British Library collection, since this narrative is so generally widespread in South and South-East Asian art and literature and is a special case as the last human birth of the Bodhisattva before his rebirth as Siddhārtha in the Pāli Jātaka collection (Appleton and Shaw 2015: II, 507-639). The protagonist’s name in the Gāndhārī version, Sudaṣṇa, does not correspond with Sanskrit Viśvantara or Pāli Vessantara, but aligns more closely with Sogdian and other Central Asian versions, as well as with early Chinese transcriptions (Lenz 2003: 158-9), perhaps adding to growing support for the ‘Gāndhārī hypothesis’ that the most likely source for early Chinese translations of Buddhist texts were Gāndhārī versions rather than Sanskrit, Pāli, or other Middle Indic languages. According to Xuanzang, events connected with this narrative were commemorated at shrines around Pa-lu-sha in the Peshawar basin also visited by Song Yun a century earlier.<sup>7</sup> Between the visits of Faxian and Xuanzang, embedding of this widespread rebirth narrative probably aided in the consolidation of Buddhist sacred geography in Gandhāra, which overlaps with the growth of monasteries and shrines in the Peshawar basin. The localization of famous episodes in this narrative attracted local devotees and long-distance pilgrims. Étienne Lamotte ruefully dismissed this process of generating

<sup>5</sup> According to Pons (2011: Appendix 2, 57) the illustration of the Dīpaṅkara Jātaka is the third most widely depicted narrative in Gandhāran art.

<sup>6</sup> Deeg (2005: 247-54) provides a German translation of Faxian’s account with commentary on the localization of the meeting with Dīpaṅkara Buddha (§15) and references to further Indian and Chinese textual sources. He points out that Faxian’s account emphasizes the gift of lotus flowers rather than the spreading of the hair by the prostrating Bodhisattva, which is the most recognizable iconographic feature of Gandhāran depictions of the episode. Li (2002: 173) provides an English translation of the passage in Faxian (T51, number 2085). Li (1996: 66) gives an English translation of the relevant passage in the account of Xuanzang (T51, number 2087, Fascicle II, 878c). Shinohara (2003) focuses on the localization of the ‘contact relic’ of Śākyamuni’s bowl.

<sup>7</sup> Song Yun’s account is translated by Beal (1884: xcvi-xcix, 111-13) and Chavannes (1903: 413ff.); Beal (1884: 111-13) and Li (1996: 79 [T51, number 2087, Fascicle II, 881b]) translate Xuanzang’s account. Foucher (1901/1915: 33-38) discussed the omission of these sites from the account of Faxian, although it was visited by Song Yun and relied on Alexander Cunningham’s identification of Pa-lu-sha with modern Shahbazgarhi. Elizabeth Errington (1993) proposes to identify this location with Sahrī-Bahlol (the provenance of many Gandhāran sculptures very close to Takht-i Bāhī).

sacred geography by writing: ‘Gandhāra was the only one to play the game - somewhat puerile, but profitable to the places of pilgrimage - of the acclimatization of the legends’ (1988: 335 [1958: 367]). Nevertheless, the efforts of Gandhāran Buddhists to map the sacralized topography of their own region as the home for many of the Buddha’s previous births obviously succeeded.

The survey results confirm that the Śyāma Jātaka is relatively well represented in Gandhāran art, with over ten identifiable depictions. Multiple pieces belong to narrative sequences from Jamālgarhī, Taxila-Dharmarājikā, and recent excavations at Aziz Dheri. The story of Śyāma, the son of blind ascetic parents who was mortally wounded by a king while hunting but revived by Indra, is one of the longer Pāli Jātakas in the Mahānipāta (Appleton and Shaw 2015: I, 117-144). Narrative elements of the Śyāma Jātaka story overlap with Daśaratha’s accidental killing of a young ascetic in the *Rāmāyaṇa* and *Raghuvamśa*, but in Buddhist versions the king is not cursed by the ascetic parents or by Śyāma, but instead Śyāma’s virtues of loving-kindness, forbearance, and filial piety are extolled by his parents, who call upon the gods to revive him. Although there is no extant Gāndhārī Avadāna or Pūrvayoga of the Śyāma story, based on iconographical analysis Dieter Schlingloff (1987: 70) argues that the content of Gandhāran reliefs is more closely connected to a version in the *Mulasarvāstivādin Vinaya* than to those transmitted in the Pāli Jātaka or Buddhist Sanskrit Jātakas and Avadānas in the *Mahāvastu*, *Jātakamālā*, or the *Bodhisattvāvadāna-Kalpalatā*. According to Xuanzang’s account, there was:

... a stūpa built at the spot where Śyāmaka Bodhisattva (formerly transcribed as Shanmo Bodhisattva) gathered fruits to offer to his blind parents in fulfilment of his filial duty and met the king who was hunting and who accidentally hit him with a poisoned arrow. His mind of sincerity moved Indra, who dressed his wound with medicine, and his virtuous deed inspired the gods, who restored him to life very soon (Li 1996: 78).

Foucher (1901/1915: 46; 1905: 279-83, fig. 143) proposed to identify this stūpa with archaeological remains located at Periaṇo Dheri north of Chārsada on an important route between the Gandhāran capitol of Puṣkalāvati and the Swat valley.

The jātaka of Ekaśṛṅga (‘one-horn/unicorn’)/Ṛṣyaśṛṅga (‘deer-horn’), the offspring of a female antelope which accidentally consumed the semen of an ascetic living in a forest hermitage in the mountains, is also depicted in Gandhāran imagery and localized by Xuanzang in the mountain passes between the Peshawar basin and the Swat valley (Foucher 1919: 20-23). While this visual narrative is not as widely depicted in Gandhāran art as the stories of Dīpaṅkara’s encounter, Viśvantara, or Śyāma, interesting images from Koī Tangī (in the Indian Museum) and in private collections, as well as a seal (Falk 2008; 2013) demonstrate transmission of various motifs in the story. There is not an extant Gāndhārī version of the story, but accounts and references in Sanskrit, Pāli, Chinese, Tibetan, Tocharian, and even an early Christian bestiary have been the subject of extensive literary studies (Lüders 1940; Schlingloff 1973; 1987). The motif of the boy with one horn suckling from his antelope mother which appears in Gandhāran images is included in the version of this narrative in the *Mahāvastu*, while other versions elaborate upon the seduction of the young ascetic by either a courtesan or king’s daughter, which is depicted in Buddhist art at Bharhut and Mathura. According to Xuanzang, this story of the ‘Ṛṣi Unicorn’ was localized to the north-west of where episodes connected with the Viśvantara previous-birth narrative were believed to have taken place:

On the south side of the mountain there was a monastery, in which lived a few monks who studied Mahāyāna teachings. The stūpa beside it was built by King Aśoka at the place where the ṛṣi Unicorn once lived. This ṛṣi was ensnared by a lustful woman and lost his supernatural powers. The lustful woman then rode on his shoulders and returned to the city (Li 1996: 79).

According to Foucher (1901/1915: 45-6), this monastery and stūpa may be located near Shahkot Pass between Peshawar basin and Swat valley. Perhaps artisan storytellers and their patrons drew upon a ‘logic of locality’

by linking jātakas with ascetic characters to hilltop shrines on mountainous passageways between Peshawar plains and Swat valley (Foucher's 'septentrionale' monasteries). Their selective appropriation of previous-birth stories probably helped to consolidate a ritualized topography as Buddhist institutional presence expanded from the Peshawar basin to the range of hills surrounding Gandhāra with interregional linkages to Swat (Neelis 2011: 235-9).

Other previous-birth narratives of bodily self-sacrifice (*dehadāna*) are depicted in Gandhāran visual culture and emplaced in the sacralized landscape of the north-western frontiers. King Śibi's bodily offerings of a piece of his own flesh to save a pigeon (*kapota*) from a hawk is depicted in Gandhāran sculptures, Upper Indus petroglyphs at Shatial and Thalpan (Fussman 1994b; Fussman & König 1997: 178-9; Bandini-König 2003: 118-122, pl. XXIIb; Thewalt 1983: 625-8), and a rare painting from Haḍḍa (Zin 2013: fig. 3), while the gift of his eyes can be identified in a stucco relief on stair-risers at Chakhil-i Ghoundi in Haḍḍa. Fifth and sixth century accounts of Faxian and Song Yun link the story of King Śibi's flesh offering to the region between Swat and Gandhāra (Beal 1884: cvi-cvii; Deeg 2005: 120-1, 226-8; Li 2002: 169-70).<sup>8</sup> In the sixth and seventh century, Song Yun and Xuanzang tie the jātaka of King Śibi's gift of his eyes to a blind Brahmin to *stūpas* near the Gandhāran capital of Puṣkalāvati (Beal 1884: ciii, 110; Deeg 2005: 123, 228-9; Li 1996: 78). The Vyāghrī Jātaka, in which a Bodhisattva (an ascetic in Āryaśūra's *Jātakamāla*; a prince in the *Suvarṇaprabhāsottama-sūtra*) sacrifices himself to feed a hungry tigress and her cubs, is only found in a few fragments of Gandhāran sculptures (including the pedestal of a Dipaṅkara Jātaka image from Shotorak in eastern Afghanistan) and in a petroglyph at Chilas Bridge (Bandini-König 2003: 118-122; Thewalt 1983). Based on the itineraries of Faxian and Song Yun (Beal 1884: xcii, xcvi-xcvii; Chavannes 1903: 411-2; Deeg 2005: 230-1; Li 2002: 170), various localizations in the Swat valley and at Manikyala Stūpa to the east of modern Islamabad have been proposed (Foucher 1901/1915: 25, n. 3; Zwalf 1996: 55). The Avadāna of Candraprabha's head offering localized in Taxila in Faxian's account (Li 2002: 170) may also be identified in Gandhāran art, although the interpretation of other scenes with decapitated heads have previously been interpreted as the Amarādevī episode of the Maḥośadha Jātaka story cycle. As Max Deeg (2005: 121-2) observes that Chinese accounts of 'Four Great Stūpas' associated with the two jātakas of King Śibi's gifts of his flesh and eyes, the Vyāghrī Jātaka, and the Avadāna of Candraprabha's head offering reflect an effort to transpose a parallel sacred geography to the four great events of Śākyamuni Buddha's birth, awakening, first teaching, and parinirvāṇa in the Buddhist heartland of northern India.

These were not the only places where these jātakas were localized, and there are other rebirth narratives reported to have been localized in Gandhāra, Swat, Taxila, and neighbouring areas of the north-western borderlands by Chinese pilgrims which are apparently not included in the repertoire of Gandhāran art.<sup>9</sup> Seven jātakas identified in the visual culture of Gandhāra are not known to have been localized in north-western geographical settings, according to Chinese accounts:

Maitrakanyaka  
 Candrakinnara  
 Ruru  
 Hastin/Nāga (Pāli: Indasamānagotta)  
 Naḷapāna (*Mahāvastu*: Vānara)  
 Ṣaḍḍanta  
 Śāsa (uncertain)

<sup>8</sup> Foucher (1901/1915: 25, n. 3) refers to the following localizations proposed by Aurel Stein: Śibi's gift of flesh at Girarai; Śibi's gift of eyes at Puṣkalāvati. Deeg points out that the phonetic correspondence of Chinese Suheduo with Sanskrit Suvastu is problematic.

<sup>9</sup> Lamotte 1958: 356-7/1988: 334-5 and Zwalf 1996: 54-55 refer to the following stories reported by Xuanzang, which are not attested in Gandhāran art although they are localized in the Northwest: Kṣāntivādin in Maṅgalapura (Mingora) in Swat, Sarvada or Sarvaṃdada further to the south, a young Brahmin falls from a tree to learn a Dharma verse near Mt. Ilam in Swat, Dharmatrata/Dharmarakta transcribes texts with his own ink as blood at Gumbatai in Buner, King Maitribala feeds five yakṣas at Rohitaka, and the story of a Bodhisattva Nāga near Bamiyan.

Among these seven without attested geographical associations in ‘Greater Gandhāra’, with the exception of four narrative sequences of the Maitrakanyaka Jātaka, the others do not seem to have been widely represented, with only one or two images each. Five of the seven are narratives about previous births as animals (deer, monkey, six-tusked elephant, and perhaps rabbit) or involve an animal as the main figure (a young elephant which destroys an ascetic’s hut in the Hastin/Nāga jātaka). Patterns of localization and geographical emplacement of previous-birth stories belonging to the Gandhāran visual repertoire and attested in Chinese visitors’ accounts raise more questions about selection and domestication of Avadānas and Pūrvayogas in Gāndhārī manuscripts.

### Narratives of past and present births in Gāndhārī literary culture

Publications of recently-discovered Gāndhārī manuscript collections over the last two decades provide insights into an early period of regional literary production in Gandhāra between the first century BC and third century AD. Among the texts written on birch-bark scrolls of the British Library collection, original compositions of terse Avadāna and Pūrvayoga narrative summaries written as secondary texts by two specialist scribal storytellers deviate from the ‘standard avadāna package’ (Lenz 2010) of other Buddhist literary compilations of rebirth narratives, and seem to belong to an early formative stage in the development of these genres. References to local and regional toponyms, such as Taxila and Puṣkalāvati, as well as personal names, titles, and ethnonyms of historically attested figures from first century Gandhāra reflect emplacement of these stories in the hybrid cultural milieu of the borderland environment (Neelis 2008; 2011: 253-5). Avadānas and pūrvayoga narratives localized in north-western geographical, political, settings belong to what might be considered a ‘homegrown strand’ of storytelling, which is definitely more distinctive to these narrative genres than other types of extant Gāndhārī literature. On the other hand, stories about well-known characters from the time of Śākyamuni Buddha or Aśoka imported or ‘transplanted’ from the Māghadhan Buddhist heartland tend to be more likely identifiable with other Buddhist literary versions of the narratives. In innovating and adapting Avadānas, Pūrvayogas, and other narratives to the distinctive Gandhāran cultural milieu, scribes and artisans had to resolve tensions between localization and maintaining fidelity to recognizable versions of the stories. Hagiographic stories of Śākyamuni’s present birth were certainly more widespread in Gandhāran visual and literary cultures, but translocating the events of his own lifetime outside of his homeland in ancient Magadha and Kosala was difficult due to chronological and geographical constraints. Koichi Shinohara (2003: 90ff.) identifies three narrative strategies for constructing Buddhist sacred places outside of the hagiographic homeland of Śākyamuni:

1. Linking previous Buddhas and past lives of the Buddha, as in some Gandhāran jātakas, including the encounter with the previous Buddha Dīpaṅkara, to particular locations;
2. Worshipping at shrines for moveable objects used by the Buddha, such as the ‘contact relic’ (*paribhogika dhātu*) of his begging bowl (Shinohara’s specific focus);
3. Converting local autochthonous Nāga and Yakṣa deities whose stories are embedded in the *Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya* (Lamotte 1958: 752-3 / 1988: 679, n. 67; Przyluski 1914).<sup>10</sup>

While this contribution to the Gandhāran Connections workshop on the Geography of Gandhāran Art has focused on the first of these strategies, the scope for examining the connection between other types of Gandhāran visual and literary narratives and the populating of the landscape with stories that connect the ‘Second Holy Land’ to the hagiographic homeland of the present lifetime of Śākyamuni Buddha can be broadened.

<sup>10</sup> The expansion of sacred geography to include sites of the Buddha’s apocryphal Dharma conquest of the Northwest with Vajrapāṇi is very well attested in the accounts of Chinese visitors to shrines in Gandhāra and Uḍḍiyāna (Swat).

## Provisional concluding points

A comprehensive publication of results of collaborative research between Gandhāran art historians and Gāndhārī textualists will elaborate upon the provisional findings presented at the Gandhāra Connections workshop on the Geography of Gandhāran Art in March 2018. The presentation at the workshop was intended to bring renewed attention to the significance of Buddhist rebirth narratives in Gandhāran Buddhist images and texts. In addition to expanding the corpus by proposing new identifications of jātakas not previously known in Gandhāran art, such as the Naḷapāna and Indasamānagotta (*hastin/nāga* story of the young elephant who destroys the ascetic's hut),<sup>11</sup> the research reveals diverging patterns of selection and localization of rebirth narratives in visual and literary media. Among more than 180 images of around fifteen jātakas depicted in Gandhāran art, only the ubiquitous Viśvantara (Pāli Vessantara) Jātaka is summarized as the story of Sudaṣṇa in a series of Pūrvayogas which belong to the corpus of 58 Avadānas and Pūrvayogas in the British Library collection of Gāndhārī manuscripts. Artisans and scribes employed various techniques to 'domesticate' narratives in local and regional Gandhāran contexts.<sup>12</sup>

The focus on emplacement of stories in the sacralized geography of Greater Gandhāra is a useful lens for examining the significance of Buddhist birth stories for regional practices and pan-Buddhist pilgrimages attested in Chinese travel records. However, by taking another look at the localization or 'acclimatization' of legends in written and visual media, I am not arguing that narrative locativization is necessarily the only or most important interpretive framework.<sup>13</sup> The aim of this very brief and provisional contribution to the proceedings of the workshop is merely to suggest that asking questions about where narrative episodes were believed to have taken place opens up other interesting questions about why these particular rebirth stories were selectively appropriated for representation and elaboration by artisans and scribes, how they may have circulated in storytelling networks, and what Gandhāran Buddhists did to enact and perform their own stories.

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<sup>11</sup> Identifications by David Jongeward in consultation with Jessie Pons and Monika Zin are not discussed here, but will be elaborated upon in a catalogue publication. Other identifications proposed by Nakao Odani (2008) will be discussed in that publication.

<sup>12</sup> The concept of literary domestication defined by Todd Lewis as 'the dialectical process by which a religious tradition is adapted to a region's or ethnic group's socio-economic and cultural life' (2015: 233) for application to Newar Buddhist Avadānas and Jātakas in the Kathmandu Valley does not entail a pejorative sense of compromising narrative integrity by obscuring an original meaning or true location of episodes in the Buddha's past and present lives.

<sup>13</sup> Locativizing tendencies in the history of religions elucidated by Jonathan Z. Smith (1978; 1987; 2004) have been criticized by Ronald Grimes (1999).

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