ALMA MATER STUDIORUM
UNIVERSITÀ DI BOLOGNA

IsIAO
Istituto Italiano per l'Africa e l'Oriente

Miscellanies about the Buddha Image

Edited by

Claudine Bautze-Picron

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1.
INTRODUCTION

Created nearly 2000 years ago, the image of the Buddha has remained the focus of veneration throughout Asia to the present day. Between the first and the fourth century AD, it underwent major iconographic and stylistic changes: probably created in the region of Mathura, it was also destined to become very soon the major object of veneration in the Northwest of the Peninsula (Gandhāra), each region developing highly specific iconographic forms related to different concepts, as evidenced by the publications of Herbert Härtel, Johanna van Lohuizen-De Leeuw, Maurizio Taddei and, more recently, Juhyung Rhi. The Mathura image of the first to second century AD, labelled Bodhisatva in inscriptions, went on in the third century to integrate Gandhāran stylistic features, paving the way to what would become the most common mode of representing the Buddha. The resulting Mathura image, usually associated with the 'Gupta period' (fourth to fifth century), constitutes a prototype that would then be exported through Central Asia to the Far East, whereas the contemporary Sarnath image would exert profound influence on the ateliers of Southeast Asia.

However, the very first phase of representing the Buddha through his physical body is still a source of puzzlement. As can be seen in Akira Miyaji's paper included in this volume, if one can relate the first depictions of the Buddha in Swat with images from Mathura, study of the images in greater depth reveals relations with other, earlier sites of North India, such as Bodhgaya and Bharhut. Further, this image was practically introduced as an object of propaganda, the image becoming support to the Buddhist Dharma: indeed, the very first images show the gods entreating the Buddha to preach. By doing so, the Buddha makes his thought accessible and enables its durability through the foundation of the community of monks – which had the result of establishing the presence and the prominence of his thought in society.

The image of the body seems to have introduced a break in artistic development and in the religious background (worship, beliefs), and various authors have long discussed the origin of the Buddha image, the region where this creation took place, the reasons for the apparent absence of the image before our era, etc., referring to this early period as an-iconic or pre-iconic (Karlsson 1999: chapter I). By doing so however, we automatically relate the 'icon' to the representation of a 'body' – be it real or fantastic is here irrelevant – but thereby probably revealing our partiality. Living in a (Western) world of (divine) images, we might have difficulty in taking into account the other possibilities for depicting the unseen. However, and as shown by Klemens Karlsson, the so-called 'pre-iconic' phase is in fact already iconic in making use of another, but genuinely Indian, vocabulary. Moreover, this radical change was not confined to the Buddhist community but swept throughout all of India's religious communities, most probably sharing in the recognition of their own values when brought face to face with one another. In a certain way, the cult image becomes a propaganda tool, whatever the community.

The first representations of the Buddha leave the body out; they are abstract and composite, integrating elements of various natures: (representation of the) footprints, the seat on which the Buddha had sat, the tree in the shade of which he had settled to teach or meditate, and other motifs such as the pillar or the disk (Karlsson 1999). Much has been written on such compositions, seeing in them depiction of moments in his life or of sites visited by the Buddha, which had become part of a pilgrimage route (Karlsson 1999: 48-52). However, beyond the 'identification', which is a dominant part of Western research on the art of South Asia, one can also argue that such compositions were, from the very beginning, virtual representations of the Buddha and speculative attempt to show his personality. Within this context, the footprints were perhaps the very first independent images to be produced, relating to a deep Indian understanding of traces left by personages of importance – consider, for instance, the worship of divine footprints in Gaya, of royal sandals in Rajasthan or of Mohammed's footprints in different sites from India and Bangladesh. Because of their particular nature – forming wide flat spaces – footprints could be 'used' to record elements contributing to define the 'personality' of the deceased one: the footprints would preserve this function throughout Asia, becoming images of the universe encompassed by the Buddha (nature), as seen for instance in Burma and beyond (Thailand, Laos, Cambodia) (Quagliotti 1998).

The image of the footprints was introduced in the early period, displayed on a stool placed in front of the throne; it is also evident that their position within the relief coincides with the position which the feet of the Buddha would have, were he to be illustrated (i.e. below the throne). Besides, as we have seen, the footprints bear symbols which are

preserved on the soles of the feet when the Buddha is actually represented.

It would be wrong to think that the depiction of the Buddha's body should supplant other ways of referring to him. The simultaneous representation of scenes with the human image and of scenes where non-figural (but iconic, indexical or symbolic) 'signs' are displayed (Karlsson 1999: 19-21) is, for instance, a common feature of the art of Andhra Pradesh.

Whereas the representation of the body is bound up with a radical change in the choice and position of the attendants, it does not affect the arrangement of the scenery within which the unseen or the visible body occupies the central position. When comparing the 'iconic' image to the 'virtual' composition of the early period we observe that the presence of the body seems to have automatically called forth the representation of a setting where the image, when seated, sits on a 'throne' and is flanked by characters of a divine nature (gods, Bodhisattvas), whereas the human devotees of early times, be they monks or lay-people, are shifted to the lower part of the image, thus below the Buddha image. When the Buddha image is integrated in a narrative panel, this hierarchy is shown through mere size, the Buddha being (naturally) taller – a feature which could not be properly appreciated in scenes where the body was not illustrated and where the human devotees proportionally occupied a broader space around the virtual composition referring to the Buddha. The cult image is thus seen as if hovering above the human world. It was, then, not to take long before this image came to be taken to relate to a supra-mundane world. Once created, the image became the issue of philosophical and political reflections, and the point through which the Buddhist community connects with the surrounding society.

Fourth- and fifth-century images from Mathura and Sarnath reflect diverging understandings of the Buddha nature. In a certain way, the image created at Mathura remains the visual rendering of abstract concepts developed in an earlier period in the region; the Buddha is there basically immutable and immovable, as expected of his function as ruler of the universe. On the contrary, the Sarnath image reflects subtle changes which are related to the emergence of new concepts within Buddhist philosophy such as the 'feminization' of the Buddhist world (Robert L. Brown 2002). As for the Buddha image from Maharashtra, it was eventually to combine simultaneously the rigid image from Mathura with the sinuous motion of the Buddha at Sarnath, the concepts illustrated by the sole image at Sarnath then finding expression through a full range of other characters, female and male.

What Robert L. Brown's article and Akira Miyaji's paper in this volume show is how important it remains to take a stylistic approach. Style and iconography are closely related ways of looking at the object even though they are often

– and perhaps unfortunately – separately considered. Both contribute, in their own way, to place the object within a historical framework before the endeavour to bring to light the spiritual or intellectual values hidden within the image.

Here we turn to another aspect of study of the Buddha image, and that is: would it be justified to limit study of the Buddha image solely to the figure of the Buddha himself, or should we not, rather, take into consideration the peripheral characters and the background and surroundings forming a frame to the image. The image of the maṇḍala which emerges in the course of the fifth century is directly connected to the composition of the second to fourth century, when the Buddha sits on a throne, is flanked by Bodhisattvas or other divine personages and is, as we saw above, worshipped by human devotees. Although limited by the nature of the material, the composition has to be translated into a three-dimensional space; the Buddha not only sits above the human world, but is surrounded by images created outside the Buddhist monastery – and thus belonging to the space 'outside the vajras', whereas a variable number of characters of divine nature and Buddhist origin are inserted all around him within this outer limit. These characters are distributed according to a subtle hierarchy which is dominated by the sole image of the Buddha (whatever the name given to him), of whom they represent in fact particular aspects, and in whom they are reabsorbed. Thus, although the peripheral images differ from the central Buddha, they participate through their mere presence in defining the Buddha image, which thus comprises more than the sole representation of the body.

This is not a new tendency. The image had gone through elaborations in the early centuries, elements of various natures being combined into a coherent structure located at the centre of a composition, which integrated devotees, human or otherwise (real or fantastic animals, divine characters), and elements drawn from the nature. Quite evidently, the periphery was always present in the representation of the Buddha, being indispensable for a better and more explicit understanding which the community could form of its own position within the society, and of the nature of the Buddha and his thought. Proper study of the 'image of the Buddha' thus entails taking into consideration all the figures introduced in the compositions – at times three-dimensional and distributed on different walls – at the centre of which the proper Buddha image is displayed. The difficulties involved in defining 'this' image at the purely visual level, marking out its limits and differentiating it from other 'Buddhist' images when faced with the task of producing a catalogue of a collection of objects, are described in the paper by Serenity Young and Catherine Bollinger.

As a personage with real and (to our eyes) fantastic features, the Buddha is also the hero of tales running through his life and all those which predated it. This extension of the

Buddha concept leads further to the notion of the Buddhas of the past and of the future, although technically speaking a Buddha still to come is for the time being a Bodhisattva and this Buddha 'of the future', Maitreya, is indeed usually represented with ornaments and princely dress. Moreover, because he is the Buddha-to-come, Maitreya also shows intrinsic features differentiating him from the Buddha and from other Bodhisattvas, as will be seen below in Katsumi Tanabe's article.

The representation of *jātakas* or of scenes drawn from the last life raises new questions about the image of the Buddha: what is preserved in those narrative visuals from the hierarchy introduced in the iconic composition? Is there still a hierarchy? Or does it differ? Clearly, the image of the (future) Buddha is taller in such narratives than the characters who accompany him; clearly, also, numerous discrepancies are to be observed between the literary and visual sources – revealing that art has its own language using its own rules (introducing, for instance, characters who are not necessarily mentioned in the literary sources, distributing them in a composition which has its own logic – for instance, divine characters in the upper part, human devotees in the lower part, etc.). As a matter of fact, depiction of moments from the Buddha's life also requires the right setting to underline the supra-mundane nature of the principal character. The topic of the Buddha's life, although articulated on very specific events distributed in a strict line, shows countless variations in the representation of these moments: some events were favoured in certain regions in given periods, and while the broad lines of composition are preserved throughout the development, details can be included in illustration of them which remain otherwise unknown; such is the case of Māyā seen among the mourners at the Buddha's parinirvāṇa in images from the North-West as seen in Doris Srinivasan's article. As for the *jātakas*, they do not only imply a multiplication of images in a linear succession, but also – and more relevantly to our present topic – illustrate how the (future) Buddha assumes different bodies, human, divine, or animal.

Throughout its development the image of the Buddha preserves a very clearly defined iconography which has seen very few changes brought in. Whereas the literary image presents a genuinely fantastic being, the artistic image is constrained by the sole fact that it is supposed to represent a historical character. Thus, only some of the numerous *lakṣaṇas* described in literature can here be recognized, implying not that the texts inspired the artists who then selected motifs which could be shown in some particular form, but rather the contrary: it is highly probable that the material image was initially created, constituting the foundation for the highly speculative image of the Buddha in literature.

One of these elements is the flame crowning the *uṣṇīṣa* in Tamil Nadu, as studied in the present volume by Yuko Fukuroi. Beside this category of elements which

contribute to defining the physical appearance of the Buddha, attributes can also be integrated into the image. The one most commonly met with is undoubtedly the alms bowl– others being the *khakkhara*, the monastic fan, the fruit of the myrobolan, the mango, all encountered with great irregularity and in variable chronological and regional contexts. The alms bowl is a most particular element because it in a sense it constitutes the place where the community of monks hinges on lay-society; as pointed out below by Anna Filigenzi, it enhances the fundamental notion of 'donation', *dāna*, which is recurrent in the lives of the Buddha but which also acts at different levels in a Buddhist society up to its highest level, i.e. the king.

Throughout the development, the independent image of the Buddha can be located in a narrative context while at the same time being in itself a means of worship. It represents a moment in the life of the Buddha, and yet it does not belong to a frieze and the narrative components have been reduced as much as possible. Such is also the case of the 'emaciated (future) Buddha' images, as is to be seen in different regions of the Subcontinent and Southeast Asia in various periods, and which is the only variation in the physical appearance of the Buddha. As recently demonstrated by Juhyung Rhi (2008), such images were the object of admiration in the North-West. Their importance in their original context most probably relates to their meaning: they were definitely more than simple representation of the long phase of extreme asceticism gone through by the future Buddha, as explained below by Anna Maria Quagliotti, and notably referred to meditation on the corpse – a type of contemplation that still forms part of the monks' practices today. As for the very same image from Southeast Bangladesh and Burma, it introduces motifs creating a coherent narrative context which is specific to the region (Claudine Bautze-Picron).

Although the different situations referred to above are mostly reflected in South Asian images, they cannot be considered exclusive to the Indian subcontinent. And although the observations are about representation of the Buddha, they can also be seen not to apply solely to Buddha images – on the contrary, they can also be applied to images of other 'divine' characters belonging to other sectarian groups. In more than one case, in fact, the image of the Buddha proves to be a pan-Indian creation and shares with those images a common sense for the structure of the divine image.

One might at a first glance consider a study bearing on the 'image' of the Buddha to be a merely formal matter, be it stylistic or iconographic. And of course, as can be surmised from our remarks above, the situation is summarized here only very briefly. A major and initial element of study in this area is apparently the question of delimitating problems of different natures: where does the image start, where does it stop; formal or stylistic development of the image; position of the image within the monument; image as expression of contemporary changes in Buddhist religious thought,

etc. Marking such limits and making use of different methodological tools will bring new light to bear on the history of this image.

The papers included here address various issues that reflect manifold ways of approaching study of the Buddha image. Most were presented in July 2007 during the Nineteenth International Conference of the Association of South Asia Archaeologists in Europe (panel 'The Buddha, Images and concepts'); I am very thankful to Akira Miyaji and Yuko Fukuroi, who were unable to attend to the Ravenna conference but sent their paper for this volume.

This volume cannot be held to be conclusive on the topic, for it does not cover all issues related to the Buddha image, and it does not consider the information to be found in the literary sources, analysis of which should be carried out in parallel to study of the visual evidence. The aim of the panel was also not to cover systematically a special area of research bearing on the Buddha image. Rather, it has cast light on numerous possible ways of looking at the image and as such, should be considered in a sense 'preliminary' to further, more specific studies bearing on the topic.

Three further papers were presented in Ravenna, more directly concerned with the 'life of the Buddha'. Peter Skilling introduced the reliefs of the recently excavated site at Phanigiri in Tirumalagiri Mandam, District Nalgonda, Andhra Pradesh; preoccupied with numerous professional obligations, he was unfortunately unable to deliver his written paper. Deborah Klimburg-Salter introduced remarks on a part of the depiction of the life in the Tabo Assembly Hall (Himachal Pradesh) which had remained unidentified, and Verena Widorn had spoken on the carvings in the wooden temples of Chamba and Lahaul; for reasons known only to themselves, they did not respond to any of the circulars concerning publication of the proceedings, nor did they send in their contributions.

Claudine Bautze-Picron

Bibliography

Brown, Robert L. (2002) 'The Feminization of the Sārnāth Gupta-Period Buddha Images', *Bulletin of the Asia Institute* 16, pp. 165-79.

Karlsson, Klemens (1999) *Face to Face with the Absent Buddha, The Formation of Buddhist Aniconic Art*. Uppsala: Univ. Library (Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, Historia religionum 15).

Quagliotti, Anna Maria (1998) *Buddhapadas, An Essay on the Representations of the Footprints of the Buddha with a descriptive Catalogue of the Indian Specimens from the 2nd century B.. to the 4th century A.D.* Kamakura: Institute of the Silk Road Studies (Memoirs vol. 2).

Rhi, Juhyung (2006/2008) 'Some Textual Parallels for Gandhāran Art: Fasting Buddhas, Lalitavistara, and Karuṇāpuṇḍarīka', *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 29/1 2006(2008), 125-53.

Chapter 2.
Seeking the Buddha in the American Museum of Natural History's Collection

Serinity Young and Kate Bollinger

This paper will discuss the Buddha Project[1] – a project of the anthropology department at the American Museum of Natural History (hereinafter AMNH)– which was first presented at the 19th Annual Conference on South Asian Archaeology on July 3, 2007. The project, completed in Spring 2005, had the aim of compiling objects with images of the Buddha from the anthropology department's Asian archives into a searchable database. While a seemingly straightforward task, the project was complicated in at least two ways. To begin with, AMNH possesses a somewhat random collection of thousands of Asian objects; some were donated, others purchased by curators, and quite a number were gathered during late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century expeditions sponsored by AMNH. Being a natural history museum, this meant that works of art were gathered at the same time as weapons, agricultural tools, clothing, botanical and biological samples, and so on. While the museum has obtained some outstanding examples of art, for the most part the collection is composed of objects made for widespread distribution rather than for private collections. Since the objects were collected under a wide variety of circumstances, their dates and provenance are often unknown. Such objects are dated from the year we received them. Secondly, it was necessary to determine what, exactly, constitutes a Buddha image and what does not. Elaboration of this topic has the advantage of both clarifying the Buddha database for potential researchers as well as exploring the more theoretical question, with which this project grappled, of what should constitute a Buddha image and why. The goal of this paper is both to introduce the Museum of Natural History's Buddha Project database as a research tool and to provide a more theoretical discourse on its contents.

The Buddha Project contains a total of 1,041 images of objects drawn from the museum's Asia archives - an electronic database of images of objects from the American Museum of Natural History's Asia collection. The images represent a diverse spectrum of Buddhist iconography, differing by time period, country acquired, mode of representation of the Buddha, and object type. This diversity of images within the Buddha Project database can be attributed to the particular method used to search

the Asia archives for Buddha images. The database is catalogued by keyword. As such, each image is linked to one or more keywords relevant to its physical attributes or function. By sifting through every image in each keyword for potential Buddha images, the search revealed a huge array of Buddha images for possible inclusions into the Buddha Project. While some are clear representations of the Buddha and were therefore obvious additions to the database, other images, more symbolic representations of the Buddha, required more detailed analysis. The discussion to follow will address why some of these more symbolic images were included into the database.

Four major events depicted in Buddha iconography - his conception, enlightenment, first sermon and death – are examples of images which show the Buddha symbolically rather than anthropomorphically. The Buddha's enlightenment, for example, is represented by the Bo Tree, his first sermon by a wheel, and his death by a burning funeral pyre without a visible body. Such images are often found at pilgrimage sites, where stone carvings were created which depicted either four or eight scenes of primary events from the Buddha's life such as those described above. Such pilgrimage sites include monasteries, temples, and *stūpas* – solid architectural structures believed to contain bodily relics of the Buddha and other holy persons. Since *stūpas*, themselves, are often believed to be physical representations of the Buddha they, too, have been included into the Buddha Project. Figure 1 is an example of a Tibetan *stūpa* in the database (Accession Nr 1928-58; Catalogue Nr 70.0/4600).

Because images such as those representing the Buddha at enlightenment and death were intentional representations of the Buddha, they were straightforward inclusions into the database. Other symbolic images, however, required more deliberation. Two significant examples of this are the Buddha's conception and his experience of enlightenment. In early Buddhism, and in some later schools, the Buddha's experience of enlightenment was understood as his having escaped from the cyclical existence of birth and death. Images of the footprint were and remain a poignant reminder of his passing out of existence, and these are also included in the Buddha Project.

Similarly, images of the Buddha's conception are clear symbols of his existence while not direct images of the

Fig. 1 – Tibetan stūpa, AMNH Accession Nr 1928-58 (Catalogue Nr 70.0/4600).
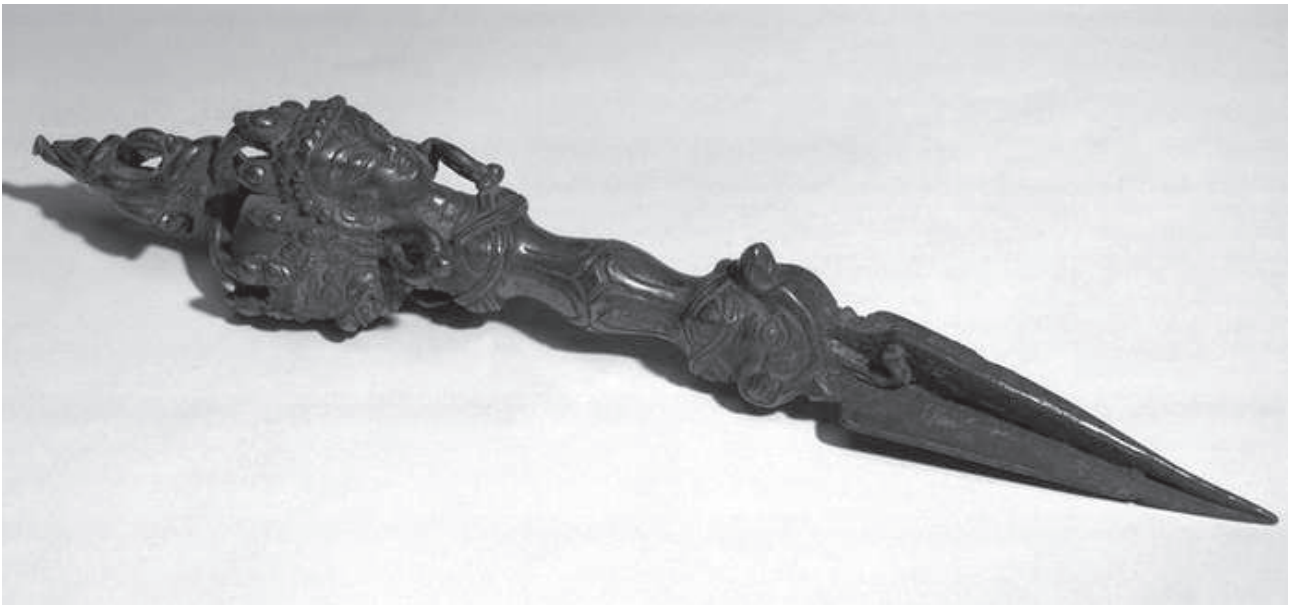
Fig. 2 – Tibetan ritual dagger, AMNH Accession Nr 1928-58 (Catalogue Nr 70.0/5253).
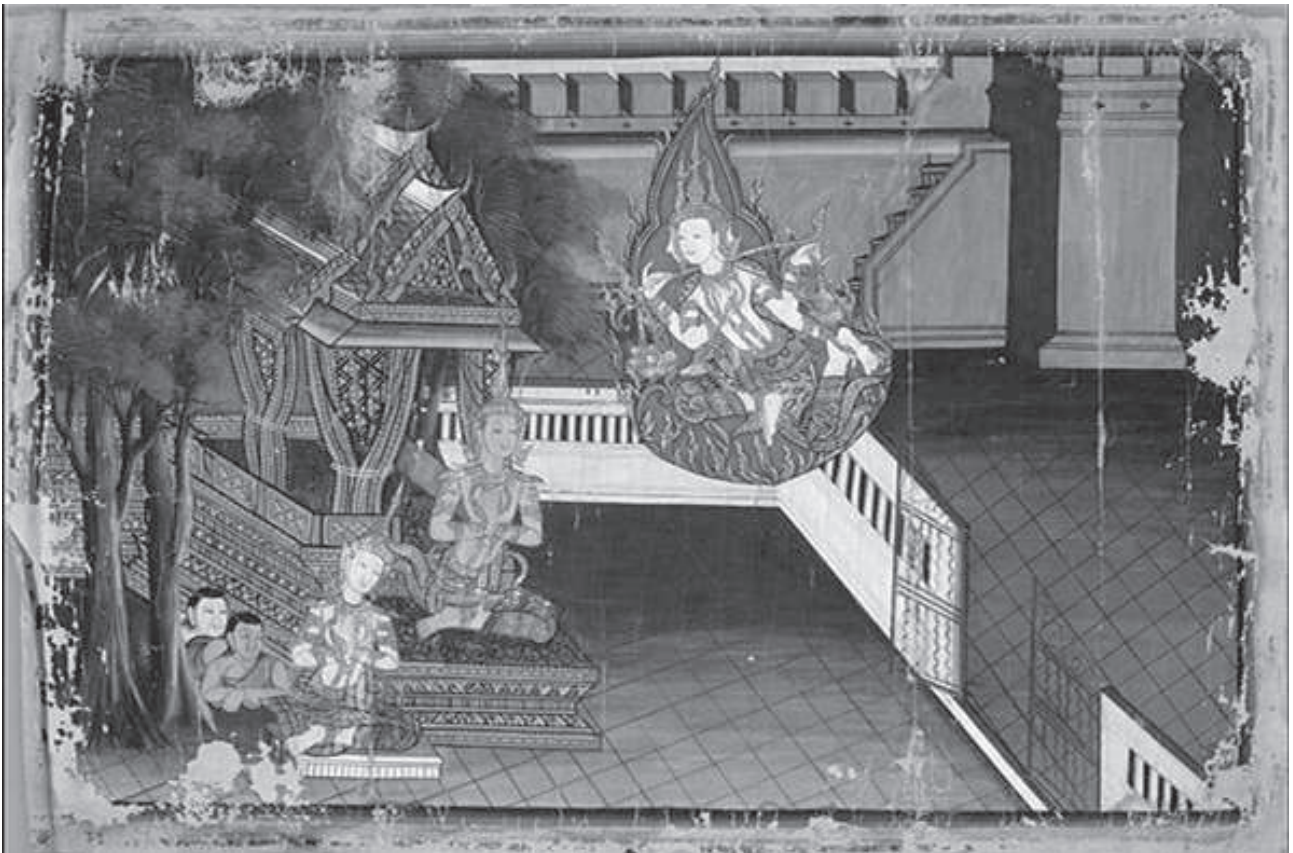

Fig. 3 – Thai painting, AMNH (Catalogue Nr TL/355 A32).

Fig. 4 – Chinese snuff bottle, AMNH Accession Nr 1961-73 (Catalogue Nr 70.3/2126AB).

the heaven of thirty-three gods, where he went to preach to the Queen Māyā. This descent of the Buddha, in both anthropomorphic and non-anthropomorphic images, is often shown as a staircase, which the Buddha descends down with gods Indra and Brahmā accompanying him on either side.

While a good deal of attention has been paid to the importance and variety of symbolic representations of the Buddha, it is also significant, and potentially advantageous to researchers, to highlight the diverse and surprising variety of objects which were found to contain images of the Buddha in his human form which are also included into the Buddha Project. The variety of human forms of the Buddha found in the database, and also the variety of objects on which he is depicted, is demonstrative of the span of Asian countries and time periods from which these objects were collected. Examples of such images are shown in Figure 2, a Tibetan ritual dagger with a Buddha image carved onto the handle (Accession Nr 1928-58; Catalog Nr 70.0/5253), and Figure 3, a Thai painting showing the Buddha in his past life as Prince Vessantara (Catalogue Nr TL/355A4), and Figure 4, a Chinese snuff bottle with a painting of the Buddha on its inside (Accession Nr 1961-73; Catalog Nr 70.3/2126AB).

Included with each image in the database is general information regarding the object's country of origin, material, dimensions, and collection information. Scanned copies of the original catalogue page and expedition field notes, as recorded when the object was initially acquired, are also available for many of the images. The Buddha Project database can be freely accessed online and images searched for via various search options including culture, catalog number, object name, or keyword. A 'Refine Search' text box can be used to the narrow search.

Buddha himself. Carvings of Queen Māyā's conception dreams are some of the earliest stone images in Buddhist art and often represent the Buddha as an elephant rather than in his infant human form. Correspondingly, in the Buddha's birth scene, Queen Māyā is posed standing, grasping a tree branch, while attendants sometimes hold an empty blanket at her right side on which the infant Buddha can be imagined. Later carvings, around the first century AD, when the Buddha began to be depicted in human form, show him floating at his mother's right side and being received on a blanket, standing by her right foot, or, occasionally, miraculously emerging from her side. Analysis of images from the Buddha's birth scene is advantageous as, while uniform in their intention to include the Buddha's presence into the scene, they vary between human and symbolic depictions of him. It is also important to note that the decision of how to depict the Buddha varied by time period and event being artistically rendered.

A final example of symbolic depictions of the Buddha are images of the Buddha's descent from Trayastriṃśa heaven,

Because the database was designed as a tool for researchers, it is available in several forms. Its simpler version can be freely accessed online through the museum's anthropology web site and, by applying for advanced access to the web site, researchers have more thorough access to the collection as well as the ability to comment upon particular images and the information provided about them. The necessity to allow researchers room to comment upon certain images was emphasized in the Buddha Project's initial presentation at the Conference for South Asian Archaeology. The presentation brought the collection to the attention of an international group of scholars, several of whom made comments challenging the provenance of artifacts as they are recorded in object descriptions. Such comments highlight the importance of utilizing the database as a collaborative tool to build upon. A further consideration for maintaining the database is the need to continually incorporate newer inclusions of Buddha images from the museum's Asian archives. Through such efforts, the Buddha Project can continue to serve both as a useful tool for researchers and a commentary on the nature of Buddha images.

The Buddha Project can be accessed through the American Museum of Natural History's web site, http://anthro.amnh.org, by clicking on 'Collections Highlights' and selecting the 'Buddha Project' database. An advanced researcher account may also be applied for by selecting the 'Advanced Research' option.

CHAPTER 3.
THE DĀNA, THE PĀTRA AND THE CAKRAVARTIN-SHIP: ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND ART HISTORICAL EVIDENCE FOR A SOCIAL HISTORY OF EARLY MEDIEVAL BUDDHISM

Anna Filigenzi

The importance attached by Buddhism to the *dāna*, or gift, is explicitly stressed in both the textual and the visual sources. Nonetheless, although somewhat univocal from an ethical point of view, the meaning of the *dāna* and of the mechanisms involved reveal decidedly different shades when evaluated from the perspective of the specific cultural and historical contexts, which is to say from the perspective of the donors.

The aim of this paper is not so much to analyse the matter in depth as to examine some of the archaeological and art historical evidence, taking as departure point a colossal sculpture (reconstructed height *c.* 3.70 m) representing a standing bejewelled Buddha from the Buddhist site of Tapa Sardar (Ghazni, Afghanistan)[1] which suggests, and even more forcefully when compared with evidence from similar artistic environments, a connection with the ritual practice of giving and its translation in visual terms.

The sculpture under discussion can be assigned to the seventh/eighth century CE ("Late Period" in the relative sequence of the site), when the Main Stūpa on the Upper Terrace was surrounded by a row of chapels, each profusely adorned with sculptured and painted apparatus dominated by a central cult image set against the front wall.

The bejewelled Buddha was found in Chapel 23 placed on the left wall of the room, at the side of the central cult image (of which only the pedestal survived) and vis-à-vis an image of Durgā Mahiṣāsuramardinī (possible height *c.* 2.50 m) (Figs 1-4).[2] Following a hypothesis first formulated by Maurizio Taddei (1992: 459) I have already, albeit briefly, dealt with this subject, tentatively connecting these two images (an addition to the original layout of the chapel) to ceremonies of the *pañcavārṣika* type actually performed in the site. I suggested there that the colossal bejewelled Buddha accompanied by Durgā might in fact have expressed a gift and a vow: to donate the kingdom to the Buddha and to defend or rescue it from the chaos, at the same time asserting the proximity of the donor to the Buddhahood (Filigenzi 2005: 426 ff.; 2008: 57 with previous bibliography). The donor may possible be the prince who appears in a fragment of mural painting that, unfortunately, remains of uncertain interpretation from both the iconographic and the technical point of view (Taddei 1968: 117, 124, note 43 and fig. 3; Silvi Antonini and Taddei 1981: 431 and fig. 4; here, Fig. 5).

An interesting point is the presence, at Tapa Sardar, of other subjects that seem to me closely associated with the twin themes of the 'protector king' and the continuity of the Dharma. My reference here is to the presence of a colossal Buddha in *Parinirvāṇa* and two colossal images of Maitreya (scarcely preserved but still recognisable by the posture), this time the primary cult object in their respective chapels (Taddei and Verardi 1978: 47 ff.; Filigenzi 2008: 52 ff.) (Figs 4, 6).

The insistence in this period, not only in Afghanistan but in much of the Buddhist ecumene, on the theme of the *Parinirvāṇa* and the advent of Maitreya attests to a widespread perception of being on the eve of a turning point, when a cycle comes to an end and a new era begins.[3] In this gap between end and beginning the focus seems to concentrate on what can oppose the potential danger it holds, namely the protection of the Dharma and its

Fig. 1 – Tapa Sardar: bejewelled Buddha from Chapel 23 (reconstruction). Dep. CS 6270 (detail); drawing Nicola Labianca; © IsIAO.

maintenance over a world entrusted first to a pious king who rules according to wisdom and compassion.

The evidence from Tapa Sardar – which Taddei (1974: 115; 1992: 461) considered closely connected with the ruling dynasty and characterised by a strict ritualism – is hardly to be traced back to haphazard origins. Rather, I believe it should be viewed within the framework of a widespread imagery where doctrine and state ideology merge together through the subtle ambiguity of the *dāna*. Fragmentary and scattered as it is, and even though only partially preserved and very often lacking any counterpart in the literary sources, the art historical and archaeological evidence from the last phase of Buddhism in the north-west of the Indian subcontinent before – and under the pressure of – the Islamic conquest seems to be strongly characterised

Fig. 2 – Tapa Sardar: hand of the bejewelled Buddha holding the pātra. Dep. CS neg. 9656/8; © IsIAO.

by contents and forms which would appear much later, far more systematised and re-worked according to new dictates, in various Far Eastern and Himalayan countries. Such is the case, I believe, of the connection between the king and the *dāna*, the persistence and consistency of which can only be explained as part of a more complex background that one might label a 'Buddhist epic of kingship', aiming at presenting the king as a follower of the Bodhisattva's path.

Fig. 3 – Tapa Sardar: head of Durgā from Chapel 23. MNAOR 3653; © IsIAO.

The faint outlines traced here are nonetheless to be taken as working hypotheses, until new discoveries or reappraisals shed clearer light on the history of this crucial period, bridging the spatial and chronological gaps with stages of transmission and exchanges that have yet to emerge from oblivion.

In order to substantiate what might appear mere speculation

Fig. 4 – Tapa Sardar: Chapels 23 and 17. Dep. CS 4023 (detail); drawing Nicola Labianca; © IsIAO.

Fig. 5 – Tapa Sardar: fragment of mural painting with lay donor (?) from Chapel 23. Drawing Nicola Labianca; © IsIAO.

I will try to sum up the relevant evidence we have of the Buddhist notion of giving and of how it entwines with the state ideology, especially in connection with *cakravartin*-ship.

The *dāna* is, basically and essentially, the material support for the physical existence of the *saṃgha*, from the elementary level of subsistence up to the emphatic apparatus of permanent settlements, the social function of which can hardly be overestimated, given the physical prominence and impact they had for several centuries in a great part of the Indian sub-continent and Far-Eastern countries.

Unlike the literary sources, accessible to limited circles of cultivated people, the visual appeal for *dāna* targeted a more variegated community of followers and, being more directly connected with patronage, reflected certain inevitable compromises between the doctrinal postulates and the current historical, social and political issues.

Reference to the *dāna* is to be found in a number of episodes of the Buddha's life, although different shadings can be detected in the way the visual communication uses narrative scenes, and 'non-biographical' subjects as well, as a constitutive authority for current practices. As the natural outcome of processes of adaptation to cultural environments and historical circumstances, these variations are in general determined or influenced by a more or less pronounced need to make the didactic function of the hagiographic tradition explicit.
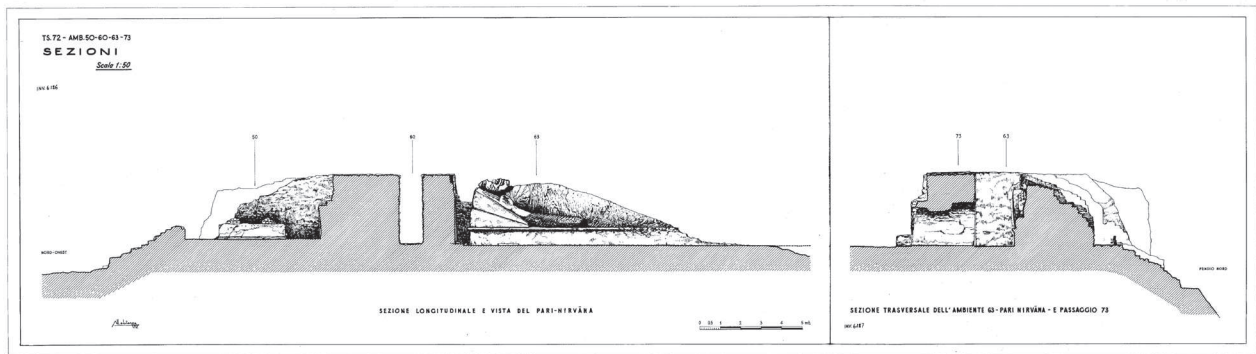
Fig. 6 – Tapa Sardar: Chapel 63 with Buddha in parinirvāṇa (left) and Chapel 50 with Maitreya in pralambapadāsana (only the feet survive). Dep. CS 6126; drawing Nicola Labianca; © IsIAO.

Among the visual transpositions of the act of *dāna* the most powerful and immediately evocative is that of the Buddha holding a *pātra*, the transparent symbol of his having renounced any possession or desire. This simple image has a primary function of *memento* for the lay community, bringing to the fore the twin virtues of detachment and generosity as practised at the highest level by the Buddha himself, and as expected, in a scale of degrees adjusted to the individual capacity, from the *upāsaka*s as well. The absolute value of the intention is affirmed by the undifferentiated feeling of acceptance and even a system of rewards that we find explicitly formulated in the words of Faxian, who recounts how the Buddha's bowl can react differently and become immediately full if poor people throw a few flowers in it, while remaining empty when very rich people make their offer (Beal 1884 [1969]: xxxiii; a slightly different translation in Kuwayama 2002: 22).

The act of giving and the effects it produces are a central theme in a conspicuous part of the literature, and of the narrative art as well, although the meaning may remain implicit and not readily grasped.

The supreme form of *dāna* is, in virtue of its definitive and irreversible character, the gift of the self, often expressed in atrocious terms of physical sacrifice of a part (flesh, blood, head) or the whole of the body (Durt 1998, 2000; Ohnuma 1998, 2000; Bautze-Picron 2008). We owe our knowledge of it in particular to a number of *jātaka*s, where the apparent disparity between price and achievement highlights the absolute, undetermined value of the universal empathy or compassion.

Only apparently different, in terms of sacrifice, is the *Dīpaṁkara-jātaka*, where the young Sumedha, after the impulsive act of throwing flowers requisitioned to a girl, bows down before the Buddha Dīpaṁkara and has the latter walk on the carpet formed by his hair spread on the ground, while expressing his true vow (*praṇidāna*) to gain Enlightenment. In this captivating tale – one of the few

*jātaka*s to enjoy great popularity in Gandhāra –[4] the *dāna* seems to be depicted as an emotional act, profound and ingenuous at the same time, implying no fatal consequences for the performer but so sincere in its ethical value that it wins the highest reward, in the form of the prophecy (*vyākaraṇa*) of future Buddhahood. However, the act performed by Sumedha is much more than a humble homage, the offer of the hair carpet being the symbolic substitute for the offer of body and life,[5] as a bridge that allows the Dharma to cross the world, so passing from the present to the future *rūpakāya*.

A purely ethical concern apparently also inspires the Gift of the dust, where the young boy Jaya, having nothing else to offer, picks up a handful of dust from the ground and places it in the Buddha's alms bowl (*Divyāvadāna* c. 366-69; cf. Lamotte 1944-80: II, 723, with copious references to visual documents). Also in this case the reward for such a useless but sincere gift is a prophecy, this time concerning the future reincarnation of the boy as the powerful and pious king Aśoka – in a word, as a *cakravartin* who is destined to rule in the name of and according to the Dharma.[6]

But, as in the case of Sumedha, the inexistent material value of the gift hides a deeper meaning: the future Aśoka, by placing an infinitesimal part of the earth in the alms bowl, actually offers the Buddha his future realm which includes, and implies, the offer of himself. The Buddha welcomes this gift in his *pātra*, a container that is, obviously, bigger than the content and, moreover, a perfect receptacle for such a gift. At the same time it is precisely Jaya's act of consciousness that transforms a handful of material particles into a legitimate realm that belongs to the domain of Dharma.

---

[4]   For the *pāli* tradition see Rhys Davids 1925: 82-97. For an extended version of the story see *Mahāvastu* (trans. Jones 1949-56: I, 193-248). For a rapid but exhaustive overview of the Gandhāran versions of the *Dīpaṁkara-jātaka* see Zwalf 1996: I, 134 ff.

[5]   I am indebted to Hubert Durt for drawing my attention to this implicit aspect of the tale.

[6]   So obviously the legend handed down by the literary sources and promoted by Aśoka himself.

Fig. 7 – Tabo, Main Temple: Mañjuśrī extending his hand from the clouds to touch Sudhana's head.

If we go back to the origin of the *pātra* we can find there a metaphorical meaning that surpasses, without superseding, its elementary function as a begging bowl. The *pātra* was offered to the Buddha by the four *lokapāla*, or kings of the four directions, who came to the Buddha at the same moment, each of them bringing a bowl. Having accepted all four bowls, the Buddha merged them into one single piece.[7]

What we can read between the lines of this tale is that with their offer the four kings have in fact recognised the Buddha as the centre from which the four directions emanate and to which they converge. Parenthetically, with his acceptance and magic fusion of the four bowls the Buddha performs a sort of self-investiture as *cakravartin* - a further ritual moment that follows the Enlightenment as a necessary and natural consequence. Therefore, the *pātra* is not only the object that qualifies the Buddha as a renouncer but a symbolic substitute for the Universe – the receptacle where all the differentiated parts of the manifested world converge and share a universal nature.

This significance may in fact lie behind certain odd stories featuring the Buddha's bowl contained in a number of sources: for instance, the fact that it wanders (Beal 1884 [1969]: lxxviii; II, 278; Kuwayama 2002: 31 ff.; Falk 2005:

445; Shinohara 2004), implying the theme of the spreading of the Buddhism and its transmission to the future and, even more revealing, its being taken into possession by some particular personages – always individual kings or members of royal lineages. Suffice it to mention the case of the Licchavis, who were said to have received the *pātra* from the Buddha himself, on the eve of his *parinirvāṇa*, 'as a token of remembrance' (Xuanzang in Beal 1884 [1969]: II, 73-74; also xxiv for a shorter account by Faxian), or the 'king of the Yuezhi', who accepted as a ransom, instead of a huge quantity of gold, two such special treasures as Aśvaghoṣa and the Buddha's begging bowl (Kuwayama 2002: 32-33).

The incalculable value of the *pātra*, which can be used as a reward or ransom highly revered by terrestrial kings, is additional evidence of its being imbued with a royal symbolism. Any offer to the Buddha, from the infinitely small to the infinitely large, is an act of recognition of his central, ruling position in the Universe and of his legitimate ownership *ab initio* of all its single components. The recognition of this fundamental truth produces merits by the force of its own essence, which meets the harmony of Dharma and is empathetically rewarded by the Buddha.

The close relationship between *pātra* and *cakravartin*-ship can explain the constant pairing, in the artistic environments of the seventh-eighth century, of *pātra* and royal *insignia*,

---

[7]   See Kuwayama 2002: 27 ff. for a list and discussion of the various sources.

*Figs. 8 – The so-called 'Buddha of Nandiviramādityanandi':
Mañjuśrī blessing the king? After Pal 1975: no. 31.*

such as jewels, crown and three-pointed cape. This attire suggests, as in Bāmiyān and – most probably – Tapa Sardar, a ceremonial context involving at the highest level both the monastic and lay community.[8]

When considering the *pātra* and the *dāna* from such a viewpoint, we can see how this functional meaning, though constantly present, is differently expressed, and possibly also so perceived, in different historical contexts. Actually what changes in literary and visual experiences is not only the preference accorded to one subject rather than another – an extremely interesting theme which is nonetheless beyond the scope of this paper – but also the specific terms

of the relationship between the two actors, the Buddha and the donor.

Interestingly enough, the prestigious model represented by Sumedha, who offers himself as a 'bridge' for the transmission of the true law to the future, seems to fall into relative obsolescence outside the geographical and chronological domain of the Gandhāran tradition. One reason for this can be found in the obscure metaphorical meaning of Sumedha's act of donation, perhaps no longer topical for a more variegated community of believers needing to be approached with more explicit contents. But there are, in my opinion, also additional reasons, and reasons that represent an extremely interesting aspect of the social history of Buddhism.

A successful substitute for Sumedha is Viśvantara, or Vessantara, who evidently provides not only a spiritual model of virtue, but precisely the most suitable model for actual rulers.

Viśvantara embodies at the highest level the Buddhist attitude to the *dāna*, but he is also a prince and, what is more, the penultimate incarnation of the future Siddhārtha. Rather than Sumedha, he represents the sublimation of the kingship on account of his proximity to the advent of a coming Buddha and his status as the epitome of the righteous prince acting according to the Dharma. The great popularity enjoyed by the *Viśvantara-jātaka* in many different contexts, from India to Southeast Asia, in the visual art as well as in literature, appears to be functional not only to the ideal portrait of the prince, more or less explicitly exploited by actual rulers,[9] but also to the definition of a 'Buddhist way', a task undertaken especially under the pressure of possible cultural clashes. Such, for instance, is the case of the dialectical encounter with the Chinese Confucian concept of filial piety, which represented a concrete obstacle to the acceptance of Buddhism, to the extent that particular attention to the question is documented in a number of specific references both in the Chinese Buddhist canon and in the commentaries thereon. Besides pointing to the examples of sublime filial conduct extolled in numerous *sūtra*s, the line of argument goes further by emphasising the superior concept of piety developed by Buddhism, which is not confined to immediate repayment for the parents' love and care but extends into the future and includes all the parents and ancestors of all living beings (Ch'en 1968).

Reassessment of this 'Buddhist way' also seems to become a concern in the Indian cultural environment when, in the context of a growing challenge represented by the Brahmanical system, the Buddhist ideal of the righteous prince expressed by Viśvantara probably had to match up to the figure of Rāma (Gombrich 1985: 427 esp.). The competition is played out on the ground of irreconcilable differences: Rāma is the ideal prince because he sacrifices

---

[8]   Obviously, it does not exclude doctrinal implications. For different aspects of this subject matter and its relevance to a more general question of religious culture and ritual practices I refer the reader to Klimburg-Salter 1989: 123 ff., 2005; Taddei 1992; Deeg 1995, 1997; Filigenzi 2005, 2008.

[9]   A particularly strong and long-lasting tradition is still to be found in Thailand (Keyes 1977: 289, 290 n. 29; McGill 1997: 207).

Figs. 9-10 – Tapa Sardar: clay figurines showing standing Buddhas holding the pātra. Dep. CS neg. 7373/2 and 7387/2; © IsIAO.

his most precious things to his caste duties, which is exactly what Viśvantara refuses to do in the name of a horizontal perspective that embraces the entire universe with no distinctions or degrees, thus becoming the epitome of a loving compassion which extends beyond this world.

Still, such an explanation is a partial one. The path followed by Viśvantara cannot be considered as separated from the practice of the Six Perfections (*paramitās*), which already represented a key concept in early Mahāyana Buddhism and, in a formalised way, in the teaching of the *Prajñāparamitā* school, among the most influential in much of the Buddhist world.

The practice of the Six Perfections, aiming at following

the Bodhisattva's path, became a distinct vocational way to attain Enlightenment. This concept goes well beyond the purely philosophical sphere and directly involves – certainly in a scale of degrees, shades and modes that we can only imagine – the lay community or at least, as far as we can judge from the material evidence of religious monuments, that part of the lay community which actively invested in patronage.

In both the literary and iconographic sources the path starts with the wish to attain Enlightenment (*bodhicitta*) and the intentional cultivation of it – in a word, exactly what Sumedha did. Nonetheless, in the Mahāyana's worldview, which stresses the timeless and universal accessibility of Enlightenment to all the sentient beings, Sumedha's tale

practically becomes an obsolete pattern, also on account of its being petrified in a remote past. The keen desire to actualise and multiply *ad infinitum* this model is reflected by the replacement of the Buddha's prophecy to Sumedha with the Bodhisattva's prophecy, which every aspirant to Enlightenment can concretely hope for.

The Bodhisattva's prophecy, translated into visual terms as scenes depicting laymen kneeling before a Bodhisattva, is a common motif at the time of the Northern and Southern Dynasties in China and in the Dunhuang mural paintings of the Sui period (Wong 2004: 164), but some positive evidence is also to be found in late Gandhāran reliefs (Filigenzi 1999; for different aspects see also Luczanitz 2005: esp. 184-85).

Taking the Bodhisattva vow is a form of initiation where conjunction with the *bodhicitta* transfigures the aspirant's mind and, by blending the discriminative awareness of emptiness and the indiscriminative virtue of compassion, transforms the practice of mundane virtues into *pāramitās*.

The success enjoyed by the *Viśvantara-jātaka* can be better understood when taken as part of a more complex metaphor which involves both the act of giving – raised to the domain of universal compassion – and awareness. There is in fact a source where these two perspectives clearly meet, namely the *Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra* - a text that we can suppose in popular currency in the seventh-eighth century – where the protagonist, the youth Sudhana, stands as the metaphor of the initiate who, under the guidance of great bodhisattvas, walks the path of spiritual advancement. Depictions of Sudhana's spiritual journey became an important part of Buddhist imagery, as we can see from its trajectories in diverse cultural contexts, some more clearly highlighted by research, others less known or simply underestimated. It is a well-known fact, for instance, that substantial doctrinal grounds for popular narratives focused on Sudhana's pilgrimage were provided in China by Huayan Buddhism, which flourished in the seventh-eighth century under the patronage of Empress Wu Zetian and in accordance with a strong state ideology (Wong 2007). Although the earliest extant evidence is to be found in Dunhuang paintings of ninth-tenth century, the existence of a preceding tradition is attested in the literature (Wong 2007: 350). Furthermore, the central role assigned to Sudhana's pilgrimage in monuments of great doctrinal complexity such as Tabo, in Western Himalaya (Steinkellner 1995, 1996; Klimburg-Salter 1997), and, much earlier, the Borobuḍur, in Java (Fontein 1967: 116-74; Gomez and Woodward 1981: 1-14; Brown 1997: 81), gives us an idea of the importance, diffusion and persistence of this tradition.

Worth noticing, in the framework of such a powerfully structured mythology, is the fact that what Sudhana is confronted with at the end of his journey is, again, the supreme value of giving, when Maitreya, after extolling the *bodhicitta*, expounds his teachings to Sudhana with stories of his own life (see Steinkellner 1995: 92-104). Among the remains of the mural paintings illustrating this section of the *Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra* in the Assembly Hall of the Main Temple at Tabo, a scene – identified by an inscription as the 'Giving of the Children' (Steinkellner 1995: 91; Klimburg-Salter 1997: 122 and fig. 124) – depicts Maitreya in a previous life giving away his two children to an ascetic.

The eternal recurrence of the same model (Viśvantara, Maitreya) establishes an indissoluble link of predestined Buddhas with the act of giving, which represents the initiation to the Bodhisattva's path and the practice of *pāramitās*, after the mind has been oriented (as Sudhana did with his resolve to undertake his pilgrimage) towards Enlightenment.

The esoteric significance of the architectural features and iconographical programme of the Main Temple at Tabo, where, in a space symbolically and physically equated to a *maṇḍala*, the practitioner can experience a mystic union with the presiding deities and retrace with the *pradakṣiṇā* the same spiritual path as Sudhana and Siddhārtha, has been clearly elucidated (Klimburg-Salter 1997: esp. 108, 132-33). Nonetheless, it is highly probable that the sense of Sudhana's journey in Tabo is to be understood not only in terms of spiritual advancement, but also as a powerful metaphor going back to the roots of the theocratic regime, with a suggested analogy between Sudhana and the actual ruler. The political importance of the Bodhisattva ideal for the kings of Pu hraṅ-Guge and its specific relevance to the Tabo iconographic programme – a fact that has been amply demonstrated (Scherrer-Schaub 1999: esp. 216 ff.; Steinkellner 1999: 258-60 esp.) – might well have fostered such a strong ideological function of the narrative. Such is, for instance, the case of the Borobuḍur, which has already come under scrutiny with regard to some interesting parallels with Tabo (Klimburg-Salter 1997: 105; Wong 2007: 353-54). The sophisticated symbolism of the Borobuḍur includes a highly ritualised concept of kingship which found full development under the Śailendra dynasty, where the Sudhana's path is presented as already accomplished by the ruling king, thereby stressing the advanced stage of the latter in the path towards Enlightenment (Moens 1950-51: esp. 398-99; Voûte and Long 2008: esp. 179-94).

As we can see, despite chronological and geographical distances, analogies surface that cannot be a matter of mere chance, and which suggest a wide circulation of ideas that evidently permeated the Buddhist imagery to such an extent that they gave rise to long-lasting conventional models. According to one of these, the great Bodhisattvas who initiated Sudhana expressed their guidance by blessing, or even touching the disciple's head, sometimes from a considerable distance: thus performed Samantabhadra in the Borobuḍur (Soekmono 1976: 35; Krom 1986 [1927]: V, Series IVB, Pl. XVIII/82), whilst at Dunhuang a cartouche in the ceiling painting of Cave 85 mentions Mañjuśrī

Fig. 11 – Tapa Sardar: Stūpa 4. Dep. CS neg. R. 7403/4; © IsIAO.

Fig. 12 – Tapa Sardar: Stūpa 7. Dep. CS neg. R. 7402/8; © IsIAO.

Fig. 13 – Tholing, Red Temple: standing Buddhas holding the pātra. After Taerqin 2001: fig. p. 138.

extending his hand from a great distance to touch Sudhana's head (Wong 2007: 354 and fig. 8a); in Tabo a similar scene partially survives, showing Mañjuśrī's hand extending 'over 110 leagues' (a concept illustrated by the repeated figure of a hand emerging from a cloud) to bless Sudhana (Klimburg-Salter 1997: 122 and fig. 125; Fig. 7).

Given such clear evidence, one cannot but wonder whether the famous bronze of Nandin Vikramādityanandin from Gilgit (Fig. 8) may be considered an abbreviated – and, after all, not so early in comparison with the Borobuḍur example – version of this iconographic and ideological subject, where a historical personality, a ruler of the Paṭola Śāhi dynasty, exploiting Sudhana's model, presents himself as an initiate, under the guidance of the great master Mañjuśrī, here depicted as an accomplished Buddha.[10] And, again, one

might indeed wonder whether the ceremonial apparatus of the *pañcavārṣika* ritual as well as the recurrent iconographic scheme of several votive bronzes of approximately the same period and cultural horizon as the Nandin Vikramādityanandin, where the donor presents himself at the feet of the Buddha accompanied by representatives of his family and his government (see for instance Filigenzi 2005), aim at a ritual reproduction of the Viśvantara's self dispossession.

We have no direct evidence, apart from some late cases in Southeast Asia (McGill 1997) and the one suggested from Gilgit, of actual princes equating themselves or implying their similarity to Viśvantara or Sudhana, but I believe that it was a highly probable occurrence, especially in contexts where, as we have seen, a strong state ideology – theocratic, even – generated monumental works and supported philosophical schools that stress certain correspondences between ritual practices and social functions, or where, as in the case of Tapa Sardar and in cognate horizons, attention focused on the advent of a new era. After the *Parinirvāṇa*

---

[10]   Such a depiction of Mañjuśrī appears not out of place if considered in the frame of the growing importance of the Bodhisattva in Buddhist tantric works which eventually leads to his role of 'primordial Buddha'. The completion of this process is already attested in the *Mañjuśrī-nāma-saṁgīti*, a text that can be safely placed in the 7th century CE (cf. Wayman 1985: 3 ff.).

of Siddhārtha, this era would be opened by Maitreya but prepared and bridged by a pious prince who put his life and his realm in the *pātra* of the Buddha. Gift and reward is, in this case, from *cakravartin* to *cakravartin*.

As further witness to the highly symbolic meaning attached to the act of giving, some small clay figurines, found in good number at Tapa Sardar, can likewise be added.[11] They depict a Buddha in *varadamudrā* holding in his left hand a rounded object that, by comparison with other, more readily interpretable examples (cf. Fig. 2), can be identified as a *pātra* (Figs. 9-10). The posture of the Buddha and the hold on the object mark a departure from the usual icons of the period and cultural environment, strongly emphasising the attribute - a receptacle of the *dāna* and a symbol of *cakravartin*-ship.[12]

The universe contained in this humble object may lie behind the strange tale of the wandering *pātra*: more than the monastic robe, more than the ascetic staff, the *pātra* seems to be the object of a special cult. Its reappearance, having remained hidden for some time, announces the arrival of Maitreya, and one may well wonder if the imagery we can detect at Tapa Sardar, besides expressing the expectant atmosphere of the period, contains a reference to this event, if not even the attempt to establish a direct connection with the new lineages and sacred geography this event was about to trace out.

Bibliography

Bautze-Picron, Claudine (2008) 'Buddhist Book Covers from Eastern India: The Book Covers of Manuscript SL68 at the Collège de France, Paris' in Claudine Bautze-Picron (ed.), *Archaeology of Religion, Issues of Hindu and Buddhist Iconography*, *Proceedings of the Eighteenth International Conference on South Asian Archaeology held at The British Museum, London, 4-8 July 2005, volume 1,* General editor: Michael Willis,

---

[11] Of the nearly 30 figurines of this type (or at least clearly recognisable as belonging to this type) listed in the inventory book of Tapa Sardar more than 20 have been found in the vicinity of Stūpa 4 (Fig. 11), one of the small 'star-shaped' *stūpa*s arranged in a incomplete row around the Main Stūpa and alternated with thrones once supporting Buddhas and Bodhisattva figures (see Taddei and Verardi 1985 for a detailed analysis). Some of the *stūpa*s were decorated on the storey bodies and/or at the base of the dome with rows of figurines representing identical series of Buddhas (standing in *varadamudrā* with left hand raised at the shoulder level or seated in *dhyānimudrā*; Fig. 12), worked separately and then applied when the clay was still wet and perhaps with the help of some adhesive, more seldom by means of tenons. Stūpa 4 preserves a complete row of meditating Buddhas at the base of the dome but none on the bodies, from where nonetheless our figurines may possibly have come. The different types of figurines might well have alluded to specific meanings, discussion of which is nonetheless beyond the scope of the present article.

[12] Interestingly, the same hold on the attribute reappears in the mural painting of Tholing associated with walking Buddhas (and monks) as well as the more hieratic standing Buddhas performing miracles or receiving homage (for a quick review see Taerqin 2001: pls. 68, 71, 126, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 138: here, Fig. 13). Whether such a striking similarity is to be considered a matter of mere chance or as the perpetuation of a prototype can only be ascertained with further research and, hopefully, new discoveries. Nonetheless, it would not be surprising to discover further links and still unknown intermediate stages of transmission.

Published by the Society for South Asian Studies, The British Academy, London, 165-78.

Beal, Samuel (trans.) (1884) *Si-yu-ki. Buddhist Records of the Western World*. London: Trubner & Co., 1884 (repr. 1969, Delhi: Oriental Books Reprint Corporation).

Brown, Robert L. (1997) 'Narrative as Icon: The Jātaka Stories in Ancient Indian and Southeast Asian Architecture', in Juliane Schober (ed.), *Sacred Biography in the Buddhist Traditions of South and Southeast Asia*, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 64-109.

Ch'en, Kenneth (1968) 'Filial Piety in Chinese Buddhism', *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 28, 81-97.

Cowell, Eduard B. and R.A. Neil (eds) (1886) *The Divyāvadāna: A Collection of Early Buddhist Legends now first edited from the Nepalese Sanskrit mss. in Cambridge and Paris*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Deeg, Max (1995) 'Origins and Development of the Buddhist Pañcavārṣika - Part I: India and Central Asia', *Nagoya Studies in Indian Culture and Buddhism* 16, 67-90.

--- (1997) 'Origins and Development of the Buddhist Pañcavārṣika - Part II: China', *Nagoya Studies in Indian Culture and Buddhism* 18, 63-96.

Durt, Hubert (1998) 'Two Interpretations of Human-flesh Offering: Misdeed or Supreme Sacrifice', *Journal of the International College for Advanced Buddhist Studies* I, 57-83.

--- (1999) 'The Offering of the Children of Prince Viśvantara/Sudāna in the Chinese Tradition', *Journal of the International College for Advanced Buddhist Studies* II, 147-82.

--- (2000) 'Du lambeau de chair au démembrement. Le renoncement au corps dans le bouddhisme ancien', *Bulletin de l'École Française d'Extrême-Orient* 97/1, 7-22.

Falk, Harry (2005) 'The Buddha's Begging Bowl', *South Asian Archaeology 2001. Proceedings of the Sixteenth International Conference of the European Association of South Asian Archaeologists held in Collège de France, Paris, 2-6 July 2001*, edited by Catherine Jarrige and Vincent Lefèvre, Paris: Éditions Recherche sur les Civilisations, 445-52.

Filigenzi, Anna (1999) *Il Bodhisattva Maitreya nell'arte rupestre dello Swat. Appunti sull'iconografia e sul culto del Buddha venturo*. Roma: IsIAO (Conferenze IsIAO 13).

---- (2005) 'A Bronze Votive Stūpa of the Shahi Period: Art, Faith and Ideology in Late-Antique Buddhism', in Ute Franke-Vogt and Hans-Joachim Weisshaar (eds), *South Asian Archaeology 2003. Proceedings of the Seventeenth International Conference of the European Association of South Asian Archaeologists (7-11 July 2003, Bonn)* (Forschungen zur Archäologie Außereuropäischer Kulturen 1), Aachen: Linden Soft, 421-30.

--- (2008) 'Late Buddhist Art in Archaeological Context: Some Reflections on the Sanctuary of Tapa Sardar', in Claudine Bautze-Picron (ed.), *Archaeology of Religion,*

Issues of Hindu and Buddhist Iconography, *Proceedings of the Eighteenth International Conference on South Asian Archaeology held at The British Museum, London, 4-8 July 2005, volume 1,* General editor: Michael Willis, Published by the Society for South Asian Studies, The British Academy, London, 49-62.

Fontein, Jan (1967) *The Pilgrimage of Sudhana: A Study of Gaṇḍavyūha Illustrations in China, Japan and Java*, The Hague: Mouton & Co.

Gombrich, Richard (1985) 'The Vessantara Jātaka, the Rāmāyaṇa and the Dasaratha Jātaka', *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, vol. 105, 3 (*Indological Studies Dedicated to Daniel H.H. Ingalls*), 427-37.

Gómez, Luis O., and Hiram W. Woodward, Jr. (eds) (1981) *Barabuḍur: History and Significance of a Buddhist Monument*. Berkeley, Ca.: Berkeley, Buddhist Studies Series.

Jones, John J. (trans.) (1949-56) *The Mahāvastu*. London: Luzac & Company Ltd. (Sacred Books of the Buddhists XVI, XVIII, XIX).

Keyes, Charles F. (1977) 'Millenialism, Theravada Buddhism, and Thai Society', *Journal of Asian Studies* 36/2, 283-302.

Klimburg-Salter, Deborah (1982) *The Silk Route and the Diamond Path: Esoteric Buddhist Art on the Trans-Himalayan Trade Routes*. With contributions by M. Klimburg, D. Snellgrove, F. Staal, M. Strickmann, and C. Trungpa, Los Angeles: UCLA Art Council.

--- (1989) *The Kingdom of Bāmiyān, Buddhist Art and Culture of the Hindu-Kush*. Naples/Rome: Istituto Universitario Orientale - IsMEO.

--- (1997) *Tabo: A Lamp for the Kingdom. Early Indo-Tibetan Buddhist Art in the Western Himalaya*. Milan/New York: Skira/Thames and Hudson.

--- (2005) 'Mahākāśyapa and the Art of Bāmiyān', in Catherine Jarrige and Vincent Lefèvre (eds) *South Asian Archaeology 2001. Proceedings of the Sixteenth International Conference of the European Association of South Asian Archaeologists held in Collège de France, Paris, 2-6 July 2001*, Paris: Éditions Recherche sur les Civilisations, 535-49.

Krom, Nicolaas J. (1986) *Barabudur: Archaeological Description*. 5 vols., Delhi: Gian Publishing House (first ed. The Hague 1927)

Kuwayama, Sh. (2002) 'The Buddha's Bowl in Gandhara', in Id., *Across the Hindukush of the First Millennium: A Collection of the Papers*, Kyoto: Institute for Research in Humanities, 20-43.

Lamotte, Étienne (trans.) (1944-80) *Le Traité de la Grande Vertu de Sagesse de Nāgārjuna (Mahāprajñāpāramitā śāstra)*. Louvain : Bibliothèque du Muséon (vols. 1-2), Publications de l'Institut Orientaliste de Louvain 2, 12, 24, 5 vols.

Luczanitz, Christian (2005) 'The Bodhisattva with the Flask in Gandharan Narrative Scenes', *East and West* 55 (*Maurizio Taddei Memorial Volume*, ed. by Pierfrancesco Callieri and Anna Filigenzi), 163-88.

McGill, Forrest (1997) 'Painting the "Great Life"', in

Juliane Schober (ed.) *Sacred Biography in the Buddhist Traditions of South and Southeast Asia*, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 195-217.

Moens, J.L. (1950-51) 'Barabudur, Mendut en Pawon en hun onderlinge samenhang', *Tijdschrift voor de Indische Taai-, Land- en Volkenkunde*, Het Bataviaasch Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen, pp. 326–86 (see http://www.borobudur.tv/Barabudur_Mendut_Pawon.pdf for an English version by Mark Long).

Nattier, Jan (1988) *The Candragarbha-sūtra in Central and East Asia: Studies in a Buddhist Prophecy of Decline*. Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Dissertation Services.

--- (1991) *Once upon a Future Time*. Berkeley: Asian Humanities Press (Nazan Studies in Asian Religions).

Ohnuma, Reiko (1998) 'The Gift of the Body and the Gift of the Dharma', *History of Religions* 37/4, 323-59.

--- (2000) 'Internal and External Opposition to the Bodhisattva's Gift of His Body', *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 28/1, 43-75.

Pal, Pratapaditya (1975) *Bronzes of Kashmir*. Graz: Akademische Druck und Verlagsanstalt.

Rhys Davids, Thomas W. (trans.) (1925) *Buddhist Birth Stories (Jātaka Tales)*. London: G. Routledge and Sons (first ed. 1880).

Scherrer-Schaub, Cristina Anna (1999) 'Was Byaṅ chub sems dpa' a posthumous title of King Ye śes 'od? The Evidence of a Tabo colophon', in Cristina A. Scherrer-Schaub and Ernst Steinkellner (eds) *Tabo Studies II. Manuscripts, Texts, Inscriptions, and the Arts* (Serie Orientale Roma LXXXVII), Roma: IsIAO, 207-25.

Shinohara, Koichi (2004) 'The Story of the Buddha's Begging Bowl: Imagining a Biography and Sacred Places', in Phyllis Granoff and Koichi Shinohara (eds) *Pilgrim, Patrons and Place: Localizing Sanctity in Asian Religions*, Editorial Assistant Jack Laughlin, General Editor Neil McMullin, Vancouver-Toronto: UBC Press.

Silvi Antonini, Chiara and Maurizio Taddei (1981) 'Wall Paintings from Tapa Sardār, Ghazni', in Herbert Härtel (ed.), *South Asian archaeology, 1979: Papers from the Fifth International Conference of the Association of South Asian Archaeologists in Western Europe held in the Museum für Indische Kunst der staatlichen Museen Preussischer Kulturbesitz*, Berlin: Dietrich Reimer Verlag, 429-38.

Soekmono (1976) *Chandi Borobudur: A Monument of Mankind*, Assen/Amsterdam/ Paris: Van Gorcum/The Unesco Press.

Steinkellner, Ernst (1995) *Sudhana's Miraculous Journey in the Temple of Ta pho. The inscriptional text of the Tibetan Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra*. Edited with introductory remarks, Rome: IsIAO (Serie Orientale Roma LXXVI).

--- (1996) *A Short Guide to the Sudhana Frieze in the Temple of Ta pho. Published on the Occasion of the Monastery's Millennium*. (Arbeitskreis für tibetische und buddhistische Studien), Vienna: Universität Wien.

--- (1999) 'Notes on the Function of Two 11th-century Inscriptional sūtra Texts in Tabo: Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra and

Kṣitigarbhasūtra', in Cristina A. Scherrer-Schaub and Ernst Steinkellner (eds), *Tabo Studies II. Manuscripts, Texts, Inscriptions, and the Arts* (Serie Orientale Roma LXXXVII), Roma: IsIAO, 243-74.

Taddei, Maurizio (1968) 'Tapa Sardār: First Preliminary Report', *East and West* 18, 109-24.

--- (1974) 'A Note on the Parinirvāṇa Buddha at Tapa Sardār', in Johanna E. van Lohuizen-de Leeuw and J.M.M. Ubaghs (eds), *South Asian Archaeology 1973, Papers from the Second International Conference of the Association for the Promotion of South Asian Archaeology in Western Europe, held in the University of Amsterdam*, Leiden: E.J. Brill, 111-15.

--- (1992) 'The Bejewelled Buddha and Mahiṣāsuramardinī: Religion and Political Ideology in Pre-Muslim Afghanistan', in Catherine Jarrige (ed.) *South Asian Archaeology 1989: Papers from the Tenth International Conference of South Asian Archaeologists, held at Musée National des Arts Asiatiques - Guimet, Paris, France, 1989*, Madison, Wisconsin: Prehistory Press (Monographs in World Archaeology, 14), 457-64.

Taddei, Maurizio and Giovanni Verardi (1978) 'Tapa Sardār. Second Preliminary Report', *East and West,* New Series 28, 33-135.

--- (1985) 'Clay Stūpas and Thrones at Tapa Sardar, Ghazni (Afghanistan)', *Zinbun: Memoirs of the Research Institute for Humanistic Studies. Kyoto University* 20, 17-32, pls 1-17.

Taerqin, Chilie (2001) *Qiangu Sihui. Zhongguo Xizang Ali Gudai Bihua Xuanji (Masterpieces Throughout Ages. A Selected Collection of Ngari Ancient Frescoes of Tibet, China)*. Shenzhen: Xizang renmin chubanshe chuban faxing.

Voûte, Caesar and Mark Long (2008) *Borobudur, Pyramid of the Cosmic Buddha.* (Phot. by F.J. Burnama), New Delhi: D.K. Printworld (P.) Ltd.

Wayman, Alex (trans.) (1985) *Chanting the Names of Mañjuśrī. The Mañjuśrī-nāma-saṁgīti.* Boston - London: Shambala.

Wong, Dorothy C. (2004) *Chinese Steles: Pre-Buddhist and Buddhist Use of a Symbolic Form.* Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

--- (2007) 'The Huayan/Kegon/Hwaŏm Paintings in East Asia', in Imre Hamar (ed.), *Reflecting Mirrors: Perspectives on Huayan Buddhism*, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 337-84.

Zwalf, Wladimir (1996) *A Catalogue of the Gandhāra Sculpture in the British Museum.* vol. I: text, vol. II: plates, London: British Museum Press.

Chapter 4.
Aspects of the Earliest Buddha Images in Gandhāra

Akira Miyaji

There are many arguments over 'the origin of the Buddha image': when, where and how was the first image of Buddha created? We have numerous arguments since the dispute between A. Foucher and A.K. Coomaraswamy, but we cannot attain any settlement on this issue. The arguments have been mainly focused on several points, i.e. that the Buddha image originated in Gandhāra or Mathurā, that the earliest image should be dated before or after the Kuṣāṇa period, why and how the Buddha image was created, and so forth. Since the end of World War II, scholars like J. van Lohuizen-de Leeuw (1949), J. Marshall (1960), and O. Takata (1967) have studied this issue in detail. However, we cannot convincingly settle the dispute on 'the origin of the Buddha image', conversely the discussions on this topic grow further heated in the recent years (Miyaji 1997).

The difficulties to date the earliest Buddha images could be reasoned by the following aspects: sculptural materials discovered with the authentic researching methods of stratigraphy and chronology are scarce; the number of images with an inscription bearing a date is limited; the historicity of the production places of images is obscure, and so on. Despite these difficulties, the archaeological findings and a comparative stylistic study of the images are essential to clarify the origin of the Buddha image and the characteristic features of the earliest images. In the chronological study of the Gandhāran sculptures, J. Marshall has held an important role through his excavations at Taxila; especially, the discovery of the city-site at Sirkap that brought out notable achievement in revealing the significant features of the Śaka and the Indo-Parthian periods when the Buddha image might have been generated thereabouts (Marshall 1951). Based on his findings from Taxila, Marshall (1960) published *The Buddhist Art of Gandhāra* in his later years; O. Takata (1967) largely followed this work in his chronological study on the Gandhāran art.

Thereafter, the Italian archaeological mission led by G. Tucci of IsMEO (at present reformed as Istituto Italiano per l'Africa e l'Oriente) conducted archaeological research in Swāt (Faccenna 1964). That extensive excavation has gained many achievements, comparatively with the excavations of Marshall at Taxila. Through the excavations by the Italian mission, a city-site of Udegram and the Buddhist sites of Butkara I, Panr, Saidu Sharif I were discovered. Notably, the excavation at Butkara I brought out many important findings of sculptures which are valuable materials for the chronological study of the Gandhāran art (Faccenna 1962/64 and 1980/81). D. Faccenna, scholar in charge of that excavation, published a paper where he stylistically classified those stone sculptures into three groups and provided approximate dating of them using stratigraphy (Faccenna 1974).

J. E. van Lohuizen-de Leeuw (1981) strongly argued that the Buddha image actually originated in Mathurā; following the study of Faccenna, she published a noticeable study titled, 'New evidence with regard to the origin of the Buddha image' in 1981, which has given a noteworthy impact to the studies on this issue thereafter.

Here, based on the study of Faccenna on the findings from Butkara I, I wish to discuss on the features in the earliest Buddhist art from Gandhāra, mainly focusing on the issue of the genesis of the Buddha image.[1] For this present study, I wish to reflect recent studies as done by J. van Lohuizen-de Leeuw (1981), G. Fussman (1987) and M. Carter (1993) etc., further I want to present a comparative study with the early art of ancient India, in particularly the sculptures from Bhārhut, Bodhgayā and Sāñchī. In the study on the genesis of the Gandhāran Buddha, scholars conventionally emphasize on an influence from Hellenistic and Roman arts; on the other side, they try to find an influence of the Buddha image from Mathurā as seen in the study of Lohuizen-de Leeuw. As to me, I am convinced that a comparison with the early art of ancient India is inevitable to understand the earliest features of the Gandhāran art; so to speak, the assimilation of elements from the early art of ancient India and from Hellenism constitute important evidences revealing unknown features related to the emergence of the Gandhāran art.

a. A Buddha figure shown on the golden coin from Tillya-tepe

In a discussion bearing on the origin of the Buddha image, recent noteworthy findings on this subject should be introduced. A collaborative project of the Soviet Union and Afghanistan has discovered seven tombs of nomad kings at Tillya-tepe in Shibarghan, the northern part of Afghanistan, in 1978. Though one of these tombs was badly damaged, many treasures were found from the other six tombs (Sarianidi 1983 and 1985). Majority of those findings were

---

[1]   Also the latest study by Faccenna (2007) is very useful.

Fig.1a – A golden coin (one side) inscribed as 'He turns the dharmacakra'. From Tillya-tepe. The Kabul Museum. (after Sarianidi 1985: pl.131).

golden ornament, but swords, mirrors (mirrors of the former Han dynasty) also coins were unearthed; especially, the gold coins are of great importance such as the ones of Mithridates II and Phraates IV of Parthia, of Tiberius in Rome, and of Indian type as introduced below. Based on those findings, it is assumed that the tombs were closed before the middle of the first century AD; the buried people are regarded as Great Yuezhi or Early Kuṣāṇa (Sarianidi 1985; Higuchi 1981; Odani 1996). Among those findings, one golden coin of Indian type from the Tomb IV is extremely important: it carries a figure who is turning the *dharmacakra* (Sarianidi 1985: pl.131), that could be the earliest image of Buddha in an anthropomorphic form known until now.

On the one side of that coin, we can see a person turning the *dharmacakra* with his hand and an inscription in Kharoṣṭhī minted as 'He turns the *dharmacakra* (*dharmacakraṃ pravartati*)'[2] (Fussman 1987: 71-72; Sadakata 1998: 228-32) (Fig. 1a). The figure is represented like a Greek hero wearing an animal skin from the left shoulder to the waist (he appears to have a tail, which might be the end of the animal skin). There is a possibility that this figure could be modelled on Herakles; however, as indicated in the inscription, that figure without any doubts is of the Buddha.[3] The gesture of that figure, turning the *dharmacakra*, reminds us of the image of Cakravarti-rāja who is mentioned in the Buddhist text as an ideal ruler of the world; eventually, this figure draws our attention to the Buddha image that has assimilated the images of the Cakravarti-rāja and the Greek hero.

The other side of this coin has an inscription in Kharoṣṭhī stating 'the lion that chased away fear (*siho vigadabhayo*)' together with an emblem of *triratna* and the figure of a lion (Fig. 1b). Lion is an allegorical representation of the Buddha regarded as 'lion of the Śākyas (Śākyasiṃha)' and the emblem of the *triratna* is a mark to symbolize the Three Jewels (Buddha, *dharma* and *saṃgha*), which can be seen in the early Buddhist art of ancient India. This memorial coin was probably produced in northwest India, and is dated to the beginning of the first century AD based on the dating of the tombs at Tillya-tepe and the style of the inscription. In fact, the figure of Buddha which combines features of the heroic deity of Greece and of the allegoric representation of Buddha in the form of a lion is not observed anywhere else; thus, we can presume that this figure of Buddha might have been a trial representation at the earliest phase. Although such representation of Buddha was not developed in the similar way, it is significantly suggestive to understand the early representation of the Buddha where features of the Cakravarti-rāja and the lion were included.

Fig.1b – A golden coin (the other side) inscribed as 'the lion who chased away fear'. From Tillya-tepe. The Kabul Museum. (after Sarianidi 1985: pl.131)

---

[2]   Here I follow the interpretation by Sadakata (1998).

[3]   K. Tanabe (2008) argues in his recent paper that the figure on the golden coin from Tillya-tepe is not he Buddha. However, I am convinced that the man who is touching and rolling the *dharmacakra* there ('He turns the *dharmacakra*') should be the Buddha.

b. Findings from the excavation at Butkara I in Swāt

The excavations of the Buddhist sites in Swāt which were conducted by the Italian archaeological mission brought out important information for the study on the art history of Gandhāra, especially excavation revealed a Buddhist temple at Butkara I, of large size, which was maintained and developed for many centuries.

The temple at Butkara had a wide precinct; in the centre, a great *stūpa* was erected and about 227 constructions surrounded that *stūpa* such as small *stūpa*s, monasteries and pillars. The result of the excavations revealed that this temple was rebuilt and repaired because of natural collapse repeatedly between the third century BC and the tenth century AD (Faccenna 1980/1981).

According to the excavator, the great *stūpa* in the centre may have been originally created in the Mauryan period of the third century BC; afterwards it could have been enlarged three times (the second phase of construction was made between the end of the second century BC and the beginning of the first century BC; the third phase between the end of the first century BC and the beginning of the first century AD; and the fourth phase in the first half of the fourth century AD); it was restored in the seventh to eighth century and finally destroyed by the Muslim invasion of the Ghaznaid in the eleventh century. Among the different phases of constructions, in the third and the fourth phases the great *stūpa* was prominently rebuilt and it was restored on a large scale after the fourth phase, which indicates certain prosperity in those periods. This chronology was made using the stratigraphy of the findings, especially the dating of the excavated coins. Although it is not completely determined, that chronology has brought to light the historicity of Gandhāra.

The stone sculptures of Butkara I were already introduced in a detailed catalogue of two volumes (Faccenna 1962/64); however, the text part including the research papers has not been published so far and the observations of the Italian mission is expected to be published in the future. Meanwhile, as mentioned above, Faccenna (1974) has presented a significant paper on many findings of the stone sculptures; here he classified them into three groups as follows:

Group I – The figures tend to flatten out in the background with stiffened limbs; the position is rather angular and the muscular volumes are quite summary, and rather undefined; the big head has large eyes with iris and pupils incised, sometimes attaining great abstraction, enclosed in a compact block. The drapery folds are incised in fine parallel lines, with a strong sensibility in drawing, so that they at times predominate over the disorganized volumes of the body.

Group II – The group shows a more substantial expression of the image; the drapery descends more freely and the surfaces have greater richness of tone; there is a sense of form that might be defined as clearly naturalistic. It is expressed in a whole series of extrinsic elements, the type of hair-do, the eyes without incised pupils, some types of turbans, etc. The incised pupils appear at a given moment in a particular series that shows a great sense of style and a refined sensibility.

Group III – The group shows the images carved with broad volumes, the body heavy and fleshy, the head round, the torso wide, the drapery heavy and with simplified folds arranged in a slightly mannerist way; this style might be called stereometric. It, too, is characterized by its own distinct series of extrinsic elements.

Analyzing the sculptures from Butkara I as above, Faccenna pointed out that the Group I is stylistically similar to the reliefs on the *stūpa*s 14 and 17, and presumed that they might have belonged to the earliest phase; eventually, they could be dated to the first half of the first century AD,[4] because the third phase of the construction in the great *stūpa* and the erection of the *stūpa*s 14 and 17 might have been contemporaneous from the view of stratigraphy (Faccenna 1974 and 2007).

Until now, there is an inclination to consider that the Gandhāran Buddha was generated under a strong influence from the art of Hellenism and the image of Buddha with naturalistic representation might have been produced at the earliest phase of the Gandhāran art, whereas the sculptures, which Faccenna classified into the Group I, outstandingly show un-naturalistic features, so to speak, archaic features, that he named as the 'drawing' style. I assume that such art occurred under the influence from the early art of ancient India and developed in northwest India. In fact, a close relationship can be perceived in those sculptures with the art-style of the Śaka-Parthian period as seen in the sculptures that Marshall discovered from Taxila (Marshall 1960: 17-32, figs.13-39; Fabrègues 1987: 33-43). In addition, those sculptures of the Group I from Butkara I contain figures of devotees, Bodhisattvas, narrative stories of Buddha's life, and also the figure of Buddha.

The themes and the figures of the sculptures, which Faccenna classified in the Group I, are various. Furthermore, we can notice the diversity of styles in those sculptures if we observe them in detail. Faccenna considered them as being produced contemporaneously, however, it is necessary to re-examine them carefully. Here, I wish to introduce certain sculptures from the Group I which, I am sure, can be taken as the earliest examples. With reference to comparable sculptures of Gandhāra, I want to search the earliest features of the Buddhist art in Gandhāra. Hereinafter, the sculptures are to be discussed respectively based on their subjects: a decorative motif, a figure of Bodhisattva, the narrative relief depicting the life of Buddha, an an-iconic representation of

---

4   The dating follows the latest study by Faccenna (2007).

Fig. 2a – A frieze with lotus motif. From Butkara I. (after Faccenna 1962: pl.CCXXXI(a)).

Fig. 2b – A frieze with lotus motif. From Sāñchī. (after Andō 2003: pl.268)

Fig. 2c – A frieze with lotus motif. Gandhāra. Private Collection, Japan. (after Kurita 2003: II, pl. 679).
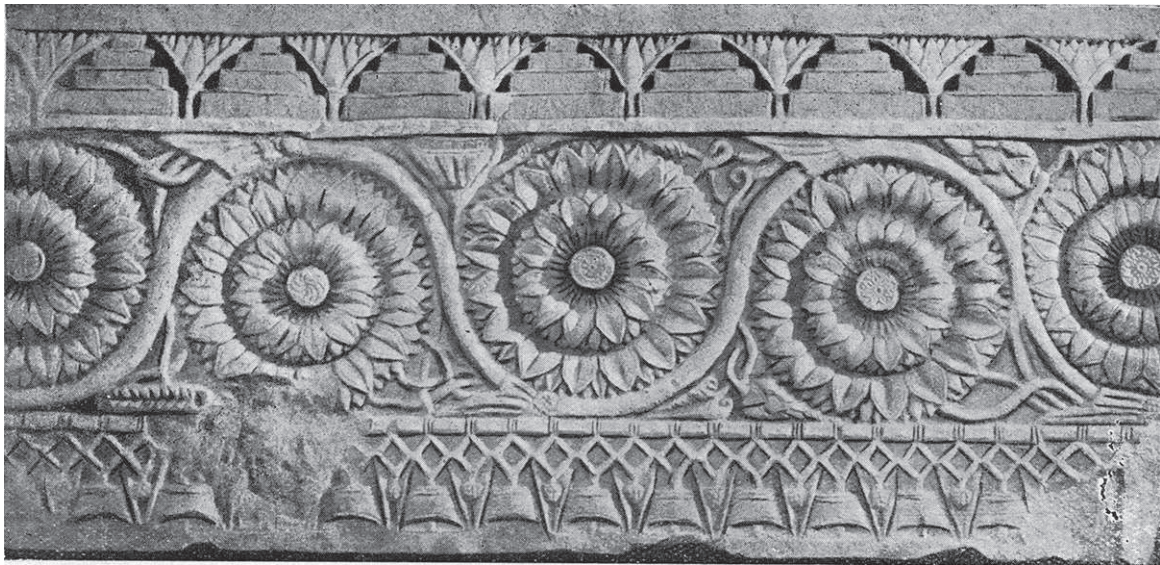
Fig. 3a – A frieze with lotus motif. From Bhārhut. (after Cunningham 1962: pl. XL).

Fig. 3b – A frieze with lotus motif. From Butkara I. (after Faccenna 1962/1964: pl.CCCXLVII(b)).

Buddha, and a figure of Buddha appearing in the scene of 'the Gods entreating the Buddha to preach'.

c. A decorative motif

In the sculptures of Group I, there is a fragment of the *dharmacakra* (Faccenna 1962: pl.CCXXXI (a) and 2007: fig.7.9). On that relief, full blossomed lotus flowers are displayed in line, and in between each of those flowers we can see images of a water lily in profile (Fig. 2a). The lotus has eight petals with a pistil in the centre and tips of other petals are seen between them. Such representation of lotus was popular in the early art of ancient India; a similar frieze can be seen on the railing of *stūpa* 2 and the *toraṇa* of *stūpa* 1 at Sāñchī (Marshall and Foucher 1940: II, pl.23b; III, pls.74 a, 103f) (Fig. 2b) and also on the railing from Bodhgayā (Coomaraswamy 1935: pl. XLI 1 and 3). Moreover, it can be found out in a relief from Gandhāra (private collection in Japan; Kurita 2003: II, pl. 679) (Fig. 2c).

And a railing coping from Bhārhut has another motif of lotus flower where a wavy scroll of lotus stalk is surrounding the full blossomed flower (Cunningham 1962: pl. XL) (Fig. 3a). Notably, such a representation appears also on reliefs from Butkara I and other Gandhāran sites (Faccenna 1962/1964: pls. CCCXLVII, CCCXLVIII; Foucher 1905: figs. 96, 97; Kurita 2003: II, pl.680) (Fig. 3b). In both reliefs from Bhārhut and Butkara I, we can see the junction (*parvan*) on the lotus stalk where the flowers are attached. And regarding this particular motif, we can say that the tradition of Bhārhut might have been accepted in Gandhāra, especially in Butkara I.

As for the botanical motifs in the Gandhāran art, a lot of Hellenistic motifs are known such as palmette, acanthus, scrolling plant, vine etc. On the other hand, there are some reliefs in the earliest art of Gandhāra that possess the lotus motif seen in the early art of ancient India as introduced above.

29

From the sculptures of Group I from Butkara I, we have one relief which shows a male devotee standing within the *toraṇa* of Indian style carrying a reliquary-like object (Faccenna 1962: pl. CXLI). On the figure of the devotee, we can perceive the distinguished grasp to simplify the body and the characteristic representation of a drapery in the shawl and the *dhotī* on which the repetition of lines are carved. What is noteworthy in this relief is the representation of the *toraṇa*: two arched cross-bars supported by two pillars, having the end beams with the shape of scroll; a motif combined with the lotus flower and *triratna* is crowning the pillars (the right one is damaged); and the upper cross-bar is topped by a palmette motif. Although the *toraṇa* from Bhārhut had three cross-bars, the design of the *toraṇa* on

the relief from Butkara I is really similar to the *toraṇa* of Bhārhut (Cunningham 1962: pl. VI).

Observing the lotus motif and the design of *toraṇa* as above, in the Gandhāran art at the earliest phase we can recognize a certain influence from the early art of ancient India like Bhārhut and Sāñchī.

d. A figure of Bodhisattva

In the sculptures of Group I from Butkara I, a few examples are there which might have been depicting the Bodhisattva Śākyamuni (Faccenna 1962: pls. CXXXVII, CXLIII, CXLVIII, CLVI, CLXIX). One of them is a standing

Fig. 4 – A fragment of a standing figure of Bodhisattva. From Butkara I. (after Faccenna 1962: pl.CXLIII).

Bodhisattva prominently displayed (Fig. 4); he raises up the right hand in *abhayamudrā*, placing the left hand on the waist, and wearing a simple necklace on the naked upper body (the lower part of the body is damaged). For the parasol above the head and the frontal posture showing the *abhayamudrā*, this figure must be a Bodhisattva. On the wide-opened and almond-shaped eyes, pupils are carved with line; the eyebrow without break in the middle is slightly curving upwards to the end. Also a moustache can be seen on the face of this Bodhisattva.

A noteworthy feature in this figure of the Bodhisattva is the armlet seen on the right arm. This is formed as an acanthus leaf, which is an old type of armlet as seen in the figures of the Yakṣa from Bhārhut (Fig. 5) (Coomaraswamy 1956: figs 17-22, 40, 42), or the *dvārapālas* in the early caves of the western India Bhājā and Pitalkhora (Dehejia1972: pls 9, 11, 13, 20). That is clearly different from the armlet which is formed with circle and square shapes with floral decoration as seen in common images of Bodhisattva from Gandhāra.

A shawl hanging from the left shoulder of the Bodhisattva is characteristically represented with layers of cloth; the folded cloth is tied around the left shoulder. Such representation of the shawl can be also found out in the figures of *deva*s from Bhārhut (cf. Fig.10). Meanwhile, in most figures of Bodhisattva from Gandhāra, a shawl is loosely covering the left shoulder to the left elbow without any folds on the shoulder. As observed later, that representation of a shawl as seen in this standing Bodhisattva from Butkara I is adopted by the Buddha figure in the earliest phase.

The turban headgear in this image of Bodhisattva might have been modelled on the actual turban headgear which the Indian royalty or nobility wore in Gandhāra at that time. The headgear is somewhat similar to the turban on the figures of the kings and *deva*s in the reliefs from Bhārhut and Sāñchī (cf. the *dvārapāla*s of *stūpa* I at Sāñchī; Marshall and Foucher1940: II, pls 36ab, 50a, 52b etc.). At the same time, the headgear in the relief of Butkara I is a crown-like turban, an ornament in fan shape is topped and a large tapering tenon is attached at the centre. Although this turban headgear basically resembles those seen in most Bodhisattva images from Gandhāra, there are differences among them: most of the turban headgears of the Gandhāran Bodhisattvas are splendidly decorated with motifs such as a jewel, an animal or a botanical element, while various patterns are applied on the tapering tenon. On the contrary, the headgear of the concerned Bodhisattva from Butkara I is simplified, which can be considered as prototype to the turban headgear of the Gandhāran Bodhisattvas. Such turban headgear is also seen in one male head in stucco from Sirkap of Taxila, which Marshall identified as a Bodhisattva image of the Indo-Parthian period (Marshall 1960: figs 38, 39).

As observed above, in the representation of ornaments and dressing, the figure of Bodhisattva from Butkara I can be

Fig. 5 – A standing figure of Yakṣa (Kubera). From Bhārhut. Indian Museum, Kolkata. (after Koezuka and Miyaji eds. 2000: pl.18)

very much compared to the figures of *deva*s and kings from Bhārhut and Sāñchī which might have been earlier than the common images of Bodhisattva from Gandhāra; thus, this could be the Bodhisattva figure in its earliest phase.

e. The narrative reliefs depicting the life of Buddha

Now, as example of the narrative reliefs depicting the Buddha's life in Group I of the findings from Butkara I, we observe one relief with the scene of 'the renunciation' (Fig. 6). In the centre of this relief, Yaśodharā, wife of Siddhārtha, is sleeping on a bed, and Siddhārtha is sitting up on that bed (the face is damaged); they are surrounded by many female musicians and servants. The groom Chandaka is also present. This scene presents the moment when Siddhārtha is about to leave the palace. Several features can be pointed out as characteristics of this narrative relief: Queen Yaśodharā is shown with the physical allure of Indian style; the frame is filled with figures of people; they are basically displayed with the combination of front, back or side view in the frame where the representation of depth in the space is lacking; physical representation is voluminous, at the same time, simplified; drapery and hair are neatly expressed with repetition of parallel lines.

The features are here related to the early art of Central India, especially to the narrative reliefs from Bhārhut. For example, one relief with the scene of 'preaching at Trāyastriṃśa heaven' from Bhārhut (Coomaraswamy 1956: fig.34) exhibits the Buddha at the centre in the an-iconic

Fig. 6 – The scene of 'the Renunciation'. From Butkara I. Archaeological Museum, Swāt. (after Faccenna 1962: pl.CLII(a)).

form of the bodhi tree and the sacred platform, and the figures of *deva*s filling the frame and horizontally installed in three lines. The *deva*s in the lower line are seated, showing the back or the side of their bodies, while the ones in the middle and the upper lines are congested, showing only the front of their faces. Thus, like in this relief, the composition combining figures seen in front, back and side views and arranging them horizontally can be seen in reliefs from Bhārhut.

Although the relief from Butkara I depicting 'the renunciation' presents more freedom in the representation of the individual figures, it basically followed the traditional composition from Bhārhut, where figures are horizontally and densely arranged in the frame. This can be better clarified if we compare it with the relief of 'the renunciation' in the Gandhāran art in its mature period. For example in one panel from Jamrūd (National Museum

of Pakistan at Karachi), it is horizontally divided into two registers with the scenes of 'life in the palace' and 'the renunciation' (Ingholt and Lyons 1957: pl. 39; Kurita 2003: I, p1-XII); here, we understand that a perspective from Hellenistic and Roman arts has been adopted. In the lower register of that panel, we see Yaśodharā sleeping on the bed in the palace which is represented within the architectural structure, Siddhārtha sitting up on the bed and calling his groom Chandaka who responds to Siddhārtha, and sleeping musicians and standing servants (*yāvanīs*) under the niches. These figures are displayed with skilful representation of depth in the space. On the other hand, the three dimensional representation cannot be perceived in the scene of 'the renunciation' from Butkara I, which is closer to the composition of the early art of ancient India. Also in the relief from Butkara I, the garment shows the parallel lines of the folds. Although this relief does not have

*Fig. 7 – The scene of 'Descent from Trāyastriṃśa Heaven'. From Butkara I. Archaeological
Museum, Swāt. (after Tōbu Museum of Art et al. 1998: pl.4).*

the sharpness seen in the reliefs from Bhārhut, both reliefs shared the same way of representing the garment.

Incidentally, the reliefs from Butkara I contain scenes narrating mainly the boyhood and the youth of Siddhārtha like 'Siddhārtha going to school', 'Engagement', 'Four encounters', 'Renunciation', 'Great departure', 'Chandaka and Kanthaka return to the palace' (Faccenna 1974). From those reliefs, the preaching of Buddha after the Enlightenment and the instructing scenes through miraculous events are missing; thus, we can suppose that the scenes following the Buddha's Enlightenment might have been avoided in Gandhāran art in the earliest period. In the early art of ancient India, Buddha has been shown with symbolic representation throughout from the birth to the *parinirvāṇa*. Whereas Gandhāran art has differentiated Siddhārtha from the Buddha before and after the Enlightenment, one might have hesitated in the early phase to illustrate the anthropomorphic form of the Buddha who was the enlightened One, or the *saṃgha* might have felt scruples to allow such a representation. Actually, we can find out an-iconic forms of the Buddha in the Gandhāran reliefs depicting the life of Buddha even

after the Enlightenment.[5] Conventionally, it has been considered that the Buddha should be shown only in an anthropomorphic form from the beginning of the Gandhāran art. However, at present we have new findings showing the an-iconic representation of the Buddha from this region that is greatly suggestive to the understanding of the Buddhism in Gandhāra. Next, we examine the an-iconic representation of Buddha in Gandhāra.

f. The an-iconic representation of the Buddha

First, we consider one relief with the scene of 'Descent from Trāyastriṃśa heaven' from Butkara I (Fig. 7). This scene depicts the episode when after the Enlightenment Śākyamuni preached to his late mother in the Trāyastriṃśa heaven, and descended from heaven to earth through stairs. In this panel, the presence of Buddha is suggested by the footprints on the lower part of the middle stairs. There, the three lines of stairs are represented with three-quarter view and we can see Indra wearing a turban headgear and showing *añjalimudrā*, the palms joined to each other, and standing at the right side of the panel and at the left side

---

[5]   In this regard it is suggestive that 'Shih-sung-lü' (T23: 352a) tells 'Although the image of Buddha should not be created, but the image of Bodhisattva can be created'.

Fig. 8 – The scene of 'Brahmā and Indra Worship the Solar Disc'. From Swāt. British Museum, London. (after Tōbu Museum of Art et al. 1998: pl.5)

Brahmā with tied-up hair showing *añjalimudrā*. The person who is kneeling in front of the footprints of Buddha might be a monk probably Śāriputra who was welcoming the return of Buddha.[6] This episode can be found out in the reliefs from Bhārhut and Sāñchī (Coomaraswamy 1956: fig. 31; Marshall and Foucher 1940: pl. 34c); in this way, the presence of Buddha is shown by the expression of footprints in the Bhārhut relief. Thus, the relief from Butkara I might have been based on that artistic tradition.

Meanwhile, there are differences in the representation of the 'descent from Trāyastriṃśa heaven' among the reliefs of Bhārhut, Sāñchī and Butkara I. In Bhārhut and Sāñchī, the stairs surrounded by praising *deva*s and people are shown in the front view; however, in Butkara I the stairs are shown with three-quarter view and the perspective is intentionally created in the frame. Also in the relief of Butkara I, the number of characters related to that episode is strongly reduced: the pair of Indra and Brahmā is outstandingly exhibited. This relief in Group I can be considered as belonging to the earliest phase from a stylistic point of view.

---

[6]   This figure might be Utpalavarṇā, a nun who was incarnated as Cakravarti-rāja. However, it is difficult to identify this figure as a nun: therefore, it would be proper to understand it as a monk Śāriputra (cf. Schlingloff 2000: I, 481).

Fig. 9 – The scene of 'the Gods Entreat the Buddha to Preach'. From Swāt. Museum of Asian Art, Berlin. (after Tōbu Museum of Art et al. 1998: pl.28)

Not only in Butkara I but also in other places of Gandhāra, we can find out the an-iconic representation of the Buddha that is suggesting the presence of Buddha by a solar disc, not by a bodhi tree or a sacred platform as commonly seen in Central India. As for that representation, we observe one panel depicting the scene where 'Brahmā and Indra worship the solar disc' in the British Museum (Zwalf 1996: I, 180; II, pl.197) (Fig. 8). In that panel, a solar disc radiating the light shown by the saw-tooth motif is seen on the square plinth surmounted by a bodhi tree with leaves. Here, Indra wearing a turban headgear, necklace and earrings, stands at the right side of the solar disc, and Brahmā in tied-up hair at the left side, both are worshipping the solar disc in *añjalimudrā*. Also at the upper corner of that panel, heavenly *deva*s with wings are offering flowers and

praising. Indra and Brahmā in this panel are close to the representation in the 'descent from Trāyastriṃśa heaven' from Butkara I mentioned above (Fig. 7). The figures of Brahmā and Indra are clearly delineated and cut and their physical representation is realistic whereas their way of dressing, the linear representation of drapery and the facial expression reveal that this might be a Buddhist relief of the earliest phase. Although the precise place of discovery remains unknown, this relief could have been produced in Swāt.

The same composition as in this relief 'Brahmā and Indra worshipping the solar disc' can be seen in another panel which depicts the scene of 'the Gods entreating the Buddha to preach' (Museum of Asian Art in Berlin) (Fig. 9), for

these panels probably shared the same theme. 'The Gods entreating the Buddha to preach' is an episode narrating that the gods requested the Buddha to preach after his Enlightenment. After attaining the Enlightenment under the bodhi tree, the Buddha hesitated to preach about the *dharma* to the people, because he thought that it was difficult to explain the profound experience of his Enlightenment; at that moment gods like Brahmā told him that his teaching could bring out the enlightened world to the people and requested the Buddha to preach.

One question can be raised here: why was the Buddha displayed as a solar disc in the scene of 'the Gods entreating the Buddha to preach'? Preaching the *dharma* is not merely teaching the people; it indicates that as the Sun turns around the earth and provides the light for maintaining the world, similarly the *dharmacakra* rotates and the *dharma* of Buddha sustains the world. At that time, an order should be given to the dark and chaotic world, and then the world with light could be established and maintained (Coomaraswamy 1935: 29-30). This might be the reason why a solar disc, an indication of the Sun, suggested not only the presence of the Buddha but also the Buddha's preaching of the *dharma*.[7]

In India, the *dharmacakra* has symbolized the truth (*dharma*) which Buddha preached since the earlier period as seen in the Aśoka Pillar from Sārnāth (there a *dharmacakra* originally surmounted four lions squatting back to back) whereas the representation of a solar disc symbolizing Buddha or his *dharma* is unknown before the Gandhāran example.[8] Therefore, we can assume that the Iranian concept *hvarnah* (glory) symbolized by a ring or solar disc might have influenced the representation of the Buddha in Gandhāra at the earliest phase, when a solar disc suggested the Buddha;[9] notably, such representation to super-humanize the Buddha is different from the tradition that is seen inside India (bodhi tree and sacred altar etc.).

g. A figure of Buddha in the scene of 'the Gods entreating the Buddha to preach'

We observe here a Buddha figure belonging to the early phase of Gandhāran art illustrating the episode of 'the Gods entreating the Buddha to preach' (Fig. 9), and an an-iconic representation of the scene showing 'Brahmā and Indra worshiping the solar disc' was introduced in the above discussion. Both panels share the same composition and style. In this relief, a seated figure of the Buddha with *dhyānamudrā* is displayed in the centre instead of the solar disc. Even though the discovered place is unknown, we can assume that this relief was also produced in Swāt

Fig. 10 – A detail of the relief depicting the 'Descent from Trāyastriṃśa Heaven'. From Bhārhut. Indian Museum, Kolkata. (after Koezuka and Miyaji eds. 2000: pl. 30).

considering the material, greenish schist, and the style. Under a bodhi tree, Śākyamuni is seated in *padmāsana* on the pedestal which is covered by grass. Indra wearing a turban headgear at the left side of Śākyamuni and Brahmā with tied-up hair and beard at his right are worshipping Śākyamuni with *añjalimudrā*.

The Buddha in this relief is shown with a round shaped face, wide opened eyes, neatly tied-up hair, naked upper body, and a shawl covering his left shoulder falling to the waist. The features of this Buddha are clearly different from common Gandhāran images of the Buddha which show a thick *saṅghāṭī*, wavy hair and the chiselled face like a western man; especially, it is interesting to see that this figure of Buddha wears only a shawl on the naked upper body, as Brahmā and Indra do. Moreover, the shawl turned and folded in a loop on the left shoulder can be similarly seen on the figures of *deva*s in the relief from Bhārhut as mentioned above (Fig. 10) and a *deva* carved on a bracket for garland from Taxila (Fig. 11). Also in the concerned relief, the drapery of the shawls and *dhotī*s which the Buddha, Brahmā and Indra wear is rendered through neatly repeated parallel lines. On the other hand, in this relief we can perceive the muscular structure grasped in the physical representation of the Buddha, which might have

---

7   Quagliotti (1991/1992) also published an interesting paper on the representation of the solar disc as the Buddha.
8   Among the railings of the Kuṣāṇa period from Mathurā, there is one relief which the Buddha is symbolized by a solar disc that could be influenced by the Gandhāra art (Nara Prefectural Museum of Art et al. 1999: pl. 78).
9   G. Itō (1979) pointed out the influence of *hvarnah* from Iran to the establishment of halo in the Buddha image.

Fig. 11 – A bracket for garland. From Taxila. British Museum, London. (after Nara Prefectural Museum of Art et al. 1999: pl. 62).

been following the tradition of Hellenism, different from the Indian tradition. Incidentally, this figure of Buddha does not carry a halo, but a necklace, symbolizing the prince-hood of Śākyamuni, hangs in the bodhi-tree.

In the sculptures belonging to Group I of Butkara I, the figures of Buddha mainly appear in the reliefs with the composition of the Buddha flanked by Brahmā and Indra together with other *deva*s; moreover, most of those reliefs have the theme of 'the Gods entreating the Buddha to preach'. Among them, we should mention one damaged relief which is carved skilfully (Fig. 12).

In the relief, the Buddha, who originally might have

Fig.12 – A fragment of the relief depicting 'the Gods Entreat the Buddha to Preach'. From Butkara I. Archaeological Museum, Swāt. (after Faccenna 1962: pl. CCVI).

Fig.13 – The scene of 'the Gods Entreat the Buddha to Preach'. From Loriyan Tangai. Indian Museum, Kolkata. (after Nara Prefectural Museum of Art et al. 1999: pl. 60).

displayed the *dhyānamudrā*, is shown in the centre under the tree branching forth near the halo. Two *deva*s are worshipping with hands in *añjalimudrā* at the right side of the panel and in the upper part a cupid-like *deva* is flying with wings and offering flowers. The *deva* with a turban headgear who is worshipping next to the Buddha might be Indra. The hair of the Buddha is neatly tied and knotted on the top of his head. He has a round shaped face, wide opened eyes and a round *ūrṇā* carved on his forehead.

His upper body is naked and a shawl is placed on his left shoulder which is folded in loop.

Two other reliefs from Loriyan Tangai are artistically similar to the panel of 'the Gods entreating the Buddha to preach' from Swāt: one is at present stored in the Indian Museum at Kolkata (Nara Prefectural Museum of Art et al. 1999: pl.60; van Lohuizen-de Leeuw1981: fig.7) and the other in the Lahore Museum (Tokyo National Museum et al. 2002: pl. 26; van Lohuizen-de Leeuw 1981: fig.6). Those reliefs also depict the episode of 'the Gods entreating the Buddha to preach' and from their style of representation we can regard that they illustrate the Buddha figure in the earliest phase (Fig. 13). Loriyan Tangai is geographically close to Swāt, so that those reliefs might have been produced under the influence coming from the valley.

Both reliefs narrating 'the Gods entreating the Buddha to preach' are close to the early art of ancient India as seen from the face of the Buddha, the shawl hanging from his left shoulder, the drapery represented with the neat repetition of parallel lines, and the row of superimposed lotus flowers in the lower part of the panel, which is also seen on the outer side of the south railing at Bodhgaya (see Coomaraswamy 1935: pl. LXI.2). At the same time, the representation and the arrangement of *deva*s surrounding the Buddha intentionally display a natural perspective within the composition; in addition, muscular structure is grasped in the physical representation of the Buddha, reflecting thus the adoption of Hellenistic ways of carving.

We observed above several examples with a figure of Buddha that could have belonged to the Gandhāran art in its earliest phase and that most of them are related to the episode of 'the Gods entreating the Buddha to preach' regarding the theme and composition. Among the toilet-trays dating back to the earliest period of Gandhāran art, one of them shows also this episode (Kurita 2003: I, pl. 252; Nara Prefectural Museum of Art et al. 1999: pl. 61). Therefore, we can regard the episode of 'the Gods entreating the Buddha to preach' as an important theme when the figure of Buddha in its anthropomorphic form appeared in the earliest phase of the art of Gandhāra. As already mentioned, an example shows the Buddha in this scene depicted by a solar disc as if the sermon of the Buddha could bring light to the people. At that point, one question can be raised, i.e. why was this episode the first to require the figure of Buddha?

In the episode of 'the Gods entreating the Buddha to preach', the Buddha listened to Brahmā and finally decided to preach because he felt mercy upon the people. The text explaining this episode states as follows:

> *At that time, Bhagavat understood the entreat of Brahmā and with mercy to every beings and with eyes of the One attained the Enlightenment, he observed the world. (The Māhavagga I. 5. 10; Maeda 1972: 25-31)*

Thus, 'the Gods entreating the Buddha to preach' is an episode explaining how Śākyamuni, who had become Buddha, decided on the 'salvation' toward the suffering people by his merciful eyes. In other words, this episode indicates that the Buddha was born as the One who actually could bring the 'salvation' to the people, and not merely as the One who attained the transcendent and self-complete 'Enlightenment'.[10] If this sequence generated the first figure of Buddha, then it means that the Buddha as a Saviour could have been felt as more important than as an Enlightened One for the people. This could explain the reason why the Buddha appeared in this scene in an anthropomorphic and not an an-iconic form. Eventually, we can say that the earliest image of Buddha in Gandhāra might have represented the Buddha who had attained the 'Enlightenment' through deep meditation, and who, at the same time, decided to save all beings with his mercy.

Conclusion

Relying on recent archaeological findings, we have here examined features of Buddhist Gandhāran art in its earliest phase. Until now, scholars have conventionally emphasized the Hellenistic influence as regards the origin of Gandhāran art. However, as seen above, numerous elements were drawn from early sites like Bhārhut and Sāñchī. They include various aspects: the lotus motif, the figure of Bodhisattva, the subject and the composition in the narrative stories from the Buddha's life, the facial expressions, and the representation of draperies, etc. At the same time, the earliest art of Gandhāra contains stylistic and iconographic features which differ from those encountered in the early art of ancient India and which lead the way to the proper Gandhāran art, for instance the an-iconic representation of suggesting the Buddha through a solar disc and the tradition in which the representation of stories following the Enlightenment of Buddha were avoided: these features are peculiar to the early Gandhāran art and might have proceeded from certain circumstances: how the Buddhism was in North-western India in those days and how the Buddhist *saṃgha* was there. In such circumstances, the first Buddha image appeared in the scene of 'the gods entreating the Buddha to preach' which probably established a compromise between the aspiration from the lay-devotees and the intention from the *saṃgha*.

Although it is difficult to give a more precise dating to the earliest depiction of the scene, it can be dated in the first half or the middle of the first century AD following the result of the excavations at Butkara I and the comparison with the early art of ancient India.

Noticeably, the reliefs of 'the gods entreating the Buddha to preach' commonly possess the flanking figures of Brahmā

---

10   E. Maeda (1972) pointed out that we should understand the episode of 'the Gods entreating the Buddha to preach' as 'the emergence of Tathāgata'. And M. Shimoda (1999) opined that this episode might have been closely related to the establishment of the Mahāyāna Buddhism, which was taken into the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-sūtra*.

and Indra with *añjalimudrā*, despite the fact that an early text mentions only Brahmā who entreated the Buddha to preach.

The composition with Brahmā and Indra flanking and worshipping the Buddha indicates the superiority of Buddhism, subordinating the gods of Brahmanism. However, another reason can be assumed behind such a representation. Brahmā is the god symbolizing that the cosmic truth (Brahman) is apotheosized and he is thus seen as lord of the spiritual world. Meanwhile, Indra is a mighty warrior and simultaneously the lord of the gods who is governing the secular world. These two gods are closely related in the world view of India: Brahmā carries the image of an ascetic and Indra of a sovereign. Both were opposed but strongly related each other through their supplemental functions (Miyaji 1992: 213-44). Through profound meditation, Buddha attained Enlightenment and reached the spiritual world by surpassing Brahmā; he provided mercy to the world by turning the *dharmacakra* and became a sovereign by surpassing Indra. Suggestively, the composition in which Brahmā and Indra are worshiping the Buddha implies the fact that the natures of the ascetic and the sovereign were integrated, both being opposite but mutually complemented in the society and the Indian view of the world.

Acknowledgment

Bibliography

Andō, Yoshika (2003) *Bukkyō Shōgon no Kenkyū* [*A Study on the Decorations in Buddhist Art*], Tokyo: Chūōkōronbijutsu-shuppan.

Carter, Martha (1993) 'Petroglyphs at Chilas II: Evidence for a Pre-Iconic Phase of Buddhist, Art in Gandhara', in A. J. Gail, G. J. R. Mevissen and Br. Zehmke (eds), *South Asian Archaeology 1991, Proceedings of the Eleventh International Conference of the Association of South Asian Archaeologists in Western Europe, held in Berlin 1-5 July 1991*, Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 349-66.

Coomaraswamy, Ananda K. (1935) *Elements of Buddhist Iconography*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

--- (1935) *La sculpture de Bodhgayā*. Paris: Les Editions d'Art et d'Histoire (Ars Asiatica 18).

--- (1956) *La sculpture de Bharhut*. Paris: Vanoest, Les Editions d'Art et d'Histoire.

Cunningham, Alexander (1962) *The Stupa of Bharhut*. (Reprint:) Varanasi: Indological Book House.

Dehejia, Vidya (1972) *Early Buddhist Rock Temples*. London: Thames and Hudson.

Fabrègues, Chantal (1987) 'The Indo-Parthian Beginnings of Gandhara Sculptures', *Bulletin of the Asia Institut*.1, 33-43.

Faccenna, Domenico (1962/1964) *Sculptures from Sacred Area of Butkara I (Swāt W.Pakistan), Reports and Memoirs*. Vol. II, parts 2 & 3, Roma: Istituto poligrafico dello Stato, Libreria dello Stato (Reports and memoirs, Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente, Centro Studi e Scavi Archeologici in Asia, vol. 2).

--- (1964) *A Guide to the Excavations in Swāt (Pakistan)*, 1956-62, Rome.

--- (1974) 'Excavations of the Italian Archaeological Mission (IsMEO) in Pakistan: Some Problems of Gandhara Art and Architecture', *Central Asia in the Kushan Period, Proceedings of the International Conference of Central Asia in the Kushan Period, Dushanbe, 1968, Moscow*, 126-76.

--- (1980/1981) *Butkara I (Swāt, Pakistan) 1956-1962*, Reports and Memoirs, 6 vols, IsMEO, Rome.

--- (2007) 'The Artistic Center of Butkara I and Saidu Sharif in the Pre- Kuṣāṇa Period', in Doris Meth Srinivasan (ed.), *On the Cusp of an Era. Art in the Pre-Kuṣāṇa World*, Leiden: E.J. Brill (Brill's Inner Asian Library, 18), 165-99, figs.6.41-7.43.

Foucher, Alfred (1905) *L'art gréco-bouddhique du Gandhāra*, Tome I, Paris: Imprimerie Nationale.

Fussman, Gérard (1987) 'Numismatic and Epigraphic Evidence for the Chronology of Early Gandharan Art', in Marianne Yaldiz and Wibke Lobo (eds.) *Investigating Indian Art. Proceedings of a Symposium on the Development of Early Buddhist and Hindu Iconography Held at the Museum of Indian Art, Berlin, in May 1986*, Berlin: Museum für Indische Kunst Berlin/Staatliche Museen Preussischer Kulturbesitz (Veröffentlichungen des Museums für indische Kunst Berlin 8), 67-88.

Higuchi, Takayasu (1981) 'Tillya-tepe no Ihō' [Treasures from Tillya-tepe], *Bukkyō-Geijutsu* 137, 115-36.

Ingholt, Harald and Islay de Courcy Lyons (1957) *Gandhāran Art in Pakistan*, New York: Pantheon Books.

Itō, Gikyō (1979) 'Bukkō to Iran Yōso' [Buddha's Light and the Iranian Elements], in his *Zoroastā Kenkyū* [*A Study of Zoroastrianism]*, Tokyo: Iwanami-Shoten.

Koezuka, Takashi and Akira Miyaji (eds) (2000) *Sekai Bijutsu Daizen-shū Tōyō-hen 13 Indo (1)* [*The History of World Art, Asia 13, India(1)*]. Tokyo: Shōgakkan.

Kurita, Isao (2003) *Gandhāra Art* I [*The Buddha's Life Story*] and II [*The World of the Buddha*]. Tokyo: Nigensha, revised edition.

van Lohuizen-de Leeuw, Johanna E. (1949) *The Scythian Period*. Leiden: Brill.

--- (1981) 'New Evidence with Regard to the Origin of the Buddha Image', in H. Härtel (ed.), *South Asian Archaeology 1979, Papers from the fifth International Conference of the Association of South Asian Archaeologists in Western Europe held in the Museum*

für Indische Kunst der Staatlichen Museen Preussischer Kulturbesitz Berlin, Berlin: Reimer, 377-400.

Marshall, John (1951) *Taxila*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

--- (1960) *The Buddhist Art of Gandhāra*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Marshall, John and Alfred Foucher (1940) *The Monuments of Sānchī*. Calcutta: Manager of Publications.

Maeda, Egaku (1972) *Shakuson* [*Śākyamuni*]. Tokyo: Sankibōbusshorin.

Miyaji, Akira (1992) 'Kodai Indo no Brahmā to Indra no Zuzō ni tsuite' [On the Iconography of Brahmā and Indra in the Ancient India], in my *Nehan to Miroku no Zuzōgaku - Indo kara Chūō Ajia e* [The Iconology of Nirvāṇa and Maitreya - from India to Central Asia], Tokyo:Yoshikawa-kōbunkan, pp. 213-244.

--- (1997) 'Butsuzō no Kigen ni kansuru Kin'nen no Kenkyū-jōkyō ni tsuite' [On the Recent Studies about the Origin of the Buddha Image], *Yamato Bunka* 98, 1-18.

Nara Prefectural Museum of Art et al. (1999) *Sanzō-hōshi no Michi* [*The Silk Road and the World of Xuanzang*]. Tokyo: Asahi-shinbun (Exhibition catalogue).

Odani, Nakao (1996) 'Kushan Ōchō Bokkō-shi ni kansuru Shin-shiryō: Tillya-tepe no Ōgon Ihō' [The Rise and Expansion of the Kushan Dynasty: Tillya-tepe Treasure as a New Historical Source], in his *Gandhāra Bijutsu to Kushan Ōchō* [*The Art of Gandhāra and The Kushans*], Kyoto: Dōhōsha-shuppan, 72-105.

Quagliotti, Anna Maria (1991/1992) 'The Buddha, the Solar Disk and the Cosmic Tree. A Relief in the Victoria & Albert Museum', *Silk Road Art and Archaeology* 2, 73-105.

Sadakata, Akira (1998) *Itan no Indo* [*Heresy in India*]. Kanagawa: Tōkai University Press.

Sarianidi, Viktor I. (1983) *Afganistan: sobrovišča bezymjannych carej* [*Afghanistan: The Secret Treasures of the Unknown Kings*], Moskva: Izd. 'Nauka' [translated into Japanese by K. Katō, Tokyo: Iwanami-shoten, 1988].

--- (1985) *The Golden Hoard of Bactria: From the Tillya-tepe Excavations in the Northern Afghanistan*, New York/Leningrad: H.N. Abrams/Aurora Art Publishers.

Schlingloff, Dieter (2000) *Ajanta-Handbuch der Malereien*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag.

Shimoda, Masahiro (1999) 'Bonten Kanjō Setsuwa to Hokekyō no Butsuda kan' [The episode of 'the Gods Entreat the Buddha to Preach' and the view of Buddha in the Saddharmapuṇḍarika-sūtra], *Chūōgakujutsu kenkyūjo Kiyō* 28, 69-99.

Takata, Osamu (1967) *Butsuzō no Kigen* [*The Origin of the Buddha Image*]. Tokyo: Iwanami-shoten.

Tanabe, Katsumi (2008) 'Not the Buddha but Hercules on the Gold Token fro, Tillya-Tepe: A Review of the Relevant Legends and Images', in Claudine Bautze-Picron (ed.), *Archaeology of Religion, Issues of Hindu and Buddhist Iconography*, *Proceedings of the Eighteenth International Conference on South Asian Archaeology held at The British Museum, London, 4-8 July 2005, volume 1,* General editor: Michael Willis, Published by the Society for South Asian Studies, The British Academy, London, 33-48.

Tokyo National Museum et al. (2002) *Pakistan Gandhāra Chōkoku-ten* [*The Exhibition of Gandhāran Sculptures, Pakistan*] Tokyo: NHK (Exhibition catalogue).

Tōbu Museum of Art et al. (1998) *Buddha*, Tokyo: NHK (Exhibition catalogue).

Zwalf, Wladimir (1996) *A Catalogue of the Gandhāra Sculpture in the British Museum*. London: British Museum Press.

Chapter 5.
The Flaming Protuberance on the Head of Tamiḻ Buddhas – Its Representations and Concepts

Yuko Fukuroi

The history of Buddhism in the Tamiḻ region of South India has not yet come into the active scrutiny of the scholars. There are many evidences available on this in the form of written literatures and sculptures. Two most authentic literatures of Buddhism in Tamiḻ are the *Maṇimēkalai*, the sixth-century poetic narrative, and the *Vīracōḻiyam*, the eleventh-century treatise of grammar (Monius 2001: 7). The *Maṇimēkalai* gives a very descriptive account of Buddhism even with reference to Buddhist logic; and the *Vīracōḻiyam* is a grammatical treatise which also provides a clear understanding about the existence of Buddhism in the Tamiḻ region.

Since ancient times, this region was well connected with other parts of India and also with many foreign countries through land route and sea route. Based on the active movement of Buddhism in and around the Tamiḻ region, Buddhist art was also developed with the production of numerous images in stone and bronze; however, the real feature of those remains is inconclusive and obscure both in the chronology and iconography. At the same time, it is noticeable that the remains of Buddha images in this region, that includes the present Kēraḻa, and some parts of Āndhra-pradēsh and Karṇāṭaka, are sharing similar or same features (Fukuroi 2002a; 2002b; 2004; 2007: 52-56) to those can be seen in the images of Śrī Lanka and Thailand. It can be argued that the images of Buddha from Tamiḻ region should be an important material to understand the wide spread tradition of Buddhism in the Southern part of Asia on the basis of more conclusive and future studies. In this paper I wish to discuss on the flaming protuberance above the head, which is the most distinguishing feature of the Buddha's body in the Tamiḻ region, with special reference from the conception of 'fire' in Buddhist tradition.

a. The Tamiḻ Buddha images

First, focusing on the images preserved in better condition, the general features of the Tamiḻ Buddhas in stone are reviewed as follows.

There are a number of round images of Buddha without a halo or any other ornaments:[1] one Buddha statue that is kept in the hamlet of Parāvai (Perambalūr district) (Fig. 1) exhibits the refined representation of a round image. This Buddha, 129 cm in height, is seated in *dhyānamudrā* and *ardha-paryaṅkāsana*,[2] showing the right leg placed on the left leg with the sole of the right foot facing upwards. The image has a square face, open eyes, full lips and three lines on the neck. The garment is displayed plain and a folded shawl is placed over the left shoulder. Through the diaphanous garment, the well-shaped body of the Buddha can be seen together with the line on the waist band. And the flaming protuberance, nearly formed to the shape of a triangle, is mounted on the low *uṣṇīṣa*. We can find several images which are artistically close to this Buddha like the seated Buddhas in the field of Tyāganūr village (Sēlam district) and in the precinct of Tiruvīraṭṭānēśvara temple at Tiruvaḍikai (Kaḍalūr district) etc.

Besides the round images of sitting Buddha in Tamiḻnāḍu, there are images seated on the throne with a backrest formed into the *makara-toraṇa*.[3] One image of the Buddha in Vikramaṅgalam village (Fig. 2) presents a highly developed representation of the body and a refined expression of the *makara-toraṇa*.[4] Seated in the *dhyānamudrā* and *ardha-paryaṅkāsana* on a lotus throne, this Buddha generates a tranquil air. As seen on the image in Parāvai, as observed above, the Buddha in Vikramaṅgalam is shown with a garment without any folds covering the left shoulder, the folded shawl placed over the left shoulder and a flaming protuberance surmounting the head. An elaborated creeper

---

[1]   Such round images of Buddha can be seen in the Subbarayamudhali School at Kāñcīpuram city (Kāñcīpuram district); inside the Śiva Kāñcī police station at Kāñcīpuram (Kāñcīpuram district); one image among three Buddhas stored in a modern Buddha shrine at Paḷḷūr (Vēlūr district); in Tiruvīraṭṭānēśvara temple at Tiruvaḍikai (Kaḍalūr district) ; from Elaiyūr (Tanjāvūr district: at present in the Government Museum of Chennai); from Pattīśvaram (Tañjāvūr district: in the Art Gallery of Tañjāvūr); from Māttūr (Tanjāvūr district : in the Museum of Tamiḻ University); from Kollāpuram (Tiruccirāppaḷḷi district: in the Government Museum of Pudukkōṭṭai); in the field of Veḷḷanūr (Tiruccirāppaḷḷi district); in a playground of one school at Periya Tirukkoṇam (Ariyalūr district); inside the Buddha Kōil, Tyāganūr (Sēlam district); in the field of Tyāganūr (Sēlam district); in the National Museum at New Delhi (Acc. No. 87.955); in Norton Simon Museum (Acc. No. F.1975.17.03. s) etc.

[2]   This sitting posture is identified as *siddhāsana* by Hikosaka (1993) and as *vīrāsana* by Schroeder (1990 & 1992).

[3]   The Buddha sitting on the throne with a backrest formed into the *makara-toraṇa* are the one from Paṭṭu (Kāñcīpuram district: at present in the Institute of Asian Studies, Chennai); the one of two Buddha images in Karukkilamarnda Amman temple, Kāñcīpuram (Kāñcīpuram district); from Kūvam (Kāñcīpuram district: at present in the Government Museum of Chennai); from Ariyalūr (Ariyalūr district : in the Government Museum of Gaṅgaikoṇḍacōḻapuram); from Maṇikaṇḍi (Rāmanātapuram district: in the Government Museum of Chennai) etc.

[4]   In Vikramaṅgalam, there is another Buddha image in stone which is seated in *ardha-paryaṅkāsana* with *dhyānamudrā* and missing the protuberance from the head.

Fig. 1. Seated Buddha, Parāvai

Fig. 2. Seated Buddha, Vikramaṅgalam

design covers the surface of two pillars in the backrest of the throne on which the Buddha is sitting, and the triangle shaped small projections that might express fire are arranged above the arch like in a saw-tooth design. And the halo with a pointed top encompasses this Buddha in the same way as the seated Buddhas from Kūvan (Kāñcīpuram district: at present in the Government Museum of Chennai); from Kīḻkoḷattūr Māvaṭṭam (Tiruccirāppaḷḷi district: in the Government Museum of Gaṅgaikoṇḍacōḷapuram); from Koḍiyāḷam Kuḷumaṇi (Tiruccirāppaḷḷi district: in the Govemnent Museum of Tiruccirāppaḷḷi); in Okulūr (Perambarūl district) and so forth.

In the Tamil region there are also many seated Buddhas in stone having the arch-shaped halo.[5] The Buddha from Ārappākkam (Fig. 3), 128 cm high, displays the arch-shaped halo with *kīrttimukha* on the top. Same as the

Buddha images observed so far, this Buddha is depicted in *ardha-paryaṅkāsana*; a diaphanous garment is rendered with the folded shawl over the left shoulder; and the low *uṣṇīṣa* is surmounted by the flaming protuberance. With a refined expression of the face and the well-balanced body, this image impresses on the artistic mutuality with its highly developed representation of the Buddha figure.

Apart from the seated images, some standing Buddhas in stone can be seen in Tamilnāḍu like the one image in the Government Museum of Chennai, discovered in Kāmākṣi Amman temple at Kāñcīpuram; the other one in the same museum, from Śrī Karpaganādēśvara temple at Tiruvalanjuli (Tañjāvūr district); the one kept in the precinct of Ādikēsava Perumāl temple at Ārappākkam (Kāñcīpuram district); also the one in the Government Museum of Dharmapurī, found at Kaḍakattūr (Dharmapurī district) etc. Among these standing

---

5   The stone images which carry the arch-shaped halo are: one seated Buddha in Karukkilamarnda Amman temple, Kāñcīpuram city (Kāñcīpuram district); in Vināyaka temple, Kaṇikiluppai (Kāñcīpuram district); outside the Amman shrine, Mēlaicceri (Kāñcīpuram district); two images in a modern Buddhist shrine at Paḷḷūr (Vēlūr district); in Virumban temple, Arikkamēḍu (State of Pāṇḍiccēri); in Māṇambāḍi (Tañjāvūr district); in Śrī Madyarjunēśvara temple, Pettavayttalai (Tiruccirāppaḷḷi district) etc.

Fig. 3. Seated Buddha, Ārappākkam
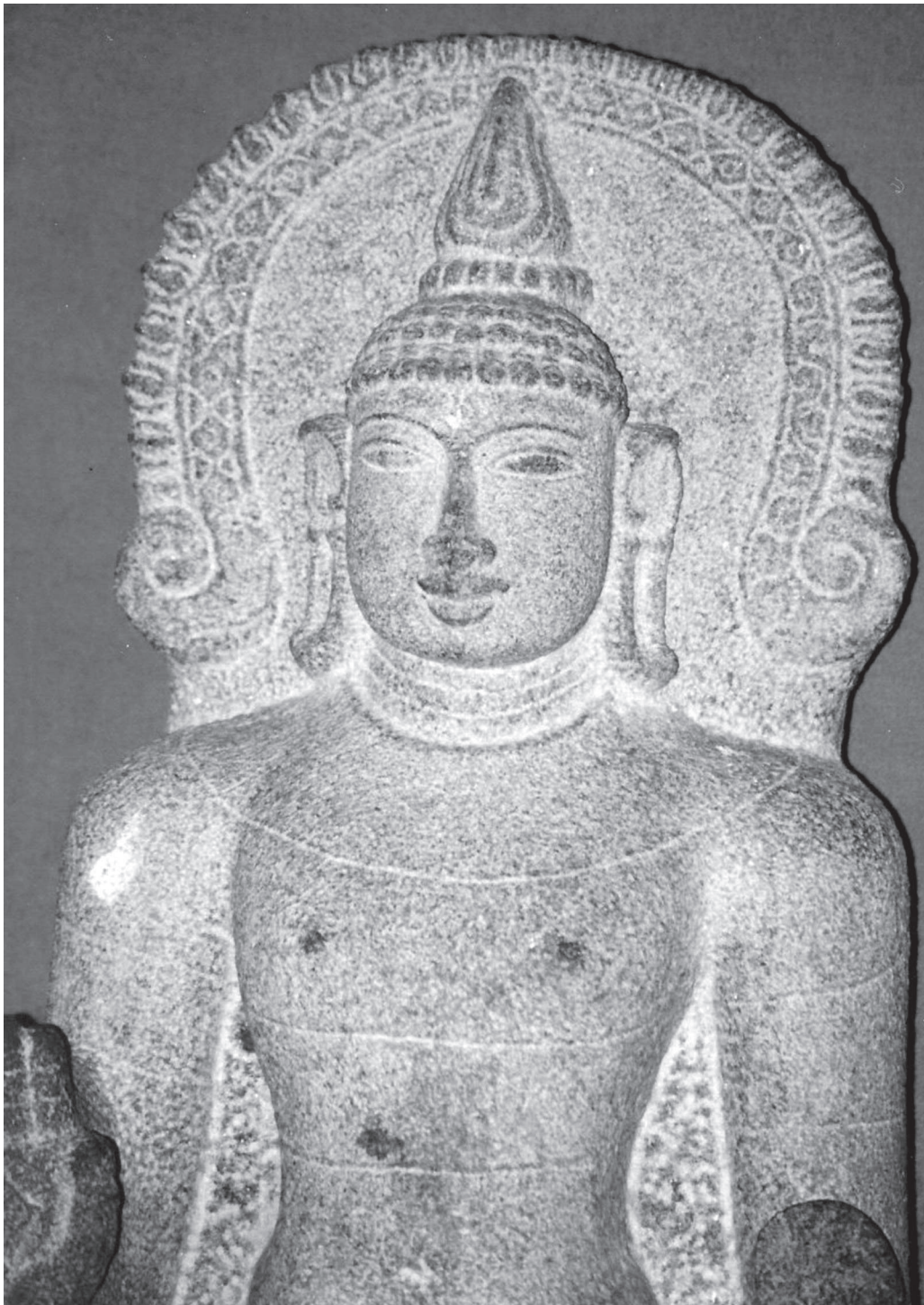
Fig. 4. Standing Buddha, Museum of Dharmapurī

Buddhas, the one in the Ādikēsava Perumāl temple exactly contains the same features as the seated Buddha images: the upper garment is rendered without showing drapery; the folded shawl is placed over the left shoulder; the right shoulder of the Buddha is uncovered; an arch-shaped halo encompasses the head; and a flaming protuberance is mounted over the head. On the other hand, the standing Buddhas from Tiruvalanjuli and from Kaḍakattūr (Fig. 4) show a difference from the common seated Buddhas in Tamiḻnāḍu, which is in the way of dressing. The image from Tiruvalanjuli, 232 cm in height, is depicted with the garment which covers the entire body and its ends are executed with frillings. The image of standing Buddha from Kaḍakattūr, measured 119 cm high, is depicted with the garment covering both the shoulders in which the drapery is shown with parallel lines extending from left to right.

47

Together with such features, these standing Buddhas display the flaming protuberance over the head same as the common images of the seated Buddha in Tamilnāḍu.

As observed above, most of the Buddha images in stone from the Tamil region have similar features as the diaphanous garments without the depiction of drapery; the folded cloth over the left shoulder; and the flaming protuberance above the Buddha's head. In the case of seated images, the sitting posture in *ardha-paryaṅkāsana* is widely observed, which can be commonly seen in the Hindu deities and the Jain images from Tamilnāḍu.

On the other hand, it should be recognized that the Tamil Buddhas in stone are diversified in postures, *mudrās*, halos, thrones, and sometimes in the dressings. Eventually, we understand the flaming protuberance above the Buddha's head as the only one common feature among the Buddha images from the Tamil region.

b. Observation of the flaming protuberance on the Buddha's head

The protuberance above the head is one of the most prominent features in the Buddha images from Tamilnāḍu both in seated and in standing postures, and also images both in stone and in bronze (Dehejia 2002: 210; Ramachandran 1992/1954: 27). In India, such protuberance is rarely seen above the head of Buddha images other than in the Tamil region. At the same time, we can find out various representations in the flaming protuberances among the Tamil Buddhas (Drawing 1). Unfortunately, many remains of the Buddha images in Tamilnāḍu are damaged at present, including the headless ones, so it is difficult to comprehend the whole feature of those protuberances. Here, focusing on the images in stone discovered from Tamilnāḍu, I observe and attempt to analyze the representation of the flaming protuberances on the images the details of which can be seen well.

Drawing 1.a – Protuberance in triangle form with vertical lines

The first type of the protuberance above the head of Buddha is one which is formed into a triangle with vertical lines along the outline of that shape. The protuberance of this type can be seen in the seated image in Parāvai as observed above (Fig. 1); another seated image at Puśpavaṉam (Nāgapaṭṭiṉam district); and a standing Buddha from Tiruvalanjuli etc.

Drawing 1.b – Protuberance with a flask-like mark in the centre

The protuberance of some other Buddha images is shown with a flask-like mark in the centre depicting five tongues. The shape of this protuberance can be divided into two: one is in triangle shape (1.b-1) and the other is in onion-
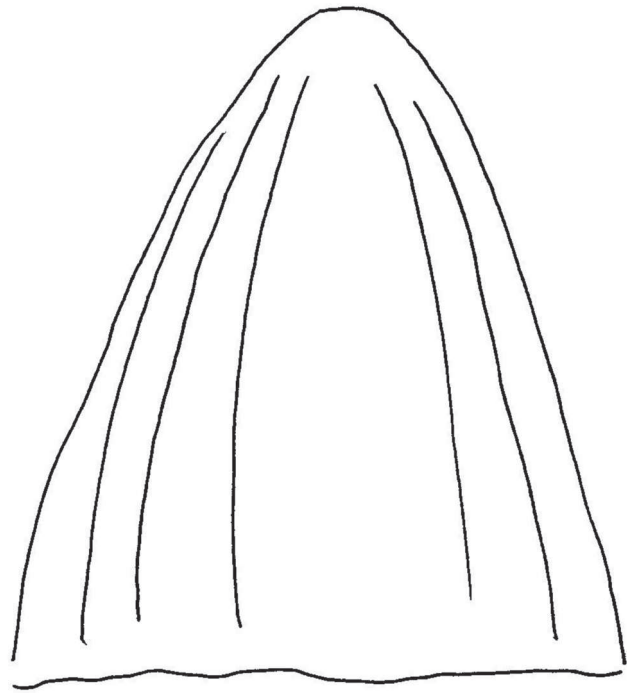
Drawing 1.a
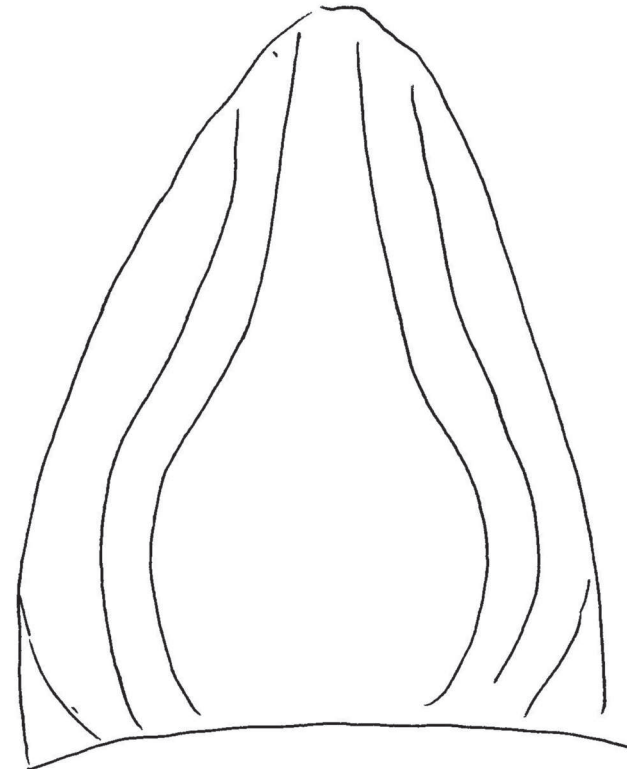
Drawing 1.b-1
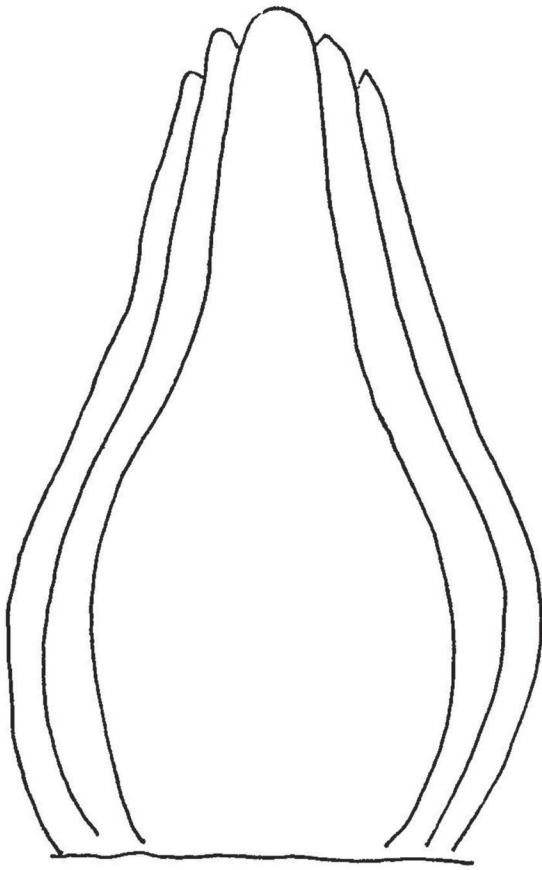
Drawing 1.b-2
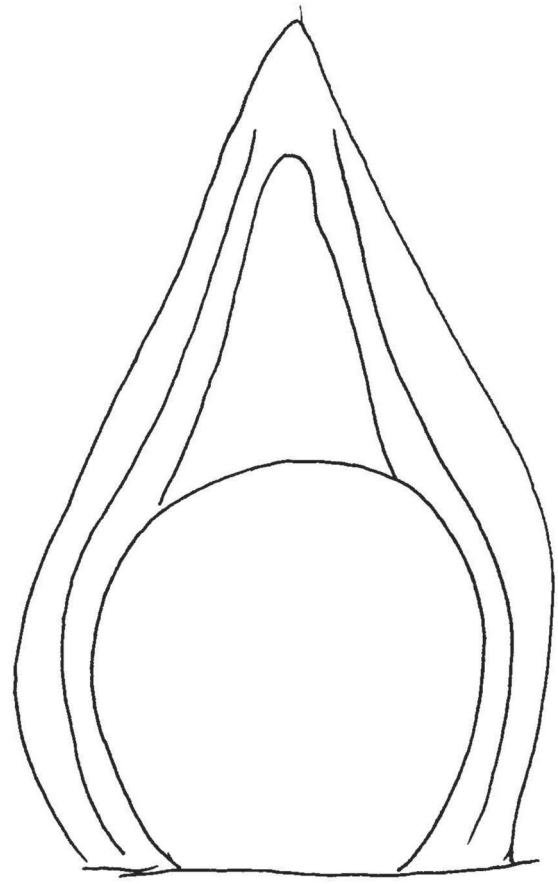
Drawing 1.c

shoot shape (1.b-2). The former protuberance can be seen in the seated image kept in Tiruvīraṭṭānēśvara temple at Tiruvaḍikai; one seated Buddha in the Norton Simon Museum (Acc. No. F.1975.17.03.s) etc. While the latter protuberance is shown by one seated image in the National Museum of New Delhi (Acc. No. 68.92); one seated Buddha in Aravāy Ammaṉ temple at Mangalam (Tiruccirāppaḷḷi district); one seated image in Jaikoṇḍacōḻapuram (Ariyalūr district) and so forth. The seated Buddha at Vikramaṅgalam (Fig. 2), being introduced above, has the protuberance of this type (1.b-2) in which the round base of the flask-like mark is framed by two lines (Drawing 3).

Drawing 1.c – Protuberance with a mark combined by a circle and a triangle shapes

The protuberance showing a mark that is combined a circle and a triangle shapes can be seen in the Buddhas such as one seated image in Māṉambāḍi (Tanjāvūr district) (Fig. 5) as to be observed later.

Drawing 1.d – Protuberance with concentric lines to the top

There are some images having the protuberance with concentric lines to its top on the surface, which are

displaying five tongues. The protuberance of this type can be perceived in the standing image from Kaḍakattūr as observed above (Fig. 4), also in one seated image with *bhūmisparśamudrā* kept in a modern Buddhist shrine at Paḷḷūr (Vēlūr district).

*Drawing 1.e – Protuberance formed like a leaf with parallel lines in both its sides*

The protuberance seen in the seated image at Buddhavēḍu (Fig. 11) is one which is formed as a leaf with lines along the outline of the leaf shape.

Drawing 1.f – Protuberance with a small ellipse mark at the bottom

One of three Buddha images in a Buddhist shrine at Paḷḷūr, which is seated in *dhyānamudrā* and encompassed by an arch-shaped halo (Fig. 6), has a huge and peculiar protuberance in the onion-shoot shape which is showing five tongues and a small ellipse mark at its bottom.

Drawing 1.g – Protuberance with a realistic representation of flaming fire

Some Buddha images in stone from Tamiḻnāḍu have the

Fig. 5. Seated Buddha, Māṉanbādi
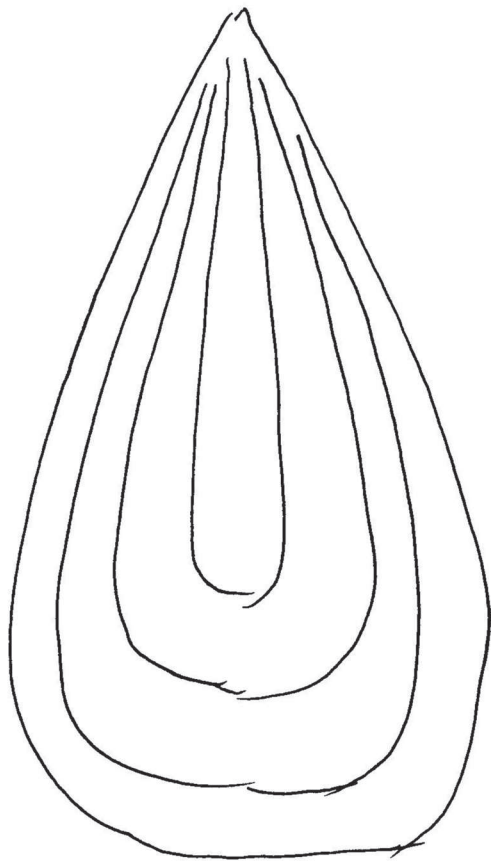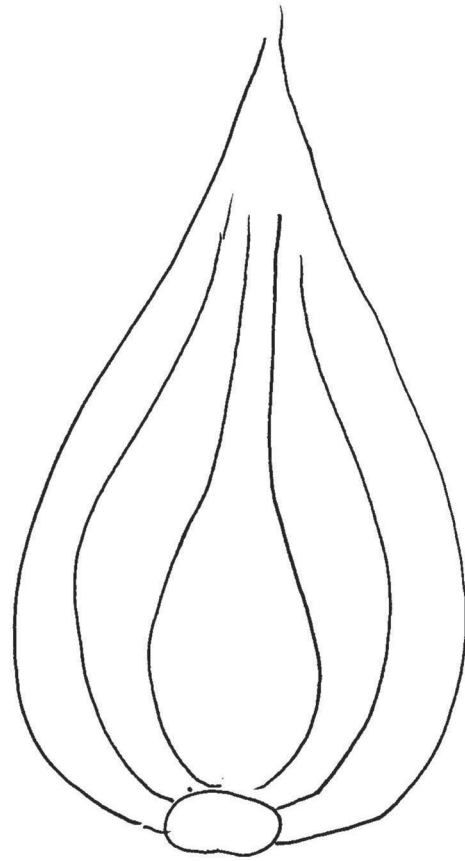
Drawing 1.d

Drawing 1.f
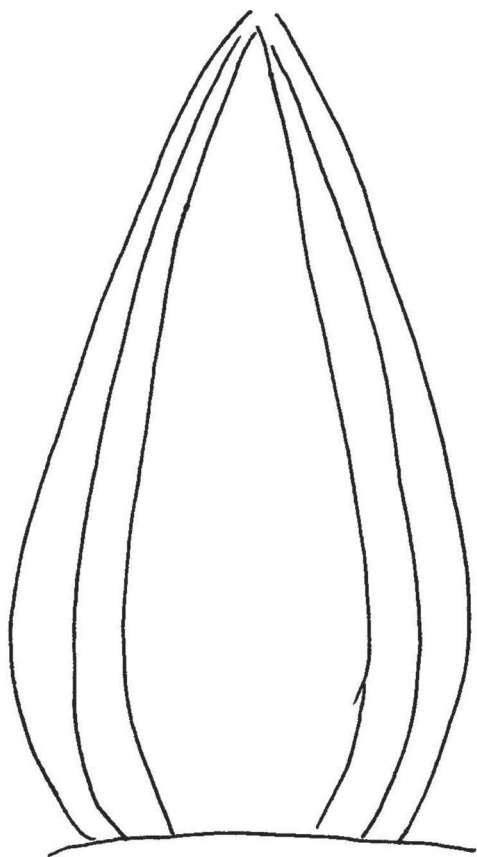
Drawing 1.e

protuberance displaying a realistic representation of flaming fire above the head. Karukkilamarnda Amman̲ temple at Kāñcīpuram possesses two seated images of Buddha, one of them shown with *bhūmisparśamudrā* and an arch-shaped halo exhibits waving flames in the protuberance above the head (Fig. 7).

As detailed above, the protuberances seen on the Buddha's head in the stone images from Tamil̲nāḍu were observed and understood that they are basically shown with five tongues.

Meanwhile, their shapes and representations of the surface are different from one another.

The lack of unification can be considered in various ways: it might be a deliberate expression of artistic freedom, or more importantly to give a variety of interpretation to the concepts of 'fire' from the philosophical and religious perspectives.

c. Buddhist view on 'fire'

According to the Indian conception, there are varied interpretations to the idea of 'fire.'

Fig. 6. Seated Buddha, Paḷḷūr

Drawing 1.g

Fig. 7. Flaming protuberance, Kāñcīpuram, Karukkilamarnda Amma<u>n</u> Temple
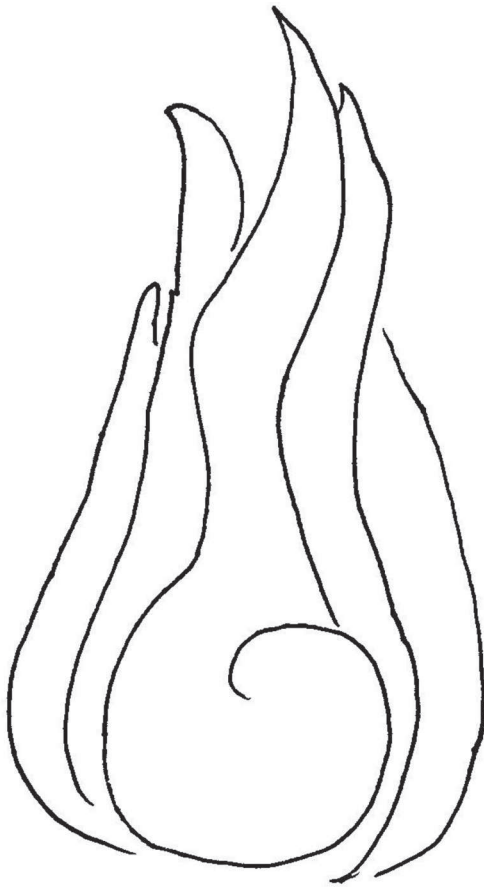
'Fire' in the external expression represents energy in its various forms. The allegoric representation of 'fire' has a special position in Buddhism. From the Buddhist point of view we can see that they use the idea of 'fire' to delineate some of its fundamental and original teachings. Also they often explain the nature of human mind and consciousness by the properties of 'fire' that it is represented as to burn and destroy, to heat and light, to cleanse and purify, or to bring it out from a dormant form of energy to a flame.

c.1. 'Fire' as a controlled flame

The *Ādittapariyāya sutta* ('Fire Sermon'; SN 38.25) uses 'fire' example as a very prudent method for interpreting some of the fundamental teachings of Buddhist philosophy.[6] The two properties, the blazing and destructive aspects of 'fire', are contrastingly revealed with the lighting and heating aspects of 'fire' seen on a thin and steady flame. The transition from the destructive nature of a thing or an action to something essential for the survival of life is the essence of Buddhist practices. In this discourse Buddha

depicts all the sense organs and the sense perception and corresponding consciousness are associated with the burning and blazing properties of 'fire' which would lead to the eventual destruction of the human personality. The normal human nature is that it follows the enticing sense organs having the nature of falling into negative stages and destroying oneself. The 'Fire Sermon' discourse demonstrates that the 'fire' in the eye, eye contact and eye consciousness leads to uncontrolled 'fire' of lust which again creates the 'fire' of birth (of things) and its decay and death and the grief, sorrow, lamentation and despair. The huge desire associated with sense perception can burn away the basis of the human personality, leading to suffering and eventual self destruction.

So the Buddha's teaching is that one needs to discern the cause of his suffering from the general nature of the sense organs and learn to control them through various meditative practices, that is similar to turning the all annihilating blazing and burning nature of 'fire' into its acceptable nature of a thin flame having properties of heating and lighting. The process of extinguishing the 'fire' of desire may not mean that one should discard the human emotions like desire or craving but it is implicitly meant that one should

---

6   The *Ādittapariyāya sutta* is described as that: "The eye, brethren, is on fire, objects are on fire, eye-consciousness… eye-contact… that weal or woe or neutral state experienced, which arises owing to eye-contact, - that is also on fire. On fire with what? On fire with the blaze of lust, the blaze of ill-will, the blaze of infatuation, the blaze of birth, decay and death, sorrow and grief, woe, lamentation and despair. So I declare. The tongue

is on fire, tongue-consciousness… The mind is on fire, mind-states…mind consciousness…So I declare. So seeing, brethren, the well-taught Aryan disciple is repelled by the eye, is repelled by objects, by eye-consciousness , by that weal or woe… by mind, by mind-consciousness (as before)…Being repelled by it, he lists not for it. Not lusting he is set free. In this freedom comes insight that it is a being free. […]" (SN 35.28)
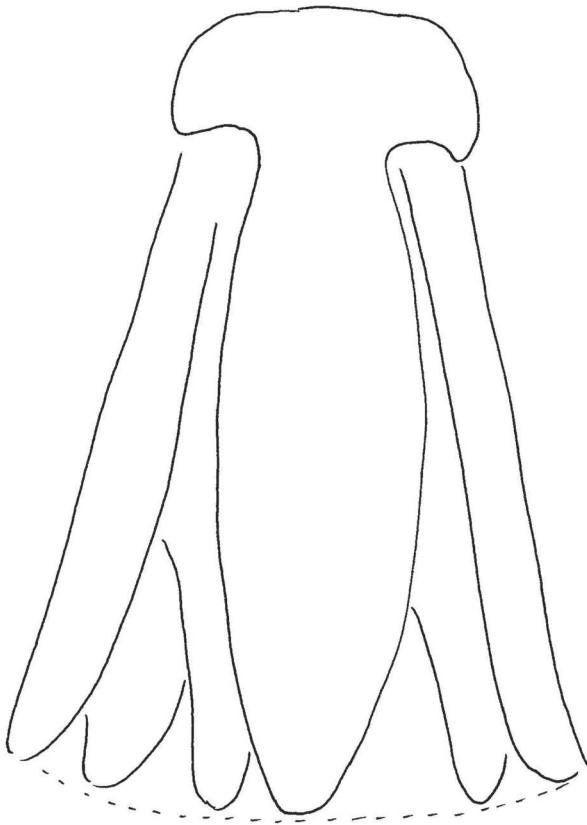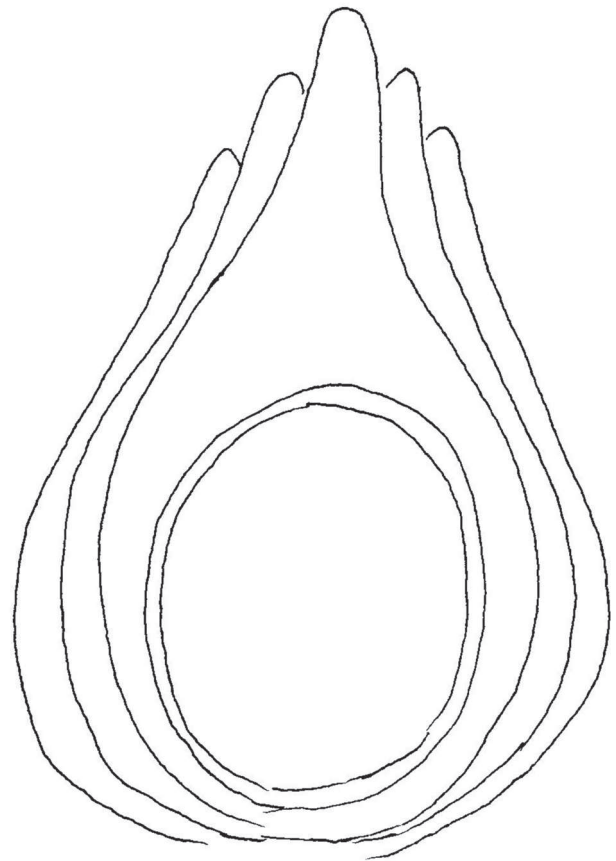
Drawing 2

Drawing 3

learn to turn the destroying aspect of 'fire' into its lighting and heating aspects that would be favourable for a human being to live a life in this world.

c.2. 'Fire' as prajñā

Buddha, after years of searching the ways to root out the inherent human ignorance, finally attained the enlightenment in the form of clarity into the causes of sufferings, the right paths to right thinking, knowledge about the phenomenal world and the wisdom of understanding the actual nature of human soul. The Buddhist conception of leading to knowledge, and wisdom and its notably importance in the monastic life is a subject of great curiosity. It is well founded in the pan-Indian tradition of interpreting 'fire' with its own distinctiveness. In the Vedic tradition, Agni is a God with distinctive properties explaining all aspects of 'fire'. One of such notable properties is of interpreting 'fire' (*agni*) as the lord of vows and *vāk*, the lord of speech and knowledge (Radhakrishnan 1999/1923: 131). This aspect is discussed clearly in the *Nāsadīya-sūkta* (Kalupahana 1994/1992: 4) as mentioned that:

> *Darkness it was, by darkness hidden in the beginning: an undistinguished sea was all this. The germ of all things which was enveloped in void, That*

alone through the power of brooding thought was born.

Upon That in the beginning arose desire, which was the first offshoot of that thought.

The depiction of the knowledge as light and the brooding thought as darkness is fundamental to various schools of Indian philosophy from ancient times. The knowledge or the wisdom of light can change the brooding thought and darkness of ignorance.

In Buddhism, the Buddha realized the conception of four noble truths, eight noble paths, dependent origination, five aggregates instead of a permanent soul, and a clear idea about desire, ignorance, knowledge and *prajñā* (wisdom) by removing the ignorance and brooding thought. This wisdom realized by the Buddha through His meditative practices can be interpreted in the form of 'fire' because it cleanses or removes the darkness of the innate human ignorance about the world of existence through the 'fire' of *prajñā*.

c.3. 'Fire' reflecting in Bodhicitta

In Tantric Buddhism, when yogic practices were integrated into Buddhist philosophy, the ultimate realization of a *yogi* is the realization of *bodhicitta* at the summit of the head

54

in the form of *uṣṇīṣa-kamala*. The principles of Buddhist tantric practices are well explained by Shashi Bhushan Dasgupta (1974: 144) as that the *bodhicitta* is considered to be originated in the lowest part of the body, moving upwards in stages with the help of breath control and other psycho-physical practices. The energy moves in the body first at the *maṇipūraṇa-cakra*, near the navel region; then the *dharma-cakra*, near the heart; the *sambhoga-cakra*, situated near the throat; and finally at the *uṣṇīṣa-kamala*, where the *bodhicitta* is realized. A *yogi* after methodical meditative practices would be able to attain purity of mind or *bodhicitta* and in such a mind *prajñā* shines like a lamp removing all confusions and protecting the mind. He could remove the darkness of ignorance from his mind and view the world as the way it appears before him. This method of invoking body energy and lifting it up is a part of yogic training (Varghese 2008: 161). In the case of Buddhist *tantra* emphasis is given for purifying the malignant *citta* through various purification practices which is called *upāya*. This purification is possible only by commingling of *prajñā* and *upāya*: the yoking of *prajñā* and *upāya* is the means for acquiring *cittaviśuddhi* (cleansing the mind) and the blossoming of *bodhicitta*, a stage of mind through which one could see the world of things properly without any misconceptions, as it is revealing the essence of all phenomena (*ibid.*: 186). In this case instead of *prajñā*, *bodhicitta* is realised as *uṣṇīṣa-kamala* at the summit of the head.

Also in the text *Cittaviśuddhi-prakaraṇa* there is an interesting verse depicting *bodhicitta* as a precious stone which shines the *prajñā* and has the capacity to remove ignorance in any form:

> The gem called *sūryakāntamaṇi*, when exposes to sunlight, produces fire, and the fire is capable of achieving its purpose of revealing itself and other objects.
>
> Similarly, when the mind is associated with *prajñā* burns away the totality of imaginations, liberating itself and helping others minds to be liberated.[7]
>
> (*Cittaviśuddhi-prakaraṇa* 91; Varghese 2008: 150, 250)

c.4. 'Fire' as yogic energy

In the case of later *yogacāras* and tantrics we can see a common method of psycho-physical practice which is similar to meditative practices from the Śaiva *tantra*.

The 'fire' as yogic energy in the Śaiva *tantra* can be interpreted as the vital energy (*kuṇḍalini śakti*) which moves through the *suṣumṇā nāḍi*. Through graduated practices a *yogi* can uplift the vital energy that moves from the lower part of the body to the upper part of the body through eight stages ending at the summit of the head known as *sahasrāra padma* (thousand-petalled lotus). Together with the movement of this vital energy, the *piṅgalā nāḍī*, represented as the sun, the giver of *nirvāṇa* or liberation moves upwards (*Śiva Saṃhita* II: 12). The yogic energy in this case is the manifestation of a healthy body (the vital energy) with perfect knowledge (the solar energy) that leads to liberation or *nirvāṇa* by appropriating the lord Sūrya who is the controller of birth and death. And the passage of this energy is explained as *brahmarandhra*, 'the spinal cord through which the *suṣumṇā* (*nāḍi*) goes and the end of which is *brahmarandhra*'[8] (*ibid.* V: 102); 'the lotus that situated in the *brahmarandhra* is known as *sahasrāra*'[9] (*ibid.* V: 103).

One of the important observations on the conception of *brahmarandhra* and the iconography was discussed by Deborah Klimburg-Salter and Maurizio Taddei (1991). In their study, focusing on the Gandhāran Buddha images, it is mentioned the expression of the luminous energy that is awakened in the body; in order to give a physical expression of it the artist struggled to find a method. So by combining *brahmarandhra* on *uṣṇīṣa* the artist could show the path of yogic energy of the Buddha by a small hole in the top of the *uṣṇīṣa* and he could place a glittering stone there to show the property of that energy which is luminously revealing itself (*ibid.*: 85-87). This expression of *uṣṇīṣa* is a combination of the ideas from Śaiva *tantra* where the yogic energy *kuṇḍalini* is realized at the summit of the head and the Buddhist idea of realizing the *bodhicitta*. In the case of Buddhist *tantra* based on the earlier discussion instead of *kuṇḍalini*, *prajñā* is the yogic energy represented as one of the dual principles of *tantra* and the other is *upāya*, the method through which *bodhicitta* is realized. And as for another representation of this psycho-physical energy at the summit of the head, the Śaiva *tantra* calls it *sahasrāra-padma* but for the Buddhist *tantra* it is *uṣṇīṣa-kamala*.

From the yogic perspective another place of 'fire' in the body is in the region of the stomach which is considered as the seat of *agni* in the form of gastric fire or sexual energy: that it is represented as *samāna-vāyu* in yogic terms (*Śiva Saṃhita* III: 7) and also explained that this 'fire' increases life, and gives strength and nourishment (*ibid.* II: 33).

d. The concepts of the flaming protuberance in Tamiḻ Buddhas

As discussed above, the conception and interpretation of 'fire' are varied in Buddhism.

At the same time, the flaming protuberances above the head, one of the most remarkable features of the Tamiḻ Buddha, are not unified among the remains. For further understanding

---

7   *sūryakāntisamāśriṣṭasūryakāntamaṇau yathā / sahasā prajvalatyagniḥ samarthaḥ svārthasādhane //*

8   *suṣumṇā meruṇā yātā brahmarandhraṃ yatoasti vai /*

9   *brahmarandhre hi yatpadmaṃ sahasrāraṃ vyavasthitam /*

55

Fig. 8. Panels. Tañjāvūr, Rājarājēśvara Temple

of the representation of 'fire' on the Buddha's head, some reliefs with Buddha figures are about to be observed.

In Tamilnāḍu, some Hindu temples have reliefs showing the figures of Buddha. The Rājarājēśvara temple at Tañjāvūr has three reliefs with Buddha figures. The one on the wall of a *gopura* is difficult to be perceived for the details because of its damaged condition; however, we can understand this Buddha as sitting under a tree and the other person shown there as worshipping the Buddha.[10] Other two reliefs with a Buddha figure are accommodated on the stairway to the vestibule of the main shrine. Two panels with those reliefs adjoin to each other (Fig. 8), one of them shows a figure of seated Buddha under a 'tree' who is surrounded by standing people. There, it is possible to recognize a triangle shape above the Buddha's head engraved on the trunk of a 'tree', that might be the same representation as the flaming protuberance seen on the Buddha statues (Fig. 9).

On the next panel, one standing Buddha under a tree raises His right hand, and the people surrounding there are worshipping Him in *añjalimudrā*. It is difficult to identify which scenes are displayed in these panels; moreover, we can not tell that they were originally in a sequence, because those panels have a cut in between and the panel with the standing Buddha might have been later added (there the left side of the tree cannot be seen completely). What is noteworthy in these panels is the representation of the tree. On the panel with the standing Buddha, a tree is seen as growing outwards with its branches and leaves. Meanwhile, on the panel with the seated Buddha another 'tree' is

differently shown: it seems to be a tree with branches, but it does not have any leaves. The waving branches adhere to each other, and they are reaching upwards from the Buddha's head; it is more appropriate to regard that this is the representation of some gaseous abstract object prouting out from the Buddha, not an actual tree.

Such strange and abstract object shown around the head of the Buddha can be found also in other reliefs. Kāñcīpuram was established as one of the main centres of Buddhism in the Tamil region (Ahir 1992: 134; Sivaramalingam 1997: 61-78 etc.) and, there, as the remaining of the past we can see many reliefs with Buddha figures in the present Hindu temples. The Ēkāmbarēśvara, the largest temple in that city, possesses on the wall of *prākāra* one rare relief displaying the figure of Buddha in *parinirvāṇa* and seven figures of the seated Buddhas. Besides, Kāmakśī Amman temple, where one colossal statue of standing Buddha was discovered, has one standing and one seated Buddha figures on one of the pillars. Also Kacchapēśvara temple exhibits nine seated Buddhas on the pillars in the *maṇḍapa* mostly with *dhyānamudrā*, and some of them with *bhūmisparśamudrā*. Many of these figures are now covered by thick paint, so it is difficult to observe the details. However, we can understand that some figures in those reliefs have a peculiar representation of the Buddha's body – that is of some layers flowing down from the head of the Buddha (Fig. 10). It seems to be the long hair waving out of Buddha's head, but it is more adequate to assume it as some abstract object effusing out from the head of the Buddha, in the same way as the tree-like object on the panel of Tañjāvūr temple.

Those reliefs indicate a connection of the flaming

---

[10] L'Hernault (2002: 28, 29) assumed this panel as one part of the story of Tripurāntaka.

Fig. 9. Seated Buddha, Tañjāvūr, Rājarājēśvara Temple

Fig. 10. Seated Buddha, Kāñcīpuram, Kacchapēśvara Temple

protuberance above the Buddha's head with the property of the abstract object emitting from there: eventually, 'fire' as the yogic energy in the Buddhist conception might be more proper to explain that object. With regard to the meaning of the flaming protuberance above the Buddha's head, Srinivasan (2000/1960: 81) has mentioned it as:

> *Besides, as these Buddhists thought of the Buddha as the supreme yogi or emperor amongst the yogis, they began to conceive of the yogic powers (yoga sakti) called as kundalini of the Buddha as ascending up from the base of the vertebral column to the head out of which it bursts forth as a divine flame. This conception should have been popularised not only by means of rituals but also by depicting the Buddha with a jvala on the head.*

According to this observation by Srinivasan, the flaming

Fig. 11. Seated Buddha, Buddhavēḍu

protuberance (*jvāla*) above the Buddha's head is the representation of psycho-physical power that which the Buddha as 'the supreme *yogi*' has realized. This interpretation could be supported not just by the flaming protuberance alone, but also by the reliefs with Buddha figures as observed above. Furthermore, we have another example among the flaming protuberances of the Tamil̠ Buddhas which reveals how the representation of psycho-physical energy could be interpreted and how it was

developed in the region of Tamil̠. From the village of Buddhavēḍu (Kāñcīpuram district), one Buddha in stone was unearthed and is kept at present at the Mahābodhi Society near the site (Fig. 11). Fortunately this image has been well preserved and we can clearly see the details: the Buddha with *dhyānamudrā* is seated on the throne with a backrest formed into a *makara-toraṇa,* measuring 63 cm at height (the total height is 103 cm including the pedestal and the *makara-toraṇa*). This image of Buddha is basically
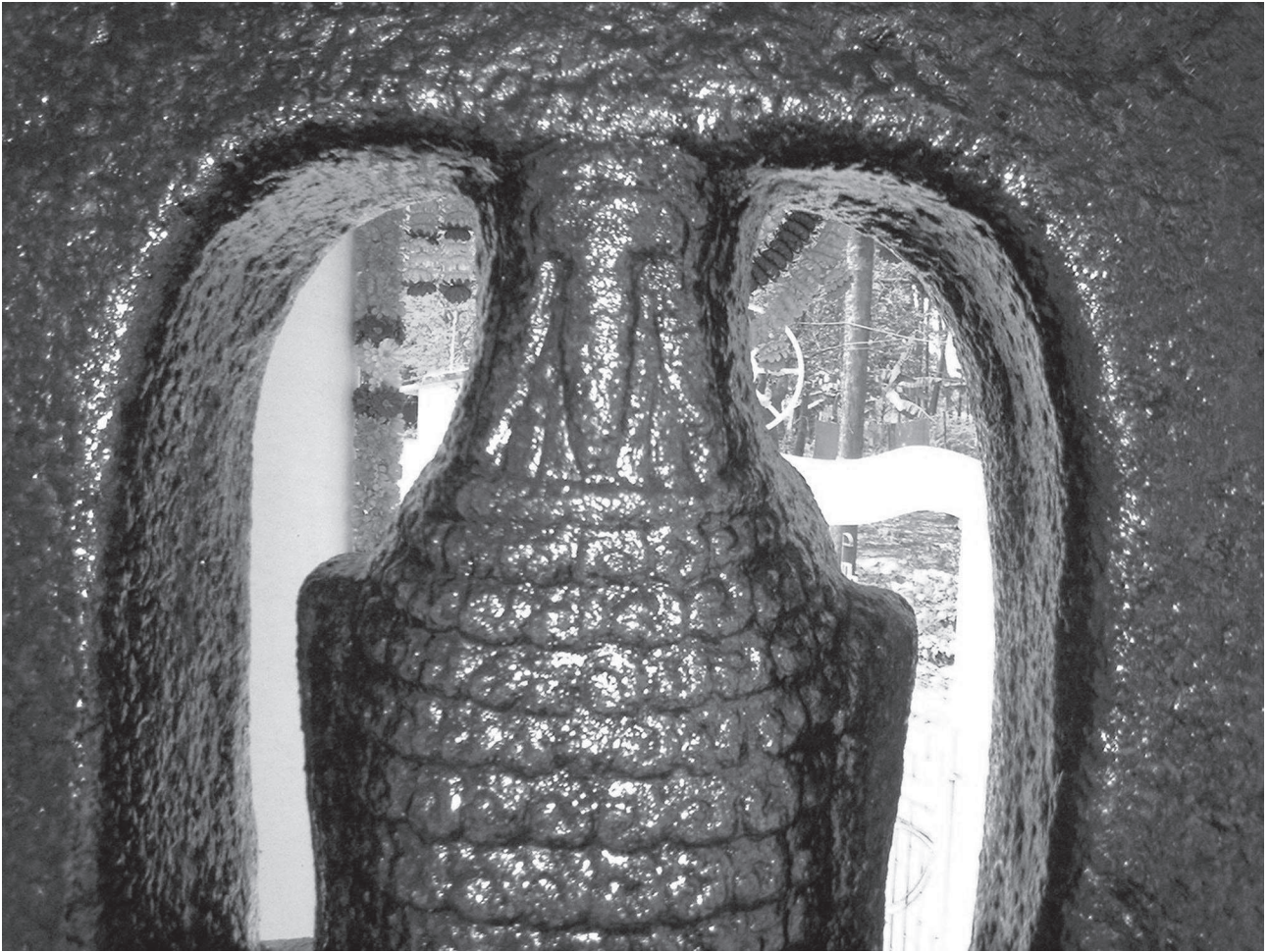
Fig. 12. Seated Buddha, rear side, Buddhavēḍu

shown with all the common features of the Buddha images in the Tamiḻ region, notably a clear *uṣṇīṣa* is surmounted by a big protuberance formed like a leaf with lines along the outline of its shape (Drawing 1.e). What is remarkable here is seen in the rear side of the protuberance (Fig. 12); there a screw-like mark with several lines is shown (Drawing 2). It is difficult to identify what this mark and lines express; however, if it is seen in an upside down position, we can understand clearly that it appears as the profile of a flower which is about to bloom. In this case the connection of the protuberance above the Buddha's head with the flower is vividly exhibited.

The flower, especially lotus, above the Buddha's head could be understood differently such as the *sahasrāra-padma*, the *uṣṇīṣa-kamala*, or some other concepts, and it is not easy to precise what is represented in that protuberance; at present, we can somehow perceive the yogic conception of final realization that could be explained by both flower and fire.

In addition, we have other noteworthy examples for the flaming protuberances on the Buddha's head: some protuberances share one peculiar appearance indicating

something different from the psycho-physical energy represented by the fire or the flower. One seated image in Māṉambāḍi shows the protuberance with a mark on its centre which combines to form the shapes of a circle and a triangle (Fig. 5; Drawing 1.c); there, the rounded shape in its base is slightly projected towards the front and emphasized. The seated Buddha with *bhūmisparśamudrā* kept in the Karukkilamarnda Ammaṉ temple at Kāñcīpuram has a protuberance representing a realistic fire above its head (Fig. 7; Drawing 1.g). Carefully observing this flaming fire, we can notice that its conch-like centre is swelled and projected. Likewise, one seated Buddha in Vikramaṅgalam has the protuberance with a flask-like mark in the centre (Fig. 2; Drawing 1.b-2) which the round base of the flask-like mark is framed by two lines and swelled (Drawing 3). Also one seated Buddha from Sīnam Tiḍāl might have the same representation of the round base in its protuberance which is framed and swelled, but it is now partially damaged.

The round shaped projection in those protuberances could have been resulted from the artistic expression to represent a mass. In the meantime, the round shaped base in the protuberance which is swelled and emphasized reminds us

Fig.13. Śiva Yoga-Dakṣiṇamūrti, Kāñcīpuram, Kailāsanātha Temple

of a gem-stone inset in the flaming protuberance on the Buddha images in bronze. One such bronze image, which Dehejia (1988: 64 & Fig.15) introduced from the collection of the Government Museum at Chennai, was discovered from Nāgapaṭṭiṇam: it is seated with *bhūmisparśamudrā*, following the same features as the Buddhas in stone from the Tamil region i.e. the diaphanous garment without showing drapery, the folded shawl over the left shoulder, *ardha-paryaṅkāsana* and the protuberance of the flame above the head. What is different in this bronze image from the common stone images of Buddha is a ruby which is inset on that protuberance. One standing Buddha in bronze (Acc. No.2, Government Museum of Chennai) possesses a hole in the front of the flaming protuberance, where a gem-stone might have been inset earlier. As well known, there are many Buddha images from Śrī Lanka, especially

the bronze images in which the gem-stone was inset on the protuberance above the head (Schroeder 1990: figs. 53 F, 54 A-E, G, H, 55 A, B, D-M; 1992: fig.9 etc.). In those images, the so-called *siraspata* or *ketumālā* is considered as 'a mass of rays on the summit of the head of the Buddha' (Wikramagamage 1997: 84).

The precious stone above the Buddha's head can be associated with the *bodhicitta* which is explained as the purified mind where the *prajñā* shines. At the same time, the property of 'fire' as lighting indicates in other implications based on the Buddhist conception of 'fire' as *prajñā* or yogic energy, being discussed above. As we have seen, Buddhist thought effectively uses 'fire' to interpret various philosophical positions. In fact, we should accept the difficulty in determining the meaning of the flaming

61

Fig. 14. Śiva, wall-painting in Kāñcīpuram, Kailāsanatha Temple

protuberance on the Buddha's head until we reach an understanding with a clear historicity of Buddhism in Tamiḻnāḍu.

We have found so far that one of the outstanding features of the Buddhist art in the Tamil region is the flaming protuberance on the head of Buddha images. There is a logical question that can be asked in this regard that why the art of Tamiḻ has the matured expression of fire on the summit of the head in various forms and expressions. In India, the Buddha with flaming protuberance on the head is rarely seen except the Tamil region; meanwhile, we can find out the similar representation in the Hindu deities there. In the Kailāsanātha temple at Kāñcīpuram some sculptures have the triangle protuberance above the head as seen on the figures of Yoga-Dakṣiṇamūrti (Fig. 13), Bhikṣāṭana[11] etc. Such protuberance is clearly different from the matted

hair or the crown of the common Hindu deities. Here one mural painting helps us to understand what was represented by those protuberances: one painting on the wall of a sub-shrine in the same temple shows a figure of seated Śiva who has the spread hair and a red-painted fire on the top of the head (Fig. 14). Therefore, the triangle protuberance above the head of certain stone images can be regarded as the flaming fire, similar to the protuberance in the case of Tamil Buddhas.

The description of 'fire' in the religion and culture of the Tamiḻs is very deeply rooted, manifesting that in various rituals and beliefs. For instance, fire walking is an important ritualistic ceremony, which is connected with the goddess in Tamiḻnāḍu (Arunachalam 1980: 296-300; Hitebeitel 1991: 436-448): in the temples dedicated to Mariyamman̠, women and girls carry *agniccaṭṭi*, a fire-pot, on their heads as one form of the offerings (Chettiar 1973: 50): van̠n̠iyars, one of the warrior castes, consider themselves as being born

---

[11] The similar triangle protuberance can be seen in one stone image of Bhikṣāṭana in the National Museum at New Delhi.

from the funeral fire (Hiltebeitel 1991: 32-39): Śiva appears as 'a column of fire' in the annual festival of Kārttikai at Tiruvaṇṇāmalai which is an important temple in Tamiḻnāḍu (L'Hernault 2003/1993: 42, 46) etc. With the importance of the fire cult in the tradition, the art of Tamiḻ brought out many icons with flaming fire: Naṭarāja dances within the flaming aureole and holds a fire in His hand; Dakṣiṇamūrti also bears a fire in the hand; and the gods in the fiery form like Bhairava, Vīrabhadra, Kālī are shown with the flaming hairs.

The fire is one of the most important attributes in the Hindu iconography of Tamiḻs; in the same way as the flaming protuberance is the most prominent feature of the Buddha images from Tamiḻ region. As far as the Hindu iconography and religious history is concerned, we have not much data available about the inter-relationship that should have existed between Hinduism and Buddhism in the Tamiḻ tradition. The scope and avenues for future studies are abundant: the common representation of fire on the head in both the Hindu and Buddhist icons requires a comprehensive thorough research of the art beyond the religious and other differences. Eventually, we could expect new perspectives to understand the iconography of Buddhism in Tamiḻ region, and also the Hindu iconography vice versa.

Acknowledgement

Bibliography

Ahir, D.C. (1992) *Buddhism in South India*. Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications.

Arunachalam, M. (1980) *Festivals of Tamil Nadu*. Tiruchitrambalam: Ghandhi Vidhyalayam.

Chettiar, S. M. L. Lakshmanan (1973) *Folklore of Tamil Nadu*. New Delhi: National Book Trust.

Coomaraswamy, Ananda K. (1995/1938) 'Uṣṇīṣa and Chatra: turban and umbrella', in Michael W. Meister (ed.), *Ananda K. Coomaraswamy: Essays in Architectural Theory*. New York: Oxford University Press, 41-51.

Dasgupta, Shashi Bhushan (1974) *An Introduction to Tantric Buddhism*. Berkeley & London: Shambhala Publications.

Dehejia, Vidya (1988) 'The Persistence of Buddhism in Tamilnadu', *Mārg*, vol. 39/4, 53-74.

--- (2002) *The Sensuous and the Sacred Chola Bronzes from South India*. New York: American Federation of Arts.

Fukuroi, Yuko (2002a) 'The Remaining Stone Images of Buddha in Tamiḻnāḍu: a report', *Journal of Buddhist Iconography* 21, 1-15.

--- (2002b) 'Minami Indo ni okeru Kōki Bukkyō Bijutsu - Tamiḻnāḍu-shū Genzon no Butsuzō Hōkoku' ('The Later Buddhist Art in South India - A Report on the Buddhist

sculptures from Tamiḻnāḍu'), *Indian Archaeological Studies* 23, 49-82.

--- (2003) 'Minami Indo ni okeru Bukkyō Bijutsu no Hirogari' ('The Spread of Buddhist Art in the South India'), in Yutaka Oasa (ed.), *Nichiin Bunka Kōryū yori no Hasshin*, Osaka: Indo Bunka Center, 38-43.

--- (2004) 'The Buddhist Art of Keraḷa', *Indian Archaeological Studies* 25, 23-40.

--- (2007) *Indo, Chōla-chō no Bijutsu* ('*The Art of Cōḻa*'). Tokyo: Tōshin-dō.

Hatha Yoga Pradipika, The. SSP edition (1981/1984). Translated by Pancham Sinh, Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications.

Hikosaka, Shu (1984) 'Nativization of Buddhism in the Tamil Country', *Journal of the Institute of Asian Studies* 1/2, 61-94.

--- (1985) 'Buddhism in Tamiḻ Nāṭu – Some Introductory Remarks', *Journal of the Institute of Asian Studies* 2/2, 45-90.

--- (1989) *Buddhism in Tamil Nadu – A New Perspective*. Chennai: Institute of Asian Studies.

--- (1993) 'Butsuzō-zahō ni Mirareru Minami Indo-teki Tokuchō – Sono Genryū to Tenkai' ('The Characteristic Feature in the Sitting Posture of the Buddha images from South India – Its Origin and Evolution'), *Indo-gaku Mikkyō-gaku Kenkyū*, Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 603-48.

Hiltebeitel, Alf (1999/1988), *The Cult of Draupadī – Mythologies: from Gingee to Kurukṣetra*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers.

Kalupahana, David J. (1994/1992), *A History of Buddhist Philosophy – Continuities and Discountinuites*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers.

Kandaswamy, S. N. (1986) 'Tantric Buddhism in Tamil Literature', *Journal of the Institute of Asian Studies* 4/1, 47-65.

Kannan, R. (2003) *Manual on the Bronzes in the Government Museum, Chennai – A Typological and Descriptive Account of the Bronzes Displayed in the Re-organised Bronze Gallery*. Chennai: Government Museum.

Klimburg-Salter, Deborah & Maurizio Taddei (1991) 'The Uṣṇīṣa and the Brahmarandhra: An Aspect of Light Symbolism in Gandharan Buddha Images', in Gouriswar Bhattacharya (ed.), *Akṣayanīvī – Essays Presented to Dr. Debala Mitra in Admiration of Her Scholarly Contributions*, Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications, 73-93.

Knipe, David M. (1975) *In the Image of Fire-Vedic Experiences of Heat*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers.

L'Hernault, Françoise (2002) *The Iconography of the Bṛhadīśvara Temple*. Edited by Lalit M. Gujral, New Delhi/Pondicherry: Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts/École Française d'Extrême-Orient/Aryan Books International.

--- (2003/1993), 'Tiruvannamalai', in George Michell (ed.), *Temple Towers of Tamil Nadu*, Mumbai: Mārg Publications, 40-57.

Manimekhalaï (The Dancer with the Magic Bowl) by

Merchant-Prince Shattan (1989). Translated by A. Daniélou, New Delhi: Penguin Books India.

Minakshi, C. (1979) 'Buddhism in South India', in R. Nagaswamy (ed.), *South Indian Studies* 2, Chennai: Society for Archaeological, Historical & Epigraphical Research, 83-131.

Monius, Anne E. (2001) *Imagining a Place for Buddhism – Literary Culture and Religious Community in Tamil-Speaking South India*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Padmanabhan, S. (1994) 'Buddhism in Tamil Nadu', *Kisan World* 21/4, 39-42.

Radhakrishnan, S. (1999/1923) *Indian Philosophy*. Vol.1, New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Ramachandran, T. N. (1992/1954) *The Nagapattinam and Other Buddhist Bronzes in the Madras Museum.* Chennai: Government Museum (Bulletin of the Madras Government Museum).

Saṃyutta-nikāya, The Book of the Kindred Sayings, Part IV (1956/1927). Translated by F. L. Woodward, London: Pali Text Society.

Schalk, Peter (1993) 'On the Beginning of Buddhism in Tamiḻakam', *Journal of the Institute of Asian Studies* 11/1, 100-105.

Schroeder, U. von (1990) *Buddhist Sculptures of Sri Lanka*. Hong Kong: Visual Dharma Publications.

--- (1992) *The Golden Age of Sculpture in Sri Lanka – Masterpieces of Buddhist and Hindu Bronzes from Museums in Sri Lanka*. Hong Kong: Visual Dharma Publications.

Sivaramalingam, K. (1993) 'Tracing Buddhist Vestiges in Toṇṭaimaṇṭalam', *Journal of the Institute of Asian Studies* 10/2, 48-89.

--- (1997) *Archaeological Atlas of the Antique Remains of Buddhism in Tamil Nadu*. Chennai: Institute of Asian Studies.

Śiva Saṃhita, The. SSP edition (1981/1984). Translated by Rai Bahadur Srisa Chandra Vasu, Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications.

Smith, David (1991) 'Aspects of the Symbolism of Fire', in K. Werner (ed.), *Symbols in Art and Religion – the Indian and the Comparative Perspectives*, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 129-43.

Srinivasan, P. R. (2000/1960), 'Buddhist Images of South India', in A. Aiyappan & P. R. Srinivasan (eds), *Story of Buddhism with Special Reference to South India*, Chennai: Department of Information and Publicity, Government of Madras, 62-101.

Subrahmanyam, B. (2001) *Vajrayāna Buddhist Centres in South India*. Delhi: Bharatiya Kala Prakashan.

Thasarathan, A. (1992) 'New Findings of Buddhistic Remains: A Report', *Journal of the Institute of Asian Studies* 10/1, 130-44.

Vajracharya, Gautama (2007) 'Pipal Tree, Tonsured Monks, and Ushnisha', in Pratapaditya Pal (ed.), *Buddhist Art – Form & Meaning*, Mumbai: Mārg Publications, 13-35.

Varghese, Mathew (2008) *Principles of Buddhist Tantra – A Discourse on Cittaviśuddhi-prakaraṇa of Āryadeva*. New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers.

Veluppillai, A. (1991) 'The Maṇimēkalai: Historical Background and Indigenization of Buddhism', *Journal of the Institute of Asian Studies* 9/1, 23-72.

Wikramagamage, Chandra (1997) *Principles of Buddhist Iconology*. Polgasovita: Academy of Sri Lankan Culture.

Chapter 6.
New Considerations on some Gandhāran Fasting Buddhas

Anna Maria Quagliotti

The Gandhāran 'Fasting Buddhas' images have attracted considerable attention together with some examples that occur in Southeast Asian art at a much later time. With a few exceptions, the latter are beyond our scope (let me refer you to the observations offered by Claudine Bautze-Picron said in the course of this Conference). Here we mean to examine the two most famous of the Gandhāran images: the Buddha of Sikri Stūpa in the Lahore Museum and the Buddha from Takht-i-Bahi, now in Peshawar Museum (Ingholt 1957:62, pls 52-3, here Figs 1- 3). As has been widely noted, in the first case – on the pedestal of the Buddha – a fire stand is the axis of the composition represented between six monks – four of whom in *añjalimudrā*, two kneeling, and the others standing on the extreme right and left – and, in the second case, again on the pedestal, Siddhārtha (this time not emaciated) in *abhayamudrā* between Trapuṣa and Bhallika with their carts and oxen. Here, I would like to expand on some points made by Zwalf (1996: 170), who considered the Lahore and the Peshawar Buddhas – together with other images of 'fasting' ones, as 'meditational images' besides serving narrative purposes.

The emaciated Buddha images have mostly been identified as representing the Buddha during the years of austerities before his Awakening, after his cutting of his hair and abandonment of clothing episodes, the theme being a continuation of the previous episodes. Siddhārtha in his extreme asceticism transforms himself into a living skeleton (see below). Subsequently the Buddha decides to take food again.[1] Having achieved Awakening, the Buddha fasts once again at Bodhgaya during the seven weeks, each week in a different location. At the end of the seven weeks, according to the *Nidānakathā* (Rhys Davids 1880: 109) Sakka gave him to eat. However, we should take into account the late date of this text. This was the first food he had, immediately followed by the gift of rice and honey by Tapassu (Trapuṣa) and Bhallika. In the *Lalitavistara* (Foucaux 1884: 317-22) the episode is closely connected with the offering of the four bowls by the Lokapālas. But then, we may ask, having achieved Awakening, why did the Buddha fast once again at Bodhgaya? We shall revert to this point later on.

To return to the emaciated Buddha images, according to Brown (1997) they should represent Siddhārtha's austerities

practised *not before* his Awakening, but during his second fasting period:

> *Thus, there are two periods of fasting which both end by food being given to the Buddha. Most, if not all, of the Gandharan images represent, I think, the Buddha fasting during the forty-nine days of fasting at Bodhgaya (ibid.:106).*

In support of his hypothesis, Brown cites relief No. 87 in Chandigarh Museum and Art Gallery:[2]

> *A fragment of a relief showing several scenes also in Lahore [sic] may support the association between the seat of the grass, on the Sikri fasting Buddha] and the emaciated Buddha of the Chandigarh Museum relief. The lower scene of the Chandigarh Museum relief shows the Buddha approaching the seat with the grass while the middle scene shows the Buddha, now emaciated, on the seat. The broken third scene shows a full-bodied seated Buddha, unfortunately so destroyed that we cannot identify the scene, but the only sequence that makes sense is that the Buddha prepares the seat, is shown emaciated during the forty-nine days of fasting, and then is shown restored to his perfect body.[3] (Figs 4-5)*

Brown takes the relief from the bottom up, ignoring the fact that it was almost certainly meant to be read in the opposite direction, as is generally the case with Gandhāran reliefs. What matters to us here is the presence, in the second scene from top to bottom following the image of skeletal Buddha and representing Siddhārtha approaching the Bodhi tree, of the tree deities and the earth goddess, mentioned, e. g., in the *Lalitavistara* (Foucaux 1884: 280-81, 286 and 272). Moreover, Siddhārtha holds in his left hand a bunch of grass which he touches with his right hand, in accordance with the – albeit later – descriptions of the *Abhiniṣkramaṇasūtra* (Beal 1875: 206): 'Then as Bôdhisatwa approached the sacred spot [i. e. the Bodhi tree], holding the grass in his left hand, he arranged it with his right hand on the eastern

---

[1]   As evidenced by Brown (1994: 106) a clear rejection of the extreme austerities which can be seen as a repudiation of such extreme austerities practiced by the rival śramaṇa sects.

[2]   Cf. Foucher (1905: 391-9, fig.20); Kurita (1988: fig. 2l3); Ingholt (1957: 65, No. 62), who compares it to No. 787 of the Peshawar Museum, from Takht-i Bahi, see here, below.

[3]   Fig. 4 shows the two fragments joined together when the sculpture was in the Lahore Museum (Foucher1905: fig. 200, reproduced in Kurita 1988: fig. 213), and Figs 5a and b the separated parts of the sculpture, now in the Government Museum and Art Gallery of Chandigarh.

Fig. 1 – Fasting Buddha, from Sikri, Lahore Museum inv. 2099/675. After Kurita 1988: fig. P2-IV.

Fig. 2 – Fasting Buddha, from Takht-i Bahi, Peshawar Museum inv. 799/new 45. After Kurita 1988: fig. 183.

Fig. 3 – Detail. After Kurita 1988: fig. 184.

side of the tree.' To be borne in mind is the presence of the two goddesses on the previously mentioned No. 787 of the Peshawar Museum (Ingholt 1957: 65, pl. 62), with Māra between his two daughters and Siddhārtha approaching the tree, the earth goddess on the base of the seat and the goddess of the tree rising from the seat.[4]

This would not be the only case of two different scenes being shown on the same panel. Suffice to mention, for example, the lunette against the North-East side of Stūpa 70 of Butkara I, Italian Archaeological Mission, nr 2816 (Faccena 1962: 46-47, pl. CLXII; 1980, part 2: 378; Kurita 1988: fig. 106; Quagliotti 1989: 346-47, pl. IVb) with 'The Royal Chaplain Introducing Yaśodharā and Temptation of Śākyamuni', and, on the left, the defeated Māra tracing out the lines on the ground with his stick.

To return to the Qyzyl painting, let me quote to you some observations by Santoro (2002: 217-8), who first pointed out that while the three female images to the right of the Buddha are of fair aspect (the first actually assuming a 'provocative' attitude), the three to his left have white hair and faces scored by deep wrinkles. Santoro goes on to observe (ibid.: 218):

It is clear that in the two groups we are to recognise the daughters of Māra, depicted first, to the left, as young, voluptuous women, and secondly, to the right, as old women. The introduction of the double depiction effectively illustrates the point made in a number of Buddhist texts,[5] where we read that not only does the Bodhisattva resists the allure of the

god's daughters, but that, indeed, beholding them he prefigures their old age, or even transforms them into old women.

As we shall see later on, reference here is clearly to the physical transience of the body.

Brown (1997: 106-7) then goes on to examine the fasting Buddha of Peshawar where, he writes, by virtue of the presence of Trapuṣa and Bhallika on the pedestal, the scene

supplies an almost sure connection of the emaciated image with the second period of fasting at Bodhgayā [...]. The Buddha whom the merchants approach is not emaciated, but holds his hand in abhayamudrā, gesturing for the merchants to approach him without fear. The connection of the food to the restored body of the Buddha is thus made in the predella scene.

Here one might object: but if the Buddha is in *abhayamudrā* to reassure the two merchants, they cannot have offered him food yet! Unless, of course, there might be some reference to the food offered to him by Sakka before the two merchants came on the scene, but, as we have seen, this is a risky line to take given the greater antiquity of the sculpture with respect to the *Nidānakathā*.

As to the third sculpture mentioned by Brown (1997: 1l0-11), namely No. OA 1880.67 in the British Museum, from Jamal Garhi (Errington & Cribb 1992: 228-9; Zwalf 1996: 169-70), in agreement with Brown, I hold it quite plausible that it might represent the second period of fasting Siddhārtha, attended by Indra (although his presence is noted in the too late *Nidānakathā*, but not in other texts) and Vajrapāṇi on his left and, on his right, by two worshippers, the first one, a female, holding 'with joined hands perhaps a floral offering or a garland' (Zwalf 1996: 170), in contrast with the interpretation advanced by Foucher (1905: 382), who saw the second female figure as holding a bowl, and so

---

[4]   One might wonder how it is that the Buddha in the upper panel is already wearing the typical garment. Actually it is quite normal, since he is depicted with this garment after the exchange of clothing, as for example on relief Nr OA 1882-65 in the British Museum showing the Bodhisattva parting from Kaṇṭhaka and Chandaka (Zwalf 1996: 188, nr 179).

[5]   I.e. the following texts: *Lalitavistara*, cf. Foucaux (1884: 278); *Abhiniṣkramaṇasūtra*, cf. Beal (1875: 216); *Avadanakalpalatā* cf. Tucci (1967: 199), According to the *Lalitavistara* (Foucaux 1884: 315) this also happens when Māra tries to persuade the Buddha to enter into parinirvāṇa after the fourth week, where 'le tathāgata ne prit pas garde à elles [i. e. Māra's daughters], mais il les changea en vieilles décrépites.'

Fig. 4 – Three scenes from Buddha's life, Government Museum and Art Gallery, Chandigarh, inv. 57. After Kurita 1988: fig. 213.

identified the scene in terms of the food offered by Sujatā to the Buddha.[6]

Brown bases his arguments on the fact that: a) the emaciated Buddha was clearly associated with the site of Bodhgaya at least in the seventh century AD, according to the descriptions of Xuanzang – who visited the temple and the sacred area, including the seven stations, each in a separate shrine (cf. Beal 1875: 128) who reports that, while there were examples of the emaciated Buddha from India, there was also one at Bodhgaya, adding that the image was of his six-years fasting. In this connection Brown notes that the reports of the Chinese pilgrim are somewhat confused, in that the image was seen near the temple at Bodhgaya, to the east of the tank of the Nāga Mucalinda, in the place where the Tathāgata subdued the heretics, events that happened long after Awakening. More important, we believe, is the pilgrim's description of which Buddha image was involved, and this is put quite clearly; b) a fasting Buddha is shown on some small stone plaques - mostly from Pagan - representing the seven stations at Bodhgaya (on this point see, in this issue, Bautze-Picron).

To revert to Siddhārtha's 'penances' prior to his Awakening, for instance in the *Lalitavistara* (Foucaux 1884: 210-24), the six-years period is described at great length. According to this text, Siddhārtha's hair and whiskers fell from him on this occasion to be gathered by Sujatā, who would fed him. We shall revert to this point later.

We know, e.g. from the *Lalitavistara* (Foucaux 1884: 218-9) that during this period the Bodhisattva applied himself to *āsphānaka* contemplations. This is a state where the ascetic succeeds in being devoid of life-breath, although he does not thereby cease to exist.

> *En ce moment, quelques dieux ayant vu cet état du Bôdhisattva, parlèrent ainsi : Hélas! il est allé à la mort, en vérité, ce jeune Siddhārtha ! D'autres dirent : Non, il n'est pas allé à la mort, mais il en est ainsi pour les Arhats qui demeurent dans la méditation.[7]*

The gods sent this news to his mother in the realm of the Thirty-three gods, who descended to the Nairañjanā river:

> *En le voyant [i.e. her son] ainsi pareil à un mort, suffoquée par les sanglots, elle se mit à pleurer [...] Alors le Bôdhisattva la consolant, lui dit: Il ne faut*

---

[6]   As pointed out by Zwalf (1996: 170): 'while it seems certain that the Bodhisattva is here attended by Vajrapāṇi and Indra, the flanking and formally paired male and female worshippers seem like donors and may be intentionally ambiguous.' Naturally, Foucher's interpretation came in for contestation by Brown.

[7]   See below, note 10. As evidenced by Strong (1994: 88): 'It is none less interesting to take the statement as face value: an arhat, think the deities, is someone who paradoxically looks both dead and alive, at the same time.' In other words, Siddhārtha's divestment of his princely robes and hair, his cemetery meditation and penances are followed by what was believed to be an arhatship.

Fig. 5a – Photo Joachim K. Bautze. Courtesy Government Museum and Art Gallery, Chandigarh.

Fig. 5b – Photo Joachim K. Bautze. Courtesy Government Museum and Art Gallery, Chandigarh.

pas craindre; tu retrouveras ton fils [...] Je rendrai visible la prédiction d'Asita, je rendrai visible la prédiction de Dipaṅkara [...]. Le temps n'est pas loin où tu verras l'Intelligence d'un Bouddha.

Buddha's asceticism should be described in terms that recollect the cemetery-meditation tradition as is written e.g. in the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*. Here Siddhārtha brings his asceticism to its culmination when, just prior to resuming eating, lying down next to a corpse in a cremation ground, he sees his body as a living skeleton (Strong 1992: 87).

As evidenced by Strong (1992: 87)

what is emphasized in the accounts of the Buddha's asceticism is not his hunger and suffering so much

as his body's thinness – which, in fact, is described in terms that recollect cemetery-meditation traditions [Majjhima Nikāya 1: 245-46 = Horner 1954-59, 1: 300].

We may recall that, according to the *Lalitavistara*, beholding the repulsive scene of the ladies, lying on the ground in the harem, the Bodhisattva realised in his mind the idea of the cremation ground. We know from the *Dīgha Nikāya* (Warren 1922: 64) that, in the same episode, his magnificent apartment 'began to seem like a cemetery filled with dead bodies impaled and left to rot.' Is this not, perhaps, a precursor of his future meditations on the decomposition of dead bodies?

Indeed, as we noted, in the Buddha biography preserved

in the Mūlasarvastivāda *Vinaya* (Gnoli 1978: 1, 107), the culmination of his asceticism comes when he lies down next to a corpse. Seeing his body as a living skeleton enables him to realize its inherent involvement in suffering, impermanence (in this respect we can recall the episodes of the meetings) and non self and it leads logically to the next episode of his life: his Awakening at Bodhgaya.

Does this not evoke a rite de passage? The future Buddha returns to the condition of the newborn baby whose hair has yet to grow, and Siddhārtha's hair will grow again when he takes food. Or, even more. If we turn our thoughts to the *tacapañcaka*, the fivefold formula of meditation on the perishable nature of the human body: hair, body hairs, nails, teeth, skin, where as Strong (1992: 88) points out,

> *the hair of the head [...] may be thought to stand for the body as a whole; with the hair's removal in the rite of tonsure, its perishable nature becomes particularly obvious. [...] Indeed, shaving the hair was in India an important part of the preparation of the dead for a funeral. Thus, whatever psychosexual significance the tonsure of the Buddhist monk may hold, it may also symbolically associate him with the dead.*

And again: if we think of the *upasampadā* or higher ordination we realize that Buddha's asceticism does not only consists of the divestment of the royal robe, but is also a cemetery meditation followed by arhatship. These, I believe, are the symbolic meanings of the Gandhāran fasting Buddhas. Siddhārtha has concluded his 'apprenticeship' and has realised that austerities are not the way to knowledge. He must be 'reborn', and begins to nourish himself once more.

But let us go on now to the two Gandhāran reliefs previously mentioned, beginning with the one at Peshawar. Here, on the pedestal, the Buddha in *abhayamudrā* in the episode of the visit of Trapuṣa and Bhallika is not skeletal, while he is in the principal image, in *dhyānamudrā*. Might not the presence of the two merchants on the pedestal be seen as an interpretation of the principal figure? Here we keep in mind the Śākyamuni seated beneath the *jambu* in sculpture inv. 1739/new inv. 39 of the Peshawar Museum, from Sahri-Bahlol (Kurita 1998: fig. 131; Verardi 1994: 35-6, fig. 23) (Fig. 6). On the pedestal of this piece the axis of the composition is a fire stand with – to the right – the farmer with his oxen and – on the other side – two figures standing in *añjalimudrā*, while on the far left we see the Suddhāvara or Suddhādivāsa god. As evidenced by Verardi (*cit.*), here the fire ritual which is being performed is clearly the focus of this relief

> *and it may be suggested that Siddhārtha is being requested (or even obliged, because of the rite's inherent power) to grant favours, or avoid damages, in relation to some kind of agricultural activity. In*

> *such an icon Siddhārtha should not be considered the Buddha-to-be, as may be the case of the narrative scene of the Sikri Stūpa [lngholt 1957: 57-58. pl. 36], but as an already Enlightened being who, as shown by his miraculous birth and exploits as a newborn child, has decided to descend on earth as a Bodhisattva.*

In other words, according to Verardi, this should be a representation of an *exoteric homa* performed before Siddhārtha, a Buddhist doctrine to explain invariant rituals within a Buddhist context.

On the sculpture of the Peshawar Museum, the Budha with Trapuṣa and Bhallika represented on the pedestal is not skeletal and, without excluding the hypothesis that this may allude to the food offered to him by the two merchants after his prolonged fasting, we may understand his fasting in relation to the first period of austerities, preceding the Awakening, symbolised by the principal image.

Let us now go on to the Buddha of Lahore, according to Verardi (1994: 38, fig. 24), a representation of *audārāgni* or fire of hunger performed by Siddhārtha fasting. On the pedestal is a fire-stand between six monks.[8]

As evidenced by Verardi (cit.), if in the case of the Budha seated under the jambu tree we are facing with a form of exoteric or proto-homa ritual (and thus for the general public), here the message is esoteric (and so only for initiates), since the ritual is performed by monks and this is a developed Buddhist form of *homa*:

> *What is more, the ritual is not addressed to Buddha or a Bodhisattva, but to Siddhārtha fasting, which would suggest that the considerations made so far appear to be not very consistent with the ritual actually represented. If the scene represents homa, the whole matter should be reconsidered.*

In fact 'the ritual depicted is probably *not* proper *homa'*, in the sense that

> *the stela cannot be explained except with reference to practices and texts not considered by scholars to be politically correct. In fact, the only clue is the homa chapter of the Vairocanābhisambodhi Tantra where, among the 12 fires considered there, is the audāryāgni. The Lahore stela seems, in fact, to evoke the practice of fasting in order to reach tapas (Siddhārtha's actual aim) and is evidence*

---

[8]   Brown (1997: 114, n. l0) writes: 'As far as I know, there has been no adequate explanation of why the fire altar is worshipped in conjunction with the Buddha. G. Verardi (referring to the article of 1987) has discussed the topic, offering interesting speculation.' Brown was not acquainted with his subsequent study in which Verardi (1994: 38-9, fig. 24) points out that we witness a fire ritual performed by monks.

Fig. 6 – Meditationg Siddhārtha, from Sahri Bahlol. Peshawar Museum inv. 1739/ new 39. After Kurita 1988: fig. 131.

for the existence of an esoteric fire ritual with this purpose.[9]

I am in total agreement with Verardi's observations, but I would like to draw your attention to another aspect that emerges from perusal of the texts previously cited, and that is that the Bodhisattva, having gone to the cremation ground, sees his body like a living skeleton. Is this not an allusion to the *asubha-bhāvana*, a group of ten forms of meditations on the corpse in its various stages of decomposition, each form terminating with the conclusion: 'This body of mine too, is even so constituted, is of even such nature, has not got beyond that fate', as we read in the *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna suttanta* of the *Dīgha Nikāya* (*sutta* 22; II: 295-8; cf. Rhys Davids 2002: 331-3):

And moreover, Bhikkhus, a brother just as if had seen a body abandoned in the charnel field, dead for one, two, or three days, swollen, turning black and blue[10] and decomposed, applies that perception to this very body (of his own), reflecting: 'This body, too, is even so constituted, is of even such a nature, has not got beyond that (fate).'

The text continues with various stages of decomposition of the body, the dismemberment of the skeleton and its reduction to dust.

I will confine reference to, among other texts, the *Mūlapaṇṇāsa* of the *Majjima Nikāya* (*sutta* l0: I.58-9, cf. Horner 2000: 74-5), much like the previous text, quoting just a few sentences:

And again, monks, as a monk might see a body thrown aside in a cemetery, dead for one day or for two days or for three days, swollen, discoloured, decomposing: he focuses on this body itself,

thinking: 'This body, too, is of a similar nature'... And again, monks, a monk might see a body thrown aside in a cemetery, a skeleton with some flesh and blood, etc,; he focuses on this body itself, etc.; the bones gone rotten and reduced to powder; he focuses on this body.

And finally: 'Monks, the idea of the skeleton, if cultivated, conducts to great peace from bondage (*yoga-kkhema*)', we know from the *Samyutta Nikāya* (V, I29, cf. Woodward 1930: 110). At the same time, in a later period, we know from Xuanzang (Beal 1875: 128, cf. Brown 1997: 114) that in Bodhgaya the image of the fasting Buddha could cure those suffering from diseases.

And how is, we may ask, that we find so many images of the fasting Buddha in Gandhāra? On this point Brown (1994: 1129) had the following observation to make:

One possible reason for not wanting to represent the emaciated Buddha and for its almost total absence in South Asian art is because it represents the Buddha doing something that he in fact rejected and advised against, and more broadly it represents the Buddha embodying the very concepts of pain and death which he had overcome.[11]

After this brief digression, let us return again to the Buddha in the Peshawar Museum. As we have seen, the Buddha sculpted on the pedestal is not skeletal, but allusion to his post-Awakening fasting may be symbolised by the principal image. Here Verardi's observation is even more relevant. In other words: Why would it have been necessary for Siddhārtha to fast a second time? He had already reached the Bodhi. Here the *audāryāgni* comes into the scene again. The Buddha is seated in *abhayamudrā*, or in other words in the gesture of teaching the merchants the importance of fasting (although not mentioned in the texts): fasting is a way of reaching a certain stage through which – again as a *rite de passage*, in a certain sense, food may once again be taken. This may possibly be the first teaching of the Buddha which, having made a donation of his locks of hair and fingernail fragments to the two (as we know, hair and nails continue growing after death), will begin to spread the Dharma.

---

9   On the seventh-century Mahā-Vairocanābhisambodhi Tantra, see Hodge 2003.
10   Siddhārtha says in the *Lalitavistara* (Foucaux 1884: 221): 'during my staying period of austerities the inhabitants of the village in the vicinity of which I happened to be thought: Ah! Truly he is black, the śrāmaṇa Gautama; truly he is bluish, the śrāmaṇa Gautama!' And in the *Majjima Nikāya* (Ñāṇamoli 1995: 339-40): 'Now when people saw me [i. e. Siddhārtha], some said: "The recluse Gotama is black." Other people said: "The recluse Gotama is not black, he is brown." Other people said: "The recluse Gotama is not black, he is brown." Other people said: "The recluse Gotama is neither black nor brown, he is golden-skinned."' And in the Mahāvastu (Jones 1952: 122): 'Women and men in the herdsmen's villages saying that the recluse Gotama was black, now that he had the sallow colour of a magdura'. See also the Theravādin Sutta (*Majjhima Nikāya* I: 242-7, cf. Bareau 1963: 46-7): [the Buddha says] 'des divinités m'ayant vu en cet état, dirent ceci: "il est mort, le religieux Gotama." Certain divinités dirent ceci: "Il n'est pas mort, le religieux Gotama, mais il est en train de mourir." D'autres divinités dirent ceci: "Il est ni mort, ni en train de mourir, le religieux Gotama, il est un Arhant [...]"' And again: 'des hommes, m'ayant vu dans cet état, dirent ceci: "Il est noir, le religieux Gotama." Certains hommes dirent ceci: "Il n'est pas noir, le religieux Gotama, il est brun, le religieux Gotama.' D'autres hommes dirent ceci: "Il n'est pas noir, le religieux Gotama, il n'est pas brun non plus, il a la peau tirée, le religieux Gotama", tant [...] la couleur de ma peau, pourtant parfaitement pure, parfaitement propre, était altérée sous l'effct du jeûne.' Do not these passages again recall the colours of the body in decomposition?

11   Lack of fasting Buddhas at Borobudur. Is it possible that cemetery meditation was not practised? To return to the fasting Buddha, let us briefly consider the scenes on the First Terrace at Borobudur, where he does not appear. How can we account for this absence, seeing that the episodes of his life to the First Preaching are represented with no fewer than 120 reliefs? As is generally accepted, the artists drew their inspiration from the *Lalitavistara* which deals at length with the years of austerity. There are three possible answers: either the text the artists referred to was not the *Lalitavistara* but some similar text, or – if the fasting Buddhas are a symbolic reference to the cemetery meditations Buddhist should perform on the impermanence of human life – these rites did not exist in Borobudur, or the clients who commissioned the work wished to avoid anything shocking, since as Brown points out (2003) the world depicted there is fantastical, joyful, designed for an élite and not to the public at large.

To sum up: it is my opinion that the Gandhāran fasting Buddhas of Lahore and Peshawar represent Siddhārtha in the period prior to the Awakening. Although the Bodhgaya image considered by Xuanzang as a depiction of the Buddha before the Awakening can offer further support to our hypothesis it is also quite possible that the subsequent images – the Buddha protected by the Nāga Mucalinda, etc. – might attest to the increasing importance of the places where the Buddha is said to have stayed in the seven weeks following upon the Awakening – places thronged with pilgrims at the time of Xuanzang and in the following times. This would account for the presence of the fasting Buddha cited by Brown (1997: ll3-4, fig.4) in the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Kansas City Burmese image of life scenes and the seven stations, the emaciated Buddha (bottom image along the proper left edge) becoming here another station at Bodhgaya, the one of his post-Awakening fasting.

I also believe that the fasting Buddhas were meant to serve as 'meditational' models for representation of skeletons as in the case of the well-known painting of cave of Tepe Shotor (Tarzi I976: 408, fig.21) and, over the centuries, the skeleton representations of Central-Asian production of Qyzyl, e.g. in the Seefarherhöhle (Grünwedel 1920 pl. XVIII, fig.6; Bussagli 1963:75, fig. on p. 68), or on some representations on the meditation on the stages of decomposition of bodies as shown, for example, in Cave 20 in Toyuk (Miyaji 1997: 207: 32), or in the later production, e.g. in some Japanese paintings, for which I refer you to my forthcoming article on two photographs of the Gerini fund of Naples University 'l'Orientale'.

Bibliography

Bareau, André (1963) *Recherches sur la biographie du Buddha dans les Sūtrapiṭaka et les Vinayapiṭaka anciens : de la quête de l'Éveil à la conversion de Śāriputra et de Maudgalyāyana.* Paris : École Française d'Extrême-Orient (Publications de l' École Française d'Extrême-Orient, volume LIII).

Beal, Samuel (1875) *The romantic Legend of Śākya Buddha, A Translation of the Chinese Version of the Abhiniṣkramaṇasūtra.* (Reprint:) Delhi, etc.: Motilal Banarsidass, 1969 (1st ed. London: Trübner & Co., 1875).

Brown, Robert L. (1997) 'The Emaciated Gandhāran Buddha Images: Asceticism, Heath, and the Body', in Natasha Eilenberg, M.C. Subhadradis Diskul and Robert L. Brown (eds), Living a Life in Accord with Dhamma: Papers in Honour of Professor Jean Boisselier on his Eightieth Birthday. Bangkok: Silpakorn University, 105-15.

--- (2003) 'Place in the Sacred Biography at Borobudur', in Phillis E. Granoff & Koichi Shinohara (eds.), *Pilgrims, Patrons, and Place. Localizing Sanctity in Asian Religions*, Vancouver/Toronto: University of British Columbia Press, 247-63.

Bussagli, M. (1963) *La peinture de l'Asie Centrale.* Genève: Skira (Les trésors de l'Asie 6).

Errington, Elizabeth & Joe Cribb, eds. (1992) *The Crossroads of Asia: Transformation in Image and Symbol in the Art of Ancient Afghanistan and Pakistan.* Cambridge: Ancient India and Iran Trust (exhibition at the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, 6 October – 13 December 1992).

Faccenna, Domenico (1962) *Sculptures from the Sacred Area of Butkara I (Swat, West Pakistan).* Part 2. Roma : Istituto poligr. dello Stato, Libr. dello Stato (Reports and Memoirs, Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente, Centro Studi e Scavi Archaeologici in Asia, 2.2).

--- (1980) *Butkara I (Swāt, Pakirtan) 1956-1962.* Parts 1, 2, 3. Roma: IsMEO (Reports and Memoirs, Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente, Centro Studi e Scavi Archaeologici in Asia, 3).

Foucaux, Philippe Edouard (1884) *Le Lalita Vistara, Développement des jeux, contenant l'histoire du Bouddha Çakya-mouni depuis sa naissance jusqu'à sa prédication, traduit du Sanskrit en Français.* Paris: Ernest Leroux, éditeur (Annales du Musée Guimet, tome sixième). (Reprint:) Paris: Les deux Océans, 1988.

Foucher, Alfred (1905) *L'art gréco-bouddhique du Gandhāra, étude sur les origines de l'influence classique dans l'art bouddhique de l'Inde et de l'Extrême-Orient. Tome Ier Introduction, les édifices, les bas-reliefs…* Paris: E. Leroux (Publications de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient, V).

Gnoli, Raniero, ed (1978) *The Gilgit Manuscript of the Śāyanāsavastu and the Adhikaraṇavastu, being the 15. and 16. sections of the Vinaya of the Mūlasarvāstivādin.* Roma : Ist. Italiano per il medio ed Estremo oriente (Serie orientale Roma 50).

Grünwedel, Albert (1920) *Alt-Kutscha, Archäologische und religionsgeschichtliche Forschungen an Tempera-Gemälden aus Buddhistischen Höhlen der ersten acht Jahrhunderte nach Christi Geburt.* Berlin : Elsner.

Hardy, Robert Spence (1967) *A Manual of Buddhism, in its Modem Development.* [Reprint:] Varanasi: Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series (Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series 56) (1st ed. 1860).

Hodge, Stephen (2003) *The Mahā-Vairocana Abhisaṃbodhi Tantra. With Buddhaguya's Commentary.* London: RoutledgeCurzon.

Horner, Isaline Blew (2000) *The Collection of the Middle Length Sayings (Majjhima-Nikāya). I. The First Fifty Discourses (Mūlapannasa).* Oxford: Pali Text Society (Translation series 29) (1st ed. 1954).

Ingholt, Harald & Islay de Courcy Lyons (photographs) (1957) *Gandhāran Art in Pakistan.* New York: Pantheon Books.

Jones, J. J. (1952) *The Mahāvastu*, Volume II, Translated from the Buddhist Sanskrit. London: The Pali Text Society.

Kurita, Isao (1988) *Gandharan Art. I. The Buddha's Life Story.* Tokyo: Nigensha.

Miyaji, Akira (2007) 'Indian influence on mural paintings along the Silk Road' In Kazuya Yamauchi, Yoko Taniguchi, and Tomoko Uno (eds.), *Mural Paintings of the Silk Road. Cultural Exchanges Between East and West. Proceedings of the 29th Annual International Symposium on the Conservation and Restoration of Cultural Property, National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, Tokyo, January 2006*, 27-33.

Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli (1995) *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha. A New translation of the Majjhima Nikāya*, original Translation by. Transl. and rev. by. Boston: Wisdom Publications.

Quagliotti, A. M. (1989) 'Mahākāruṇika', *Annali dell'Istituto [Universitario] Orientale di Napoli* 49, 337 -70.

Rhys Davids, T. W. (1880) *Buddhist Birth Stories, or Jātaka Tales. The Oldest Collection of Folk-lore Extant: being the Jātakatthavannanā*, for the first time edited in the original Pāli by V. Fausböll, and translated by T.W. Rhys Davids [and Robert C. Childers]. London: Trübner & Co (Trübner Oriental Series).

--- (2002) *Dialogues of the Buddha. Translated from the Pali of the Digha-nikāya, Part II*. Oxford: Pali Text Society (Sacred Books of the Buddhists 3) (1st ed.1910).

Santoro, Arcangela (2002) 'Dalla nascita all'Illuminazione: su quattro scene della vita del Buddha storico nella Grotta dei Pavoni (Kizil, Xinjiang)', *Rivista deli Studi Orientali* LXXV, 205-30.

Strong, John S. (1994) *The Legend and Cult of Upagupta. Sanskrit Buddhism in Notth India and Southeast Asia*. (Reprint:) Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass (1st ed., Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992).

Tarzi, Zemaryalaï (1976) 'Hadda à la lumière des trois dernières campagnes de fouilles de Tapa-é-Shotor (1974-1976)', *Académie des Inscriptions & Belles-Lettres. Comptes rendus des séances de l'année 1976*, 381-410.

Tucci, Giuseppe (1967) *II trono di diamante*. Bari: De Donato (All'insegna dell'orizzonte 29).

Verardi, Giovanni (1987) 'The Buddha's Dhuni', in Marianne Yaldiz and Wibke Lobo (eds.) *Investigating Indian Art. Proceedings of a Symposium on the Development of Early Buddhist and Hindu Iconography Held at the Museum of Indian Art, Berlin, in May 1986*, Berlin: Museum für Indische Kunst Berlin/Staatliche Museen Preussischer Kulturbesitz (Veröffentlichungen des Museums für indische Kunst Berlin 8), 369-83.

--- (1994) *Homa and other Fire Rituals in Gandhara*. Supplement no. 79 to the *Annali dell'Istituto [Universitario] Orientale di Napoli*. Napoli.

Warren, Henry Clarke (1922) *Buddhism in Translations: Passages selected from the Buddhist sacred Books and translated from the original Pali into English*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press (Harvard Oriental Series 3/84).

Woodward, Frank Lee (1930) *The Book of the Kindred Sayings (Samyutta-Nikāya) or Grouped Suttas. Part 5 (Maha-Vagga)*. London: Pali Text Society/Distributed by Routledge and Kegan Paul (Pali Text Society Translation series 16). (Reprint: 1997).

--- (1932) *The Book of the Gradual Sayings (Anguttara-Nikāya) or more Numbered Suttas*. London: Published for the Pali Text Society by Oxford University Press (Pali Text Society Translation series 22, 24-27). (Reprint: 2000).

Zwalf, Wladimir (1996) *A Catalogue of the Gandhāra Sculpture in the British Museum*. London: The Trustees of the British Museum/British Museum Press.

CHAPTER 7.
THE EMACIATED BUDDHA IN SOUTHEAST BANGLADESH AND PAGAN (MYANMAR)

Claudine Bautze-Picron

Images of the emaciated Buddha were never a common representation in India; after those created in the Northwest in the first four or five (?) centuries[1] they practically disappear from the region. Two rare eighth-century images from Kashmir relate to the Gandharan representations although they reveal a more narrative perception of the subject (Pal 2003: cats 69 & 71). This topic remains thus afterwards absent for a very long period till it surfaces again in Eastern Bengal and Pagan.

The depiction of the asceticism is there introduced in one of the side scenes distributed around the central image of the Buddha reaching the Enlightenment in late eleventh- and twelfth-century images from Eastern Bengal and twelfth to thirteenth-century small sculptures from Pagan (Figs 1 and 3).[2] Beside these images which offer an ideal depiction of the Buddha's life this scene is also illustrated in some rare independent images belonging to the cycle of steles narrating Śākyamuni's biography in the Kyaukku Ônhmin or the Ananda Temple (Figs 6-9) and is, moreover, a major topic present in small sculptures in pyro-phyllite originating from the region of Pagan and dating probably from the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries (Figs 10-12).[3] The presence of the scene in the images from Bangladesh can be explained through the fact that although reproducing a model created in Bihar – a model which, as a matter of fact, will be repeated in far-away regions and in different mediums: cloth-paintings in Tibet, murals and small stone (so-called 'andagu') images in Pagan, for instance –, these sculptures introduce depictions of moments of the life which are otherwise not illustrated in the available material from Bihar (but I suspect that they actually refer to a now lost model which must have been available to all Buddhists, perhaps in Bodhgaya or in another major centre). They thus reflect a renewed awareness for the biography which is coeval with the detailed illustration of the life in the Ananda Temple at Pagan, for instance. These images originating from a Bengali region which is located between South Asia and Burma, it is likely that they were carved within a

Fig. 1 – The emaciated Buddha, detail of the 'Betagi image'. Photo Joachim K. Bautze.

community which sustained stronger links to Burma than to Bihar. However, and as seen below, the scene of asceticism in these images differs from the scene depicted in Pagan.

---

[1] The chronology of images from the Northwest remains a major point of argumentation among scholars; recently, Juhyung Rhi has 'provisionally' (and thus very cautiously) dated the images of the fasting Buddha in the second century A.D. (2006/2008: 149 note 52).

[2] See Bautze-Picron 1999 & 2006 for this type of images from Burma. The images from Southeast Bangladesh have been considered in earlier publications (Bautze-Picron 1992 & 1995/96).

[3] For a general introduction to this group, see Bautze-Picron 2006. A proper study of this group is in preparation.

to say with the Great Departure. In Pagan the rupture in Śākyamuni's life is focused on the cutting of the hair, a scene which is prominently displayed below the images of the Buddhas of the past (Bautze-Picron 2003: 84 and pls 87-88). Although testimonies from Bihar or Bengal are altogether lacking, the understanding of the cutting of hair as being symbolic for a clear rupture most probably traces its origin in these regions, being also observed in a similar position in twelfth and thirteenth-century cloth-paintings from Tibet (Bautze-Picron 1995/96: 380 'thanka A', figs 2-3 & 11; Pal 2003: cat. 121).

Such images can lead the way to meditation on death and on the ephemeral nature of life (as shown in this volume by Anna Maria Quagliotti's article). But they might also have been the object of veneration actually paid to the (future) Buddha performing

> *unequalled austerities … which easily eclipsed any such practice by heretics, and thus were a most eloquent symbol of the Buddha's superiority over all those following heresy even in their privileged methods. At the same time, they were images of the austerities par excellence the Buddha endured through his numerous incarnations, which were perceived even close to an indispensable part of practice toward enlightenment. (Rhi 2006/2008: 146-7)[5]*

However, the absence after the fourth century of any artistic allusion to the extreme asceticism practiced by Śākyamuni might have also resulted from the interpretation of this period of his life as being inauspicious, being even understood as 'the last expiation of evil deed, which [the Buddha] had committed in his previous births.'(Hara 1997: 250; see also Rhi 2006/2008: 140 note 38) These images may not only reflect an extreme aversion for the body as expressed in Buddhist texts (Wilson 1996: 41-76), but may also have generated at the level of aesthetics in a proper Indian context the feeling of aversion or *jugupsā* in total contrast with the emotion of peace or serenity, *śānta*, arising out all other Buddha's images (Goswamy 1986: 198-200, 270-72). This might have had for partial consequence the absence of its depiction.[6] Depictions of emaciated characters did not, however, remain unknown in a Buddhist context. Ascetics are indeed present in the narrative context of Śākyamuni's life in India and it is out of this development that the presence of ascetics in a non-narrative context in the

Fig. 2 – The Buddha protected by Mucilinda, detail of the 'Betagi' image. Photo Joachim K. Bautze.

Although its study can lead the way to various interpretations, this specific iconography basically remains an illustration of the six enduring years during which the future Buddha led extremely rigorous austerities after he had left Kapilavastu, cut his long hair and renounced his princely dresses.[4] The period of asceticism started so

---

[4] Some texts describe the pitiful shape of the Bodhisattva, leading some to believe he had died (Bautze-Picron 2007a: 107). The *Abhiniṣkramaṇasūtra* tells that '… his skin became wrinkled, and his body attenuated and his eyes hollow as an old man's; whilst his limbs were unable to support him as he moved, and all who beheld him were filled with a strange feeling of awe and reverence at the sight of the penance he was thus enduring.' (Beal 1875/1985: 187) The same text mentions that during all those six years, he would only take millet 'sufficient to keep him alive' (ibid.). See also the lengthy description of the emaciated man in the *Mahāsaccakasutta* (Thomas 1927: 65-66; Ñāṇamoli 1998: 18-19). Very recently (in fact, after the present paper had been written), Juhyung Rhi published an important 'new' source praising the asceticism of the Buddha, i.e. the *Karuṇāpuṇḍarīka*: from a chronological point of view, this source could be roughly contemporary to the Gandhāran images (Rhi 2006/2008: 141-50).

[5] The asceticism takes place on the vajrāsana – which clearly enhances its positive value in the *Karuṇāpuṇḍarīka* which also puts an 'emphasis on the merit of seeing the image of austerities'(Rhi 2006/08: 141 & 149). And see here Fig. 9. A very detailed list of sources describing the period of fasting has been recently published by Juhyung Rhi 2006/2008: 132-3 & 140 note 38. Sources used in the present paper differ, being those which were more evidently available in Burma.

[6] A similar remark might apply to the situation in Burma (and, but partly only, Thailand): after the images from the Pagan period (11th-13/14th c.; here Figs 3, 6-12), a long period follows during which no material is available: when it appears again, in the early 18th c. and on paintings, the (future) Buddha is never to be shown in his emaciated form but in his healthy body (here Figs 13-15).

Fig. 3 – The emaciated Buddha, detail of Fig.1 in Bautze-Picron 2006. Photo Joachim K. Bautze.

murals of Pagan emerged. Their position within the overall ornamental structure probably reflects their place within the Buddhist community: whereas the two monks Sāriputta and Moggallāna are constantly seen, kneeling on either side of the main image of the Buddha, these ascetics are utmost rarely depicted and then only in the frame around Buddha images or in the ornamentation of windows, i.e. near the outside space (Bautze-Picron 2003: 104,108, pls 126-8).

Behind the attitude of avoiding the viewing of the wasted body, a more 'political' approach to the use of the Buddha image might have been at work, which might have fostered this development. Being the most concrete manner of expressing ideas, the image is addressed not only to those who ordered the images to be carved or de facto worshipped them, but also to those who belong to the periphery, i.e. to the 'others' who visit Brahmanical institutions and worship Śiva or Viṣṇu, for instance. Through veneration and rituals, worshippers concentrate their attention on the image in which various specific spiritual, social and political concepts converge, making it the most explicit and adequate expression of a community opposite the other social or religious groups. In this context, emaciated characters

of non-Buddhist origin are distributed at the periphery of 'healthy' Buddha images from the sixth century onwards.[7]

The small images presently under survey were probably carved in the region of Pagan. The mere size of these images, rarely exceeding 20 cm and the fact that they belong to a fairly large group of carvings let suggest that they must have been part of relics deposited in a stūpa or an image; they were thus most probably not aimed at a popular or public worship.

Images from Pagan which illustrate the 'life' of the Buddha in a fixed set of events reflect a tradition which hinges on the north-eastern India tradition of the ninth to twelfth century (Bautze-Picron 1992 & 1995/96). However, if the overall structure borrowed from India is preserved, the different 'motifs' which are introduced in the images of the ascetic Buddha mirror the 'birmanization' of the Indian model and announce the fourteenth-century Thai school of Sukhotai. These motifs reflect, moreover, a refined mind well-aware of

[7] I deal with this aspect of the Buddha iconography in a separate study bearing on the images distributed at the periphery of the Buddha and concerned with the definition and the limits of the Buddha image; this study will be published in the *Berliner Indologische Studien.*

Fig. 4 – The Buddha protected by Mucilinda, detail of Fig.1 in Bautze-Picron 2006. Photo Joachim K. Bautze.

Fig. 5 – The Buddha protected by Mucilinda together with his representation as emaciated. After Pal 1993: 58.

Fig. 6 – The emaciated Buddha, Kyaukku Ônhmin Temple, Pagan. After Luce 1969-70, III: pl. 141d.

the literary sources, their study conveying an understanding of the image as a way of asserting major ideas belonging to the local main stream Theravādic Buddhism.

a. The two gods, the two monks, the two merchants

Two village people push sticks into the ears of the (future) Buddha in two images of the site (Figs 6-7); two devas support the Buddha in a relief of the Ananda temple and in a small image in pyro-phyllite (Figs 9 & 12), and two flank him in another stone relief from the same site (Fig. 8).[8] They can be replaced by the two monks Sāriputta and

Moggallāna (Fig. 3) who constitute a constant element of the iconography in the temples of Pagan (Bautze-Picron 2003: 103-4) and most probably symbolize the whole *saṅgha* (and act thus as intermediaries between the Buddha and the lay community). Either standing or flying, the Devas carry a vessel (Figs 8, 10 & 12) which symbolizes the 'divine energy' which they are dissuaded by the future Buddha to infuse 'through the pores of his skin' as said in the *Nidānakathā* (Jayawickrama 1990: 89-93) or in a similar way in the *Mahāsaccakasutta* (*Majjhimanikāya*

---

[8]   The two Devas standing on either side of the (future) Buddha in Fig.8 venerate him. Further Devas are depicted in the pedestal, the central figure apparently playing music and being thus Indra (see here Fig. 14),

other again holding bowls. What is striking here is that each of these five panels from the site (Figs 6-9 and Luce 1969-70, III: pl. 152c) has its own iconographic program, which proves the creative thinking of the artists and monks of Pagan. Within this context, one observes that in one image, the Buddha does not display the dhyāna - but well the bhūmisparśamudrā (Fig. 9).

Fig. 7 – The emaciated Buddha, Ananda Temple, Pagan. After Luce 1969-70, III: pl. 318d.

I, *Sutta* 36; Ñāṇamoli 1998: 18-19) whereas in the *Paṭhamasambodhikathā*, these gods 'preserved his life, by insinuating food through the pores of his skin' (Alabaster 1871: 138-42), the same being told in the *Mālāṅkaravatthu* (Edwardes 1959: 35-39; Bigandet 1880, I: 72-83).[9]

This departs from the Indian tradition where villagers were picking sticks in the future Buddha's ears (Bautze-Picron 2008: 171-2), a scene still observed in the images from Southeast Bangladesh (Fig. 1) which had introduced a composition preserved up to Burma, i.e. the Buddha flanked by two standing characters turned toward him. Beyond Bengal (Pal/Meech-Pekarik 1988: pl. 14, fig. 28; Pal 1993: 58, cat. 4; here Fig. 5), it is also observed in the North in Nepal (Zwalf 1985: 119 &127, cat. 172; Pal 1985: 103-4 cat. S23) and in the South in Pagan (Figs 6-7; Stadtner 2005: 78).[10]

The alms bowl is constantly observed in the murals and sculpture from Pagan, a presence which stresses how this attribute remains fundamental in being at the point of articulation between the *saṅgha* and the lay community. Beyond this link, the bowl, in being the place where

_____

[9]   Brahmā and Indra kneel on either side of the emaciated Buddha on a relief from Gandhāra, letting surmise that the tradition of having Devas attending to the Buddha during this hard period of his life has a long past (Coomaraswamy 1928: 250-1 & fig. 6; also drawn in Tissot 1985: pl. XXV.1). Also at an earlier period in the Swāt valley, one observes that the meditating Buddha can be rather thin (Faccenna 2007, fig. 7.36).

[10]   As reminded by Stadtner, loc.cit., the event is also narrated in the Mahāsīhanāda Sutta (The Middle Length 2005: 175).

Fig. 8 – The emaciated Buddha, Pagan Museum. After Luce 1969-70, III: pl. 407d.

Fig. 9 – The emaciated Buddha, Ananda Temple, Pagan. After Seidenstücker 1919: Abb. 59.

the food is collected, becomes a symbol of healthy life: the presence of this attribute – the only attribute of the Buddha in fact – in the pedestal below the emaciated Buddha might illustrate the existence of an alternative to the severe austerities which the future Buddha had chosen to experiment. The *Nidānakathā* also underlines the fact that the future Buddha 'went about gathering alms…' for which the alms bowl is evidently necessary (Jayawickrama 1990: 89-93). As we know, the taking of food led to the regeneration of the future Buddha who had lost all his gleam and was even thought to be deceased (Bautze-Picron 2007a: 107); when resuming to food, the future Buddha recovered his thirty-two characteristics and the 'golden hue' of his body (*Nidānakathā*), and his hair grew again, as shown by Anna Maria Quagliotti in the present volume.

Among the events following the Enlightenment, one is closely related to this concept and practically acts as a moment symmetric to the offering of the milk-rice prepared by Sujātā. Dividing the meal offered to him by the young village girl into seven times seven small balls (Strong

2001: 69; Swearer 2004: 146),[11] Śākyamuni ate all of them, without any further food, within the forty-nine days following the Enlightenment (*Nidānakathā*) (Jayawickrama 1990: 89-93) or, in reversal of events, within forty-nine days before the Bodhi (*Mālāṅkaravatthu*) (Edwardes 1959: 35-39; Bigandet 1880, I: 72-83). Like those of the *Abhiniṣkramaṇasūtra*, the authors of the *Mahāvastu* state that '… the Exalted One fasted for seven weeks or forty-nine days' after the Bodhi, on the basis of which Robert Brown had partly concluded that the image of the emaciated Buddha would reproduce the Buddha practicing fast during the seven weeks following the Enlightenment, i.e. during the so-called seven stations (Brown 1997:107, 112-4).[12]

---

[11]   The forty-nine portions clearly echo the forty-nine days spent around the tree of the Bodhi: 'He divided his exquisite food into forty-nine mouthfuls, which he ate entire, without mixing any water with it. During forty-nine days he spent round the Bodi [sic!] tree, Buddha never bathed, nor took any food, nor experienced the least want.' (*Mālāṅkaravatthu*: Bigandet 1880, I: 83). See also Rhi 2006/2008: 131 note 22.

[12]   Moreover the presence at Bodhgaya of an image showing the Buddha at a certain moment of his existence does not imply that the depicted event took place in the site; enough is it here to mention the illustration of different events, such as the birth for instance, in niches of the models

The offering of the milk-rice marks thus the beginning of the cycle leading to the Enlightenment. Similarly, the seven stations, i.e. the seven weeks, which succeeded to this moment conclude with the taking of the food offered by the two merchants Trapuṣa (Tapussa) and Bhallika (Strong 2001: 78-80; Quagliotti 2005: 218-21).[13] The Buddha rewarded them in giving some of his hair and nails which were going to be inserted in a *caitya*, the hair being, according to the Burmese tradition, enshrined within the Shwedagon (Strong 1998). As seen in a very rare depiction of this event (Fig. 17), both merchants kneel in the pedestal on either side of a stand which supports an alms bowl, each presenting further the honeyed meal to the Buddha who holds a bowl while picking some of his hair. The four bowls which are thus depicted probably remind that the four Lokapālas had offered him bowls which he had changed into one single one with four rims in order to take this meal.[14]

b. The five monks

The future Buddha had met on his way five mendicants who 'became his constant companions during the six years he was engaged in his great striving, and they served him' (*Nidānakathā*) (Jayawickrama 1990: 89-93). As a result of trying to suppress his 'breath he fell down unconscious' – some gods thinking even that he had passed away – , a scene which is illustrated in a relief from the Ananda temple (Fig. 16) and survived till the nineteenth century in Burma

and Thailand. In a Burmese illuminated manuscript from the first part of the nineteenth c., the five monks kneel at the feet of the reclining Buddha (Fig. 15; Herbert 1992: 34-35). In the murals of the Wat Choeng Tha, at Ayutthaya (Fig. 13), the ascetics helped the future Buddha when he collapsed, 'one held his feet, two supported his body, one fanned him and the fifth cried.' (*The Life* 1957: 54-55, pl. 18).[15] In this mural, the dark shade of his skin is particularly noticeable, a feature mentioned in different sources.[16] A mural in the Wat Ratchasittharam at Thonburi (Fig. 14) reproduces the iconography observed at Pagan, i.e. the future Buddha is depicted lying on his side with the five ascetics in the lower part of the mural whereas Sakka sits, plucking here the string of his musical instrument (*Wat* 1982: 68-69; *The Life* 1957: 56-57, pl. 19).

In those paintings like in the carvings from Pagan, these men are never depicted as the ascetics who they are but as the monks who they will become in the Deer Park of Sarnath. Likewise, the future Buddha is depicted as Enlightened – a choice which probably betrays disinclination for such an extreme concept as the emaciated body: as a matter of fact, Śākyamuni is depicted at Pagan as a Buddha from the very moment when he cuts his hair. The presence of Sakka playing his musical instrument contributes to this interpretation; the god plucks three different strings, one too high, one too low and one producing a perfect sound, which helps the future Buddha to understand that neither extreme asceticism nor a life of pleasure can lead the way to Enlightenment, but well the Middle Way (*Paṭhamasambodhikathā*; *Sitthāt Ōk Buat*) (Strong 2001: 66; Swearer 2004: 145-6). As to the fact that the five disciples are not shown in the guise of ascetics but of monks, it probably indicates the pre-eminence of the status of the monk over the position of the ascetic – an observation which is corroborated by the respective position of the (constant) image of the two monks on either side of the cult image whereas the (rare) depictions of ascetics are seen at the periphery in the iconographic program of the murals at Pagan as mentioned above.[17]

Moreover, the presence of the five monks always calls for the representation of the two deer as seen below (e) and of the alms bowl put above a stand or presented by one of the (monks-)ascetics (Figs 10-12) as if they would be suggesting Śākyamuni an alternative to his asceticism.

c. The banyan-tree or nyagrodha (Ficus benghalensis)

The 'andagu' images show the Buddha seated in *padmāsana* below a banyan, a tree which is also related in literary sources to the period of extreme asceticism as being the

---

reproducing the Bodhi mandir. Rather, the presence in this site of such images let surmise the wish to recreate the ideal life within a very specific spatial setting – which is a phenomenon noticed at various levels, in painting, in sculpture, in the recreation of the seven stations, etc. For the quote in the *Abhiniṣkramaṇasūtra*, see Beal 1875/1985: 239: 'it was now forty-nine days... since he had eaten nothing.' Early sources, however, suggest a shorter length, one month, for the sojourn of the Buddha at the site of his Enlightenment (Bareau 1963: 99). As suggested by André Bareau, the 'seven days' motif was probably first introduced in the Mucilinda and the two merchants episodes; moreover, the offering of food by the later might have concluded a (single) week of fasting. 'From there, the pattern of the seven days would have been introduced in the other narrations' and the fasting would have been extended to a longer period of seven times seven days, with the visit of the merchants concluding it. Moreover, the same early texts studied by Bareau refer to food of various types being taken during these successive weeks of meditation, i.e. under the goatherd tree or under Mucilinda (Bareau 1963: 101: Vinaya of the Mahīśāsaka).

As seen above, the (pre-Enlightenment) asceticism took an end when he decided to resume eating and received the bowl of milk-rice from Sujātā, carefully dividing up this food in forty-nine small portions or *piṇḍas* (note 11). Whether he took all of this food in one meal or in forty-nine days, this happened before the Enlightenment. When fasting during this (post-Enlightenment) period, the Buddha does preserve his healthy body as seen here in the depiction of the event concluding the seventh week when the two merchants offer him a sweet meal (Fig.17).

[13] So is the tradition preserved by the *Nidānakathā* (Strong 2001: 78-79 & 81) whereas the offering of food by the two merchants follows immediately the Bodhi in the 'Discourse of the Fourfold Assembly' (*Catuṣpariṣatsūtra*): ibid: 79-81. See also Bareau 1963: 106-123.

[14] See the narrative in the *Abhiniṣkramaṇasūtra* for instance (Beal 1875/1985: 239-240) or in the *Pathom Somphōt* ('The Buddha's Supreme Enlightenment') (Swearer 2004: 135). Late pictorial depictions of the scene show indeed the simultaneous presence of Sakka who offers the myrobolan to the Buddha (for which episode, consult Bareau 1963: 124-6), of the four Guardians of space who present him with his alms-bowl and of the two merchants, see for instance Herbert 1992: 43 or Stadtner 1991: fig.9.

[15] See also Swearer 2004: 145: 'Siddhattha continued to fast, growing weaker and weaker until he could no longer stand, whereupon the five hermits cared for him as he lay upon his bed.'

[16] As it stands in the *Mālānkaravatthu*, for instance (Edwardes 1959: 35; Bigandet 1880, I: 73).

[17] But words attributed to the Buddha might have encouraged this way of showing them: they are indeed named bhikkhus in the *Mahāsaccakasutta* (Thomas 1927: 66; Ñāṇamoli 1998: 21).

Fig. 10 – The emaciated Buddha, private collection. Photo Joachim K. Bautze.

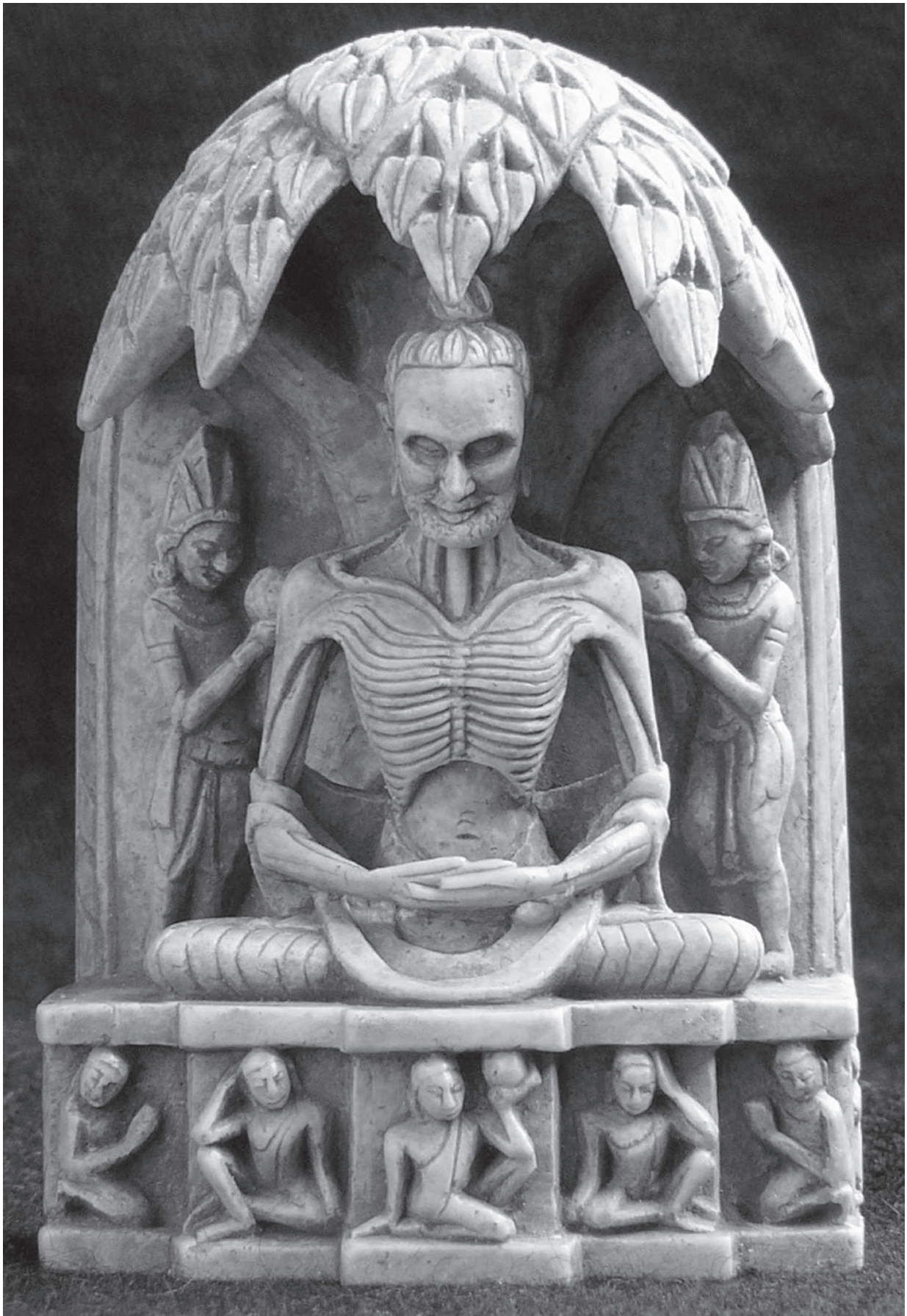*Fig. 11 – The emaciated Buddha, private collection. Photo Joachim K. Bautze.*

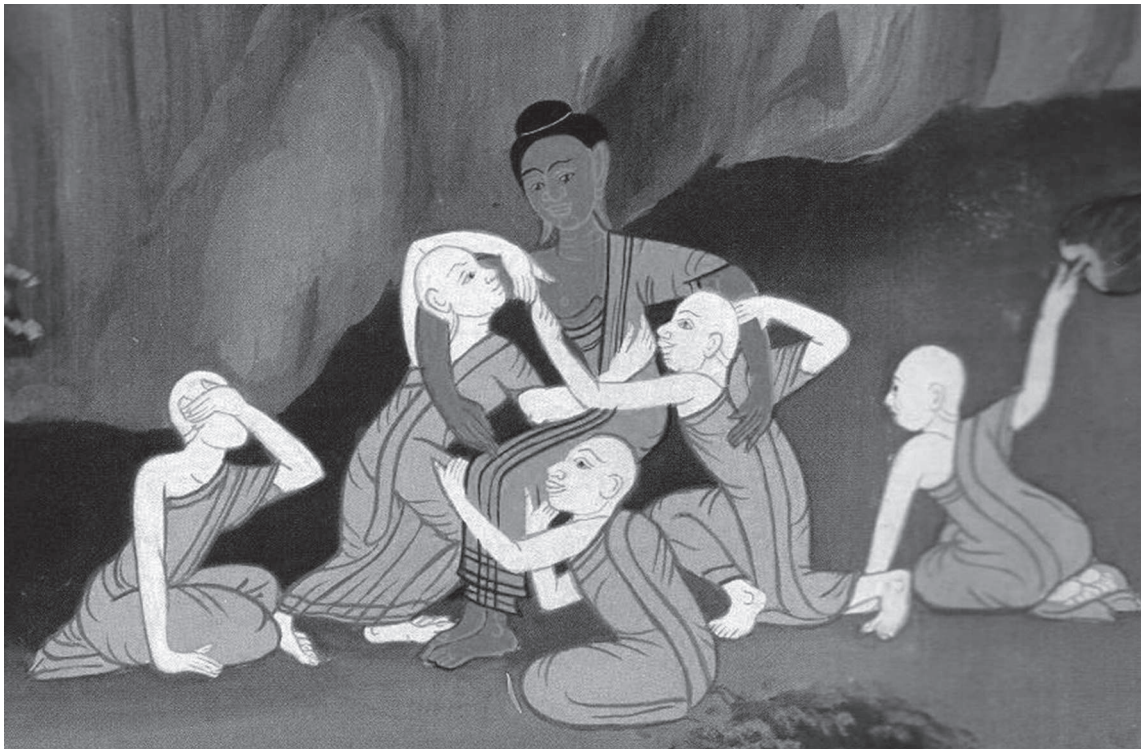*Fig. 12 – The emaciated Buddha, private collection. Photo Joachim K. Bautze.*

Fig. 13 – The fainting Buddha, Wat Choeng Tha, Ayutthaya. After The Life 1957: pl. 18.

tree below which the future Buddha spent partly if not all of his six years of severe austerities. It is also while seated below this tree that he resumed to food in accepting from Sujātā his last meal before taking place under the tree at Bodhgaya, i.e. a Ficus religiosa.[18] The proper site where the banyan-tree stood is not yet identified but it was evidently in the vicinity of Bodhgaya since the Enlightenment episode follows directly this period, and in the *Karuṇāpuṇḍarīka* the asceticism prior to the Enlightenment took even place under the Bodhi tree (*bodhivṛkṣamūlavajrāsane*)(Rhi 2006/2008: 141).

A major banyan tree is still worshipped today in the Southern suburbs of Gaya, the 'undecaying banyan' or Akṣaya-vaṭa (Fig. 18) being indeed a major station in the *śrāddha* made in honour of the dead ones (Gode 1961: 375sqr; Dubey 1997: 1105, 1114; Viennot 1954: 199). Beside the fact that this tree is believed to give endless merit to those who accomplish the pilgrimage all through Gaya, and that its roots are also supposed to merge with those of the same tree at Prayaga (Allahabad), it is the mere presence of such rituals made below and involving the tree which cannot be ignored here. As the study of other aspects of Buddhist art in the region of Gaya/Bodhgaya shows, a number of features taken by this iconography evolved out of a reaction to the existence of Gaya as a central Brahmanical place of pilgrimage made for the rescue of the souls of the deceased ones (Bautze-Picron 2004: note 151 & 2007b: 85-88 & note 68).

And although definitive pieces of evidence are here lacking, we cannot but suggest that the long period of asceticism took place under or near the Akṣaya-vaṭa as it was apparently believed at the beginning of the nineteenth century as reported by Francis Buchanan (Buchanan 1936: 125): [19]

Near this remarkable tank is a high and large terrace, built of stone and brick, composed evidently of ruins and having every appearance of a recent work. On it is growing a Banyan tree, which the orthodox call Akshaybat, and allege that it was planted by Brahma. The Buddhists believe that Gautama passed six years under its shade. The tree is not large and has no mark of old age; but may have been frequently renewed by slips from successive stocks...

---

[18] On these two trees in the context of the Buddha's life, see Viennot 1954: 164-190, 199-200, passim; see also Coomaraswamy 1977: 384-6. Concerning the offering of food by the young village-girl(s), see Thomas 1927: 70-71.

[19] See also Buchanan's Journal: 'They [i.e. the Buddhists] had no temple near the present Gya [i.e. Gaya], but say that Gautoma (sic!) lived six years under the Akshiya Bot, which they call Gautama Bot, and the tank called Rukminikund the Buddha call Gautamakund…' (Jackson 1925: 61). Another (?) tradition relates the hill of the Gayaśīrṣa, a site visited at various moments by the (future) Buddha with the Brahmayoni, a hill located near the Akṣaya-vaṭa. As a matter of fact, Śākyamuni 'ascended the hill … wishing to enjoy rest of mind and body. Having arranged a seat of leaves he sat down beneath a tree' before having even started his extreme asceticism; from there he went to the village of Uravilva where he received a meal from Sujātā before 'he… sat down and composed himself to severe contemplation' (Beal 1875/1985: 185-6). Information of a completely different nature relates the sacrifice of goats in honour of the Manes to the tree, both, i.e. the sacrifice of goat and the tree, being quoted in the same text (Gode 1961: 377).

Fig. 14 – The fainted Buddha, Wat Ratchasittharam, Thonburi. After Wat 1982: 69.

Another banyan tree appears in the cycle of the Bodhi, the Buddha taking place then under the 'tree of the Goatherd' during the fifth or sixth week after the Enlightenment,[20] a tree which can also be related to the tree of the pre-Enlightenment period of asceticism as seen below.

d. Below the banyan, below Mucilinda

Within this context, one can wonder about the depiction of the emaciated Buddha in the images carved in southeast Bangladesh where the scene is paired to the image of the meditating Buddha under Mucilinda (Figs 1-2). Both

scenes are integrated in the lower part of the image, between the sequence of the main events and a group of pre-Enlightenment scenes which cover the pedestal, and anyway at the edge of the image. Both groups of events are differentiated inasmuch as the so-called 'main' events are depicted within small niches or shrines distributed around the central image whereas the lower scenes do not get any specific elements enhancing their importance. Both scenes refer, however, to moments which belong respectively to the pre- and to the post-Enlightenment.[21]

---

[20]   Early sources, however, date this episode right after the week spent under the Bodhi tree (Bareau 1963: 98). Consult Strong 2004: 81 for a comparison of two sources presenting different sequences to the episodes.

[21]   Both belong together in the images from Southeast Bangladesh ('A13' & 'A14' in Bautze-Picron 1992: figs 4-6) as well as in painting from Bengal (Pal/Meech Pekarik 1988: pl. 14; Pal 1993: 58, cat.4: here Fig. 5) and in early Tibetan cloth-paintings (Pal 2003: cat. 121). In the 'andagu' images, both scenes form also a pair in the lower part of the images, but one should mention the fact that this depiction of the Buddha sheltered by Mucilinda does not fulfil the function of being one of the six stations

Claudine Bautze-Picron
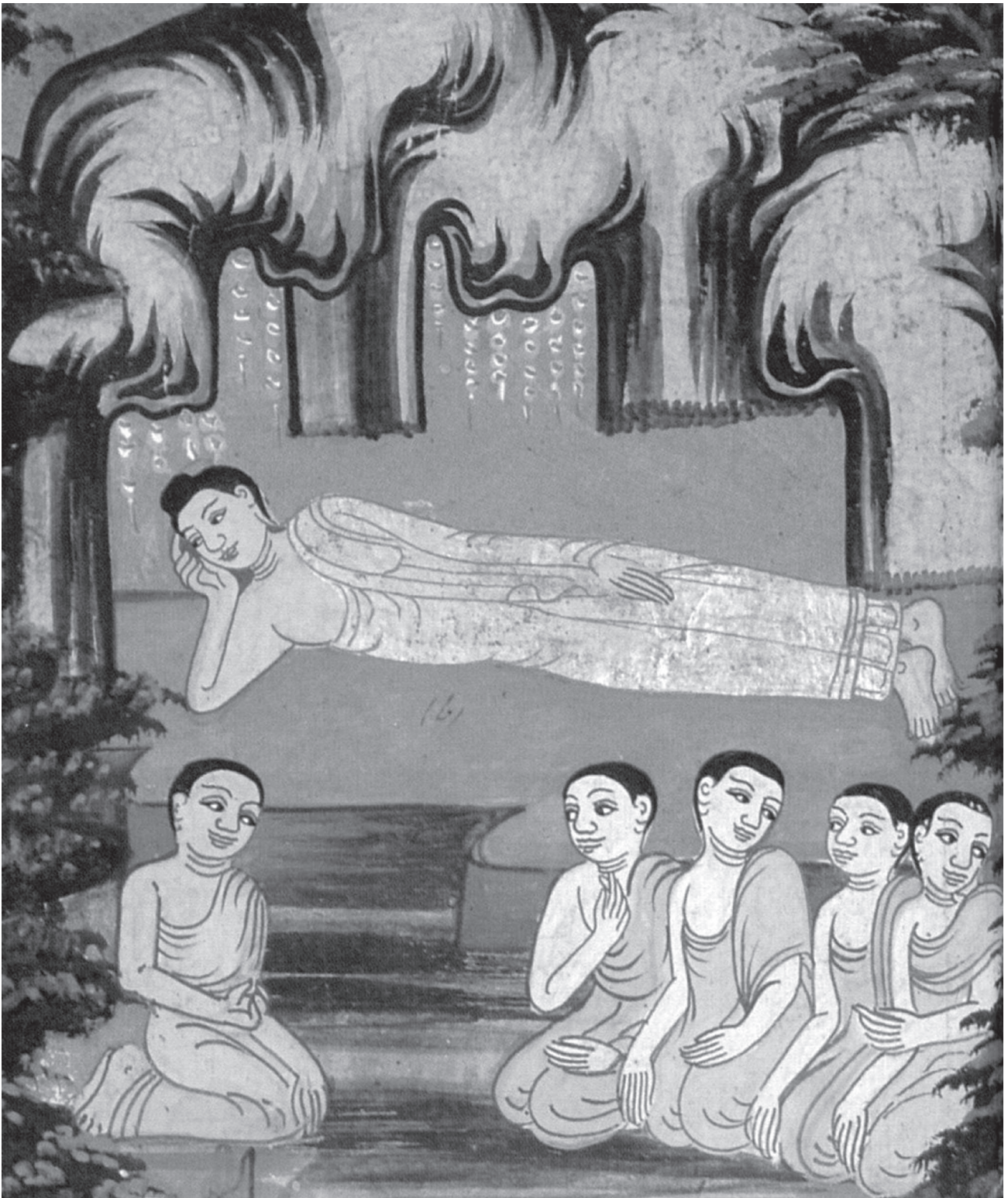
Fig. 15 – The fainted Buddha, Manuscript inv. Or. 14297, f.15-16 (The British Library, London). After Herbert 1992: 34-35.

The images of the Buddha protected by Mucilinda and of the emaciated future Buddha remain rare at Pagan: the

distributed around the central Buddha image since this series includes its own depiction of the Buddha seated below the snake (Bautze-Picron 1999: fig. 1 or Brown 1997: fig. 4 for instance). Some hierarchy may have also been introduced, the image paired to the ascetic Buddha being seated under a three-headed Mucilinda whereas the Buddha of the fifth station sits under a single-headed snake in one example (Brown 1997: fig. 4).

Buddha is seated below Mucilinda in a stone image and in a thirteenth-century wood carving from the same site and the topic is also encountered in the murals of the place.[22] Like in the images from Bangladesh, both scenes form a pair in

22 Bautze-Picron 2003: pl. 40 & p. 41 (mural). Galloway 2002: figure 5.6, Menzies 2001: 30-31, cat. 13 (wooden image). *Dokumentation* 2002: 95 (stone image). I am thankful to Charlotte Galloway for having very

small carvings showing the life of the Buddha as ideally depicted through eight major events, eventually enlarged with the seven stations (Figs 3-4). The image of the fasting (future) Buddha from the Ananda temple differs from those found in other temples at Bagan which tally the traditional attitude of Śākyamuni meditating.[23]

This simultaneity of representation of these two events calls for some more attention since both iconographic types share the Buddha sitting and meditating (Fig. 5). These two images reflect the opposition between the unhealthy body before and the healthy body after the Enlightenment but also refer to the simultaneous presence of fire and water within Śākyamuni.[24] Beside the independent small sculptures reproducing the emaciated Buddha, another important part of this group of 'andagu' images illustrates the Buddha meditating under Mucilinda (Bautze-Picron 2006: fig. 4a-b). Behind the reference to the unhealthy body, the emaciated image can refer, in a more dramatic manner, to death since the future Buddha was even thought to have passed away. There is no place to dwell at length here on the topic but the Enlightenment was also experienced as a second birth, as a regeneration as opposed to the surrounding death to which Śākyamuni was confronted and which he overcame in the night of the Enlightenment. The simultaneous representation of the emaciated Buddha below the banyan tree and of the healthy Buddha below Mucilinda might thus constitute a reference to death and life, enhancing, moreover, the positive way of life offered by the Buddha in contrary to the extremely hard path of life imposed by other spiritual ways and which can lead to death.

e. The deer, the banyan tree

The creation of these images reflects a very refined and well-read mind. How to account for instance for the presence of the two deer? We know that in the Indian vision

Fig. 16 – The fainted Buddha, Ananda Temple, Pagan. After Seidenstücker 1919: Abb. 60.

of the hermit one or more of these peaceful animals refer to the ascetic's life in the forest, and that even often one or more lion can be introduced in this depiction of an idyllic peaceful life: as such, both animals are present from Sanchi to Deogarh or Mahabalipuram. And as such also, the deer occur in a small image flanking the Buddha meditating below a tree (Bautze-Picron 2006: fig. 17a-b).

The deer, more particularly the two deer, refer, in the precise context of the Buddha's life to the Mṛgadāva, the 'Deer Forest' located in the vicinity of Varanasi, today at Sarnath, where the Buddha held his first sermon – and the presence of the five monks who were the very first ones to get the teaching of the Buddha confirms this link.

---

[23] kindly sent me photos of the wooden image today preserved in the National Gallery of Australia.

[23] These images are reproduced by Luce 1969-70, III: pls 141d (Kyuakku Ônhmin), 152c (Myinpyagu), 318d (Ananda) and 407d (Pagan Museum) (and I: 165). Only one among them (the Myinpyagu image) shows the (future) Buddha alone. The other ones introduce two male characters holding 'tubes' with which they 'press ambrosia in his ears' according to Luce, whereas Donald Stadtner suggests to recognize more probably here the episode where village people thrust 'spikes into his ears' (Stadtner 2005: 78, where the relief from the Kyuakku Ônhmin is reproduced).

[24] Beyond this dichotomy, it could well also be the simultaneous presence within the Buddha of fire – expressed through yogic exercises – and water – referred to by meditation – which might be here reflected. Enough it is to quote after the *Abhiniṣkramaṇasūtra*: 'Seated thus, he began to reflect, and these three ideas presented themselves; that as it is impossible to obtain fire from boring wood that is wet, or by using dung that is sodden; so, though a Shaman or a Brahman may not practise lust, yet so long as there is the least love of it in the heart, he cannot obtain Supreme Wisdom (the dampness of the wood and the dung must be got rid of) … Although, he thought, that when a Shaman or Brahman, in addition to abstention from evil, has experienced in his heart a feeling of universal love, and desires to arrive at perfection that he may profit others, then like dry wood and dry dung, the fire may be easily kindled.' (Beal 1875/1985: 185). Austerities are thus here the way to disentanglement from emotions which are like dampness: freed from them, the mind reaches perfection like the wood freed from humidity can properly burn. See also Thomas 1927: 64; Neumann 1995: 270-71; Bareau 1963: 42-43.

Fig. 17 – The Buddha pulling his hair, private collection. Photo Joachim K. Bautze.

Fig. 18 – The Akṣaya-vaṭa, Gaya. Photo Joachim K. Bautze.

How did it come to be known as the 'Deer Forest'? The answer is provided with in *Jātaka* 12 and is also narrated by Xuanzang; thus in the *Jātaka* of the 'Banyan Deer' (*Nigrodhamiga/ Nyagrodhamṛga - jātaka* or the '*jātaka* of the tree growing downwards') (Grey 2000: 292-4) we learn how the Bodhisattva, named Nigrodha, was the Golden king of the deer who could convince the local king Brahmadatta to renounce hunting deer and to offer to the herd of animals a park where it could live and graze in peace. This was going to become the deer park where Śākyamuni would hold his first sermon. The deer might thus refer to the meditation as mentioned above, but also to the place of the first Sermon; sustaining this identification is the presence of the five monks in the pedestal, thus a further reference to Sarnath.

A general consensus prevails in the Pāli sources in naming a banyan tree under which the Buddha spent the fifth week after his Enlightenment 'Ajapālā' or 'goatherd' (*Nidānakathā*) (Jayawickrama 1990: 89-93).[25] This spot where the Buddha would be confronted to Māra's daughters was located on the banks of the Neranjara at Uruvelā near the Bodhi tree.

25 But see note 18.

However, another more detailed version is given by the *Mahāvastu* (Jones 1978: 287-90) and the *Abhiniṣkramaṇasūtra* (Beal 1875/1985: 192 and 238) where the name is applied to the tree which protected the Buddha during his six years penance. Thus, we read in the first text that

when [a] goatherd saw the Exalted One mortifying himself with these grim austerities faith arose in him. With serene heart he planted a young banyan tree for the Exalted One… Thus the goatherd's young banyan tree quickly grew to have great branches and to be a lovely and beautiful tree through the power of the Exalted One… In virtue of that serenity of heart and his root of merit, on the dissolution of his body he was reborn among the devas of Trāyamstrimsha as a deva named Nyagrodha possessing great majesty and power… The deva Nyagrodha, while he was thus pondering what his root of merit might be, saw the banyan tree which he had planted for the Exalted One on the banks of the river Nairanjanā. And so, accompanied by several thousands of devas, the deva Nyagrodha, in his surpassing beauty irradiating the whole abode

of Mucilinda with a sublime radiance, came to the Exalted One, bowed his head at his feet and stood to one side…

This veneration of the Buddha took place in the close vicinity of the Bodhi tree since the Buddha is supposedly protected by Mucilinda when the deva Nyagrodha sees the tree and comes to pay homage to the Buddha, recognizing him from his previous human life.[26] There is thus here a direct link between the banyan tree under which the period of austerities was spent and the banyan tree 'of the goatherd' or Ajapālā under which the Buddha would sit and meditate in the sixth week after the Enlightenment, following the week of meditation below Mucilinda. Moreover, from this narrative, one could surmise that the austerities had taken place in the close vicinity of what would become the site of the Enlightenment since this is there that the deva Nyagrodha recognizes the tree which he had planted in his previous life. As a matter of fact, Nyagrodha concludes in requesting the Buddha to 'make use of [the] banyan tree' which the Buddha did: 'After he had left the abode of Mucilinda the Nāga king, the Exalted One spent the sixth week fasting in joy and ease at the foot of the Goatherd's Banyan-tree.' However, the complete narrative might also be a rather artificial construction linking the two different banyan trees under which Śākyamuni had taken place, one before the Enlightenment and for a long period of severe asceticism and one after the Enlightenment and for seven days of meditation.

The images under survey might thus illustrate the hard way of austerities which should not be followed and simultaneously convey the idea that to become *buddha*, or be a follower of the Buddha, constitutes the correct way of life (vs. death) which is also achieved by taking food, by collecting it in alms bowl, and by renouncing the ascetic life in order to become a monk. Further, through their mere existence, they express the notion that one should not simply disregard such extreme ways but be aware of their existence, only then is it possible to make the right choice – just like the Buddha did.

The understanding of images from Burma in the first centuries of the second millennium cannot be made with exclusive reference to specific texts while putting aside other ones. While it is true that Pāli sources were fundamental, even leading to local biographies of the Buddha, it is also true that they had to blend in with a substratum where some components clearly betray concepts which belonged to the mainstream (Sanskrit) Buddhism of Northeast India – notably in what concerns the visual rendering of the Buddha biography. Rather than understanding the images

as a mere depiction of textual descriptions, we should also wonder about the possibility that they act as the (visual) reflect of the community of monks within the society, and of concepts which either refer to the nature of the Buddha or to Buddhist thought.

Within this context, we should also not neglect the fact that although dealing with a particular group of images or a specific iconography these images are part of a larger group and only but reflect a segment of the Buddha iconography. Moreover, and this is illustrated by the iconographic peculiarities of the sculpture and murals of the Pagan period, the interpretation of a motif which can be given in one site does not necessarily apply to the art of other Asian regions, neither can it be generalized to all periods.

Bibliography

Alabaster, Henry (1871) *The Wheel of the Law, Buddhism illustrated from Siamese Sources by The Modern Buddhist, A Life of the Buddha and An Account of the Phrabat*. London: Trübner & CO.

Bareau, André (1963) *Recherches sur la biographie du Buddha dans les Sūtrapiṭaka et les Vinayapiṭaka anciens : de la quête de l'Éveil à la conversion de Śāriputra et de Maudgalyāyana.* Paris : École Française d'Extrême-Orient (Publications de l' École Française d'Extrême-Orient, volume LIII).

Bautze-Picron, Claudine (1992) 'A Preliminary Report on the Buddha Image from Betagi', in C. Jarrige (ed.), *South Asian Archaeology 1989, Papers from the Tenth International Conference of South Asian Archaeologists in Western Europe, Musée National des Arts Asiatiques Guimet, Paris, France, 3-7 July 1989*, Madison Wisconsin: Prehistory Press (Monographs in World Archaeology n° 14), 301-8.

--- (1995/96) 'Śākyamuni in Eastern India and Tibet from the 11th to the 13th centuries', *Silk Road Art and Archaeology*, Kamakura: The Institute of Silk Road Studies 4, 355-408.

--- (1999) 'Between India and Burma: the "andagu" stelae', in Donald M. Stadtner (ed.) *The Art of Burma, New Studies*, Marg Publications, vol. 50, Mumbai, 37-52.

--- (2003) with photographs by Joachim K. Bautze. *The Buddhist Murals of Pagan, Timeless Vistas of the Cosmos*. Bangkok: Orchid Press, 2003

--- (2004) 'The universal compassionate Bodhisattva, Miscellaneous Aspects of Avalokitasvara/ Avalokiteśvara in India', *Silk Road Art and Archaeology,* Kamakura: The Institute of Silk Road Studies 10, 225-90

--- (2006) 'New Documents of Burmese Sculpture: Unpublished "Andagū" Images', *Indo-Asiatische Zeitschrift* 10, 32-47.

--- (2007a) 'Der Buddha und die Wandlung seiner Erscheinung', in Erik Hornung und Andreas Schweizer (Hrsg.), *Schönheit und Mass, Beiträge der Eranos-Tagungen 2005 und 2006*, Basel: Schwabe Verlag, 91-141.

---

[26] Which reverses the sequence of events as narrated in the *Nidānakathā* (Strong 2001: 81) where the meditation below the banyan tree of the goatherd takes place in the fifth week (the Buddha being then disturbed by Māra's daughters) and the meditation below Mucilinda during the sixth week. Similarly, the Vinaya of the Theravādin places the week below the tree in the second week, the week below Mucilinda in the third week (Bareau 1963: 98 & 101).

--- (2007b) 'The hidden God. Some Remarks on Yama and the Protectors of the sacred Space in Buddhist Art', in G. Bhattacharya, G. Mevissen, M. Mitra and S. Sinha-Sarkar (eds), *Kalhār (white water-lily), Studies in Art, Iconography, Architecture and Archaeology of Indian and Bangladesh (Prof. Enamul Haque Felicitation Volume)*, New Delhi: Kaveri Books, 81-95.

--- (2008) 'Buddhist book-covers from Eastern India, The book-covers of the manuscript SL68 at the Collège de France, Paris', in Claudine Bautze-Picron (ed.), *Archaeology of Religion, Issues of Hindu and Buddhist Iconography*, *Proceedings of the Eighteenth International Conference on South Asian Archaeology held at The British Museum, London, 4-8 July 2005, volume 1,* General editor: Michael Willis, Published by the Society for South Asian Studies, The British Academy, London, 165-78.

Beal, Samuel (1875/1985) *The romantic Legend of Śākya Buddha, A Translation of the Chinese Version of the Abhiniṣkramaṇasūtra.* (Reprint:) Delhi, etc.: Motilal Banarsidass (first edition: London: Trübner & Co., 1875).

Bigandet, P. (1880) *The Life or Legend of Gaudama, the Buddha of the Burmese, with Annotations, The Ways to Naibban, and Notice on the Phongyies or Burmese Monks.* 3rd ed. London: Trübner & Co.

Brown, Robert L. (1997) 'The Emaciated Gandhāran Buddha Images: Asceticism, Heath, and the Body', in Natasha Eilenberg, M.C. Subhadradis Diskul and Robert L. Brown (eds), *Living a Life in Accord with Dhamma: Papers in Honour of Professor Jean Boisselier on his Eightieth Birthday*, Bangkok: Silpakorn University, 105-15.

Buchanan, Francis (1936) *An Account of the Districts of Bihar and Patna in 1811-1812.* Patna: Published by the Bihar and Orissa Research Society and Printed by the Calcutta Oriental Press. See also under Jackson.

Coomaraswamy, Ananda K. (1928) 'Notes sur la sculpture bouddhique', *Revue des Arts Asiatiques* V/4, 244-52.

--- (1977) 'The Inverted tree', in Roger Lipsey (ed.), *Coomaraswamy, 1. Selected Papers, Traditional Art and Symbolism*, Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University press (Bolligen Series LXXXIX), 376-404. Reprint of the paper initially published in *The Quarterly Journal of the Mythic Society* (Bangalore), vol. XXIX, 1938, 111-49; French translation by Gérard Leconte published as monograph: *L'Arbre Inversé*, Milano: Archè, 1984 (Cahiers de l'Unicorne).

Dokumentation (2002) *Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Dokumentation der Verluste, Band III, Museum für Indische Kunst.* Berlin: Staatliche Museen zu Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz.

Dubey, S.P. (1997) 'The Historicity of Akṣayavaṭa at Prayāga', in Nagendra Kr. Singh (ed.), *Encyclopaedia of Hinduism*, volume 40, *Purāṇas*, New Delhi: Centre for International Religious Studies & Anmol Publications Pvt. Ltd., 1103-27.

Edwardes, Michael, ed. (1959) *A Life of the Buddha, From a Burmese Manuscript.* London: The Folio Society.

Faccenna, Domenico (2007) 'The Artistic Center of Butkara I and Saidu Sharif I in the Pre-Kuṣāṇa Period', in Doris Meth Srinivasan (ed.), *On the Cusp of an Era, Art in the Pre-Kuṣāṇa World*, Leiden/Boston: Brill (Brill's Inner Asian Library, volume 18), 165-99.

Foucaux, Ph.Ed. (1884) *Le Lalita Vistara, Développement des jeux, contenant l'hisgtoire du Bouddha Çakya-mouni depuis sa naissance jusqu'à sa prédication, traduit du Sanskrit en Français.* Paris: Ernest Leroux, éditeur (Annales du Musée Guimet, tome sixième).

Galloway, Charlotte (2002) 'Relationships between Buddhist texts and images of the Enlightenment during the early Pagan period', in Alexandra Green & T. Richard Blurton (eds), *Burma, Art and Archaeology*, London: The British Museum Press, 45-53.

Gode, P.K. (1961) 'The History of the Akṣayavaṭa (Undecaying Banyan Tree) at Prayāga and Gayā as revealed by some Sanskrit texts – Between the First century A.D. and 1900', in : P.K. Gode, *Studies in Indian Cultural History*, volume I, Hoshiarpur: Vishveshvaranand Vedic Research Institute (Vishveshvaranand Indological Series, I-9), 374-83.

Goswamy, Brijindra Nath (1986) *Rasa, les neuf visages de l'art indien*. Paris: Association Française d'Action Artistique.

Grey, Leslie (2000) *A Concordance of Buddhist Birth Stories*. Third Edition, Oxford: The Pali Text Society.

Hara, Minoru (1997) 'A Note on the Buddha's Asceticism, The Liu du ji jing (Six Pāramitā-sūtra) 53', in Petra Kieffer-Pülz and Jens-Uwe Hartmann (eds), *Bauddhavidyāsudhākaraḥ, Studies in Honour of Heinz Bechert on the Occasion of His 65th Birthday*, Swisttal-Odendorf: Indica et Tibetica (Indica et Tibetica, Band 30), 249-60.

Herbert, Patricia M. (1992) *The Life of the Buddha*. San Francisco: Pomegranate Artbooks in association with The British Library.

Hōbōgirin, Dictionnaire encyclopédique du bouddhisme d'après les sources chinoises et japonaises, premier fascicule : A-Bombai. (Reprint :) Paris : Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres, c/o Jean Maisonneuve, 1981.

Jackson, V.H. (ed.) (1925) *Journal of Francis Buchanan (afterwards Hamilton) kept during the Survey of the Districts of Patna and Gaya in 1811-1812*. Patna: Superintendent, Government printing, Bihar and Orissa (Publications of the Government of Bihar and Orissa). See also Buchanan.

Jones, J.J. (1978) *The Mahāvastu*, Volume III, Translated from the Buddhist Sanskrit. (Reprint:) London: The Pali Text Society.

Klimburg-Salter, Deborah & Maurizio Taddei (1991) 'The Uṣṇīṣa and the Brahmarandhra: An Aspect of Light Symbolism in Gandhara Buddha Images', in G. Bhattacharya (ed.), *Akṣayanīvī, Essays presented*

to Dr. Debala Mitra in admiration of her scholarly contributions, Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications, 73-93.

Luce, Gordon H. (1969/1970) *Old Burma ~ Early Pagán*. New York: J.J. Augustin Publisher, Locust Valley for Artibus Asiae & The Institute of Fine Arts, New York University, 3 vols.

Menzies, Jackie (2001) *Buddha, radiant Awakening*. Sydney: Art Gallery of New South Wales.

Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli (1998) *The Life of the Buddha according to the Pali Canon*. Translation from the Pali, selection of material, and arrangement by. (Reprint:) Kandi: Buddhist Publication Society.

Neumann, Karl Eugen (1995) *Mittlere Sammlung aus dem Pāli-Kanon übersetzt*. Fifth edition, Herrnschrot: Beyerlein-Steinschulte (first edition: *Die Reden Gotamo Buddho's aus der mittleren Sammlung Majjhimanikāyo des Pāli-Kanons*. Leipzig: Friedrich, 1896.)

Pal, Pratapaditya (1985) *Art of Nepal, A Catalogue of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art*. Berkeley/Los Angeles/London: Los Angeles County Museum of Art/ University of California Press.

--- (1993*) Indian Painting, A Catalogue of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art Collection, Volume I, 1000-1700*. Los Angeles/Ahmedabad: Los Angeles County Museum of Art/Mapin Publishing Pvt.Ltd.

--- (2003) *Himalayas, An Aesthetic Adventure.* Chicago/ Berkeley/Ahmedabad: The Art Institute of Chicago in association with the University of California Press and Mapin Publishing.

Pal, Pratapaditya and Julia Meech-Pekarik (1988) *Buddhist Book Illuminations*, New York etc./Hurstpierpoint: Ravi Kumar/Richard Lyon-Chimera Books.

Quagliotti, Anna Maria (2005) 'Again on Siddhārtha's hair', *East and West* 55/1-4, 217-42.

Ray, Niharranjan (1972) *Idea and Image in Indian Art*. Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt.Ltd.

Rhi, Juhyung (2006/2008) 'Some Textual Parallels for Gandhāran Art: Fasting Buddhas, Lalitavistara, and Karuṇāpuṇḍarīka', *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 29/1 2006(2008), 125-53.

Seidenstücker, Karl (1916) *Süd-buddhistische Studien. I. Die Buddha-Legende in den Skulpturen des Ānanda-Tempels zu Pagan*. Hamburg: Gedruckt bei Lütcke & Wulff, E.H. Senats Buchdruckern (Mitteilungen aus dem Museum für Völkerkunde IV, aus dem 9. Beiheft zum Jahrbuch der Hamburgischen Wissenschaftlichen Anstalten XXXII, 1914).

Stadtner, Donald M. (1991) 'A Fifteenth-Century Royal Monument in Burma and the Seven Stations in Buddhist Art', *The Art Bulletin* 73/1, 39-52.

--- (2005) *Ancient Pagan, Buddhist Plain of Merit*. Photography Michael Freeman, Bangkok: River Books.

Strong, John (1998) 'Les reliques des cheveux du Bouddha au Shwe Dagon de Rangoon', *Aséanie, Sciences humaines en Asie du Sud-Est*, 79-107.

--- (2001) *The Buddha, A short Biography*. Oxford: Oneworld.

Swearer, Donald K. (2004) *Becoming the Buddha, The Ritual of Image Consecration in Thailand*. Princeton/ Oxford: Princeton University Press.

The Life (1957) *The Life of the Buddha according to Thai Temple Paintings*. Ed. Kurt F. Leidecker, ill. Rudolf Hampe, n.pl. (Bangkok?): United States Information Service.

The Middle Length (2005) *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha, A Translation of the Majjhima Nikāya*. Translated from the Pāli, Original Translation by Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli, Translation edited and revised by Bhikkhu Bodhi, Third Edition, Boston: Wisdom Publications in association with the Barre Center for Buddhist Studies , Third Edition.

Thomas, Edward J. (1927) *The Life of Buddha as Legend and History*. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd.

Tissot, Francine (1985) *Gandhāra*. Paris : Librairie d'Amérique et d'Orient (La vie publique et privée dans l'Inde ancienne, Série 2).

Viennot, Odette (1954) *Le culte de l'arbre dans l'Inde ancienne, Textes et Monuments brâhmaniques et bouddhiques*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.

Wat (1982) *Wat Ratchasittharam*. Bangkok : Muang Boran Publishing House (Mural Paintings of Thailand Series.)

Wilson, Liz (1996) *Charming Cadavers, Horrific Figurations of the Feminine in Indian Buddhist Hagiographic Literature.* Chicago/London: The University of Chicago Press.

Zwalf, Wladimir, ed. (1985), *Buddhism, Art and Faith*. London: Published by British Museum Publications Limited for The Trustees of the British Museum and the British Library Board.

CHAPTER 8.
GANDHĀRAN BODHISATTVA MAITREYA IMAGE
– SOTERIOLOGICAL FUNCTION OF KETOS AND EROS –

Katsumi Tanabe

One of the most outstanding features of the Bodhisattva Maitreya images (Fig.1) of Gandhāra is the sumptuous ornamentation of torque, necklace and sacred thread (*yajñopavīta*), formed of three strands (*trivṛt*) worn obliquely across the upper body (Tissot 1985: pls XXIII-XXIV).[1] These ornaments, unsuitable in a sense for the sacred image of a bodhisattva, appear to be accepted by modern scholarship of Gandhāran art as a result of the bodhisattva image being modelled after the outward appearance of an Indian royal personage. It is true that the garment of the Bodhisattva Maitreya images correspond, on the whole, to those worn by Indian kings and princes depicted not only on the stūpa architectures at Bharhut and Sanchi but also in Gandhāran narrative reliefs. However, the images of the Bodhisattva Maitreya are not exact copies of Indian kings and princes as is clear from the ascetic hairdo *(jaṭā)* of Brahman type and the vase (*kamaṇḍalu*) held in the left hand. A possible explanation of these two iconographical characteristics of the Bodhisattva Maitreya image is that the Gandhāran sculptors wanted to stress the fact that Maitreya is foretold to be born to a Brahman family of Jambudvīpa in the distant future 5, 670, 000, 000 years from now.

In addition to this, these two characteristics that identify the Bodhisattva Maitreya could result from the intention of Gandhāran sculptors to distinguish the image of the Bodhisattva Maitreya from that of the Bodhisattva Siddhārtha. Their attempt to differentiate these two kinds of images is further extended to the ornamentation of the upper body of the Bodhisattva Maitreya images. Compared with other images of the Bodhisattva Maitreya and also of other kinds of Bodhisattvas from Mathura, Central Asia, China and Japan, the upper body ornamentation of the Gandhāran Bodhisattva Maitreya images is unique and outstanding in that they wear a maximum of three strings or cords of which one of them is decorated with so-called amulet boxes. No other Bodhisattva image wears such a string or cord with so-called amulet-boxes except for the Gandhāran Bodhisattva images.[2] In this regard, I should like to remark that the string or cord and so-called amulet-

Fig. 1

boxes are not copied from Ancient Indian Brahman images including Gandhāran ones but were independently created by Gandhāran sculptors.

However, a more important ornament for understanding the essence or the function of the Bodhisattva Maitreya is observed in the necklace. The two terminal ends of the necklace are as a rule decorated with the head of the Greek marine-creature Ketos (Fig. 2) or the complete figure of Eros (Fig. 3) (Tissot 1985: pl.XXXIII). Compared with Greek, Roman, Iranian (Achaemenian, Parthian, Sasanian), Scythian, Sarmatian and Indian necklaces, the employment of Ketos and Eros is unusual, because the two terminals of the torque or necklace produced in the Mediterranean,

---

[1]   Although the upper body of other unidentified bodhisattva images from Gandhāra is decorated with the same kinds of torque, necklace and cords, they must have been modeled after those of the Bodhisattva Maitreya images. Therefore, in this paper the author does not take into consideration the images of unidentified bodhisattvas, including so-called the Bodhisattva Siddhārtha, Avalokiteśvara images (Rhi 2006).

[2]   Dr. John Siudmak kindly informed me of the two fragments of Mathuran Bodhisattva images that wear proper or standard *yajñopavīta* with cylindrical boxes (Vogel 1930: pls 33a and 34a). The attachment of

cylindrical boxes to *yajñopavīta* is exceptional as to Mathuran Bodhisattva images. Thus, the adoption of cylindrical boxes is beyond doubt influenced by Gandhāran art as is definitively proved by a Gandhāran schist statue of woman unearthed from Saptarṣi Tīlā in Mathura (Rosenfied 1968: pl. 50).

Fig. 2
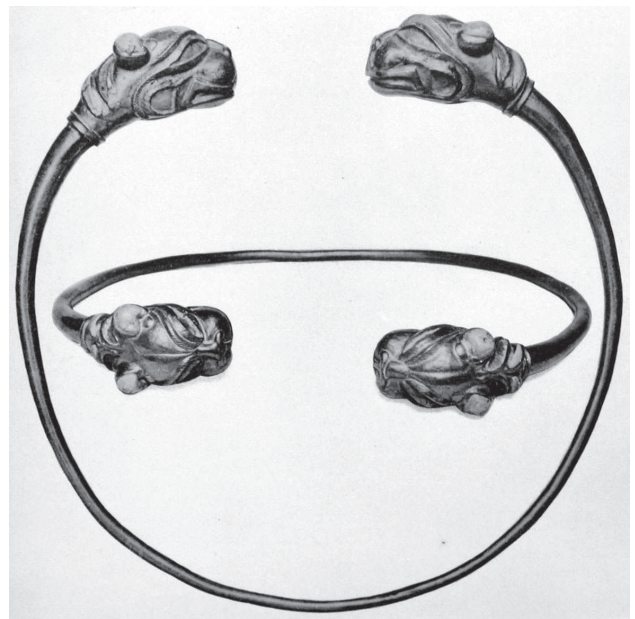
Fig. 4

Fig. 3

Fig. 5

West Asian, northern Caucasian and Central Asian areas are usually decorated with the head of a lion (Fig. 4), a griffin (Fig. 5), a horse, a ram, a bull or a snake but not with the head of Ketos or with the figure of Eros (Pope 1938: pls 113, 121-2; Musche 1992: pls XCVII, CX, CXIII-CXV; Tissot 1999: figs 4-5). The function of these animals and fabulous monsters is apotropaic. As for Ketos and Eros, I believe that their function is not restricted to an apotropaic one as I explain below. In other words, the necklace of the Bodhisattva Maitreya is quite exceptional in both a morphological and functional sense, in the light of the history of ancient necklace terminals. Therefore, we can say that the choice of these two Greek motifs of Ketos and Eros is not accidental but intentional.

In the following exposition I will attempt to clarify the reason why Ketos and Eros were employed for the necklace-terminals of the Gandhāran Bodhisattva Maitreya images.

Fig. 6

Fig. 8

Fig. 7

a. *Yajñopavīta*

The string or cord which I investigate in this paper is called *yajñopavīta*, a 'sacred' cord or string to be given to a student at the ceremony of *upanayana*. According to *Khadragṛhyasūtra* and *Gobillagṛhyasūtra*, there are two ways of wearing the *yajñopavīta*. One of them is to wear it from the left shoulder to the right armpit whereas the other is reversed from the right shoulder to the left armpit (Oldenberg 1996, I: 374; II: 17). Generally speaking, the former way is more widely used than the latter by Hindu gods (Kreisel 1986: pls 75, 77a, 113, 114a, 116, A21, A24, A25). As for the image of Oesho (Fig. 6) depicted on Kuṣāṇa coins issued by Vima-Kadphises, Kaniṣka I and Huviṣka, as a rule, he wears the *yajñopavīta* in the former way (Cribb 1997; Giuliano 2004).

As regards the Bodhisattva Maitreya images from Gandhāra, the most typical type is one that consists of two 'sacred' cords or strings (Fig.1). It is quite apparent that the lowest of the two cords or strings is the proper or standard *yajñopavīta* (Fig. 7), and the remaining one cord or string, which is worn from the left shoulder to the right arm, cannot be identified as *yajñopavīta*, because it is not decorated with so-called amulet-boxes, which are described and discussed below.

In addition to this type, there is another Bodhisattva Maitreya image that wears the three cords or strings (Fig.8) (Ingholt 1957: figs 290, 292; Matsuoka 1993: pls 4, 5, 7;

However, before starting my investigation of these two motifs, I should say something about the string or cord with so-called amulet-boxes and also discuss several torques decorated with Greek or Kuṣāṇa deities, because their functions might be related to that of Ketos and Eros.
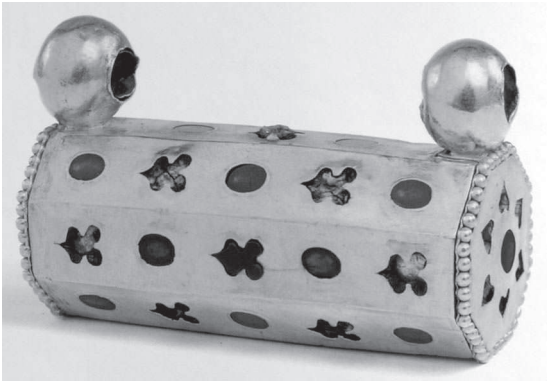
Fig. 9

Zwalf 1996: vol.II, pl.50; Behrendt 2007: pls 42, 44, 53). Why does the Bodhisattva Maitreya wear the two cords or strings in addition to the proper *yajñopavīta*? This feature is quite unique because Hindu gods like Śiva never wear a triple-corded 'sacred' thread. In my opinion, the addition of two cords could be explained by a Brahmanic description of the *yajñopavīta*. N.N.Bhattacharyya says that it is composed of three cords made of nine strands (Bhattacharya 1975: 72). Bh. Barua says that it is made of three cotton threads (Barua 1994: 44). In the *Mānava-dharmaśāstra*, chapter II, the *yajñopavīta* for a Brahman boy is said to be composed of triple (*trivṛt*) strand of cotton thread twisted upwards (Olivelle 2005: 96). Here the qualification of *trivṛt* is problematic. It means triple, threefold, consisting three parts or folds, a triple cord, an amulet of three strings (Monier-Williams 1964: 460). *Trivṛt* is a compound word

formed from *vṛta* (covered, surrounded) and *tri. Tri* can mean both triple and three. Eventually, *trivṛt* can be taken as three cords just like *trilola* (three worlds), *trimūrti* (three faces). Therefore, Gandhāran sculptors interpreted *trivṛt* as actually meaning three cords (Liebert 1976: 350).

Then, the three cords must have a definite meaning. Three is sacred number in Buddhist literature. According to the Philosophy of Sāṃkhya School, the universe is composed of three *guṇas* (primordial matters, fundamental qualities): *sattva, rajas* and *tamas* (Liebert 1976: 350; Huntington 1985: 279). According to *Pratimālakṣaṇa* of the *Viṣṇudarmottarapurāṇa* (seventh century AD), the *triśūla* of Śiva symbolizes these three *guṇas* (Bhattacharyya 1991:32). In Buddhism number three means *triratna* as well as in Jainism (Liebert 1976:350). Therefore, these three cords of Maitreya including the proper or standard *yajñopavīta*, might symbolize the Buddha, the Dharma and Saṃgha.

However, typically the Gandhāran Bodhisattva Maitreya image only wears two 'sacred' threads or cords (Fig. 1). Unfortunately, I have no idea why this practice was adopted, except for my initial surmise that an extra thread or cord was added to the proper or standard *yajñopavīta* to distinguish the image of Bodhisattva Maitreya from a Brahman ascetic or Hindu deity such as Śiva=Oesho (Fig.6), who only wears a single proper or standard *yajñopavīta*.

In any case, the proper or standard *yajñopavīta* must have a definite meaning. In my opinion, it originally symbolized

Fig. 10

brahma-caryā (study of the Veda) and *brahma-cārin* status (practicing sacred study, young Brahman student etc.) However, the Buddhists replaced *brahma-caryā*-hood by *bodhi-caryā*-hood (exertion for enlightenment), and eventually the *brahma-cārin* by the *bodhi-cārin* (the practice of acquiring perfect knowledge and wisdom) (Sakamoto 1994: 90, note 40). Therefore, the proper or standard *yajñopavīta* worn by the Bodhisattva Maitreya seems to symbolize the intrinsic essence of the bodhisattva (one whose essence is perfect knowledge and wisdom, one who exerts himself for the Buddha-hood), in addition to the Brahman caste and origin of Maitreya.

Next I must draw attention to the so-called amulet-boxes (Waddell 1912: 159, figs 1-2; Foucher 1918: 182; Rowland 1961: 10-12, fig. 10). They are octagonal or cylindrical boxes as exemplified by the gold octagonal box (Fig. 9) found at Ahin Posh Stūpa by Ch.Masson. However, this piece does not contain any amulet nor *dhāraṇī*, but two Kuṣāṇa gold coins (Zwalf 1996, I: 351, pl.669; II: 352, colour pl. XVI). It is quite difficult to regard this kind of box as containing amulets, because the people (donors) depicted in Gandhāran sculptures do not carry such an object at all. Therefore, I believe that such a box is not amulet-box. Another silver cylindrical box which contains several fragments of a whitish wood (Fig. 10) is in the Ikuo Hirayama Collection. These whitish fragments might be a substitute for *śarīra* (of the Buddha), i.e., whitish bone fragments. The above-mentioned gold coins might be another substitute, because since the Vedic period gold symbolizes eternity and purity, that is to say, of the Dharma or the Buddhahood (Gonda 1991: 25-31). Based upon the evidence of these pieces, I should like to say that the relevant cylindrical box is not an amulet-box, but a relic container without any apotropaic function.

Although some scholars might still maintain that it is an amulet-box because the cord tied around the waist of the Bodhisattva Maitreya has an apotropaic function symbolized by the so-called Hercules knot (Figs 1, 11) in its centre, this waist-cord might be equated with the so-called *mekhalā*. The *mekhalā* cord, also given at the *upanayana* ceremony, is said to have an apotropaic function (Oldenberg/Narain 2005: 48). Therefore the Hercules knot can have an apotropaic function as the *mekhalā* does (Nicgorski 1995: 24, 36, 187-9, 277). However, this Hercules knot was used generally, not particularly by Maitreya. Furthermore, there are many Bodhisattva Maitreya images that do not wear the Hercules knot. So, I cannot agree with the opinion that the Hercules knot was employed by Gandhāran sculptors in order to show an apotropaic funtion of Maitreya.

In any case, the Bodhisattva as well as the Buddha has no need to carry amulets, because both are superhuman beings endowed with miraculous powers *(ṛddhi)* and can easily subdue all demons and malicious spirits such as Māra-Pāpīyān, *asura*s, *rākṣasas* and *preta*s (Zin 2006: 12: 'der Buddha [bedarf] bekanntlich keines Beschützers').

Fig. 11

G.Schopen is right when he says that those who wear any form of amulet are not bodhisattvas (Schopen 2000: 80). Maitreya is a bodhisattva called *ajita* (invincible) like *Sol Invictus* and thus he does not need to carry any such amulet.

b. Torque

Bodhisattva images of Gandhāra wear a flat collar torque. The centre of this ornament is usually decorated with floral or geometric pattern. However, there are a few exceptional Maitreya images where the centre of torque is decorated with small divine figures such as Serapis, Ardoxsho, or the tutelary couple Pāñcika and Hāritī. According to some scholars these figures could symbolize rebirth (in Tuṣita Heaven), fecundity, or kingship etc. (Carter 1999/2000; Quagliotti 2000, 2007). However, at the present stage of our knowledge of these deities, it is very difficult to properly assess the function of these divine figures, because they are employed exceptionally and not generally as far as bodhisattva images are concerned. In other words, it is not clear whether these images are related to the intrinsic function of Maitreya or to the particular desire or wish (rebirth, fecundity, riches etc.) of each donor (lay worshipper) of the relevant Bodhisattva (Maitreya) images. If the latter surmise is accurate, these divine figures might reflect what the donor asked privately when he sought Maitreya's benevolence. Taking into consideration this kind of probability, I want to leave aside this problem, to be investigated in the future.

c. Ketos and Eros attached to the necklace of Bodhisattva Maitreya

Ketos and Eros that decorate the two terminal parts of the necklace of the Bodhisattva Maitreya images are beyond any possible doubt related to the intrinsic function of Maitreya, because they are generally employed but not exceptionally. Ketos is usually represented only by the head while Eros is shown as a complete or part figure. As for

Fig. 12

the head of Ketos, before I identified it as a Greek marine creature, various appellations were given such as dragon, a dog and various others (Tissot 1985: 218; Tanabe 2003). However, these appellations are misnomers. If we compare the heads of Ketos with those of Ketos depicted abundantly on circular stone dishes from Gandhāra (Fig. 12),[3] we can easily identify the monstrous heads of the relevant necklaces as those of Ketos. Furthermore, Ketos is also depicted on Gandhāran reliefs (Fig.13) (Rahman 1993: pls LIIb, LIIIa). By comparing the necklaces of the Bodhisattva Maitreya with these Gandhāran stone dishes and reliefs, it is evident that the monstrous heads of the necklace worn by the Bodhisattva Maitreya certainly derived from Ketos. Probably the image of Ketos was transmitted from Greece to Central Asia (Greco-Bactrian Kingdom) and Gandhāra (Indo-Greek Kingdom) as was already proved by J.Boardman (Boardman 1986, 2003a, b, 2007).

The reason why only the head of Ketos was applied to the terminals of the necklaces of the Bodhisattva Maitreya images is that the two terminals of the circular necklaces and bracelets (Figs 4, 5) of the Achaemenids, Scythians, Sarmatians were decorated only with heads of animals (lion, ram, serpent etc.) and fabulous ones (griffin), and this convention (pars pro toto) was eventually adopted by Gandhāran sculptors (Schmidt 1995, 1997; Tissot 1999).

On the other hand, as for Eros, this deity is also depicted on

Fig. 13

the circular stone dishes from Gandhāra (Fig. 14) (Francfort 1979: pls I, IV, XI, XII, XIII, XVII-XIX) as well as on many Gandhāran reliefs as garland-bearer (Ingholt 1957: figs 370-380).

Therefore, we can assume that Ketos and Eros terminals of necklaces of the Bodhisattva Maitreya images derived from circular stone dishes that had been produced earlier than the Buddha and Maitreya images, which were created in the latter half of the first century A.D. Thus, it is quite reasonable to take for granted that the function of Ketos and Eros on the necklaces is almost identical with that of the same creatures depicted on circular stone dishes. I will now clarify the function of Ketos and Eros.

---

[3]   These circular stone dishes have been called as toilet-trays or palettes, but in my opinion, these appellations are misnomers, because they have no cosmetic purpose. They were objects with ritualistic purpose particular to the Gandhāran Buddhists (Tanabe 2004, 2005, 2007b).

Fig. 14

12) depicted on Gandhāran stone circular dishes is that of a lion, Pegasus, or sea-horse in addition to a rabbit (Francfort 1979: nr 12, 33-37, 50, 55).

The function of Ketos depicted on Gandhāran circular stone dishes is psychopompos, salvational, soteriological, and probably apotropaic. Thus the head of Ketos decorating the two terminals of the necklace of the Bodhisattva Maitreya images could have succeeded to such traditional function (Tanabe 2007a). However, as for the last-mentioned apotropaic function of Ketos, I believe that it was maintained by Gandhāran sculptors, not for protecting and guarding the Bodhisattva Maitreya but for showing the Bodhisattva Maitreya's function to defend the souls of the Buddhist dead as psychopompos and saviour.

2. Function of Eros – Compared with Ketos, the function of Eros is more varied. As Eros is associated with Nereid, he rides quite often on Ketos as is attested to by depictions on Gandhāran circular stone dishes (Fig. 14) (Francfort 1979: pls XII-no.23, XVII-XIX; *LIMC*, III-1: 850-942; III-2: 632-93). Therefore, it is clear that Eros is intimately related to Ketos. In Greek art, a winged Eros is depicted flying in the air, riding on a dolphin, or serving Olympian gods as messenger and musician (Buschor 1944: 31; Greifenhagen 1957: 26-7). This results from the fact that as a son of Aphrodite Eros became an intimate friend of the sea and sea-creatures, and was consequently given the same function of the escort of the souls of the dead as dolphin and Nereid (Stuveras 1969: 44-6, 153-64). On the other hand, Eros was also regarded as the son of Hermes and Artemis (goddess of the other world) and thus was endowed with the same psychopompos function as that of Hermes, the escort ('Seelenführer') of the souls of the dead (Kerényi 1944).

1. Function of Ketos – Ketos is usually depicted carrying Nereid on Greek vases, mosaics (Fig. 15), boxes (Fig. 16) and other objects (*LIMC*.VIII-1: 731-736; VIII-2: 496-501; Barringer 1998).This Greek marine creature was regarded by the Greeks as the escort of sailors, sea-farers, and consequently as psychopompos of the soul of the dead. This psychopompos function continued further even in Roman Imperial period as is well attested by Roman marble sarcophagi (Rumph 1939). The head of Ketos varies from that of sea-monster to that of lion, sea-horse (Hippokampos), ram and bull (on Greek vases, Barringer 1998: pls 41, 43, 45, 50, 53, 110-111, 116-9: on Roman Imperial sarcophagi, Rumph 1938: 12, 16-17, 30 etc., pls.1, 3-5, 8, 11-13, 19 etc.). Accordingly, the head of Ketos (Fig.

Fig. 15

103

Fig. 16

It is true that Eros, as god of love, is usually represented as youthful, beautiful but unreliable. Thus, Eros is liable to give us an unsuitable impression as guard, escort and psychopompos. However, Eros was originally incarnate of voluptuous and cosmic genetic power, and after he was regarded as born of a union of Hermes and Aphrodite, he became a god of love as Amor, or Putto among the Romans. According to another view, it was only after the Hellenistic period when Eros became associated with Psyche that he was regarded as god of love (Kohzu 1960: 75, 216). We should not be deluded by this more popular aspect of Eros, and thus remove the function of the god of love from Eros depicted in Gandhāran artifacts. The salvational or soteriological function was recently pointed out by A. Provenzali in the Eros depicted on Gandhāran reliefs (Provenzali 2005).

Furthermore, being incarnate of intelligence and virtue, Eros was assumed to be an able soldier on the battlefield, and believed to bring victory as Nike does (Greifenhagen 1957: 37, 40-46, 62-3). Eros as Putto girlandiphore and garland-bearer is associated with the Rebirth, Immortality, Paradise and the Isle of the Blessed, probably due to the belief that he is one of the Thiasos of Dionysos (Stuveras 1969: -31, 41-63).

Among various functions of Eros, the most important for assessing his function in the necklace of the Bodhisattva Maitreya is his psychopompos and salvational one that led Gandhāran sculptors to decorate the two terminals of the necklace of the Bodhisattva Maitreya images with the bodies of Eros, whether depicted fully or only partly.

d. Ketos and Eros in the Buddhist Context

From the above investigation, it is confirmed that the function of Ketos and Eros is both psychopompos and salvational. Therefore, this function could be applied to Ketos and Eros depicted on the circular stone dishes from Gandhāra. As for these dishes, they were owned by town-living Buddhists as I have already proved in my previous papers and a book (Tanabe 2004, 2005, 2006).Their owners were surely lay Buddhists because many were excavated in towns such as Sirkap. Furthermore most of these lay Buddhists were fundamentally Greeks and Iranians, including mixed-blood Buddhists of Greek, Indo-Scythian, Indo-Parthian and native Gandhāran stock who could more or less understand Greek mythology.

Here I will investigate the psychopompos and salvational function of Ketos and Eros in the Buddhist context. According to the Teachings of the Buddha Śākyamuni of Hīnayāna Buddhism, the rebirth in the *svarga*, *devalokas* such as *Tuṣita, Trāyastriṃśa, Yama* and other Heavens is not the goal for which Buddhists should strive. Their goal is the arhatship to be only attained by monks and nuns (*pravrajito śramaṇaḥ*). Therefore, all lay Buddhists cannot attain arhatship or *nirvāṇa* after death, according to Hīnayāna Buddhism (Kariya 1990: 60-61). By the accumulation of merits (*puṇya*) through donation (*dāna*), lay Buddhists can only attain rebirth in one of these heavens (Nath 1987: 26), but must return to this world in the future after staying there for some time to repeat the endless chain of rebirths. Probably since the second century BC at the latest, the Gandhāran Buddhists, especially lay Buddhists wanted to reach the other shore (*pāramitā*) after death. Compared with *svarga* and *devaloka* that are not perfect worlds because the re-born souls in these worlds are destined to return to this world, the *pāramitā* world is perfect because the reborn souls can stay there permanently without returning to this world. Although I am not sure which one of these two destinations the Gandhāran lay Buddhists aspired to, I believe that most of them preferred the perfect *pāramitā* world to the imperfect *devaloka* and *svarga*.

In any case, the journey of the souls of the Buddhist dead cannot help but cross the sea or Great Ocean, or the flooded (inundated) river in order to reach the other shore. The journey crossing the sea and river was regarded as dangerous, as is mentioned in the *Suttanipāta*, the *Mahāvastu* and so forth (Kanazawa 2002: 408, 418; Nagasaki 1991: 32-4; Jones 1956: 291).

Especially in Gandhāra, lay Buddhists seem to have believed that on the journey, demons, monsters and other evil beings (*asura*s, *rākṣasas* and *preta*s) would wait for and attack the souls of the dead. This assumption or fear is corroborated by the fact that Ketos, Eros and also griffin (Fig. 17), i.e., Phoenix serving the Sun God and carrying the souls of the dead (Cumont 1922: 102; Flagge 1975: 70-71), are depicted as protector, saviour and psychopompos on Gandhāran circular stone dishes. The psychopompos griffin might imply Ascension to heaven (*devaloka, svarga*) whereas Ketos and Eros rather refer to the sea- journey.

The assumption of the attack by these demons and others could have been very strong among the dominant Buddhists of Gandhāra and environs, i.e., those Greek and Iranian

Fig. 17

foreigners and their descendants mentioned above. The Greeks believed in the existence of sea-monsters such as Skylla, Charybdis, Seiren and others cleared by Hercules who attack the souls of the dead during the after life journey (Cumont 1922: 148-69; Ahlberg-Cornell 1984: 109-56, figures of serpent/fish-monster; Barringer 1998: 11). The Indo-Scythians and Indo-Parthians, probably followers of some Iranian religion similar to the Mazdeism or Zoroastrianism, also feared demons and malicious spirits who were believed to appear during the three nights after death according to Zoroastrian eschatology (Söderblom 1901: 10, 36, 86, 91-2; Modi 1922: 61, 78).

Therefore, a divine escort and guard were needed by the souls of the dead Gandhāran Buddhists, at least by the lay Buddhists. As far as the after life journey and Ascension are concerned, there is a big difference between those Gandhāran Buddhists and the other Buddhists living in Indian Subcontinent Proper who did not find it necessary to ask for help from divine escorts and guards (Namikawa 1993, 2005: 51-64).

The Gandhāran lay Buddhists could find a proper psychopompos in the images of Ketos and Eros as is attested by circular stone dishes (Figs. 12, 14, 17). When Gandhāran sculptors created the Image of Maitreya, they adopted exclusively these two psychopompos creatures and decorated the two terminals of his necklace with them, in order to show vividly the psychopompos and salvational function of the Bodhisattva Maitreya. So, we can assume that the image of the Bodhisattva Maitreya is the real and legitimate successor to the Greek psychopompos creatures such as Ketos, and Eros, comparable and equivalent in a sense to the Greek psychopomposes such as Hermes and Charon.

Concluding remarks

The Bodhisattva Maitreya or the Buddha Maitreya was revered as great saviour full of benevolence and compassion (*karuṇā*) towards the Buddhists. In other words, his salvational and soteriological function is to help the Buddhists to reach the other shore (*pāramitā*) or the heavens (*devalokas*). In addition to these worlds, Gandhāran Buddhists might have wanted to attain the perfection of wisdom (*prajñāpāramitā*) and possibly *nirvāṇa* (rebirth in paradise=*sukhāvatī*). In any case, therefore, in order to show vividly the benevolent, salvational and psychopompos function of the Bodhisattva Maitreya, Ketos and Eros were also employed for the necklace of this bodhisattva because they were already well known to Gandhāran Buddhists as they were depicted on circular stone dishes.

In conclusion, the head of Ketos or the body of Eros attached to the terminals of the necklaces of the Bodhisattva Maitreya images is not a simple ornament, but is intimately related to Maitreya's intrinsic function as psychopompos and great saviour and also to the Buddhist fundamental conception and desire to reach the other shore *(pāramitā)* or *devaloka (svarga)*, needless to say, including the rebirth in Tuṣita Heaven over which Maitreya is now presiding.

Furthermore, it goes without saying that the same function holds good for the Buddha Śākyamuni image. In other words, the Buddha image was created in anthropomorphic form just as great saviour and psychopompos of the Buddhists.

Bibliography

Ahlberg-Cornell, Gudrun (1984) *Heracles and the Sea-Monster in Attic Black-Figure Vase-Painting*. Stockholm: Paul Aströms Förlag.

Barringer, Judith (1998) *Divine escorts, Nereids in Archaic and Classical Greek Art*. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press .

Barua, Bharati (1994) *A Study of the Socio-Religious Ceremony of Upanayana*. Calcutta: Punthi Pustak.

Behrendt, Kurt (2007) *The Art of Gandhara in the Metropolitan Museum of Art*: New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Bhattacharyya, Narendra Nath (1975) *Ancient Indian Rituals and Their Social Contents*. London: Curzon Press.

Bhattacharyya, Dipak Chandra (1991) *Pratimālakṣaṇa of the Viṣṇudharmottara*. New Delhi: Publishing House.

Boardman, John (1986) 'The Ketos' in Lilly Kahil, in Christian Augé and Pascale Linant de Bellefonds (eds), *India, Iconographie Classique et Identités Régionales*, *Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique*, Supplément XIV. Paris: Diffusion de Boccard: 447-53.

--- (2003a) 'Three monsters at Tillya tepe', *Ancient Civilizations from Scythia to Siberia* 9/1-2: 133-46.

--- (2003b) 'The Tillya Tepe Gold: A Closer Look', *Ancient West and East* 2: 348-74.

--- (2007) 'Central Asia: West and East', in Joe Cribb and Georgina Herrmann (eds), *After Alexander, Central Asia before Islam*, Oxford: Oxford University Press: 9-25.

Buschor, Ernst (1944) *Die Musen des Jenzeits*. München: F. Brückmann Verlag.

Carter, Martha (1999/2000) 'A note on a Serapis–like bust in the necklace of a Gandhāran bodhisattva sculpture in the Norton Simon Museum', *Silk Road Art and Archaeology* 6: 9-18.

Cribb, Joe (1997) 'Shiva images on Kushan and Kushano-Sasanian coins', in Katsumi Tanabe, Joe Cribb and Helen Wang (eds), *Studies in Silk Road Coins and Culture*, London/Kamakura: Institute of Silk Road Studies, pp.11-66.

Cumont, Franz (1922) *After Life in the Roman Paganism*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Flagge, Ingeborg (1975) *Untersuchungen zur Bedeutung des Greifen*. Sankt Augustin: Verlag Hans Richarz.

Foucher, Alfred (1918) *L'art gréco-bouddhique du Gandhâra*. Tome II, Paris: Imprimerie Nationale.

Francfort, Henri-Paul (1979) *Les Palettes du Gandhāra*. Paris: Diffusion de Boccard.

Giuliano, Laura (2004) 'Studies in early Śaiva iconography: (1) the origin of the triśūla and some related problems', *Silk Road Art and Archaeology* 10: 51-96.

Gonda, Jan (1991) *The Function and Significance of Gold in the Veda*. Leiden: E.J. Brill.

Greifenhagen, Adolf (1957) *Griechische Eroten*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyther & CO.

Huntington, Susan (1985) *The Art of Ancient India*. New York/Tokyo: Weather Hill.

Ingholt, Herald (1957) *Gandhāran Art in Pakistan*. New York: Pantheon Books.

Jones, J.J. (1956) *Mahāvastu*. Volume III, London: Luzac & Company, LTD.

Kanazawa, Atsushi (2002) 'Issaishohoh no higanntoha?', *Higashiajia no Bukkyoh - Sono Seiritsu to Tennkai*, Tokyo: shunjyuhsha: 406-19 (in Japanese).

Kariya, Sadahiko (1990) 'Buttoh-bosatsu-daijyohbukkyoh – bukkyoh ni okeru zaikedoh', *Bukkyoh to Shakai*, in Japanese, Kyoto: Nagata Bunshohdou: 57-77.

Kerényi, Karl (1944) *Hermes der Seelenführer*. Zürich/Stuttgart: Rhein Verlag.

Kohzu, Harushige (1960) *Greek and Roman Mythological Dictionary*, Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten (in Japanese).

Kreisel, Gerd (1986) *Ikonographie der Śiva-Bildwerke in der KunstMathuras. Von Anfangen bis zur Spatguptazeit*. Wiesbaden: F. Steiner Verlag.

Liebert, Gösta (1976) *Iconographic Dictionary of the Indian Religion*. Leiden: E.J. Brill.

LIMC Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae. Volume III, 1986, Volume VIII, 1997, München/Zürich: Artemis Verlag.

Matsuoka Museum of Art (1994) *Ancient Asian Sculptures from the Matsuoka Collection*. Tokyo: Matsuoka Museum of Art.

Modi, Jivanji.J. (1922) *The Religious Ceremonies and Customs of the Parsees*. Bombay/Mazagon: British India Press.

Monier-Williams, M. (1964) *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Musche, Brigitte (1992) *Vorderasiatischer Schmuck von den Anfängen bis zur Zeit der Achaemeniden*. Leiden: E.J.Brill.

Nagasaki, Houjun (1991) 'Tathāgata koh', *Bukkyoh bunnka ronnshuu*, Tokyo: Sankiboh Busshorin: 25-49 (in Japanese).

Namikawa, Takayoshi (1992) 'Shokibuttenn ni mirareru budda no kyuhsaisei : √trī no causative no yohrei yorimite', in Egaku Maeda (ed.) *Genshibukkyoh to Daijyohbukkyoh*, volume I, Kyoto: Nagata Bunshohdou: 235-54 (in Japanese).

--- (2005) *Gotama Budda koh*. Tokyo: Daizoh Shuppan (in Japanese).

Nath, Vijay (1987) *Dāna: Gift System in Ancient India (c. 600BC. – c. AD 300)*. New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers.

Nicgorski, Ann, M. (1995) *The Iconography of the Hercules Knot and the Hercules- knot hairstyle of Apollo and Aphrodite*. Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, University of North Carolina.

Oldenberg, Hermann (1996) *The Grihya Sūtras*. 2 parts, Sacred Books of the East volumes XXIX-XXXX, Delhi: Low Price Publications. Reprint of the 1886 edition.

Oldenberg, Hermann and V. Narain (2005) *Pāraskara Gṛhyasūtra*. Delhi: Chaukhamba Sanskrit Pratishthan.

Olivelle, Patrick (2005) *Manu's Code of Law, A Critical Edition and Translation of the Mānava- Dharmaśāstra*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Provenzali, Anna (2004) 'La figura infantile nella prima arte Gandharica: Modelli e corrispondenze significanti', *Parthica* 7: 155-76.

Quagliotti, Anna Maria (2000) 'A Gandharan Donor on Sale by Sotheby's New York', *East and West* 50: 523-33.

--- (2007) 'An Unidentified Gandhāran Bodhisattva', in Ellen M. Raven (ed.) *South Asian Archaeology 1999, Proceedings of the Fifteenth International Conference of the European Association of South Asian Archaeologists held at the Universiteit Leiden, 5-9 July, 1999*, Groningen: Egbert Forsten, 2008 (Gonda Indological Studies volume XV), 305-16.   .

Rahman, Abdur (1993) 'Shnaisha Gumbat:First Preliminary Excavation Report', *Ancient Pakistan* 3: 1-106.

Rhi, Juhyung (2006) 'Bodhisattvas in Gandhāran Art: An Aspect of Mahayana in Gandhāran Buddhism', in Pia Brancaccio and Kurt Behrendt (eds) *Gandhāran Buddhism: Archaeology, Art, Texts*, Vancouver/Toronto: UBC Press: 151-82.

Rowland, Benjamin (1961) 'Bodhisattvas or Deified Kings: A Note on Gandhara Sculpture', *Archives of Chinese Art Society of America* 15 :6-12.

Rumph, Anreas (1939) *Die Meerwesen auf den antiken Sarkophagreliefs*. Berlin: G. Grotesche Verlagsbuchhandlung.

Sakamoto, Sumiko (1994) 'Hair and whisker', *The Journal of the Nippon Buddhist Research Association* 59: 77-90 (in Japanese).

Schmidt, Caroline Woodford (1995) 'The Sacred and the Secular: Jewellery in Buddhist Sculpture in the Northern Kushan Realm', in Susan Strong (ed.) *The Jewels in India*, Bombay: Marg Publications: 15-36.

--- (1997) 'Replicas of Chain Necklaces with Figural Terminals in Buddhist Art of the Kushan Period', *South Asian Archaeology 1995*, II: 523-42.

Schopen, Gregory (2000) *Monastic Buddhism in India during the 'Mahāyāna' Period*. Tokyo: Shunjyuhsha (in Japanese).

Söderblom, Nathan (1901) *La Vie Future d'après le Mazdéisme*. Paris: Ernest Leroux.

Stuveras, Roger (1969) *Le putto dans l'art romain*. Bruxelles: Latomus (Collection Latomus, vol.XCIX).

Tanabe, Katsumi (2003) 'The Earliest Pāramitā Imagery of Gandhāran Buddhist Reliefs', *Silk Road Art and Archaeology* 9: 87-105.

--- (2004a) 'Function of the so-called Gandhāran Toilet-trays', *Bulletin of the Ancient Orient Museum* 24: 65-82 (in Japanese with English summary).

--- (2004b) 'Symbolic Meaning of Toileting lady in Gandharan Buddhist Reliefs', *Bulletin of the Ancient Orient Museum* 25: 73 -86 (in Japanese with English summary).

--- (2006) *Sex and Death through the Origin of the Buddha Image*. Kyoto: Yanagihara Shuppan (in Japanese).

--- (2007a) 'Origin of the Gandhāran Maitreya Image – A New Approach to the Origin of the Gandhāran Buddha Image', in Katsumi Tanabe (ed.), *Gandhāran Art from The Hirayama Collection*, Tokyo: Kodansha: 262-83 (in Japanese with English summary).

--- (2007b) 'Unique Semicircular Stone Dish from Gandhara – Further negation of toileting function and purpose', *Bulletin of the Ancient Orient Museum* 27: forthcoming (in Japanese with English summary).

Tissot, Francine (1985) *Gandhāra*, Paris: Adrien Maisonneuve.

--- (1999) 'Jewellery in Gandharan art: images and reality', in Michael Alram and Deborah. E. Klimburg-Salter (eds), *Coins, Art , and Chronology, Essays on the Pre-Islamic History of the Indo-Iranian Borderlands*, Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften: 399-412.

Vogel, Jean Philippe (1930) *La Sculpture de Mathurā*, Paris/ Bruxelles: G. van Oest (Ars Asiatica XV).

Waddell, L.A. (1912) 'The "Dhāraṇī" Cult in Buddhism, Its Origin, Deified Literature and Images', *Ostasiatische Zeitschrift* I/2: 155-95.

Zin, Monika (2006) *Mitleid und Wunderkraft*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag.

Zwalf, Wladimir (1996) *A Catalogue of the Gandhāra Sculpture in the British Museum*, 2 volumes, London: The British Museum.

Figures

All photos are copyright of the author unless mentioned here:

Fig. 4 – After Pope 1938: pl.121-A

Fig. 5 – After Kyouto Shinnbunnsha, *Glories of Eurasian Steppe Culture*, exhibition catalogue, Kyoto, 1993, pl. 38

Figs 7 & 8 – After Behrendt 2007: front-cover, pls 42- 43

Fig. 9 – After Zwalf 1996:vol.II, no. 668

Fig. 11– After H. Fujita, *The Gandhara*, 1996, pl. 81

Figs 14 & 17 – After Francfort 1979: nos.23, 40.

Figs 15 & 16 – After Rumph 1939: figs.159, 164

CHAPTER 9.
MĀYĀ, GANDHĀRA'S GRIEVING MOTHER
– PART 2 –

Doris Meth Srinivasan

When thinking about Māyā's portrayal in Gandhāran art it is usual to think of her as 'a Mother' but not 'a grieving mother'.[1] Māyā is portrayed as the expectant Mother of the Buddha-to-be, as the parent curious to know the explanation of her dream, and as the actual emitter of the babe. I am referring, of course, to the many depictions of Māyā's prenatal dream (see the example from Sikri in the Lahore Museum: Kurita 1988: I, 26 fig. 19); her presence, along with that of her husband, King Śuddhodana, as they listen to Asita's interpretation of the dream (see examples in the Musée Guimet and the Lahore Museum: ibid.: I; 27, figs 22-23); and her delivery in the Lumbini Grove outside of the town of Kapilavastu (an example is in the Arther M. Sackler and Freer Gallery of Art: ibid.: I, 31, fig. 31). No grief is associated with Māyā in representations of these events. The emphasis in all such images (be they from Gandhāra or the early Indian schools of Buddhist art), is of Māyā's maternal nature, one may almost say maternal destiny, in the life story of Siddhārtha Gautama.

A rare and most unusual Gandhāran image has recently been published that emphasizes Māyā's maternity. The relief, from a private collection, depicts a pregnant Māyā on half of the stele fragment (Fig. 1). We can be quite sure that this is a Buddhist scene since the other half of the relief depicts two monks. Māyā's image is a *tour de force* in that it marries the elephant's form to the female's body. The reference to the elephant reminds of Māyā's dream, at the time of conception, that a pure white elephant enters her body (*Buddhacarita* I.4).[2] In the relief, the Queen's head is human, inclined, and with beautifully styled hair. The rest of her anatomy has analogies to the shape of the elephant, such that her breasts are the elephant's two forehead protuberances; her inflated belly starts the animal's rounded trunk; the eyes and tusks of the elephant are worked into the quasi-bodily form which ends with two large elephant feet. The image is remarkable not only because it is rare and so successfully imaginative, but also because there are hardly any precedents in Indian religious imagery. Indian art portrays a pregnant personage very, very seldom.[3] Few studies have been made on this subject. I wrote on the form of 'the pregnant male' as the vessel of cosmic creation and pointed out that the ancient Vedic ritualists did not shy away from ascribing female procreative attributes to the male in order to convey the notion of cosmic creativity.[4] Pal considered the portrayal of female pregnancy and came to the conclusion that an Indian artist 'rarely if ever portrayed a pregnant woman, much less a pregnant goddess'. Although he is premature in his opinion that 'even with such human teachers as the Buddha or Mahāvīra, whose lives have been portrayed in great detail, neither of their mother has been represented actually as pregnant while they were with child ...'(Pal 1990: 80), the fact that it is attempted in this Gandhāran relief of the second and third centuries AD attests to the near exclusive focus – at least among Northern Buddhists – on Māyā's motherly nature.

This paper continues the focus on Queen Māyā's maternal nature, but Māyā as a Mother who grieves because her son lies dying. Ever since a study of Gandhāran art has been undertaken, the presence of Māyā at the Parinirvāṇa has never been pointed out. However, she is represented at this event – and in two different ways. The reason it had been so difficult to find her is because Māyā's depictions respond more to conventions found in Roman and Parthian art than to conventions in South Asian art.

The use of foreign models to construct funerary iconography is understandable. The funerary theme remained undeveloped in early Indian art. Other than the Buddhist cycle relating to the Parinirvāṇa (with depictions of the subsequent funeral pyre and distribution of the relics), the theme of death, burial and/or cremation for mortals and godlings remained unexplored and unnecessary in the visual arts. But since Buddhists had the need, Gandhāran artists had to comply and devise a way to refer to this theme in visual terms. Their method of using and transforming foreign artistic conventions for their own purpose cannot be seen as an unusual way to give expression to visual imagery and symbolism where no indigenous precedents existed.

At the time of the Buddha's Parinirvāṇa, Māyā is believed

---

[1]   Part 1 of this study was published in 2006.
[2]   Aśvaghoṣa's *Buddhacarita* dates to the Kuṣāṇa period and is therefore contemporary with the production of Gandhāran art. The *Lalitavistara* (VI) which also refers to Māyā's 'elephant dream' may be somewhat later but composed in the Northern regions. Note the interesting but highly speculative essay on 'The Buddha-Elephant' by Giovanni Verardi (1999/2000).

[3]   On the Mahā Yakṣa in ancient Indian art whose large belly symbolizes the fruitful womb or cosmic womb-chamber, see Srinivasan 1997, Chapter Fifteen.
[4]   Ibid.

Fig. 1 – Gandhāran relief, Buddhist scene with Pregnant Māyā, first-third century AD, Schist, 33.5 x 41 x 10 cm. Private Collection.

to be in the Trāyastriṃśa Heaven where she was reborn, having died soon after giving birth. To be present at the Parinirvāṇa she has therefore to descend from this Heaven. Her descent and presence at the Parinivāna are postulated in several early textual accounts from China and Central Asia. These mention Māyā's descent and sorrows at this time. Specifically, both a sorrowful Māyā and a weeping Māyā are mentioned in these sources. The *Mahāmāyāsūtra*, which may have had a Central Asian origin, contains a reference to Māyā's descent from heaven in order to be present at her son's demise. This text, probably translated at the end of the fifth century by T'an Chiang [Tanjing; T'an Ching] into Chinese at Nanking emphasizes ritual gestures including the offering of various flowers (Srinivasan 2006: 262). The pre-sixth century Chinese *Dīrghāgama* (39a) cites Māyā among various gods and monks who delivered lamentations over the body of the Buddha (ibid.: 263). There is also the account of the famous seventh century Chinese pilgrim Xuanzang who states that he was shown a memorial at Kuśinagara which was erected to commemorate the place that Mahāmāyā descended to weep at her son's Parinirvāṇa (ibid.: 261 citing Watters' translation). Another early Chinese work cited in Prof. Akira Miyaji's analysis of the Parinirvāṇa is the *Ta-T'ang Hsi-yu-chi* (Miyaji 1978: 14). It describes the lamenting Mahāmāyā; Miyaji dates this text and the *Mahāmāyāsūtra* between AD 479 and 502.

Two images of Māyā, (one) weeping and (the other) probably making some ritual offering, have been described in my initial study of Māyā at the Parinirvāṇa in Gandhāran art. The findings in that study are summarized here for they lead into the main subject of the present paper. The first model used to represent Māyā is inspired by a Roman funerary form termed the *clipeata imago*, or shield image. A Roman shield image has specific properties. It is a truncated portrait on a round shield or on the replica of a shield, or on a rounded niche (Srinivasan 2006: fig. 6). By c. first century BC- first century AD, and onwards, the *clipeata imago* was also used in funerary contexts. Two Gandhāran reliefs indicate that Gandhāran artists were acquainted with the properties of a *clipeata imago*. Each relief depicts a foreign soldier carrying a shield with a face on the surface. The first relief is in the Lahore Museum (Tissot 1985: figs 268-9) and the second is in the Storeroom of the National Museum, Karachi (Fig. 2). A Roman funerary relief with a shield image that illustrates the sort of source that inspired Gandhāran craftsmen is the well known early second century AD Testamentum Relief in the Museo Capolitano in Rome (Fig.3). Here the deceased is lying on a couch. He leans towards a matronly figure, probably his mother seated on the left. The shield image, or image medallion, probably of the father, is placed above the deceased. This Roman funerary motif was adopted into Parthian funerary art, with very similar results as this Palmyrene plaque shows (Fig. 4). Both Rome and Parthia, as is well known, had considerable contact with Greater India during the early Christian era.

A Gandhāran Parinirvāṇa relief in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (Fig. 5) features an image medallion which replicates the positioning of the one in the Testamentum Relief.

Inside the leafy frame of the relief is the bust of a female.

Fig.2 – Gandhāran fragment of an armed group, first-third century AD, schist, 59.6 x 34.2 cm, National Museum, Karachi Storeroom. Author's photograph.

Fig. 3 – Rome, The Testamentum Relief, early second century AD. Photograph, courtesy of Musei Capitolini, Rome.

Fig. 4 – Palmyrene funerary plaque with bust of a girl (Hadâ) within a wreath medallion, AD 125/6. After Colledge 1976: fig. 84.

I identified her as Queen Māyā who may be holding a flower offering. Another Gandhāran Parinirvāṇa relief in the Victoria and Albert Museum (Fig. 6) features in the top left corner a leafy roundel with the bust of a female inside. This female bends her head and seems to be weeping into a large cloth as she faces the recumbent Buddha. I proposed that this weeping female, inside the leafy modification of an image medallion, also represents the grieving Mother of the Buddha, hovering above the deathbed of her son. These two reliefs depict both the weeping and offering gestures attributed to Māyā in the aforementioned early Chinese and possibly Central Asian texts.

Since the descent of Māyā is cited in the aforementioned early texts it is not too surprising that Māyā has also been noticed in both Central Asian and Chinese depictions of the Parinirvāṇa. In Bāmiyān Caves 72, 330, 338, and 386, Professor Akira Miyaji who made on-site studies of this theme, saw a female seated near to the pillow on which rests the head of the Buddha. His description for the scene in Cave 7 runs thus

> *At the left side of the Buddha a haloed female figure seated in a chair slightly droops her head... She wears a long robe reaching her feet and a bracelet on her arm. This is the mother of the Master, Mahāmāyā, who has descended from heaven in*

Fig. 5 – Gandhāran Parinirvāṇa, late second-third century AD, schist, Florence and Herbert Irving Collection, on loan to the Metropolitan Museum of Art inv. L.1993.69.41. Photograph, courtesy of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

order to attend the death of the Buddha (Miyaji 1978:14).[5]

Miyaji noticed a similar seated female figure to the proper right of the Buddha in three caves at Dun-huang (Nos. 295, 420 and 280). He noted that she sits on a high stool, wears a long robe and seems to be deep in thought, or sorrow, as she rests her bowed head on the palm of her left hand (Fig. 7: from Cave 295). The Dun-huang paintings date to the Sui Period (AD 581 - 619) and are therefore earlier than the

probably mid-seventh century Bāmiyān paintings. However, their similar iconography almost implies a precedent used by both as the model for the seated, lamenting Māyā. All these findings, plus the analysis of Māyā in the image medallion are already published in greater detail and only summarized here in order to place my new findings regarding the second model into the proper context.

At present I know of one possible precedent in Gandhāran art for the way Māyā is depicted at Dun-huang and Bāmiyān. This is the second way Māyā can be depicted at the Parinirvāṇa and this model is based on the seated figure. It may be useful to note, parenthetically, that the descent of Māyā was perhaps not altogether unfamiliar in Gandhāra. The *Lalitavistara* knows that Māyā descends to assist her

---

[5]   This figure is illustrated in the line drawing of my paper of 2006: fig. 10. I would like to point out that although Miyaji's quoted description for the placement of Māyā appears to differ in the Bāmiyān and Dun-huang paintings, this is not so. She is always placed seated by the side of the Buddha's head. The placement of Māyā in Bāmiyān is to the proper right and not to the proper left, as Miyaji's quote may imply.

Fig. 6 – Gandhāran Parinirvāṇa, late second-third century AD, schist, Victoria and Albert Museum inv. I.M.247-1927. After Kurita 1988: I, fig. 482.

son as he undergoes rigorous ascetic practices (Srinivasan 2006: 262).

The second model is in a Gandhāran Parinirvāṇa scene occupying half of a grey schist carving measuring 22cm

ht. x 68 cm w. (Fig. 8). The relief may now be in a private collection in Nara Prefecture. Seated at the proper right of the dying Buddha's bedstead, by the side of his pillow, appears a draped female in a long robe covering her feet which rest on a base. Her right arm, bent at the elbow,

Fig. 7 – Dun-Huang Parinirvāṇa, cave 295, Sui Period. After Pelliot 1921: pl. CCLXXIV.

Fig. 8 – Gandhāran Parinirvāṇa, second-third century AD, schist. Private Collection, Nara, Japan. Photograph, courtesy of Mr I. Kurita.

Fig. 9 – Palmyra, banquet scene, found in the Hypogeum of Malkû, third century AD, 208 cm w. x105 cm. h.
After Tanabe 1986: pl. 410.

crosses her waist and supports the elbow of the left hand which is raised so that it touches the cheek of her slightly inclined head. The pose suggests sorrow. It is easy to note the female's basic iconographic similarity to the female in the Bāmiyān (Caves 72 and 330) and Dun-Huang paintings.

However, the Gandhāran female wears a turreted crown and defence walls appear to rise from her shoulders. Miyaji considers this female to represent the city goddess, or *nagaradevatā*, of Kuśinagara and not Māyā. Yet in all three instances (Gandhāra/Bāmiyān/Dun-Huang), the lady assumes a similar pose, similar dress, similar gesture and she is placed in a similar religious context. Another point of similarity is the shoulder ornament: Miyaji also noticed a fort shaped ornament behind the halo of the Bāmiyān Māyā.[6] I think it is possible that the Gandhāran lady with the turreted crown and the fort shaped shoulder ornament may be Queen Māyā, if it can be shown that the turreted

crown relates to some of the same sources as the rest of the seated model, and if an explanation for the crown's appearance can be found. Therefore the sources of the seated female will be discussed first. Then the sources and symbolism of her crown are considered.

The sources for the second model are found to be Rome and Parthia, therefore the same as those for the first model. Palmyra's funeral reliefs with their impressive banquet scenes often depict a long robed and seated female. For example, the matron in the c. third century A.D. banquet relief in the hypogeum of Malkû (Fig. 9), in the Damascus Museum), assumes a pose – expressive of sorrow – that is similar to the seated female in our Gandhāran Parinirvāṇa. Palmyra, linked to Parthia, was influenced by Roman funerary art, especially from the first century AD onwards. Illustrative of the type of Roman funerary art produced during these times, the Testamentum Relief once more becomes instructive. Now it is the matron, probably the mother of the deceased, who takes on new interest (Fig. 3). The long robed female resting her feet upon a stool is seated next to the deceased. This type of seated and sorrowing matron is the basic iconographic inspiration which ultimately accounts, I believe, for the seated form in Gandhāra (Fig. 8). The conduit was probably Parthian and Indo-Parthian art whose influence upon pre-Kuṣāṇa art is recognized.[7] The Gandhāran seated female could

---

[6] I wish to acknowledge, with thanks, the help of Dr. Haruko Tsuchiya who contacted Prof. Miyaji directly in Japan on December 30, 2007 to confirm his assessments and then wrote to me. Professor Miyaji reiterated what he said in his book (1992: 530): 'In Cave 72 (Cave Fc), Bāmiyān, Māyā in red robes, seated near the head of the Buddha, is depicted with a fort shaped ornament behind the halo. This could be assumed to be somehow related to a female figure seated near the head of the Buddha in a Gandhāran relief in a private collection in Japan who could be interpreted not as Māyā but as nagara devatā (city goddess) of Kuśinagara.' Dr. Tsuchiya conveyed to me that Prof. Miyaji is not very sure about the exact relationship between this Bāmiyān Māyā (Fc) and the Gandhāran female figure . He observed that the fortress ornament of Bāmiyān Māyā (Cave Fc) reflects Nana, the Goddess of Central Asia who is represented with a fortress shaped crown.

[7] For example, note the similarity between a male on a vase lid from Sirkap, reflecting the Partian style (Marshall 1975: pl. 146 # 106) and the depiction of a reclining Hercules at Behistun, Iran dated 148 BC (Colledge 1986: pl. XLIb).

Fig. 10 – Gandhāra, the Great Departure, schist. Peshawar Museum inv. 33 L. After Yaldiz/Lobo 1987: 61, fig. 1.

easily be identified as Māyā, the grieving matron, were it not for the turreted crown and rising city walls. Clearly, the appearance of the Māyā-s of Dun-huang and Bāmiyān are better understood if an antecedent such as the female in the Gandhāran Parinirvāṇa is postulated as being Māyā. This postulate would also explain the iconographic similarity between the seated females of two sites – Dun-huang and Bāmiyān – so far apart in time and distance from each other.

But, whereas the form of the Gandhāran female can be traced back to Western prototypes stemming mainly from a funerary context, the turreted crown does not stem from a funerary context. The turreted crown and probably the shoulder towers are typical of the Hellenistic Tyche and Roman Fortuna. In the Classical World, Tyche was worshipped to assure that a particular city or individual was protected from the tricks of fate and reaped, instead, good fortune. In short, Tyche was conceived as a protective deity. It needs to be stressed however that the turreted crown has a wide distribution and goes beyond identifying classical Tyche.

In South Asian art, the turreted crown is not an unusual attribute for a female who protects. For example, carvings from the Buddhist stūpa at Butkara, Swāt dating to the c. first century AD, depict several turreted crowned goddesses (Faccenna 1964: pls CCCXXXVI & CDL). But the Butkara Report does not identify these females as a 'Tyche'. Rather

they are given the generic label 'city goddess' and no other specific name is cited. Only in one instance, where this persona appears in The Great Departure, is she identified as the City Goddess of Kapilavastu. This cautious approach taken by the compilers of the Butkara Report may be due to recognition that other deities besides Tyche can wear this crown, and that these deities may not have developed out of the Western context. Indeed these deities may have links to a broad range of non-Classical imagery and ideology, some of which stem directly out of the South Asian context.

Another Gandhāran relief of The Great Departure shows a good example of an indigenous type of city goddess. In this relief, the City Goddess of Kapilavastu wearing a turreted crown is a semi-nude, sensuous, slightly draped female who wears oriental adornments down to an ornament in the shape of a pipal leaf covering her pudendum (Fig.10). This city goddess is conceived along local aesthetic lines and is thus far removed from the depictions of the classical standard for Tyche, represented by the Tyche of Antioch (Pollitt 1986: fig.1). The classical Tyche is wrapped in a long robe which covers and hides her feminine form. She wears the turreted crown and holds attributes symbolic of the prosperity she can bestow and the power she has to direct the fortunes of a town or an individual. The more indigenous type of South Asian city goddess can also be rendered as an impressive image, seemingly independent of a narrative context. An example is the beauteous Goddess, whose head, surrounded by a halo, is graced with the turreted crown resting on the

117

a presiding deity of a town, the *nagaradevatā*, known in ancient Indian culture. The term *nagaradaivatā* appears, for example, in the ancient play the *Mṛcchakaṭika* (c. 400 AD; I.27). But the concept of the tutelary deity of a city should be considerably older. The *Arthaśāstra* specifies that tutelary deities of the city and the king, and metal workers, jewellers and Brahmans should live in the northern quarter of a city (II.4.15) (Kangle 1988). The reference is significant for two reasons. First, the text is believed to date to the first or second century AD but to contain information that may well go back as far as the third century BC (Witzel 2006). It therefore testifies to the antiquity of the indigenous concept of a city-deity in South Asia. As such, the notion of a *nagaradevatā* may overlap with the Western notion of Tyche, but the concept need not necessarily stem only from a foreign source. Second, grouping together tutelary deities and metal workers and locating them in the same urban space indicates a possible indigenous source, in addition to the foreign one, for pre-Kuṣāṇa and Kuṣāṇa examples of tutelary deities.[8] The *Arthaśāstra* passage implies that metal workers (which would include those who minted coins), lived sufficiently close to the king and deities I presumably present in some visual form fit for worship to be acquainted with the depiction of a city - deity , were a ruler to request an image on a coin type.[9] Therefore a second iconographic source could come from the local environment. There is an apt example to support this line of reasoning.

A gold coin (in The British Museum inv.1879 -4-1-12: Mukherjee 1969: pl. V, No 17), possibly dating to c. first century BC - first century AD portrays the *nagaradevatā* of Puṣkalāvatī. On the obverse stands a goddess in a long flowing robe; she wears a turreted crown and holds a flower. She is labelled on the coin as the *devatā* of the (city-) of Pakhalavati (probably Puṣkalāvatī or Puṣkarāvatī the 'lotus city'), the town in ancient Gandhāra. The legend is in kharoṣṭhī. The name of the town may explain the flower (possibly a lotus) that she holds as attribute.[10] Another gold coin, in a private London Collection is of the same type (Senior/Barbar 1998: 13). Again the reverse shows the female with these attributes and features the same legend in kharoṣṭhī on the right. In both coins, her body is poised in a gently swaying stance so typical in South Asian art. However this coin also contains the complete term 'Dropasaya' on the left side of the female, which is only partially present in the British Museum specimen. The coin seems to have been minted by the Indo-Scythian king Azes (c. 57 - 30 BC), probably in the town of Puṣkalāvatī. This coin type demonstrates that by the first century BC-AD, Gandhāra has an image of a city goddess of one of its own towns,

Fig. 11 – Gandhāra, nagaradevatā, schist, private collection. Photograph, courtesy of Mr I. Kurita.

wreath in her hair (Fig. 11). She stands 3' 3", even though much of her feet, crossed below the ankles, have been broken off. The garment worn by the Goddess clings to her sensuous form because the folds are treated like 'wet' drapery, revealing, in a provocative fashion, the nipples of her breasts and rounded abdomen. Securing and holding the folds of her garment is a beaded girdle from which hangs the same type of pipal leaf ornament above her pudendum as is seen on the City Goddess of Kapilavastu in Fig.10.

An image of a more indigenous Goddess wearing a turreted crown may well have arisen in response to the concept of

---

8 For foreign examples found on seals and coins, as well as local examples inspired by foreign iconographies, see Callieri 1997: catalogue Nos. 1.7, 1.10, 5.2; Mac Dowall 2007b: 249, 252-4.

9 Kangle 1988: 69 note 15, believes that all the personnel mentioned in II.4.15 inhabit the extensive area outside the palace grounds.

10 The Kharoṣṭhī inscriptions on the figure's right and left read: [Pu](sha)khalavadidevasa on the right, Dro(possibly 'tro')pra(possibly pa)saya on the left. I wish to acknowledge that Joe Cribb provided these details about this coin in his Department, Coins and Medals in the British Museum.

and, importantly, that such a *nagaradevatā*, an indigenous city goddess, wears the turreted crown, which is a foreign emblem. Why? In my forthcoming and final study on this theme, it will be shown that ancient Indian art had hardly any indigenous iconographic symbols that unambiguously designated a minor female goddess or a queen. Other than the halo, the multiplicity convention (reserved in this early period for major Hindu goddesses), a defining narrative context, the *samapada* posture, excessive height, and/or the covered pudendum, there were no insignia to designate an exceptional female, be she 'goddess' or 'queen'. A crown is an immediate signifier of rank, but examples in early pan-Indic art of a crown worn by an important female appear to be lacking. Tutelary deities of villages and cities were generally considered to be goddesses, although minor goddess, as the term *devatā* would imply.[11] The turreted crown could have been adopted for the *nagaradevatā* from examples of Tyche seen on some foreign or foreign inspired, pre-Kuṣāṇa coins, seals, talisman or images (Callieri 1997: Catalogue Nos 1.7, 1.10, 5.2; Mac Dowall 2007b: 249, 252-4).[12] The transference could have occurred because the concept of the *nagaradevatā* is akin to that of Tyche. The process of transferring, which ought to be the subject of a separate paper, may have been fostered by an intermediary between Roman and Gandhāran art. That is, Parthian and Indo-Parthian influences could have helped transfer Tyche's classical emblem into Gandhāran art. Parthians were acquainted with the Hellenistic Tyche made for Antioch; the Fortune of Palmyra at Dura Europus (Syria; dated AD 159), for example, resembled the classical model. A c. first century AD relief of 'the goddess with doves' at Dura Europos (and brought into the Temple of Adonis at this site in the second century) shows her wearing a large turreted crown with clearly rendered mural walls. Perkins opines that possibly the great Syrian goddess Atargatis is represented at Dura-Europos as the Tyche of that city.[13] The reason for taking note of this crown of Atargatis is that a similar crown appears on a Charsadda relief of a city goddess (Basham 1982: pl. XXXII). Charsadda is, of course, the name for ancient Puṣkalāvatī, the mint town which had its own *nagaradevatā* who wears the turreted crown on the gold coin type described above, and the town ruled by Indo-Parthians and Soter Megas, subsequent to Indo-Scythian control there. As for Atargatis, a goddess of generation, social order, fertility and protection (Rosenfield 1967: 185), she wields power in domains similar to the domains of other goddesses wearing the turreted crown who are itemized below.

Just as Gandhāran art borrowed both styles and iconography in order to compose a funerary scene, I conjecture that the rationale for adopting the turreted crown from classical iconography is due to the need for a visual signifier not available in the local tradition. In this case, a form attributing importance to a female who is not a major goddess seems to have been needed. The necessity to invent visual forms in Gandhāra, the first school of art in the Northwest, should have been just as keen as in Mathurā, the first school of art in the Gangetic Valley. However, as I will demonstrate in my forthcoming study, in those instances where indigenous traditions existed that could supply the foundation for an iconography; they were respected, preferred and used in Gandhāran art.

The first conclusion that can be drawn is that Māyā – if this identification is adopted – wears a crown that is also worn by a local divinity, namely the *nagaradevatā*. Māyā is not, of course, a *nagaradevatā*. In fact, a *nagaradevatā* may have a provocative aspect to her nature which can certainly not be attributed to Queen Māyā (Figs 10-11; *Mṛcchaṭika* I.27). But some kind of connection between the two must have been thought to exist in order that the same attribute be applied. The link may be the protective nature attributed to both. Probably Māyā was also considered to be godlike by the time of Kaniṣka, or perhaps even before. We read in the *Saundarananda* of Aśvaghosa, a contemporary of Kaniṣka, that Queen Māyā was like the goddess Māyā in heaven, and she had a godlike husband, the king (Canto II. 49).[14] Being godlike and a protectress could well explain a resemblance between Queen Māyā, proposed as the female in the Parinirvāṇa scene, and a *nagaradevatā*. In fact, there exists a scene of The Great Departure wherein the City Goddess Kapilavastu is represented in almost identical fashion to the grieving female in the Gandhāran Parinirvāṇa (Fig. 8). The schist relief is housed in the Karachi Museum and measures 13 cm ht. x 46 cm w. (Kurita 1988: I, 85 fig. 152). City Goddess Kapilavastu sits grieving behind the gateway from which Siddhārtha exits. She does not face him; instead she is seated, head inclined, facing the haloed prince; she rests her cheek on the palm of her right hand. The female cannot be Māyā descending; to the best of my knowledge there is no reference to Māyā's presence at the Great Departure. Since the figure surely represents the *nagaradevatā* Kapilavastu, would it not therefore be possible for the female in the Gandhāran Parinirvāṇa scene to be Kapilavastu as well? I, for one, cannot see the underlying sense of the City Goddess of Kapilavastu to be present at the Parinirvāṇa and for her to occupy a place in such close proximity to the body of the Buddha. Could then the Parinirvāṇa female be identified as the *nagaradevatā* Kuśinagara? Theoretically, yes, were not the Buddhist depictions at Bāmiyān and Dun-Huang available for comparison. In the Central Asian and Chinese Parinirvāṇa paintings, Miyaji's conclusion is that Māyā is depicted. Perhaps it is useful to repeat here that Miyaji noticed that Māyā in Cave 72 at Bāmiyān was also adorned with a 'fort shaped ornament' behind her halo. The importance of this observation lies in the fact that attributes of a protective deity such as the *nagaradevatā* could continue to be associated with Māyā for quite a long

---

11   For an overview, though sometimes out-of-date, on Goddesses as Guardian Deities of Villages, Cities, etc. see Tiwari 1985: 32-40.
12   And Mac Dowall 2007a: 103 mentioning both Puṣkalāvatī and Taxila as pre-Kuṣāṇa mints.
13   Perkins 1973: 103-4, pl. 44: Perkins suggests a first century AD date for the Dura-Europos carving.

14   Johnston 1942 suggested that the goddess Māyā referred to in the *Saundarananda* was a mother-goddess.

time. And in a recent communication, Professor Miyaji mentioned that 'he is not very sure of the exact relationship between the Bāmiyān (Cave 72) Māyā and the Gandhāran female figure'.[15] My addition to Miyaji's observations is that in all three depictions (Gandhāra, Bāmiyān and Dun-Huang), the female not only is dressed and seated in the same way, she also assumes the same pose and occupies the same place in a composition dealing with the same theme. The place she occupies, it can be argued, is the closest, most intimate and honoured position with respect to the body of the Buddha. Indeed it is precisely the figure's position in the composition which greatly weakens the supposition that she could represent a *nagaradevatā*. In my forthcoming paper I will analyze South Asian textual material relating to funerary rites where there is mention of the space ritually reserved for the close female relative of the deceased. That position corresponds to the place Māyā occupies in the Gandhāran Parinirvāṇa relief. Neither the Kuśinagara nor the Kapilavastu *nagaradevatā* could, I propose, be the occupant of the solemn space reserved for a female relative. Indeed, the placement of the participants at the Buddha's Parinirvāṇa appears to me to be ritually and hierarchically codified and not subject to indiscriminate dispositions.[16] In effect, attributing the turreted crown, an emblem reminiscent of a *nagaradevatā*, to the Mother of the Buddha, gives substance to a suggestion already made in 1971 by N.N. Bhattacharyya. He observed that city goddesses played a significant role in the history of the Mother Goddess cult of India (Bhattacharyya 1971: 47).

Should the Mother of the Buddha, Queen Māyā, be recognized as the figure wearing the turreted crown in the Parinirvāṇa relief, she would in fact, join a group of important females who have a motherly and protective nature. In addition to Tyche, the turreted crown is worn in antiquity by non-classical deities of maternity and protection throughout a wide geographical area surrounding – and within – the region of Gandhāra. The group comprises both high ranking matrons and important divinities. Atargatis, the Syrian goddess who was worshipped in areas under Parthian and Roman rule, has already been mentioned as belonging to this group. Other deities and their characteristics are described below; they are gleaned for possible indicators regarding the appropriateness of this crown and its significance in relation to Queen Māyā:

a. Cybele

Cybele, the Mater Magna of Anatolia, is depicted wearing an ornamented *polos* on a gold-covered, c. third century BC silver plate found (but probably not made) in Ai' Khanoum, Bactria (Francfort 1984: pl. XLI). The plate should have reached Central Asia during the time that Bactria was still under Seleucid rule, and both the style and iconography

exhibit a mixture of Greek and Oriental elements. Cybele's dress, for example, reminds, in form and style, of the dress worn by female deities on the ivory rhytons of Nisa, the earliest capital of the philhellenic Parthians. The headdress of Cybele is described as a 'polos crénelé' according to Paul Bernard (1970: 341), but as a 'polos dentelé (plutôt que crénelé)' according to Henri-Paul Francfort (1984: 94) which I understand to mean a cylindrical crown with fine denticulations (i.e. perhaps resembling pointed towers) rather than crenelations. I studied the plaque, on exhibition at the Musée Guimet, in December 2006, and noticed that Cybele's *polos* was ornamented with a series of tall, triangular shapes which could be a design pattern or towers. It is therefore interesting to observe with Bernard and Francfort that Cybele, the Great Mother of Anatolia has a lot in common with Atargatis (Francfort 1984: 102-4). Cybele's crown is significant because images of the goddess surface in western sources that impact Gandhāra. The cult of Cybele came to Rome and by 191 BC that city had a temple erected to her. A splendid Roman statue, dated c. 50 AD shows the turreted crown on a Roman matron of high social standing portrayed in the guise of Cybele, the Great Mother (J. Paul Getty Museum inv. 57 AA19: *Looking* 2003: 15; Vermeule/Neuerburg 1973: 27 no. 58). Here is an early indicator that the crown also graces mortal females of high social standing who embody maternal qualities.

b. Ardoxsho

Ardoxsho, an Iranian goddess of abundance and prosperity, featured on Kuṣāṇa coinage and in Central Asian art may also wear a turreted crown. A beautiful medallion of the Kuṣāṇa period shows a bust of this goddess wearing this headgear; she holds a lotus in her right hand and a cornucopia in her left.[17]

c. Nana

Nana, a most important deity in the pantheon of the dynastic Kuṣāṇas,[18] came to be assimilated with numerous goddesses of generation, vegetation and abundance etc. including Ardoxso (Rosenfield 1967: 87; Ghose 2005), Atargatis and Cybele. Her cult stems from Western Asia and penetrated into Central and South Asia at different times. Due to her syncretism with important local deities from the Near East and beyond – a complex process being documented by M. Ghose (2006) – Nana can exhibit a variety of emblems that bespeak of her fertility aspect, her martial aspect and her aspect as bestower and protectress of sovereignty. Her appearance on a few coins of Huviṣka suggests that Nana may also have some connection with the notion of divine maternity. A goddess shown standing by the side of Oēsho is referred to as Nana; other Huviṣka coins show Oēsho by the

---

[15] Transmitted to me via email by Dr Tsuchiya on December 30, 2007.
[16] The hierarchical placement of mourners is quite apparent in Japan's oldest Parinirvāṇa painting (1086) at the Kongōbu-ji Temple (Mount Koya)(Treasures 2003: cat. 95)
[17] Christine Sachs in Bopearachchi et alii 2003: 91 no. 181. To note: The other similar medallions cited by Sachs do not show Hārītī with the turreted crown.
[18] She is mentioned first among gods worshipped by Kaniṣka who claims to have received the kingship from this deity, see Sims-Williams/Cribb 1995/1996.

side of a lotus bearing female named Ommo, whose name probably stands for Umā (Göbl 1984: 43-44), a Mother Goddess already associated with a northerly region in the *Kena Upaniṣad* where she is called Umā of the Snowy Mountain. Since Nana occupies a position similar to Ommo on a few of Huviṣka's coins, the religious significance of the two should have some overlapping points. The importance of Nana for the dynastic Kuṣāṇas seems to have continued to some degree in Central Asia even after her worship was eclipsed in the Gandhāran region. She is represented on c. eighth century AD silver bowls from Khorezmia as a four-armed goddess wearing the turreted crown (Ghose 2005: figs 12-13, which is reversed).

d. Central Asia goddess

However, before the eighth century, the turreted crown is known and worn by a Central Asian goddess who seems to be a protectress of towns. She appears on a Graeco-Bactrian silver chalice from Central Asia dated between the third and the second century B.C. (Trever 1949: 93-97, pl. 27). Also this goddess is seen in sculpture of the first centuries AD from Old Chardzhou on the Amu Darya and in terracotta from the area around Varakhsha in Sogdiana (Pugachenkova/Rempel 1991: 14; MacDowall 2007b: 237-8).

e. Hārītī

Probably in the present context, the most important icon that links the turreted crown to a goddess of maternity and protection is Hārītī, the Mother Goddess whom the Buddha converted from an ogress who harmed children into one who nurtured them.[19] Hārītī wears a turreted crown in a Kuṣāṇa Gandhāran image of grey schist c. 110 cm in ht. which is in a private European Collection (Fig.12). The standing goddess is portrayed as a veritable Divine Mother. Children scamper all over her body: two sit on her shoulders, two (or more) hug her legs; possibly one is supported by her cupped left hand. Since some areas of the sculpture are no longer intact, it is hard to know how many children were originally carved. Hārītī may be holding a flower or rattle in her lowered right hand. She is dressed and ornamented according to local custom and on her neatly arranged hair rests a wreath upon which sits the turreted crown. The crown depicts fortification walls composed of two storeys. Towers are clearly indicated and indentations, suggesting battlements, are precisely engraved. Most indentations are rectangular, but at least one is shaped like an arrow, seen on actual remains of Kuṣāṇa battlements at Surkh Kotal (Schlumberger/Le Berre/Fussman 1983: pls 56-57 'Merlons'). The sculpture, given its height, superb carving and artistic presence should have been an important cult icon. The excavation at Butkara I has yielded another female, identified as Hārītī by the excavator and Quagliotti (1999/2000: 57, fig. 7), who wears a turreted crown.

---

[19] I wish to thank Dr Carolyn W. Schmidt for drawing my attention to this sculpture in Kurita 1988: II, fig. 493.

Fig. 12 – Gandhāra, Hārītī, schist, 110 cm h. After Kurita 1988: II, fig. 493.

Doris Meth Srinivasan

Fig. 13 – Roman gem, onyx cameo of Livia, c. 14-29 AD. Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna inv. LV a 95. After Richter 1971: pl. 486.

In these examples, the turreted crown is an emblem that seems to marry maternity and/or protection to high rank and/or divinity. Such a marriage, or let us say iconographic union, is the result of the transference and permutations originating with Tyche's crown and ending up in Gandhāran art where the turreted crown can be used as an insignia for an important female, be she a godling such as a *nagaradevatā*, a Divine Mother or – I submit – a queen, who comprises a maternal and protective nature as part of her persona. I propose that the seated female in the Gandhāran Parinirvāṇa relief who wears a turreted crown is Queen Māyā. Her dress and demeanour hark back to Western prototypes. Her crown is an appropriate insignia for protective godlings such as the *nagaradevatā*-s and motherly deities such as Hārītī. It should also have served as the fitting emblem for a queen. The source of the turreted crown as a royal insignia worthy of a queen stems from Rome – like the rest of Māyā's iconography. Not only does the Roman matron (in the guise of Cybele) wear this crown but Livia herself, the wife of Augustus, wears this crown as she sits on a throne and holds a bust of the deified Emperor, her husband, in her right hand (Fig. 13; Richter 1971: 101-2, fig. 486). Significantly this scene is engraved on a cameo dated between AD 14-29. Such a representation or similar ones could easily have travelled eastward to Parthia. In my forthcoming paper, I will discuss the role Parthian iconography played in adopting the turreted crown as an

insignia for royalty, including queens, wherefrom it could have entered Gandhāra.

In conclusion, the second model, the seated figure of Māyā at the Parinirvāṇa, employs an iconography – in the choice of headdress, robe, posture and placement – which proclaims the exact state of the Mother of the Buddha at the occasion of his demise: sorrowful, maternal and regal.

Bibliography

Basham, A.L. (1982) *The Wonder that was India, a Survey of the History and Culture of the Indian Sub-continent before the Coming of the Muslims*. (Revised edition:) London: Sidgwick & Jackson.

Bernard, Paul (1970) 'Campagne de fouilles 1969 à Ai'Khanoum en Afghanistan', *Comptes-rendus des séances de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres*, 301-49.

Bhattacharyya, N.N. (1971) *Indian Mother Goddess*, Calcutta: Indian Studies: Past & Present.

Bopearachchi, Osmund, Landes, Christian and Christine Sachs (eds) (2003) *De l'Indus à l'Oxus, Archéologie de l'Asie Centrale, catalogue de l'exposition*. Lattes: Association Imago – Musée de Lattes.

Callieri, Pierfrancesco (1997) *Seals and Sealings from the North-West of the Indian Subcontinent and Afghanistan (4th century BC – 11th century AD)*. Naples:

Colledge, Malcom A.R. (1976) *The Art of Palmyra*. London: Thames & Hudson (Studies in ancient Art and Archaeology).

--- (1986) *The Parthian Period*. Leiden: Brill (Iconography of Religions, Sec. 14, Iran; 3).

Faccenna, Domenico (1964) *Sculptures from the Sacred Area of Butkara (Swāt, W. Pakistan)*. Vol. II, Part 3, Roma: Istituto poligrafico dello Stato, Libreria dello Stato (Reports and memoirs, Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente, Centro Studi e Scavi Archeologici in Asia, vol. 2).

Frankfort, Henri-Paul (1984) *Fouilles d'Ai'Khanoum. Vol. 3,2. Le sanctuaire du temple à niches indentées. Les trouvailles*. Paris: Boccard (Mémoires de la Délégation Archéologique Française en Afghanistan, Tome 27).

Ghose, Madhuvanti (2005) 'A Rare Image of the Goddess Nanā from Afghanistan', in Bopearachchi, Osmund and Marie-Françoise Boussac (eds), *Afghanistan, Ancien Carrefour entre l'Est et l'Ouest, Actes du colloque international au Musée archéologique Henri Prades, Lattes du 5 au 7 mai 2003*, Turnhout: Brepols (Indicopleustoi, 3). 259-70.

--- (2006) 'Nanā: The "Original" Goddess on the Lion', *Journal of Inner Asian Art and Archaeology* 1, 97-112.

Grossman, Janet Burnett (2003) *Looking at Greek and Roman Sculpture in Stone: Styles, and Techniques*. Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum.

Johnston, E.H. (1942) 'A Terracotta Figure at Oxford', *Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art* X, 94-102.

--- (ed.) (1992), *Aśvaghosas Buddhacarita or Acts of the*

Buddha: complete Sanskrit text with English translation. New enlarged ed., Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.

Kale, M.R. (1924) *The Mṛchchhakaṭika of Sudraka.* Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass

Kangle, R.P. (trans.) (1988) *The Kauṭilīya Arthaśāstra*. Part II. (Reprint:) Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.

Kurita, Isao (1988) *Gandhāran Art* I (*The Buddha's Life Story*) and II (*The World of the Buddha*). Tokyo: Nigensha.

Mac Dowall David W. (2007a) 'Numismatic Evidence for a Chronological

Framework for Pre-Kaniṣkan Art from Kalchayan to Gandhāra', in Doris Meth Srinivasan (ed.), *On the Cusp of an Era. Art in the Pre- Kuṣāṇa World*, Leiden/Boston: Brill (Brill's Inner Asian Library, 18), 95-117.

--- (2007b) 'Coinage from Iran to Gandhāra – with special Reference to Divinities as Coin Types', in Doris Meth Srinivasan (ed.), *On the Cusp of an Era. Art in the Pre-Kuṣāṇa World*, Leiden: E.J. Brill (Brill's Inner Asian Library, 18), 233- 65.

Marshall, John (1975) *Taxila: an illustrated Account of archaeological Excavations carried out at Taxila under the orders of the Government of India between the Years 1913 and 1934.* (Reprint:) Delhi: Banarsidass.

Miyaji, Akira (1978) 'The Parinirvāṇa Scenes of Bāmiyān: An iconological Analysis', in *Japan-Afghanistan Joint Archaeological Survey in 1976*, Kyoto: Committee of the Kyoto University Archaeological Mission to Central Asia, 13-22.

--- (1992) *Nehan to Miroku no Zuzōgaku - Indo kara Chūō Ajia e* (*The Iconology of Parinirvāṇa and Maitreya - from India to Central Asia*), Tokyo:Yoshikawa-kōbunkan.

Mṛcchakaṭika: see Kale 1924 and van Buitenen 1968.

Mukherjee, B.N. (1969) *Nanā on Lion*. Calcutta: Asiatic Society.

Pal, Pratapaditya (1990) 'Pregnant or Pot-bellied?', in Claudine Bautze-Picron (ed.), *Makaranda, Essays in Honour of Dr. James C. Harle*. With a Foreword by Thomas S. Maxwell, Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications, 79-82.

Pelliot, Paul (1921) *Les Grottes de Touen-Houang: peintures et sculptures bouddhiques des époques des Wei, des T'ang et des Song*. Vol. V. Paris : Geuthner.

Pollitt, J.J. (1986) *Art in the Hellenistic Age*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Perkins, Ann (1973) *The Art of Dura-Europos*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Pugachenkova, G.A. and L.I. Rempel (1991) 'Gold from Tillia Tepe', *Bulletin of the Asia Institute New Series* 5, 11-25.

Quagliotti, Anna Maria (1999/2000) 'An Inscribed Image of Hārītī in the Chandigarh Government Museum and Art Gallery', *Silk Road Art and Archaeology* 6, 51-60.

Richter, Gisela M.A. (1971) *Engraved Gems of the Romans; A Supplement to the History of Roman Art*. Part II. London: Phaidon Press.

Rosenfield, John (1967) *The Dynastic Arts of the Kushans*. Berkeley/Los Angeles: University of California (California Studies in the History of Art, 6).

Schlumberger, Daniel, Le Berre, Marc and Gérard Fussman (1983) *Surkh Kotal en Bactriane. Vol.1, Les temples: architecture, sculpture, inscriptions*. Paris: Boccard (Mémoires de la Délégation Archéologique Française en Afghanistan, Tome 25).

Senior, Robert C. and R. Barbar (1998) 'A New King and a New Deity [Indo-Parthian king]', *Newsletter, Oriental Numismatic Society* 157, 13.

Sims-Williams, Nicholas and Joe Cribb (1995/1996) 'A New Bactrian Inscription of Kanishka the Great', *Silk Road Art and Archaeology* 4, 75-142.

Srinivasan, Doris Meth (1997) *Many Heads, Arms and Eyes*. Leiden: E.J. Brill (Studies in Asian Art and Archaeology, 20).

--- (2006) 'From Roman Clipeata Imago to Gandhāran Image Medallion and the Embellishment of the Parinirvāṇa Legend', in Pierfrancesco Callieri (ed), *Architetti, Capomastri, Artigiani. L'Organizzazione dei Cantieri e della Produzione Artistica nell'Asia Ellenistica. Studi offerti a Domenico Faccenna nel suo ottantesimo compleanno.* Roma: Istituto Italiano per l'Africa e l'Oriente (Serie orientale Roma, 100), 247-69.

Tanabe, Katsumi (ed.) (1986) *The Sculptures of Palmyra*. Tokyo: Ancient Orient Museum (Memoirs of the Ancient Orient Museum 1).

Tissot, Francine (1985) *Gandhāra*. Paris : Librairie d'Amérique et d'Orient (La vie publique et privée dans l'Inde ancienne, Série 2).

Tiwari, J.N. (1985) *Goddess Cults in Ancient lndia (with special reference to the first seven centuries A.D.).* Delhi: Sundeep Prakashan.

Treasures (2003) *Treasures of a Sacred Mountain, Kūkai and Mount Kōya, Special Exhibition*. Kyoto: Kyoto National Museum.

Trever, K.V. (1940) *Monuments of Graeco-Bactrian Art*. Moscow/Leningrad: Academy of Sciences of U.S.S.R. (State Hermitage, Monuments of Culture and Art in the Collections of the Hermitage, I) (in Russian).

van Buitenen, J.A.B., trans. (1968) *Two Plays of Ancient India*, New York/London: Columbia University Press.

Verardi, Giovanni (1999/2000) 'The Buddha-Elephant', *Silk Road Art and Archaeology* 6, 69-74.

Vermeule, Cornelius and Norman Neuerburg (1973) *Catalogue of the ancient Art in the J. Paul Getty Museum: the larger Statuary, Wall paintings and Mosaics*. Malibu: J. Paul Getty Museum.

Watters, Thomas (1905) *On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India, A.D. 629-645*. II. London: Royal Asiatic Society (Oriental Translation Fund, 14-15, New series).

Witzel, Michael (2006), 'Brahmanical Reactions to Foreign Influences and to Social and Religious Change', in Patrick Olivelle (ed.) *Between the Empires. Society in-lndia 300 BCE to 400 CE*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 457-99.

Yaldiz, Marianne and Wibke Lobo (eds) (1987) *Investigating Indian Art, Proceedings of a Symposium on the Development of Early Buddhist and Hindu Iconography held at the Museum of Indian Art Berlin in May 1986 (H.*

Härtel Festschrift). Berlin: Museum für Indische Kunst,
Staatliche Museen Preußischer Kulturbesitz.