

Characteristic Features of Buddha Image in Gandhara Art

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Abstract: This paper is an attempt to throw light on the depiction of Buddha image on stone, stucco and terracotta or clay in Gandhara art. The main objective behind this has been to bring into focus on the distinctive features of the Buddha image. The present study has revolved around the Buddha image. Gandhara art rising under the powerful Kushan kingdom and this was its blossom period. Therefore, the term Gandhara art applied to the Buddhist art and architecture that flourished in the Gandhara region 1st century to 5th century C.E. Gandhara art is the most fascinating chapter in the art history of the subcontinent. This region gives birth to a rich tradition of art and sculptures devoted to a unique holy human being Buddha. Emperor Kanishka gave physical shape to Buddha statue and the first Buddha figure was constructed in Gandhara and the most significant contribution of Gandhara art is the depiction of the Buddha in human form. Many questions are still open concerning the identification of scenes and characters within the narratives, as well as the classification of Buddha. Many aspects of Buddha image have been studied, however, some misted up in obscurity. Even today, many questions are remaining about the date of its period, its origin and the sources of its influence. All these issues are part of a discussion of the present research study.

Keywords: Gandhara Art, Kanishka, Buddha, Buddhism, Sculptures, Mahayana, Image

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Introduction

The term Gandhara applied to the North Western region of Pakistan around Peshawar valley and eastern Afghanistan. However, the term Gandhara has come to well define in ancient sources, encompassed the basin surrounding the modern city of Peshawar, bounded to the north and west by foothill to the east by the Indus River, and to the south by flat lands that become increasingly arid. In the nineteenth century, the word Gandhara was also used to describe finds coming from a series of culturally related

areas beyond the Peshawar plains, such as the Swat valley, the Buner and Taxila regions, eastern Afghanistan, and even parts of ¹Kashmir (Brancaccio&Behrendt; 2006:1). The term Gandhara also used in a broader sense based on Gandhara art and the extent to some other region, particularly the Dir district, Malakand and Bajaur agencies (Gazetteer of, North West Frontier Province: 1979;124.). The modern geographic narrative is now consistently employed to overcome generalization, with much the same intention proposed the term Greater Gandhara to describe this vast cultural region. These regions surrounding ancient Gandhara form Greater Gandhara (Behrendt; 2007:3). The ancient accounts of Buddhist Chinese pilgrims and traveling monks also contribute to form a more exact picture of the extension of this area, its growth, and its decline. The Chinese pilgrims' records, the region is known as Kien-to-lo, lying on the west of the Indus, the capital name was Po-lu-sha-pu -lo to be three or four days journey from the Indus and near the south bank of a large river(Beal:1969; 97-108).Gandhara is a region of high mountains, lush green valleys, and beautiful rivers with a good climate. Gandhara a vast geographic area with unique features was almost always control of foreign rule.

The earliest reference of this region occurs in the Rig-Veda the oldest sacred literature of Aryan composed in roundabout from 1500-1000 BCE (Basham; 2004:38).In the historic period Gandhara was annexed by the Achaemenid Empire under Darius 1 in 526 B.C. It became Achaemenid satrapies and the rich city of Taxila was capital (Zwalf; 1996: 15). The Achaemenid rule ended abruptly with the advent of Alexander the Great(Michael, 2011:31), although the ensuing Greek rule was of short duration (326-317). After the Alexander death ChanderguptaMaurya was established his rule over Gandhara. Nevertheless, short Greek rule and Maurya rule both prevail as a religious, cultural influence for more than a millennium and the continued domination of Bactria by the Greeks until 145B.C.E and the spread of Buddhism across the borders of the Maurya Empire during the Asoka period marked both Greek and Indian cultural influence on the Achaemenid traditions in the Gandhara(Raspsom; 1965:449). In Gandhara, the Indo Greeks remained in power until 57 B.C.E. (Indo Greek dynasty actually survived in constantly diminishing the area east of the Indus until the first decade of the 1st century C.E.) (Bopearachchi; 1991:125). Indo Greeks were replaced by the Saka (Scythian), who had established a dynasty and occupation of Taxila about (Gupta; 2004:63) 90 B.C.E. under the king Maues also known Moga. Saka followed the Parthians (Majumdar; 1980:123-24), had an Iranian origin.

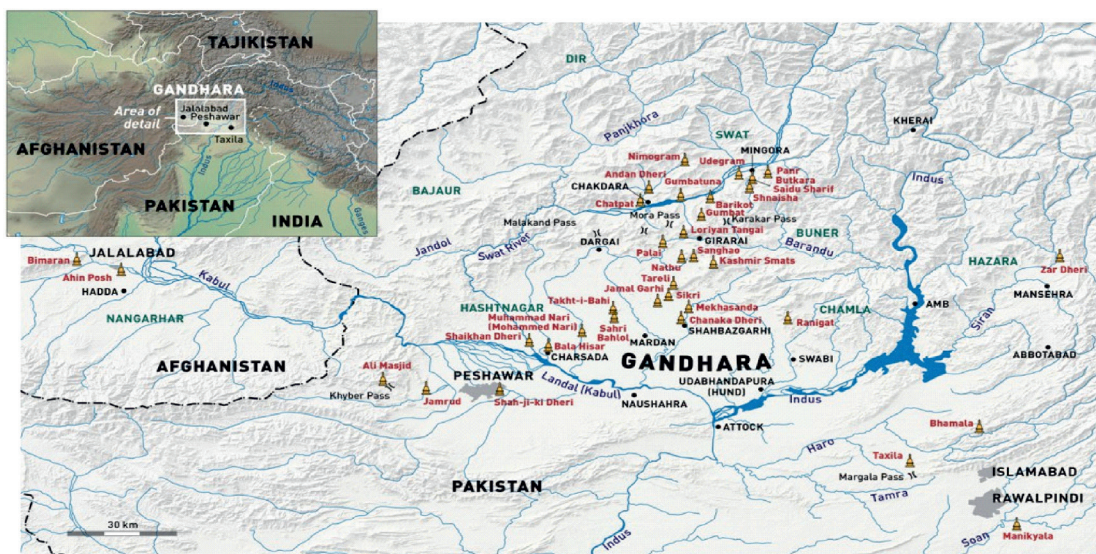
Parthian was expelled by a Yue-Chi tribes who known as Kushan. The Kushan rule lengthens (60 C.E to 350 C.E) and expands from the Oxus valley to Ganga valley and including in Gandhara, Kabul valley, Bacteria and Ganga valley up to the Bay of Bengal during the Kanishka period. The Kushan rule was very productive in Buddhism and Buddhist art in Gandhara (Dani 1979:223). The Kushan rule was completed by Sasanian, who's conquered Gandhara and established his rule under the Shahpur 11but Sasanian rule did not long last because they were pushed back by KidarKushan. They recovered Gandhara from the Sasanian and develop into a new master of Gandhara and Punjab till they were defeated (460 C.E)(Mitterwalner; 1986 40-44) by the White Huns or Epthalites who destroyed everything by the sword and fire, mostly Buddhist stupas and monasteries in Gandhara but some scholars not agreed to this point of view(Zwalf; 1996,vol.i:20,30). Gandhara not at all well again after the destruction of white Huns, but art production did not stop completely. In the 9th century the HinduShahis took over the charge of Gandhara from TurkiShahis and ruled till the 10th century (Marshal; 1960:10-46). Taking into account of Gandhara history, we know various nations ruled over the region, it is no wonder that the art and culture of this region is a combination of different nations who ruled this area and settled Gandhara.

All of the nations, there were two nations; periods were so long that of the Achaemenid Empire and Kushan. The Achaemenid Empire establishes here an administrative system that carries on after their

disappearance (Gupta; 2004:64). The second was Kushan, who was a great supporter of Buddhism and under their patronage Buddhism and Buddhist art flourished as never before, spreading to central Asia and China through the Silk Road. The short period's dynasties Indo Greek, Scythian, Parthian, Sasanian, Kidar Kushan, also left their influence on culture and Buddhist art and resulted in a mixture of many foreign artistic elements with Indian art tradition which have been the subject of many dissertations. All these nations had been playing an interesting role in the development of culture and civilization. Gandhara was in closer contact with Afghanistan, China, and Central Asia and West on the one hand through the Silk Road and other was Subcontinent. Gandhara served as a station between the East and West, which received and transmitted cultural, artistic, political, commercial and religious currents in both the directions (Tissot: 1985). It is interesting that foreign cultures could not succeed in completely replacing the unique cultural pattern of Gandhara. Even Buddhism, when it reached Gandhara, took a new turn and developed into a new form. This was known as the Mahayana Buddhism (the Great Vehicle). Mahayana Buddhism gave birth to the most tangible form of the civilization of Gandhara and Gandhara art. The Kushan dynasty trend of artistic syncretism between eastern and western traditions caused the Gandhara art to reach its zenith. The Gandhara artist adopted several foreign techniques in terms of art and architecture and introduced a new kind of art that was totally Buddhist in nature and Gandhara in expression (Dar; 1980): 91-96). Buddhism was predominantly in Gandhara and mostly Gandhara art associated Buddhism. Although the Buddha himself was never visited Gandhara with the passage of time, the area became a true holy land for Buddhist. Several places were identified who's assumed association with the Buddha previous birth (jatakas stories) and over these spots erected stupas and monasteries.

In early Buddhist art, especially during the Asoka period, the image of Buddha as a human being was not represented in subcontinent art, but regular contact of the Gandhara Buddhists in the Western world created a division between the Buddhists community as Hinayana and Mahayana Buddhism. Mahayana Buddhism as an act of liberal patronage of Kanishka. He organizes the fourth Buddhist Council held at Jullundur or Kashmir (Walters; 1904/05:273-6) and as a result, Mahayanism a new progressive Buddhist school flourish in Gandhara. Mahayanist changed the old tradition and philosophical trends of Buddhism and Buddha also transform almost as a god, and the high regard of the future Buddha as holding providences (Puri, 1965, 145). In the Mahayana philosophy, the symbols of the Buddha took the new physical expression and received a transcendental and celestial character. In the image form, the Buddha was acceptable for the first time to be represented in human form. Kushana kingdom playing a very significant role, almost all Kushan monuments in Gandhara are Buddhist except Shrine 8 in Taxila (Dar; 1980:91-106). Stupas and monasteries were the most important buildings of the Kushan period. Chinese pilgrim Hsüan-Tsang observes great number of stupas and viharas built by Kanishka in throughout in Gandhara. In Peshawar Kanishka built a stupa consist of thirteen story's with a total height of 213 m (Spooner; 1908/09: 38-59). The Gandhara stupa with its curved base, circular drum and spherical dome, together with its sculptural accompaniments, marks a development from the earlier types known at Sanchi and Bharhut and at Dharmarajika (Taxila), The Kushan contribution lies in the overall sculptural decoration of the bases and drums of stupas. Apart from stone reliefs fixed on the largest stupas, the smaller votive stupas were usually embroidered with stucco figures of the Buddha, Bodhisattvas, and devotees set in niches, Sometimes figures of the Buddha were set in the foliage of Corinthian capitals carved in stone (Rowland; 1970: 145). In Gandhara art the rich visual documentation preserved in the narrative sculpture, where scenes from the Buddha's life are staged in the Gandhara world. Reliefs showing the worship of stupas, the veneration of images and relics, and the community honoring the figure of the Buddha all define the

Gandhara ethos (Brancaccio & Behrendt; 2006:4). Many sources are helpful for this subject, Foucher, 1905, Marshal 1951, Rosenfield 1967, Errington & Cribb 1992, Zwalf 1996, Rhie, 1999, Adams 1925, Bahhofer 1925, Bautzpicron 2007, Snellgrove 1978 and Waldschmidt 1967). The studied of Buddha images in Gandhara art are so far been in a limited perspective., the material has been excavated from only three major sides(Ghirshman, 1946) of Gandhara at Peshawar Valley) (Dani, 1965/66), Swat Valley and Taxila valley(Marshall, 1951). The major sites of these valleys are Takht-i Bahi, Jamal Garhi, Sahr-i- Bahlol, Shah-jiki-Dheri (Peshawar), Dharamarijika, Julian, Kalwan, Mohramardu (Taxila) Butkara1(Swat) Tharelli, MekhaSanda, Nathu, Sanghao, Manikyala, Rani Ghatetc, where acquired the material for study. **(Map: 1)** Besides these, Kharoshti inscriptions and numerous gold and copper coins have been found But although we know about many Buddha sculptures (Ingholt, 1957; Marshall, 1960, pp. 63–108.) of the different periods of the region.



Map. 1: <https://www.ancient.eu/image/3943/map-of-gandhara/>

Background of Buddha Image

After the Mahaprinervana of the Buddha, his followers start his worship, but they have no object of worship like a stupa, caitya, and a Buddha image. Firstly, King Asoka built thousands of stupas, caitya and viharas and this time Buddhism spread in Gandhara by Majjhantika. Gandhara received its share within the relics of Buddha, erected stupa to enshrine the relics of Buddha and story of Buddhist art and architecture were also started. In the earliest Buddhist art, the Buddha was not sculpted in human form. Rather, his presence was shown through symbolic representation and not physically. Initially, various symbols were employed for Buddha as a lotus flower represents his birth, the horse symbolizes the great departure, Bodhi tree indicates his enlightenment (Sterlin, 1983):16., Chakra represents the First Sermon delivered in the deer park at Sarnath, and a stupa represents his Mahaparinirvana. This early form of Buddhism flourished mainly in India, particularly under the Mauryans found Sanchi and Bhaurat stupa (Hungtington; 2006) 58-89). The Maurya Empire followed the Graeco- Bactrian kingdom. The Indo Greeks rulers arrive at with new philosophical and cultural approaches and giving new dimensions to the art of Gandhara. Subsequently, the Indo-Scythian and the Indo-Parthian set new trends in the local traditions. However, the Kushan ruled proved more innovation in the field of art and architecture. It is in this regard that the reign of Kanishka-I was considering the golden age of Gandhara art .During the reign of Kanishka Buddhism took a new twist and developed in Mahayana

Buddhism (the Great Vehicle). Mahayana Buddhism gave birth to the most tangible form of Gandhara art. In India, initially Buddhist sculptures were made in the form of symbols, but Emperor Kanishka gave physical shape to Buddha statue and first Buddha figure was constructed in Gandhara because the need of his worship was felt and the artist started producing images of Buddha. This was the most important contribution of Gandhara art is the depiction of the Buddha in human form.

The Origin of Buddha Image

It is a debatable point where and when the first image of the Buddha was made in Gandhara or at Mathura (Coomaraswamy, 1926:165). Probably, it developed both places at the same time, one developing directly out of native Indian art and the other (Gandhara) borrowing its features from the Western world. It was generally believed that the earliest Buddha images belonged to the Kanishka age, but Marshall wrote of an early date based on Gandhara style developing during the first century A.D (Marshall, 1960: 63–108). In Gandhara the development of religious architecture, the problem concerning the origin of the Buddha image has not yet been convincingly resolved. Assuming western inspiration for the form and origin of the Buddha image, some scholars see it as adapted from the Greco Roman Apollo (Grunwedel & Burgess; 1985:159-169). Others have suggested late Roman Republican IS started or the earlier imperial statue as the possible sources of inspiration (Wheeler; 1949:9-19), Golubew (1923:438-54) and Coomaraswamy (1926:165-70) suggest standing Yaksha and Yogin of ancient India art as prototypes. It has also been argued that there was no need for a European stimulus and that Gandhara and Mathura schools of Buddhist art could have evolved the image independently. Coins of Kanishka (c. AD 100 or little later) showing well developed Buddha image are also cited as postulating an earlier and established form. The Kushan coinage is the best evidence of the Buddha image.

The Chronology of Buddha Image

Although a definite chronology of the Buddha image is still missing. It is possible to follow the broad lines of their evolution. The first group of images centered of the Swat valley betrays extremely close similarities to images of the Buddha at Mathura which date from the first century A.D and examples of those were even discovered in the region, the Buddha sits in the padmasana, the legs hidden by the waistcloth, the upper garment is folded around the left shoulder and falls low on the chest practically leaving in the bare. Thick folds are indicating through lines that are incised or in slight relief. The bread bun with the tuft of hair will be separated from each other is tied with a ribbon that is visible. The Buddha has a mustache, and his eyes are wide open and bulging but while the Mathura Buddha sits to the right rose at shoulder height, this Buddha presents the gesture of meditation with the right hand lying above the left one. Only very rarely does he keep the raised hand observed at Mathura, which will lead the way to the gesture of protection. Other similarities shared with the Mathura image are the presence of the two standing attendants venerating the Buddha and of the foliage of the pipal tree above the Buddha who hide the trunk of this tree under which he has achieved enlightenment.

The following step of the evolution is also noticed in the Swat valley when the sanghati completely covers the chest the arms, the feet and eventually even the hands of Buddha. Symmetric and concentric thick folds, then cover the arms and the chest. Such an image present the Buddha who is seated on a stool atop the second century A, D “Kanishka casket from Sha-ji-ki-dheri” near Peshawar who shows the Abhaya mudra while holding the edge of his dress in the left hand and is still flanked by the Gods attending him, thus forming the triad which originated from Mathura. Coins minted during Kanishka reign likewise contain the image of the standing Buddha on the reverse showing the same

gesture and dressed in a heavy cloak (Picron: 2009;182). The images which emerge in the course of the second century becomes the most typical and classical Gandhara representation of the Buddha. Largely penetrated by influential stylistic trends originating in the west, which merge into a genuine south Asian conception of the Buddha, it is crucial in defining the development of Buddha images in the Far East. The heavy folded cloak hides the body, the folds, forming large concentric curves centered on the right shoulder. The face is stretched out or shows heaviness in its lower part: the chin can be prominent; the corners of the thin mouth are slightly sunken, the mustache has disappeared.

The eyes become narrows below a heavy upper lid and in contrary to the early phase, where the Buddha was looking straight in front of himself, his gaze is now directed downwards. The hair is all drawn back and upwards, forming the top knot supposedly hiding the Usnisa. In the earlier period the right shoulder of the Buddha image remained bare, but it becomes visible in the later period, perhaps the fourth to fifth century, in images showing the Buddha teaching to Bodhisattva who are definitely different hair styled, gesture and position of body, thus leading the way to the clear distinction between all of them that is observed in South Asia from the fifth century onwards (Ibid; 183).

The Image of Buddha

In Gandhara, thousands of Buddha images were produced. Figural sculptures are consisted of seated and standing Buddha. His individual images were enshrined in the chapels or the monasteries and niches of the stupas for the worship of Buddha. Figures in the round are very rare in this art and much emphasis was laid on the front, the back of the sculptures was always left unfinished because it was to be installed against the wall. The image of Buddha gained a great height in the art of Gandhara. Gandhara art gets western inspiration for the form and origin of the Buddha image, some closely resembling the Greco Roman God Apollo (Grunwedel & Burgess; 1985, 163-64). All the images are gradually developed and a standard iconography of physical details that identify the figure of the Buddha. The image of Buddha has been seen as being the physical representation of a historical character Sakyamuni, who while he had given up his social requirement and become an ascetic, reached the understanding of the roots of human suffering. This moment of deep recognition made him a Buddha “enlightened” an “awakened one” a man who had achieved the level of “Bodhi” (enlightenment, awakening). Having thus reached this supremely high spiritual level, his image could simply not portray a normal human being but had to reflect this concept. In the same way, the historical reality of this man became embedded within two sets of fantastic narratives, first, the life of Sakyamuni was framed by mythic events and second, this life was understood as being. The image is it material and literary of the human character Sakyamuni thus merged with the concept of being Buddha and it became a model of all at his Buddha’s of the past and the future. The two functions of the image, an icon or in a narrative context, evolved within the Indian context where one simultaneously meets the devotional image of the divinity and this image acting within a mythic frame. The creation of the Buddha image belonged to wide moment. It is there that the need a material for the image of God. There is no doubt that the Buddha image was conceived within a cultural background (Picron: 2009; 164). It is noted that Gandhara art figures not carved in round shape. These were mostly carved in $\frac{3}{4}$ rounds with backs left flat and unfinished. It’s meant to be seen from the front side as were mainly fixed against the wall.

Features of Buddha Image

Sakyamuni Buddha has been represented as the human being in Gandhara art. He has most visible extraordinary features like peaceful face, half-open eyes, appear to have a slightly a symmetrical positioning., the hair carefully dressed in a series of incised concentric curls, which also covers the

Usnisa, the lips are full and shaped into an introverted smile, the junction of the hair forms a clearly distinct line with an apex in the middle of the forehead, certainly be traced to the Gandhara art (Pal: 1975; 212). The top bun of hair worn over the head is the way of the wise men of India, the elongated ear lobes, can result from the Buddha of having heavy ear ornaments as a prince Siddhartha. The bunch of hair between the eyebrows may be connected to the Indian tradition of presentation one has a sectarian association through a specific motif painted in the mid of the forehead. The Gandhara Buddha has an idealized figure with a delightful face, standing barefoot or seated cross-legged. Thousands of statues showing individual Buddha were carved in Gandhara.

The Head of Buddha

In Gandhara art, the head of Buddha has practically all the attributes with a high Usnisa. The arrangement of the hair in concentric curves which also cover the Usnisa Arched hairdressing is also known for Gandhara schist sculptures (Ingholt; 1957:119, fig 246) as also parallel vertical curls descending from the Usnisa to the forehead (Ibd,123-124,fig 256). Various manners of representing the hair can be seen. The tuft show undulations starting backward from the line of the scalp or left and right from a central line dividing his hairstyle into symmetrical parts this undulation can become very short and lead the way to snail-shell curls which cover the scalp and the top knot similar to the hairstyle seen Mathura and elsewhere in South Asia from the fourth century onwards (**Fig. 1**) (Picron: 2009;183).



Fig. 1: Head of Buddha stucco 3rd-4th century <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/38777>

The Postures of Buddha

Buddhist sacred literature mentioned four type postures of Buddha and sculptures of the Buddha are generally shown standing, sitting (asana), lying or walking. The sitting position with cross- legged and lift foot leg over the right thigh and the right foot leg over the thigh of the left. While doing meditating and being dealt with Mara on the eve of his enlightenment and at the time when he teaches the dharma, he always has shown with “lotus position”(padmasana). The meditation poses is very common for seated images of the Buddha, but, in some rare cases, he is also shown seated in a chair with pendent legs in the so-called European fashion (pralambapadasana) (Rosenfield; 1993: 187). The

seated Buddha (**Fig. 2**) is an unusual creation of Gandhara artists, have no classical or Indian example available. The model of a standing Buddha may have been copied from a Greek god Apollo or even a Roman emperor wearing toga because the Kushans certainly had diplomatic and commercial relations with the Roman West But further than this exercise come to an end. The Buddha takes the standing position when coming down from the (Cunningham; 2002:29) Gods Heaven after taught the Buddhist law of his mother and the Gods (Fig. 3). The Buddha stands to a height of 2.64m and is the tallest statue known from Gandhara. The great Buddha of 38 to 55 m carved out of the rock at Bamian in Afghanistan is an exceptional expression of this tendency but unfortunately blasted some years ago. Among the thirty chapels at Takht-i-Bahi in what was called the “court of colossi”, between the main stupa and the monastery, some, when first seen was still from 25 to 30 feet (8.375-10.05m) in height.



Fig. 2: Seated Buddha 3rd -4th century British museum
<http://masterpieces.aseamus.museum/masterpiece/detail.nhn?objectId=10311>



Fig. 3: Standing Buddha 1st -2nd century schist stone
<https://www.pinterest.com/pin/381891243380476429/?lp=true>

The Peshawar Museum has recently acquired a stucco head 52 cm in height. (Juhyung; 2007 :1-6). At the Dharmarajika at Taxila, now incomplete stucco image housed in a chapel of which the walls were evidently intended to support considerable weight, would, from its proportions, had reached a height of 10.675m (Marshall; 1951 :268). The size of available stone blocks and the difficulty of transporting them did put some restraint on the dimension of independent images. But the zealous Buddhist artists found a way out: clay and stucco, the more amenable materials, could address the problem of achieving greater height. A number of further walking scenes of Buddha depicted in the images in Gandhara art (**Fig. 4**). The lying position (**Fig. 5**) is kept for only his Mahaprinirvana and his last departure or death scene where he is stretched right side sideways on a bed, head towards the North and also given the impression towards the west. A large number of images, sculptures are shown sitting and standing, often he is surrounded by devotees, the monks, lay followers, gods, Bodhisattva by listening to his sermons, present a more conceptual and iconic version of the Buddha. Such images do not necessarily represent the historical Sakyamuni, but show his more delicate qualities and features that remain invisible to the human eye. Not all images of the Buddha, however, can be known as representations of his exact life story.



Fig. 4: Walking Buddha 2nd -3rd- century
<http://www.gandhara.com.au/sculpture/test2/>

Signs of Buddha Body

The images of the Buddha show some special signs or symbols. There is evidence that these peculiar hand signs have been known in the Gandhara region. The artists were always thought about the extraordinary representation of Buddha as a human being. It was rationally visualized as entirely rephrase the male human body, so from within the real historical body taking full possession



Fig. 5: Laying Buddha schist (death scene) 1st- 2nd A.D
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parinirvana>

and Buddha images, seated or standing are usually frontage and share certain bodily signs called mahapurusalakshanas (the sign of a great man) (Grunwedel & Burgess, 1985:159-169) are usually visible. The signs for a transcendental being or a Universal Monarch as recorded in literary sources are 32 principal and 80 secondary (Grunwedel & Burbess; 1985 :159). Brahman Asita notes the thirty two signs of greatness marking of the prince Siddhartha body and tells his royal parents that he will become a universal monarch or Tathagata (Carter;1987:49) but all of these do not appear on the images of the Buddha because these have been developed at a level and time far away from the material reality. As a result of some lakshanas never had been depicted of Buddha image. The most prominent among those that appear are Ushnisha, Urna, and wheel. The Ushnisha for instance, might refer to the crown of the head through which the soul leaves the body and reaches a higher level of existence when practicing yogic meditation. The Ushnisha is represented as a knot of curly hair on top of his head, is generally considered a sign of the Buddha's wisdom and enlightenment. While Urna a small protuberance of hair between the eyebrows is a symbol of wisdom. The Buddha has long earlobes that the heavy earrings he once wore before he renounced his wealth. The wheel symbol of Chakra on as the palm appears on his hand and soles of the feet are identical marks of Buddha images. There is a halo around his head in the shape of a disc. Except in the smaller reliefs, the Buddha has²been rarely without a halo which looks like a disc behind the head (Picron: 2009:179).

The Gesture of Buddha

Gesture a wide variety of styles developed within this iconographic framework of Buddha. It's a fundamental part of Buddha iconography. The seated Buddha is a typical creation of Gandhara artists in the first century A. D and such gestures taken over all the schools of Buddhism because such tradition has not existed in the classical or Indian culture. These local modifications are preserved throughout all Asian countries.

The iconography of Buddha images is codified into postures (asanas), gestures (mudras) and attributes (objects held by the Buddha), to refer to various scenes from the Buddha's life. The seated Buddha has a special position (padmasana) of his hands and seated on the full blossom lotus flower.

The term mudra (pose) is used to designate certain important gestures performed by the hands of special significance. The gesture presented by one or both hands puts up with the name which explains their meaning. The Buddha applies his continual generosity in offering his compassion and love to the devotee, a moral attitude which is expressed through the right hands. In Buddhist text, a lot of mudras introduced but in the Gandhara art, only a few mudras appeared. The most common are four mudras and can also be displayed when the Buddha is sitting position, but whereas in the standing position the left hand always holds the edge of the dress. The First mudra called “Dharmacakrapravatanamudra” turning the wheel of the law a preaching gesture, (**Fig. 6**) is expressed by bringing both hands before the chest. In this gesture, the Buddha shows as a teacher and he slightly bends the right hand to himself in front of the chest, the thumb of the left hand, also slightly the closed, joined the index finger and look to enter into the lower part of the right hand. This very exacting gesture is showing when he teaches his ethical principle (Picron: 2008:182).



Fig. 6: Teaching Buddha from Sahri Bahlol Peshawar Museum

In Gandhara sculptures is perfectly illustrated by a well preserved relief from Sahri Bahlol, now in the Peshawar (**museum-no 1527**) (Alfred Foucher, 1918: 206). It depicts a large Sakyamuni Buddha seated on a lotus throne flanked by two standing Bodhisattvas, with the attending deities Brahma and Indra is looking protectively over the Buddha left and right shoulders. The gesture of the Buddha is the “Dharmacakramudra” in an early form and is the characteristic Kushan gesture of the teaching of Buddha. It depicts a large Buddha seated on a lotus flowers throne sides by two standing Bodhisattvas with the attending deities Brahma and Indra is looking protectively over the Buddha left and right shoulders. Here the right hand is raised with palm on the chest and thumb projecting upward. The first two fingers curved upward as if indicated the direction of the heart. The left hand is cupped below the right with fingers and thumb gathered so that the fingertips appear to be inserted under the palm of the right hand (Carter; 1987, 46). The Bhumisparshamudra meaning the (earth- touching pose) was performed by the Bodhisattva before the Enlightenment, when he called upon the earth goddess by touching the earth with his right hand to bear witness in the context of Maras’ Attack on the lotus flower. Some of the seated position figures besides reassurance show the Dhyanamudra,(meditation pose), (**Fig. 7**) This pose show right hand lying above the left, palm upward, in the lap. The gesture of

the meditation is referring to the Buddha's periods of meditation during his seek for enlightenment. *Abhyamudra* meaning "gesture of the without fear" In this pose Buddha lift up his right hand almost to the height of the shoulder in the standing position. One thing also notices hen showing the gesture of meditating or touching the earth, the Buddha shoulders are fully covered, even legs and feet are hidden by the robe of a monk. Each of such *Mudra* is identified by the position of his right hand with or without any reference to the position of the left hand.

The Robe of Buddha

Buddha image is different from a monk dressed. The Buddha is wearing a very specific simple dress and the Buddhist *Vinaya* (discipline books) states, three types of monastic robes called *tricivara* in Sanskrit. One of these is a lower undergarment around the middle called *antaravasaka* (waistcloth) in Pali falls down to the ankles and is similar to the "lungi" It is an unsewn oblong piece of cloth made of a variety of materials. The second is an upper under robe over the left shoulder called (*Uttaranga*) in Sanskrit covered the upper part of the body. It's a robe of monk hangs down the back, reaching little above knees, draped gracefully from both shoulders or only the left one and leaving the right arm open. The third is an over robe (*saṃghaṭi*) which is similarly draped around the body. It covers the back and the left shoulder (Grunwedel & Burbess; 1985 "159) but right shoulder leaves free. The *saṃghaṭi* is a long skirt which is visible at the ankle level and consequently covers the undergarments. Robe of Buddha (**Fig. 8**) is a thick garment reaching below the knees. This is much like the Roman *Toga*, a heavy dress form a series of thick folds indicated through parallel and concentric lines carved in *alto-relievo* (Picron, 2008: 179). The Buddha as a cult image wears these monastic robes. But it is difficult to be exactly sure how these robes were worn in Gandhara. Opinions differ regarding the exact position of these robes. At the same time monks appealed to keep their right shoulder bare and when meeting a superior to covered both shoulders, or when arriving in a town on the way wearing the



Fig. 7: Meditating Buddha Butkara (Swat)



Fig. 8: Robe of Buddha

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Physical_characteristics_of_the_Buddha

upper garment and the Sanghati, covering the right shoulder or leaving it bare, is closely related to the attitude of the Buddha and the position of his hand.

Therefore, when he displays the sign of protection or of teaching, the right shoulder is usually bare and when he sits and meditates both shoulders are covered. Although one can consider that when meditating the Buddha with extract fully covered within him protecting and even hiding from the exterior world in fully covered. A whole-body or aureole which may be round or oval also appears in a few late reliefs and bronzes.

The Material use in Buddha Image

The sources of influence in Gandhara art were from the contemporary West. The whole material represents the same mixture of classical, Iranian and local forms and techniques that portray in the art of Gandhara (Dar;1977, pp. 61–89 69). Materials mostly employed by the Buddha sculpture consist of gray or blue slate stone named schist, but stucco was also used for making statues and reliefs (Marshall, 1960, pp. 109–12.). At the end of Gandhara art, stucco was more and more replaced by clay and terracotta (Luczanits:2009;318). The use of wood has also been attested in some places. Casting in bronze and copper was not as common in Gandhara as sculpting in stone, stucco, and terracotta. A few bronze statues are known from Sahr-i Bahlol(Rowland, 1970, pp. 185–6),Chinkolai(Swat) and other places (Hallade, 1968, p. 86, Plate 62, p. 168, Plate 128).The Bronze image has been variously dated as from the 4th to 8th century A.D and they are placed of origin assigned to Afghanistan and Swat valley

.None of the Bronzes have an Urna ,which appears on the contrary on both the cited schist figures. It appears to me that the bronze is indeed from a later date than the schist sculptures, their place of origin, possibly being on both sides of the Khyber pass((Gupta; 2004:67). The body of the Buddha was thus the object of many speculations which have reflected on its artistic image. This resulted in making the Buddha body a metamorphosed body. Although the image always remains the same, the concept of the Buddha evolved in the course of time and not all these images necessarily depict the historical character nor are they of a narrative nature. Images which belong to the later period, from the third century to the fifth century can for instance. Illustrate the Buddha at the spiritual level which is not discernible to our senses (Picron: 2009;179).

Conclusion

The Buddhist art of Gandhara flourished in the region of Gandhara in ancient times represent the life story of the Buddha and of his early existence (jatakas) mainly in stone, stucco, and terracotta. The events of Buddha life starting from his mother dream up to his death on stone. Besides, the sculptures exemplify the life of the Buddha, single statue or relief of him, either standing or seated were also erected. The images of Buddha resembled precisely to ‘Apollo’ the Greek god of beauty. The describing style is sophisticated and has stylish manners. Buddha images are shown in many different poses such as abhayamudra, dhayanamudra, dharama charkamudra and bhumi sparsamudra. The images of the Buddha show some special signs or symbols. The most prominent among those that appear are Ushnisha, Urna and wheel. The main focus of the art was Buddha’s life stories and individual images, his previous birth stories (or jatakas) Bodhisattvas and Buddha. The origin of the first image of the Buddha is disputing the issue among the scholars. The problem becomes more critical we are confronted with the paucity of inscribed material. Even in the case of the date, the era of reckoning is not certain.

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