

15

KUSHAN ART*

*G. A. Pugachenkova, S. R. Dar, R. C. Sharma, M. A. Joyenda in
collaboration with and H. Siddiqi*

Contents

Kushan art in the north	323
Kushan art in Bactria	343
Kushan art in Nagarahāra and Arachosia	346
Kushan art of Gandhāra	351
Kushan art in Mathura	361

Kushan art in the north

Art was not uniform in style throughout the vast possessions of the Kushans. Several local centres and distinctive schools have been identified, and the Kushan Empire may be divided into four principal artistic regions: Bactria (Tocharistan in the basin of the Oxus (Amu Darya) and its tributaries); Arachosia and Nagarahāra (Ninhār, now Kabulistan, and the Jalalabad Province of Afghanistan); Gandhāra in Pakistan; and Mathura in India. Bactria is rooted in the Graeco-Bactrian traditions and Mathura in the Indian ones, while both geographically and in terms of history and culture, the second and third regions, each of which had its own independent origins, held the middle ground. Despite regional differences and variations, the fact remains that these areas were politically united under a single state, and this helped the pooling of ideas in various fields of artistic culture, which finally led to the shared stock of themes, images and attitudes that make it possible to view the arts of the Kushans as a single entity.

* See Map 7.

TOWN PLANNING AND ARCHITECTURE

The rapid growth of towns in this age went hand in hand with an increasingly vigorous urban culture. This process involved in the first instance the art of building cities. Some settlements, such as Balkh (Bactra),¹ Dilberjin,² Termez³ and Dalverzin-tepe (Fig. 1)⁴ in Bactria, sprang up around an original Graeco-Bactrian core which became the administrative and military centre or citadel. These were generally laid out in the form of a rectangle, which left room for subsequent development and was surrounded by fortress walls and a moat. Later there were improvements in fortification techniques.⁵ Citadels were set apart, and city walls were made extremely strong and were flanked by several towers, mostly rectangular but some half-round. Passages and casemates were built into the walls and bowmen's chambers into the towers. Both were pierced by countless arrow-slits, real or blind, while along the parapet lay passage walkways for the defenders and mountings for balistas. The walls were 8–12 m thick at the base and 15–20 m high. Within the walls, the towns consisted of close-packed blocks of buildings in strict alignment with public squares, palaces and temples.

The sheer size of the buildings with which the architects had to deal forced them to devise new structural techniques. In Bactria, building materials were largely of clay such as sun-baked brick and *pakhsa* (a kind of adobe), and most structures were made of these materials. While beamed roofs were employed, pit-head vaults were designed for elongated structures, and, in square buildings, the densely patterned 'closed vault' was devised.

Exterior decoration was sober in the western part of the empire. The smooth stucco of the walls was relieved only by the slit-like window openings and the cornice edges of the flat roofs with their salient beam-ends, occasionally surmounted by a battlemented parapet. But inside, the main rooms were decorated with wall sculptures and paintings. The Bactrian Kushan architectural order figured prominently, in sets of either free-standing columns or wall pilasters. Columns were used in porticos or *aiwans* on the front façade, and in large halls to support the roof beams. They were of wood, but often rested on stone bases the shape of which followed either the Old Iranian tradition of a massive torus on a square

¹ Le Berre and Schlumberger, 1964, pp. 70 et seq.

² Dolgorukov, 1984, pp. 58 et seq.

³ Shishkin, 1941, pp. 123 et seq., Plate 73.

⁴ Pugachenkova and Rtveladze, 1978, pp. 7 et seq., Plate 2.

⁵ Le Berre and Schlumberger, 1964, Plates 15–18; Pugachenkova and Rtveladze, 1978, pp. 21 et seq.; Pugachenkova, 1979, pp. 47 et seq., 1984, pp. 93 et seq.; Dolgorukov, 1984 pp. 58 et seq.; Schlumberger et al., 1983, p. 185, Plates II, X, XXV; Rtveladze, 1982.

in proportion and adorned with two or three rows of heavy acanthus leaves. There were, however, different types for which the term ‘composite’ might be more apt. In Buddhist buildings, the figure of a Bodhisattva or a gandharva might nestle among the acanthus leaves of the capitals, as at Surkh Kotal or Termez.⁸ In Bactria, the capitals were highly individualized; among the acanthus leaves could be seen two lion griffins back-to-back, or a pair of zebu bulls with a fabulous bird-creature clawing at them in between. Such examples can be seen at Termez (Sham-kala) (Fig. 2) and Shahr-i Nau (Fig. 3).⁹

Like the public and religious buildings, the homes of the wealthy followed distinctive architectural designs. Some were patterned on the architectural norms of Bactria established in the previous period, while others revealed new features. The palaces and homes of the urban aristocracy were laid out either with a central hall and vestibule or with a courtyard – the whole being surrounded by a corridor. Accommodation and auxiliary premises, as at Khalchayan, Dalverzin-tepe (Fig. 4) and Dilberjin (Fig. 5),¹⁰ were also provided for. The same concept – a hall with a corridor and possibly outbuildings around it – is typical of temples of the local cults in Kushan Bactria, whether Zoroastrian or dynastic, as at Takht-i Sangin (Fig. 6),¹¹ Dilberjin¹² or Surkh Kotal.¹³ Externally, these residences, palaces and temples took their shape from the rectangular mass of the central hall or sanctuary. On the façades, nothing broke the smoothness of the walls, the principal one being identified by a colonnaded portico or *aiwan*.

TEMPLES AND BUDDHIST BUILDINGS

The temple buildings at Surkh Kotal (Fig. 7), dedicated to the dynastic cult of the Kushans, may be viewed as of representative character. They stand on a hill from the foot of which rise five flights of steps. High fortress walls flanked with rectangular towers protect the square courtyard and the galleries running round it, while in the centre, raised on a platform, looms the chief temple built in Kanishka’s times by his official, Nokonzoko. The exterior is surrounded by a colonnaded portico, while the four-columned shrine housing the altar is flanked on three sides by an ambulatory passage. In course of time two further structures of a religious nature were built in the traditional Bactrian manner – a square hall surrounded by a corridor divided by passageways – inside and outside the courtyard.

⁸ Schlumberger et al., 1983, Plates LXVI–LXVIII; Pugachenkova, 1979 p. 55.

⁹ Staviskiy, 1981, pp. 125 et seq., Plates 93–4; Dagens, 1960, pp. 38 et seq., 1968, pp. 36 et seq.

¹⁰ Pugachenkova, 1966, Plate, 23, 1976, p. 91; Pugachenkova and Rtvcladze, 1978, Plates, 15, 26.

¹¹ Litvinsky and Pichikyan, 1981, Figs. 2–3.

¹² Kruglikova, 1982, Plate, 6.

¹³ Schlumberger et al., 1983, Plates, IX, XXXVI–XXXVIII.



FIG. 2. Fragment of a capital from Termez.



FIG. 3. Stone capital from Shahr-i Nau.

As Buddhism spread from India to the western parts of the Kushan Empire, Buddhist buildings such as monasteries, stupas and shrines sprang up and their remains have been

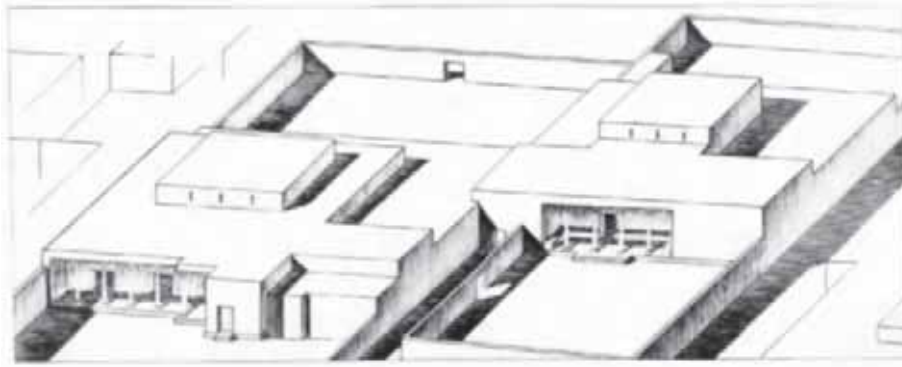


FIG. 4. Dwelling-houses in Dalverzin-tepe (reconstruction).

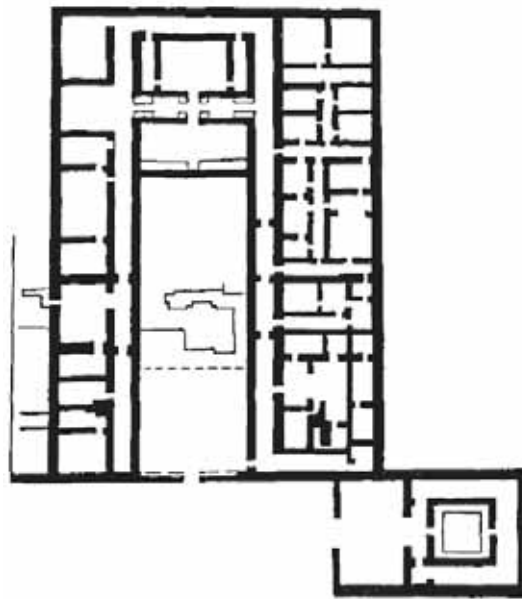


FIG. 5. Plan of a dwelling-house in Dilberjin.

found at Termez (Fig. 8),¹⁴ Ayrtaṃ,¹⁵ Dilberjin¹⁶ and Surkh Kotal.¹⁷ Architecturally, buildings in these areas are somewhat different from Buddhist structures found in the Indian parts of the empire. They accepted a blending of different architectural settings used for decorative purposes. Wall sculptures and paintings were used as part and parcel of the decoration of *aiwans* main halls and shrines, while the facing of Buddhist stupas was invariably relieved by representational sculptures.

¹⁴ Staviskiy, 1964–82a; Pugachenkova, 1967, pp. 257 et seq.; Al'baum, 1982, pp. 56 et seq.

¹⁵ Masson, 1976, pp. 81 et seq.

¹⁶ Kruglikova and Pugachenkova, 1977, pp. 61 et seq.

¹⁷ Schlumberger et al., 1983, pp. 75 et seq., Plates XLVII–XLVIII, LV.



FIG. 6. Colonnaded portico. Takht-i Sangin. (Photo: © Vladimir Terebenin.)



FIG. 7. The sanctuary at Surkh Kotal (reconstruction).



FIG. 8. Buddhist stupa, 'Bastion of Zurmal', at Termez.

Murals were constructed in a kind of glue-based tempera laid on a thick rendering of clay with vegetable additives (which was partly responsible for crumbling when the additives decayed) either directly or on a white ground. The colour range was small with a predominance of red, black and white; yellow, blue and green were rarely used. The additional hue of white, however, enabled a whole spectrum of shades to be achieved.

Only fragments of murals have survived but these command attention in respect of the variety of themes and motifs. Paintings of people of different ethnic groups are noticed, along with figures with real animals like the horse, or imaginary ones like the griffin. So are scenes of court life and subjects taken from the religious beliefs and current myths of the time in Bactria. In the Buddhist monasteries of Kara-tepe and Fayaz-tepe at Termez, for example, portraits of the Buddha, a monk and benefactors in typical Kushan costume have been discovered.¹⁸ In Dilberjin, after the Graeco-Bactrian temple of the Dioscuri had been rededicated to Śiva, a scene was added showing Śiva, Parvatī and the bull Nandi (Fig. 9).¹⁹ The temple of the Bactrian goddess in Dalverzin-tepe contained a painting of her seated on a throne, and a representation of an unknown ritual in which a priest and priestesses offer small children for her blessing (Fig. 10).²⁰ Mural decoration also incorporated ornamental motifs, as the classical palmettos in the temple of the Bactrian goddess at Dalverzin-tepe, reflecting the impact of the Greek tradition. Others clearly represent patterned fabrics:

¹⁸ Staviskiy, 1972, Tables IV and V; Al'baum, 1975.

¹⁹ Kruglikova, 1974, p. 44, Plate 30.

²⁰ Pugachenkova and Rtveladze, 1978, pp. 79 et seq., Plates 50–5; Pugachenkova, 1979, Plates 194, 196, 199, 200.



FIG. 9. Śiva, Parvatī and the guard. Painting in the sanctuary of Dilberjin.



FIG. 10. Ritual scene. Fragment of a painting from Dalverzin-tepe. (Photo: © Vladimir Terebenin.)

the Khalchayan palace had unconstrained shoots, foliage, clusters of grapes, violets and rounded fruits painted white against a dark red background. Others again consist of purely ornamental latticework interwoven with rings, as in Kara-tepe at Termez.

All these fragments testify to great professional skill on the part of the artists, and probably point to the existence of special guilds of artists in large cities. At the same time, they record traces both of Greek influence and of the gradual assimilation of that influence with the emerging new style. Apart from these paintings, it is the sculpture providing decoration for buildings that commands great admiration. Among the artistic achievements of antiquity, the Central Asian sculptures of the Kushan period now rank among the finest. In Bactria, sculptures were usually of clay, finished in paint or plaster, though some were of white marble-like limestone.

MONUMENTAL SCULPTURE

The range of subjects and scenes in Bactrian monumental sculpture was unusually wide and varied, both secular and religious, dynastic and public. Of the dynastic groups, particularly illuminating are the sculptures at Khalchayan dating from the beginning of the Christian era,²¹ Dalverzin-tepe from the first century A.D.²² and Surkh Kotal (second century A.D.).²³ In the palace at Khalchayan, complete scenes were carved around the walls of the main hall and the *aiwan*. In the hall, the centre-piece was a scene of imperial splendour – a Kushan monarch of the lineage of Heraus, seated on a throne with his lady. Above them are Nike and Heracles, and on both sides are men and women of the imperial household. To the right is another dynastic scene – the head of the family shown seated while others stand around in formal attitudes. To the left is a battle scene with mounted heroes in armour and helmets, and lightly armed bowmen shooting as they advance (Figs. 11, 12, 13, 14).

All the characters are portrayed in a completely individual manner and are clearly taken from life. Their different ethnic origins are accentuated, Bactrian and Parthian princes appear, and the majority of the figures are supposed to be the Kushan clan of Heraus, the monarch well known from his image on coins. The head compressed at the front and back, the eyes stretching lynx-like to the temples, the straight nose, the finely drawn moustache and sideboards, the straight hair caught up in a fillet or circlet – all these are tribal characteristics of the whole of Heraus' lineage (Fig. 15).

This sculpture was executed in the expressively realistic style that the Greeks brought to Bactria, though the images themselves are emphatically local. A pronounced interest in

²¹ Pugachenkova, 1971, pp. 153 et seq.

²² Pugachenkova, 1979, pp. 131 et seq., Figs. 123–4.

²³ Schlumberger et al., 1983, Plates LVIII–LXXI.



FIG. 11. Hall of the palace in Khalchayan (reconstruction).

human individuality is revealed in the portrayal not only of the subject's physical features and age, but also of his emotions. The same style may be seen in the sculpted head of the great goddess of Bactria in the Dalverzin-tepe temple,²⁴ which dates from the same period, and the image of a crowned local ruler from the temple at Dilberjin.²⁵

The main scenes at Khalchayan are topped by a sculpted frieze showing amorinis, naked or in flowing tunics, holding garlands with the busts of actors, musicians, satyrs and mimes inset.²⁶ The Hellenistic inspiration for this is clearly evident, but the characters are all Asian, or more specifically Bactrian Kushan, in appearance. The identical motif of amorinis holding garlands is carved on a second-century slab from Surkh Kotal.²⁷

The cult of Heracles, identified in Bactria with a local divinity or demigod, continued until the very end of the Kushan period. A small first-century statuette of this demigod was found in Takht-i Sangin²⁸ while his painted clay statue of the second century was found in the garrison built along the gateway bastion at Dilberjin.²⁹

A considerable impact on the development of sculpture throughout the Kushan region was made by Buddhism, the basic images, subjects and topics of which were developed in Gandhāra and spread to the north-west of the empire. Here they were assimilated with earlier indigenous traditions. A case in point is a second-century sculptured frieze from

²⁴ Pugachenkova and Rtveldze, 1978, Plate 56; Pugachenkova, 1979, Plates 175–6.

²⁵ Kruglikova, 1974, Table 1.

²⁶ Pugachenkova, 1971, pp. 22 et seq., 1979, Figs. 135–6.

²⁷ Schlumberger et al., 1983, Plate LV.

²⁸ Litvinsky and Pichikyan, 1981, Fig. 12.

²⁹ Pugachenkova, 1977, pp. 77 et seq.



FIG. 12. Statue of a queen. Khalchayan. Painted clay.

Ayrtam in which female figures half-emerge from acanthus leaves.³⁰ These are the celestial musicians or gandharvas, and girls bearing offerings of flowers, garlands or vessels. But in their ethnic appearance, head-dresses and ornaments they differ from those typical of India, and clearly portray local characteristics.

In portraying the image of the Buddha (Fig. 16), the Bactrian sculptors followed the established canons of the beginning of the Christian era, but for the secondary figures in the Buddhist pantheon – devatās (Fig. 17 and 18), genies or gandharvas – they returned to earlier Graeco-Bactrian traditions. These can be seen in figures such as the heads of devatās from the Buddhist shrine at Dalverzin-tepe, whose softly modelled features and fleeting smiles are reminiscent of the school of Praxiteles.³¹

³⁰ Trever, 1940, pp. 149 et seq., Tables 45–9.

³¹ Pugachenkova, 1979, p. 167, Tables 204–5.



FIG. 13. Statue of a Kushan Yüeh-chih prince. Khalchayan. Painted clay.



FIG. 14. Statue of a Kushan Yüeh-chih prince. Khalchayan. Painted clay.



FIG. 15. Head of a warrior. Khalchayan. Painted clay. (Photo: © Vladimir Terebenin.)

The Bactrians also differed in their portrayal of lay devotees of Buddhism. The Kushan prince in his pointed head-dress, great ladies with costly hairbands and a magnate from the same Dalverzin shrine are notable for reflecting their personal features. As distinct, however, from Khalchayan, sculptures from Dalverzin (Figs. 19 and 20) suggest a smoother moulding of the features without any sign of age, and controlled, almost non-existent emotions. They correspond not only to the ethical standards and want of sensuality prescribed by Buddhism, but also to the new tendencies in sculpture in which the emphasis in portraiture shifts from the individual to the formal. Even more generalized and formal is the dynastic sculpture of Surkh Kotal, which represents the chief emperors of the Great Kushan dynasty (Fig. 21), including the great emperor Kanishka noted for the shape of his head-dress.

THE MINOR ARTS

The hallmark of the various ‘minor arts’ in Kushan Bactria is seen from the artefacts made by professional craftsmen. Moulded or hand-made terracotta statuettes became widespread, the former most commonly figures of the great goddesses worshipped locally and bound up with ancient folk cults of the mother goddess, the patron of fertility, childbirth



FIG. 16. Head of the Buddha from Fayaz-tepe. Termez. Gypsum on clay. (Photo: © Vladimir Terebenin.)

and prosperity (Figs. 22 and 23). They differed from region to region on the basis of features, head-dress and clothing, apparently in response to local variations in population.³²

³² Gardin, 1957, Plate X; Pugachenkova, 1979, Plates 178, 179, 181–9; Kruglikova, 1974, Plates 26, 56, 68; Kruglikova and Pugachenkova, 1977, Plates 32, 103; Meshkeris, 1969, Plates 23–5.



FIG. 17. Head of a devatā. Dalverzin-tepe. Gypsum on clay. (Photo: © Vladimir Terebenin.)

Less frequent are moulded male statuettes, usually in Kushan costume, either as the goddesses' male companion or as a demigod.³³ But crudely fashioned figurines of mounted horsemen were found far and wide, and are thought to relate to the cult of the ancestor-god brought to the cities by the steppe tribes.³⁴ The import of ivory from India gave rise to the art of representational carving (Fig. 24). On a plaque from Takht-i Sangin dating from the beginning of the Christian era, for example, there is a dynamic hunting scene in which two horsemen are represented in a manner very reminiscent of the sculptured bowmen of Khalchayan.³⁵

The crafted metal jewellery of Kushan Bactria was shaped by the tastes of the upper classes. Its outstanding objects were found in the tombs at Tillya-tepe in northern Afghanistan,³⁶ and include thousands of gold artefacts (Figs. 25 and 26), sometimes

³³ Gardin, 1957, Plate X; Pugachenkova, 1973, Plate 31.

³⁴ Pugachenkova, 1965, pp. 248 et seq.

³⁵ Litvinsky and Pichikyan, 1981, Figs. 15–16.

³⁶ Sarianidi, 1985.



FIG. 18. Head of a devatā. Dalverzin-tepe. Gypsum on clay.

encrusted with precious stones – massive necklaces, bracelets, sheaths, complex composite crowns, finely figured platelets for sewing on clothing or shrouds. Some of these are genuine masterpieces of the jeweller's craft. Many incorporate representational motifs which place them in several stylistic groups.

Some of these motifs can be traced to ancient Oriental traditions in art, such as the open bracelets finished at the ends with the horned heads of lion-griffins. A statuette of a mountain goat in the round, a suite of rearing, horned griffins with snarling dog-like heads or a frontally portrayed scene in which a royal hero grapples with horned, winged and fish-tailed dragons on either side are equally interesting. All these images evoke the art of Achaemenid Iran, though a number of elements in them do appear alien to that tradition.

Some objects bear traces of Hellenistic influence. Among direct imitations from Greek art is the image of Aphrodite. Her Greek features are commonly recast in the Asian mould, as in the case of naked cupids riding dolphins and the figurines of a semi-nude winged goddess reclining on a throne (accompanied in one case by a soaring Eros) or the war-god Ares with a Greek cuirass and a Partho-Bactrian helmet.

Of particular interest is the 'animal style', as it was known. There are small plates depicting rearing dragons or a beast of prey pulling down a quadruped, and phalerae embossed with beasts of prey or fabulous zoomorphic creatures rolled into a ball as if biting their own tails. It should be noted that similar gold phalerae with turquoise insets, portraying a battle between three panthers, have been found in Takht-i Sangin (Fig. 27).



FIG. 19. Head of a noble lady. Dalverzin-tepe. Painted gypsum on clay. (Photo: © Vladimir Terebenin.)

But the Tillya-tepe collection is more than a mere synthesis of ancient Oriental, Hellenized and steppe art: it contains new elements. The faces of the goddesses and cupids, the heroes and other characters, the clothing, weapons and other details are of an intensely local kind. By their technique (known as the encrustation style) and composition devices most of this collection belongs to what is called the Sarmatian culture, which flourished over a large part of Eurasia from the first century B.C. to the first century A.D.

Archaeologists are inclined to connect the Tillya-tepe burials with the period of the Early Kushans. However, stylistic parallels are so close between many of these items and the objects of Parthian Nisa and the Saka-Parthian strata of Taxila that there is far more reason to detect a link with these peoples' advance into western Bactria, Sistan and then parts of ancient north-western India, yielding to the Kushans only in the first century A.D.



FIG. 20. Statue of a magnate. Dalverzin-tepe. Painted gypsum on clay.

A hoard of first-century objects of gold from Dalverzin-tepe, hidden beneath the doorstep of a wealthy home, illustrates the next phase in the development of Central Asian ornamental metalware.³⁷ Together with gold discs and bars, many marked with their weight in Kharoṣṭhī characters, the hoard provided a number of crafted ornaments, supposed to have been manufactured by local Bactrian jewellers. These include bracelets, earrings and pectorals. Items of Indian craftsmanship include a necklace that was probably owned by a member of the upper Indian aristocracy while a phalera depicting a fabulous shaggy beast rolled into a ball seems to have been executed in the traditions of Scytho-Sarmatian animal style.

Viewed as a whole, Bactrian art of the Kushan period is a complex, composite and evolving art. The combination of elements that date back to the past, Hellenistic motifs, steppe 'animal style' and Indo-Buddhist influences are all grafted on to native Bactrian traditions and transformed by the creativity of the artist, giving rise to a new and different phase in the development of Bactrian Kushan artistic culture.

³⁷ Pugachenkova, 1978.



FIG. 21. Statue of a ruler (Kanishka?). Surkh Kotal. Painted gypsum



FIG. 22. Statuette of a Bactrian goddess. Terracotta from Dalverzin-tepe.



FIG. 23. Statuette of a Bactrian goddess. Terracotta from Dalverzin-tepe.



FIG. 24. Comb with engraved figures. Ivory from Dalverzin-tepe.

Kushan art in Bactria

SURKH KOTAL

Surkh Kotal, about 14 km north of Pul-i Khumri and 232 km north of Kabul, is noted for dynastic temples that were set up during the reign of the Great Kushan king



FIG. 25. Sitting warrior. Tillya-tepe. (Courtesy of V. Sarianidi.)

Kanishka and his successors in the second century A.D. In the main temple a square fire altar was found, suggesting the existence of belief in Zoroastrianism. Schlumberger suggested that the sculptural decoration of the temples showed a blending of different artistic



FIG. 26. Goddess between two dragons. Tillya-tepe. (Courtesy of V. Sarianidi.)



FIG. 27. Gold phalera. Takht-i Sangin. (Photo: © Vladimir Terebenin.)

trends, including steeped merlons of Oriental tradition. Noticing the stone frieze, the series of unbaked and painted clay figures, and the damaged stone reliefs, he suggested that the statues found there should be compared with the enthroned figures at Nimrud Dag of the mid-first century B.C. representing rulers (or gods) and the Kushan images of Mathura.³⁸

The statues of a Kushan noble and the Kanishka statue exhibit the same symmetry, dress and jewellery. Most of the sculpture from Surkh Kotal provides evidence for indigenous Bactrian art and its relation with the art of Gandhāra.

TILLYA-TEPE

Tillya-tepe (Golden Hill), 5 km north of Sheberghan, was excavated by the Afghan-Soviet Archaeological Mission in 1978/79 and yielded 20, 000 gold artefacts. It was the site of a temple in the second millennium B.C. During the rule of the Achaemenids a magnificent palace was built but it was later damaged by fire, and completely destroyed by the Greek army in the fourth century B.C. Later, in the first century A.D., the site was used as a graveyard for one or two generations in the time of the Kushans. The numerous objects of the site's earlier period include Greek antiquities of Graeco-Bactrian date. Those from the later period represent the production of Bactrian artists and can be compared with the Begram hoard providing evidence of contacts with India, Rome, China and Parthia.³⁹ The style of

³⁸ Rosenfield, 1967, pp. 165–7.

³⁹ Sarianidi, 1985.

this group was influenced by local trends, and by Graeco-Bactrian, Roman and Parthian art, a combination of styles that sheds light on some unsolved problems of the Kushan art of later centuries.

DILBERJIN KAZAN

The temple of Dilberjin Kazan, situated 4 km north-west of Balkh, was excavated by the Afghan-Soviet Archaeological Mission over several seasons, and produced painted clay statues and wall paintings, which reveal traces of Bactrian style influenced by Transoxania. The wall paintings are most important for the study of art in northern Afghanistan during the Kushan period. They can be compared to the paintings from Balalík-tepe in southern Uzbekistan, dated by ex-Soviet archaeologists to the end of the fifth and beginning of the sixth century A.D. The dating proposed for these paintings of Dilberjin Kazan is the first half of the fifth century A.D. The paintings are not the earliest ones found at Dilberjin Kazan, which belong to the Graeco-Bactrian period, according to Kruglikova. The façade of the temple is decorated with a painting representing the Dioscuri with their horses, while another painting on a later wall of the same temple depicts Śiva and Parvatī seated on the bull Nandi, surrounded by devotees.

Kushan art in Nagarahāra and Arachosia

BEGRAM

Begram, about 64 km north-east of Kabul, has been identified with Kāpiśa, the summer capital of the famous Kushan king Kanishka. The Délégation Archéologique Française en Afghanistan (DAFA) carried out several limited excavations there between 1936 and 1946 but only a small part of the town area has been dug. The ruins of Begram represent three stages in the history of this famous city.⁴⁰ The original foundations were laid out on a plan not markedly different from Hellenistic cities such as Dura-Europos. This was the capital of the last of the Graeco-Bactrian kings and the first rulers of the Kushan dynasty. The second Begram, modified only by the construction of new palaces and fortifications, was the northern capital of Kanishka and his successors. It is clear that the town was violently destroyed by fire, probably at the time of the disastrous invasion of the Sasanians. The last town rose on the ruins and was probably abandoned with the coming of the Hephthalites in the fifth century A.D.⁴¹

⁴⁰ MacDowall and Taddei, 1978, p. 257.

⁴¹ Rowland, 1976, pp. 24–5.



FIG. 28. Plaster emblem of a sleeping maenad. First century A.D. Begram (diameter 17.5 cm).

The fame of Begram rests on the discovery of two rooms (probably part of the ‘palace’), which were filled with objects of enormous value – Chinese lacquer boxes, Graeco-Roman statuettes in bronze, a collection of fine Roman glass, Graeco-Roman vessels of porphyry and alabaster and an extraordinary group of plaster casts (Fig. 28) apparently taken from classical metalwork. In addition, the treasure rooms yielded a large number of superb Indian ivory carvings (Figs. 29,30,31), which had originally served as parts of various articles of furniture. Many of these objects represent types and techniques otherwise unknown to classical Graeco-Roman and Indian art. The discoveries at Begram show that under the Kushans there were close relations at artistic and cultural levels between Bactria, Gandhāra and Rome. The find of such a treasure of classical luxury goods at Kāpīśa is thus an interesting phenomenon, which seems to indicate a prevalent taste for Graeco-Roman art.⁴²

HADDA

Hadda was the magnificent Buddhist centre of Gandhāra about 8 km south of Jalalabad. Like a golden mirage of towers, the thousand stupas of Nagarahāra and Hadda drew the Chinese pilgrims Fa-hsien and Hsüan-tsang to this pilgrimage centre in the fifth and seventh centuries A.D. respectively. As a result of archaeological excavations by DAFA and the Afghan Archaeological Mission, several *saṅghārāmas* stupas and other constructions

⁴² Ibid., p. 28.

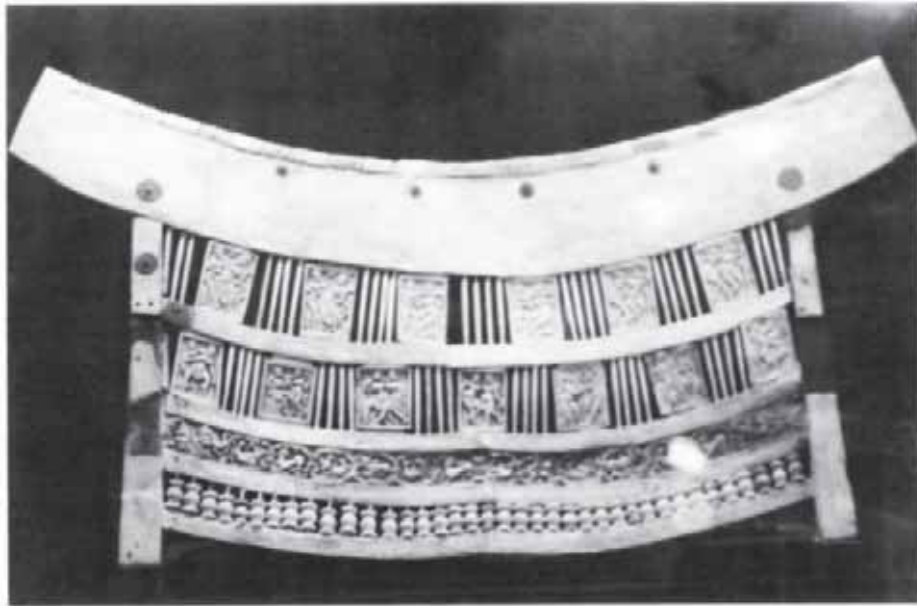


FIG. 29. Ivory throne back. Second century A.D. Begram (height 57 cm).



FIG. 30. Ivory panel. Second century A.D. Begram (height 41 cm).

such as porches decorated with statues and paintings have been discovered. The numerous objects found include statues of the Buddha, of Buddhist monks, donors, is Vajrāpaṇis, coins and pottery. The evidence from the *saṅghārāmas* and stupas of Hadda and the surrounding areas shows the artistic importance of the region under the Kushans and later



FIG. 31. Ivory statuette of a yakṣī. First century A.D. Begram (height 40 cm).

rulers. The style of art is associated with the Gandhāra school and exhibits a blending of Bactrian, Graeco-Roman and Indian concepts. There are sculptures in schist and limestone, but mostly in clay, stucco or lime plaster. According to Marshall, the stucco sculpture represents a late Indo-Bactrian renaissance, while Bachhofer considers it as a later development of the Gandhāra style.⁴³

The problem of the chronology of the stucco sculptures from Hadda needs further elucidation. While it is certain that the majority belongs to the Kushan period, it is clear that some of the material excavated should be assigned to a date before the arrival of the Kushans. The outstanding feature is their extraordinary skill in portraying human character and emotions, in a way rarely seen in other parts of the Kushan Empire.

Some pieces from Hadda show the influence of local trends in style and subject matter. Statues of local people, yakṣīs, donors with Kushan dress suggest the mixing of the local and foreign elements in Gandhāra art, which, according to Schlumberger, had its base here. Finds of artistic material from Begram, Ay Khanum, Surkh Kotal, Dilberjin Kazan and Tillya-tepe support this and the excavations of the Afghan Archaeological Mission at Tepe Shotor in Hadda throw new light on the theory advanced by Schlumberger.

⁴³ Roland, 1976 p. 28.

PAITAVA AND SHOTORAK

The *saṅghārāmas* at Paitava and Shotorak, near Begram, excavated by DAFA, weredecorated with sculptures that were mostly carvings in the familiar blue-grey schist of Gandhāra. The image of the Buddha and other Buddhist divinities and representations from the *Jātakas* figure here. Some of these images have a hieratic rigidity suggestive of the sculpture of Hatra and Palmyra, and this resemblance extends to the treatment of the drapery as well. Other carvings from these sites, like the monumental reliefs of the Buddha and Kaśyapa, suggest the deeply carved reliefs of the Gandhāra style of the second and third centuries A.D. According to Rowland, ‘these fragments of stone sculpture from the region of Begram are of great importance, illustrating the final phase of the Gandhāra style that was destined to exercise far greater influence on Buddhist sculptures in Central Asia’.

The influence of a local element is traceable in Paitava carvings. The figure of a standing donor carrying offerings under the śāla tree is a typical example. He wears the characteristic Kushan mantle, baggy trousers and felt boots similar to the dress of the famous statues of King Kanishka from Surkh Kotal and Mathura. Similar types of donors are portrayed at Hadda.

TEPE SARDAR

The early layer of Tepe Sardar, south of Ghazni near the Kabul–Kandahar highway, excavated by the Italian Mission in 1959, yielded interesting material mostly related to the time of the Later Kushans. The excavated layers are simply a thick filling following the destruction of a rich decorative complex made of unbaked-clay sculptures. These layers have similarities with those of the Kāpiśa, Fondukistan, Tepe Maranjan and Jalalabad areas. The clay sculpture of the earlier phase of Tepe Sardar, in its manifold aspects, belongs to the tradition of Bactrian Hellenism, and shows affinities with the clay images from Surkh Kotal and Tepe Maranjan.⁴⁴

TEPE MARANJAN (KABUL)

The monastery of Tepe Maranjan, on the eastern outskirts of Kabul, may be dated to the late fourth century A.D. Its sculptures are executed in clay with a thin veneer of lime plaster, and appear to be a later development of Hadda style, anticipating the style of Cave G at Bamiyan and of Fondukistan, in a combination of painting and sculpture. As in other areas of Gandhāran art, jewellery distinguishes a Bodhisattva from the Buddha.⁴⁵ Similar

⁴⁴ MacDowall and Taddei, 1978, pp. 278–9.

⁴⁵ Snellgrove, 1978, p. 183.

material was found at Tepe Khazana, north-west of Kabul town, reflecting the later Gandhāra style of the fifth or sixth century A.D.

Kushan art of Gandhāra

Although the beginning of Kushan art in Bactria can now be traced, as is shown by the excavations at Khalchayan⁴⁶ and Ay Khanum,⁴⁷ very little work has been done so far to establish its origin in Gandhāra proper. This is because the Kushan art of Gandhāra has so far been studied from a limited perspective. Kushan material has been excavated from only three major cities within the cultural periphery of Gandhāra – at Begram (or Kāpiśa),⁴⁸ Puṣkalāvati (or Peucelaotis)⁴⁹ and Taxila⁵⁰ – and from the two sites outside the Indus region, that is, Mathura⁵¹ and Surkh Kotal.⁵² Takht-i Bahi, Jamal Garhi, Sahr-i Bahlol, Shah-jiki-Dheri (Peshawar), Tharelli, Mekha Sanda, Nathu, Sanghao, Hadda, Manikyala, Rani Ghat, etc. have yielded material for study. Besides these, at least twenty Kharoṣṭhī inscriptions and numerous gold and copper coins have been found. But although we know about many Buddhist sculptures⁵³ of the Kushan period from the region, Gandhāra art has so far been studied only for the sake of its sculptural wealth and Buddhist religion or to detect Western influence, never with a view to studying the civilization of which the sculptures were a part.⁵⁴

GANDHARAN ART AND BUDDHISM

The Kushan sculptures from Gandhāra are predominantly Buddhist. Although the Buddha himself never visited Gandhāra, with the passage of time the area became a veritable holy land for his followers. Several spots were identified as having an alleged association with the Buddha in his pre-natal existence, and over these, stupas and monasteries were built. In early Buddhism, introduced here by Aśoka (third century B.C.), the Buddha was never represented in human form. But constant exposure of the Gandhāra Buddhists to the art and pantheistic religion of the Western world created a schism between the purist and the more forward-looking Buddhists. Whether out of conviction or as an act of liberal

⁴⁶ Pugachenkova, 1971.

⁴⁷ Bernard, 1967; Bernard et al., 1973.

⁴⁸ Ghirshman, 1946.

⁴⁹ Dani, 1965/66.

⁵⁰ Marshall, 1951.

⁵¹ Vogel, 1910; Rosenfield, 1967 p. 41.

⁵² Schlumberger, 1955, 1961, pp. 77–95.

⁵³ Ingholt, 1957; Marshall, 1960, pp. 63–108.

⁵⁴ Dani, 1969, p. 2.

patronage, Kanishka is said to have convened the fourth Buddhist Council at Kuvana near Jullundur (or at Kandalavana in Kashmir), which finally put an end to the dissensions that had distracted the Buddhist Church for nearly a century.⁵⁵ As a result, Mahayanism – a liberal and progressive school of Buddhism – flourished in Gandhāra and laid emphasis, among other things, on the transformation of the Buddha into a great mythological, almost eternal, god, and on the deification of future Buddhas as holding providences.⁵⁶ In the visual arts, the Buddha was permitted for the first time to be represented in human form. It is a moot point where and when the first image of the Buddha was made – in Gandhāra or at Mathura.⁵⁷ Probably, it developed simultaneously at both places, one developing directly out of indigenous Indian art and the other (Gandhāra) borrowing its type from the West. Formerly it was generally held that the earliest Buddha images belonged to the time of Kanishka, but long ago Marshall wrote of an Early Gandhāra style developing during the first century A.D. New excavations by the Italian Archaeological Mission in Swat and a reassessment of the Taxila evidence have led several scholars to push back the date even to the first century B.C.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF BUDDHIST ART

The sudden liberalization of Buddhism was a signal for the development of Buddhist art in Gandhāra and it soon reached its peak. However, it is wrong to say that the profusion and popularity of Gandhāra art owes its existence to the state-owned Church or that its distinctive appearance is indebted to the mechanical product of higher craftsmanship from the West.⁵⁸ As a matter of fact, Gandhāra art simply expresses the socio-religious fervour of its people. An indigenous socio-economic stratum of cultivated taste – the merchants, bankers, caravaners and minor officials – and not the Kushan nobility may have provided the main impetus for its development.⁵⁹ The Kushans themselves never extended any official patronage to it. They were eclectic in religion, fire-worshippers in Bactria, Buddhists in Gandhāra and Hindus in Mathura.⁶⁰

SCULPTURE

The Kushan art of Gandhāra is mainly known from the wealth of sculpture recovered from the numerous Buddhist stupas and monasteries throughout; Gandhāra. Standing and seated

⁵⁵ Puri, 1965, p. 143; Walters, 1904/05, pp. 273–6.

⁵⁶ Puri, 1965, p. 145.

⁵⁷ Coomaraswamy, 1926, pp. 165 et seq.; Lohuizen-de Leeuw, 1949, pp. 170–1.

⁵⁸ Rowland, 1970, pp. 121–5.

⁵⁹ Rosenfield, 1967, p. 73.

⁶⁰ Schlumberger, 1961, pp. 77–95.

statues of the Buddha and the Bodhisattva Maitreya, and stone slabs depicting in low relief the legend of the Buddha's birth stories, or *Jātakas* abound. Most of these statues and panels were carved out of a locally available grey or blue slate stone called schist, but stucco was also used for making statues and reliefs (Fig. 32). Clay and terracotta were used relatively sparingly. The change of medium (from schist to stucco) gave more freedom, diversity and cheapness. Modelling in malleable material made it easier to prepare casts from moulds and made it more convenient and cheaper to increase production. Whether or not the use of stone and stucco for sculpturing finally split up in two different schools – the latter springing phoenix-like from the ashes of the former but still separated from the other by a hiatus of a century and a half⁶¹ – does not concern us here.

FIGURE OF THE BUDDHA

The Gandhāra Buddha is an idealized figure having a delightful face unaffected by age or affliction. Standing barefoot or seated cross-legged he is always shown wearing an undergarment and a monk's robe. Among the signs of a *mahāpuruṣalakṣaṇa* (great man), the *uṣṇīṣaūrṇā* and *dharmacakra* are usually visible. His Apollo Belvedere type of face, though just one among the numerous types known, is no doubt the earliest to provide a model for others. The model of a standing Buddha might have been copied from a Greek god or a hero or even from a Roman emperor wearing pallium or toga, as the Kushans definitely had diplomatic and commercial relations with the contemporary Roman West. But beyond this, borrowing ceases. The seated Buddha and the figure of the seated or standing Bodhisattva (Fig. 33), the latter a peculiar invention of Gandhāran artists, have no classical or Indian precedent. Statues of Pāñcika, the Commander of the Lord's army, and his consort Hārītī are also local figures *par excellence*. Furthermore, almost all Gandhāra statues were carved in the round.

CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES

The most characteristic feature of Gandhāra sculptures is their frontality. Figures normally stare fixedly into one's eyes or are turned completely to right or left. There is seldom movement in their bodies. This can be understood in the light of Kushan sculptures from Khalchayan. These are not strictly frontal but turn slightly with restrained emotions. They are a step towards frontality and a sharp contrast to the highly emotional images of the Hellenistic world and the complete side views of Achaemenid sculpture. The fixed, unemotional frontality of the Kushan art of Gandhāra has obviously been brought from Khalchayan.

⁶¹ Marshall, 1960, pp. 109–12.



FIG. 32. Miralce of Śrāvastī. Lahore Museum.

Attempts have been made to identify portraits in Gandhāra sculptures, such as the two heads from Sahr-i Bahlol and Shpola stupa.⁶² But these are the heads of donors detached from their bodies. There may be statues of donors showing characteristic individual

⁶² Ingholt, 1957, p. 163, No. 423, p. 194, No. 563.



FIG. 33. Standing Bodhisattva. Lahore Museum.

features and wearing regional costumes but they never represented specific individuals. No doubt in Bactria⁶³ and Mathura⁶⁴ portraits of Kushan rulers and nobility in characteristic Kushan dress are numerous, but there is no such presence of the Kushan nobility in Gandhāra sculpture, not even in the figures of the Buddha and Bodhisattva. In Buddhist art, an individual – ecclesiastical or temporal monk, donor, king or commoner – always remains anonymous.

JĀTAKA STORIES

The Gandhāra panels narrate the *Jātakas* or birth stories of the Buddha, in a simple, clear and lucid way which is in sharp contrast to the confused style of earlier schools, seen at

⁶³ Rowland, 1970, p. 146, Fig. 86.

⁶⁴ Rosenfield, 1967, pp. 138–53.

Bharhut and Sanchi. Although the number of events is limited, the art of narration is simple and easy to understand. Figures in a panel stand out in correct relation to one another with proper spacing between them. Sometimes even perspective is emphasized. In this way a minimum number of figures are needed to narrate a complete story. When more than one story is required on a panel, each is separated from the other with the help of vertically arranged columns, pilasters and recessed panels, or horizontally arranged cornices and mouldings. Normally, the actors of a story are arranged in single file and move from right to left.

RELIGIOUS ARCHITECTURE

We are fortunate in having a better knowledge of the development of religious architecture in Gandhāra. The Kushan contribution is substantial. Except for Shrine 8 at Taxila, almost all Kushan monuments in Gandhāra are Buddhist. Shrine 8 is a square building within an enclosed wall measuring 37×37 m relieved with buttresses on each side and nine intercommunicating chambers. One study has associated this shrine with the Kushan occupation of the area, though its exact date and purpose cannot be ascertained.⁶⁵

Stupas and monasteries were the principal buildings of the period, as Hsüan-tsang notices in his account of the Great Vihāra built by Kanishka at Peshawar. It is said to have been built as a thirteen-storey tower with a total height of 213 m. Nothing of the monument survives except the famous inscribed Kanishka casket, now in the Peshawar Museum, and a few sculptures.⁶⁶ Among standing monuments, the remains at Takht-i Bahi, Jamal Garhi, Tharelli and the sites of Jaulian, Mohra-Muradu, Kalawan, Pipala, etc. in the Taxila valley are the best examples of the Kushan contribution to Gandhāra architecture.

GANDHĀRA STUPAS AND MONASTERIES

The basis of the Gandhāra monastery is a court or a series of courts open to the sky and surrounded either by cells for monks or by niches to place devotional objects. Connected with the court are usually an assembly hall, refectories and a room for the chief priest on one side and the main stupa encircled by votive stupas of varying sizes on the other. Gandhāra monastic establishments were built exclusively in stone diaper masonry typical of the Kushan period. The entire surface of the walls was covered with a thick coating of lime plaster. The roofs were mainly vaulted and doors and windows were either trabeated or corbelled. By the first and second centuries A.D., this type and pattern of monastic

⁶⁵ Dar, 1980, pp. 91–106.

⁶⁶ Spooner, 1908/09 pp. 38–59; Dobbins, 1971, pp. 12–40.

architecture had emerged and became fixed all over northern India. Taxila can boast of some of the earliest permanent monasteries.⁶⁷ Although the development of monasteries in Gandhāra antedates the arrival of the Kushans (cf. the Dharma-rājika stupa), it was here that the pattern of monastic establishment was perfected and became popular. A large number of such establishments in Gandhāra, their sizes, cultural content, elaborate facilities and architectural embellishments, clearly point to the economic prosperity of the period and the patronage accorded to the development of art.

ORNAMENTATION

The Gandhāra stupa with its carved base, circular drum and spherical dome, together with its sculptural embellishments, marks a development from the primitive types known at Sanchi and Bharhut and at Dharmarājika (Taxila), Shankaradara (Swat) and Manikyala. The Kushan contribution lies in the overall sculptural ornamentation of the bases and drums of stupas. Apart from stone reliefs fixed on the largest stupas, the smaller votive stupas were usually embellished with stucco figures of the Buddha, Bodhisattvas and devotees set in niches, and with figures of Atlantes, elephants, lions, caryatids, yakṣīs, etc., crouching under cornices and supporting the load of each receding terrace of the stupa base. A variety of arches, pediments, debased Corinthian capitals, dentils, merlons, rosettes and lotuses abound in both stone and stucco. The debased example of an Ionic capital in stucco is known from the Pipala stupa at Taxila. Sometimes figures of the Buddha and Bodhisattvas were set in the foliage of Corinthian capitals carved in stone. Huge Corinthian capitals, set up on pilasters or a round column, are known from Taxila and elsewhere. Most of the columns and pilasters used as architectural pieces were probably made either of wood or of some other perishable material because except for a miniature fluted column with a Corinthian capital, now in the Taxila Museum, and an Ionic column also from Taxila, now in the Lahore Museum, no such column has survived.⁶⁸

MINOR ARTS AND COINAGE

There is not much evidence for the minor arts of the period except for the Kushan coinage. It is difficult to allocate to periods the material from Scytho-Parthian and Kushan levels, partly because it comes from unscientific excavations and partly because all these dynasties had the same geoethnic background and were subject to the same sources of influence

⁶⁷ Dutt, 1962, pp. 24, 213.

⁶⁸ Rowland, 1970, p. 145.

from the contemporary West. The entire material represents the same mixture of classical, Iranian and local forms and techniques that characterizes the art of Gandhāra.⁶⁹

The coins from Gandhāra are the best evidence for the strangely syncretic character of Kushan art, culture and religion. They show a portrait copied from the bust of the Roman emperor Augustus, the first figure of Buddha and an array of twenty-eight deities of Hellenistic Irano-Babylonian and Indian origins, all identified by legends in Bactrian Greek script.

Casting in bronze and copper was not as common in Gandhāra as sculpting in stone, stucco and terracotta. A few bronze statues are known from Sahr-i Bahlol,⁷⁰ Chinkolai (Swat) and other places.⁷¹ These, however, appear to be later than the Kushan period under review, but all the nine metal statuettes from the Sirkap site of Taxila come from the two last strata and can conveniently be dated to the first and second centuries A.D. With the exception of one thin repoussé copper bust in a medallion, all the others are solid cast in open or piece-moulds.⁷² Among these are figures of purely Graeco-Roman origin such as Harpocrates, Cupid, Psyche and Aphrodite as well as Hindu and Buddhist figures. Metal sculptures from other places are mainly Buddhist.

TERRACOTTA FIGURINES

It is interesting to note that not a single terracotta figurine has been reported from the limited excavations of the Kushan city of Sirsukh in Taxila. However, the art of making terracotta and clay figures continued at Taxila, as elsewhere, until the fifth century A.D. Despite some borrowings from Hellenistic motifs, this terracotta art, 'in its own way, was just as original, forceful and independent as the Gupta Art of Hindustan and more so than the contemporary Byzantine Art in the West'.⁷³ Slip casting that is, the use of crushed stone and clay to make terracotta figures, was introduced for the first time at Taxila and became popular throughout the Kushan period.⁷⁴

The Kushan craftsmen inherited the art of making figurines in terracotta or clay from their predecessors, the Mauryas, Indo-Greeks, Scythians and Parthians.⁷⁵ Their figurines included human, animal and other toy models. The figurines were either hand-made or wheel-turned to make a hollow body that was later moulded by hand to a human or animal

⁶⁹ Dar, 1977, pp. 61–89.

⁷⁰ Rowland, 1970, pp. 185–6.

⁷¹ Hallade, 1968, p. 86, Plate 62, p. 168, Plate 128.

⁷² Marshall, 1951, Vol. II, pp. 604–6.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 442.

⁷⁴ Mian, 1974, p. 206.

⁷⁵ Marshall, 1951, Vol. II, pp. 435–72; Wheeler, 1962; Dani, 1965/66 pp. 46–109.

shape. Figures were also cast in single as well as double moulds. Sometimes, faces were moulded and fixed to hand-made bodies.⁷⁶ Almost all these types began with the Indo-Greeks and continued through the Parthian period up to the end of the Kushans.⁷⁷ According to Dani, the real Gandhāra terracotta human figurines, with well-formed heads and beautiful faces, were developed during the Middle Kushan period.⁷⁸ Among animal figurines, bodies were either solid or hollow. Bulls, horses, elephants, camels, monkeys, dogs, rams and goats were the most popular, but we also find tigers, snakes, crocodiles, pigs, birds, bird chariots and toy carts.

JEWELLERY

The inventory of specimens of Gandhāra jewellery and ornaments that can definitely be dated to the Kushan period is not very long. However, this scarcity of material is amply compensated for by the profusion of jewellery represented in Gandhāra sculpture. For example, the figures of Bodhisattva, Hārītī and other females are shown wearing gorgeous jewellery items that are not very different from the specimens of the same or slightly earlier period. A collection of 180 items from the last stratum of Sirkap,⁷⁹ thirteen from Tor Dheri, three from the Rawalpindi area and seventy-two from Palatu Dhen⁸⁰ and a few other gold ornaments reportedly from the Taxila region, now preserved in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London,⁸¹ and the Cleveland Museum of Arts⁸² etc., is all that we have of Kushan jewellery from Gandhāra. To this can perhaps be added the famous bejewelled gold casket and thirty ornaments from Bimaran of slightly earlier date.⁸³

The Gandhāra jewellery displays a variety of styles and techniques. The representation of jewellery on statues throws light on the Kushan fashion of bedecking individuals with ornaments. Men wore jewellery as much as women, whereas before and after the Kushans, the wearing of personal ornaments was the prerogative of ladies alone. The richness of ornaments depended on the status of the person wearing them. Bodhisattvas, kings and queens, men and women of noble birth and even deities are always shown wearing heavy jewellery. Commoners either wore samples of ornaments or none at all.

⁷⁶ Mian, 1974 p. 206.

⁷⁷ Dani, 1965/66 p. 47.

⁷⁸ Ibid., pp. 43, 65.

⁷⁹ Marshall, 1951, II, pp. 616–37.

⁸⁰ Marshall, 1902/03, pp. 172, 185–99.

⁸¹ Hallade, 1968, Plates IX and XI

⁸² . Anon., 1953, p. 200.

⁸³ Wilson, 1941, p. 71.

FOREIGN INFLUENCE

The Taxila collection of jewellery is predominantly Graeco-Roman in character,⁸⁴ but Gandhāra jewellery generally shows the same range of classical, Iranian, Sarmatian and Indian forms and techniques that we see in the art of Gandhāra. These reflect current trends and taste, and show how the Gandhāra types developed out of earlier ones. The commonest types of Gandhāra jewellery include earrings of Ieech-and-pendant type, necklaces, neckbands, bangles, bracelets and armlets, anklets, girdles, hairpins, amulets of great variety, etc., and are usually worn by Bodhisattvas. There is also a wide variety of fingerrings with or without encrusted gems and seal impressions. Decorative items, such as broches, turban pins, and miniature gold figures of Cupid, Psyche, animals, birds, flowers and necklaces with fanciful designs are known from Taxila, but waist-cords, bejewelled breast-chains and footwear are known only from statues. Quintus Curtius (*History of Alexander* 9.1.5) provides an interesting reference to the golden staff set with beryls and jewelled golden sandals of Sopeithes, the King of the Salt Range and a contemporary of Alexander the Great.

Gandhāra jewellery shows a fully developed stage of the crafts of granulation and filigree, which the Gandhāra goldsmiths borrowed from Western Asia, and the art of incrustation of gems, which the Orient lent to the West. Technically, Gandhāra ornaments were made with dies and by hammering, casting, moulding (lost-wax method) and repoussé. The forty-two pieces of silverware,⁸⁵ all belonging to the Late Parthian and Early Kushan periods, clearly show that the crafts of the silversmith and coppersmith were equally developed. Whereas much of the Taxila ware reflects Graeco-Roman culture in vessels such as askoi, phialai, mesomphaloi, aryballoi, kantharoi, paterae and goblets, copper and bronze vessels show a mixture of Western and Central Asian elements and predominantly local influences. Also, almost all types are represented in pottery forms, suggesting a uniform Gandhāra culture during the first and second centuries A.D.

Much other material, such as gems, seals carved with a variety of designs, bone, ivory, shell and glass objects and a wide range of beads, has been excavated from numerous cities and stupa sites. The best examples of ivory are from Taxila⁸⁶ and Begram,⁸⁷ all clearly showing how deeply this art was related to local craftsmanship.

Precious and semi-precious stones were used for making seals and jewellery, agate, amethyst, carnelian, chalcedony, crystal, garnet, jasper, lapis lazuli onyx and turquoise.

⁸⁴ Marshall, 1951, II, p. 616; Sharif, 1978 pp. 46–7.

⁸⁵ Marshall, 1951, Vol. III, pp. 564–606.

⁸⁶ Ibid., Vol. III, pp. 199 et seq.

⁸⁷ Rowland, 1971.

Glass, marble, mother-of-pearl, shell, steatite, ivory and bone were used for beads, which were made in a variety of shapes – domical, spherical and tubular – in animal and bird forms. They were perforated from one or both sides and polished.

A SUMMARY

In brief, the Kushan art of Gandhāra was a living art open to influence from within and without. It absorbed the earlier Graeco-Bactrian traditions current in the area and was also receptive to ideas and trends of the contemporary West through international trade and commerce. Gandhāra acted as the hub from which Kushan art spread in many directions to places such as Mathura, Devnamori and Amaravati in India and towns in Afghanistan and Central Asia. As a result of recent discoveries at Khalchayan, Ay Khanum and Surkh Kotal, there is now no doubt that some form of Hellenistic school lay behind Gandhāra art, but it is wrong to call it an example of Western art. It has its own individuality, reflecting the socio-religious aspirations of its people. Economic prosperity and peace remained the basis of its popularity and development, and when that was no longer the case the art could not sustain itself: it languished and then disappeared.

Kushan art in Mathura

AGE AND TECHNIQUE

The art of Mathura both precedes and post-dates Kushan art over a total span of about 1,000 years, but the Mathura workshops were most active and productive during the rule of the Kushan emperors, especially Kanishka, Huvishka and Vāsudeva (second and third centuries A.D.), which represent the golden age of Mathura sculpture.⁸⁸ The earliest dated specimen of Kushan art at Mathura, the statue of Bodhisattva now in the Sarnath Museum,⁸⁹ was made in the third year of Kanishka.⁹⁰ Mathura sculptures were carved from the spotted red sandstone quarried at Sikri, near the city, and its craftsmen mastered the technique of carving stone that was liable to be marred by streaks or spots. Some scholars believe that they originally covered the whole carved surface with a layer of polychrome or gilt.⁹¹

⁸⁸ Agrawala, 1965, p. 2.

⁸⁹ Vogel, 1930, p. 107, Plate XXVIIIa.

⁹⁰ Chanda, 1936, pp. 11, 12, 16.

⁹¹ Rowland, 1970, p. 149.

GANDHARAN INFLUENCE AND ROYAL PORTRAITS

Mathura artists, by their central geographical position, were open to influences from both Gandhāra and Amaravati, and they sent their images to a wide range of sacred sites. Typical Mathura sculptures of Kushan date have been discovered at Varanasi, Gaya, Śrāvastī,⁹² Taxila⁹³ and Puṣkalāvātī.⁹⁴

At first sight the style of Mathura seems to be a sequel to that of the stupas at Bharhut and Sanchi, but it is related to two other traditions – the art of Amaravati and the Gracco-Buddhist art of Gandhāra.⁹⁵ The gallery of royal portraits from the Devakula at Mat, near Mathura,⁹⁶ has given us portrait figures of Vima Takṣuma, Kanishka and Caṣṭana⁹⁷ set up in the reign of Huvishka. They are neither in the Gandhāra nor in the Mathura style, but possess an autonomous stylistic character of their own. Vima's seated figure wears a short tunic and heavy felt boots of Central Asian origin.⁹⁸ The headless statue of Kanishka shows the Great King standing, wearing a Central Asian stiff mantle (caftan) and heavy felt boots, his right hand resting on a mace and his left holding a broad sword.⁹⁹ The posture is rigid, stiff, frontal and hieratic but conveys the valour and kingly virtue of the dynasty (see Fig. 2 Chapter 11).

The Devakula portraits, almost in relief with no suggestion of any three-dimensional form, show clear signs of Hellenistic and Parthian influence.¹⁰⁰ They are the sole examples of portrait sculpture known from ancient India.

Apart from these portraits, the most striking examples of the Kushan art of Mathura are the figures of yakṣas and yakṣīs, nāgas and nāganīs and female (Śālabhañjikā) figures (Figs. 34 and 35), some wanton and sensual. The sculptural art of Mathura has many distinguishing features:

The material used is either red sandstone with creamish spots or buff sandstone, which sometimes contains dull red patches. In certain sculptures efforts to remove the adverse effect of spots or patches through the application of a coat of colour can be seen.

Brahmanism, Buddhism and Jainism flourished simultaneously at Mathura under the Kushans and icons and shrines of all the three sects were made in large numbers. While

⁹² Vogel, 1910, p. 28.

⁹³ Khan, 1966.

⁹⁴ Dani, 1965/66, Plates XVIII, 4–5.

⁹⁵ Agrawala, 1965, p. 3.

⁹⁶ Vogel, 1911/12, pp. 120–7.

⁹⁷ Rosenfield, 1967, pp. 135–53.

⁹⁸ Vogel, 1930, p. 91, Plate V; Rosenfield, 1967, pp. 144–51.

⁹⁹ Vogel, 1930, Plate V; Rosenfield, 1967, pp. 144 et seq.

¹⁰⁰ Rowland, 1970, p. 149.



FIG. 34. Śālabhañjikā figure on the obverse side of a pillar. Second century A.D. (From H. Zimmer, *The Art of Indian Asia*, Vol. II, plate 74a, New York, 1968.)

Brahmanism continued to be the religion of the masses, Buddhism received royal patronage, while Jainism had the following of the rich merchant community.

In this period symbols representing the Buddha in earlier times were replaced by the anthropomorphic representation.

The religious aspects of art had not obliterated its secular spirit. Skilled workers and artisans worked for patrons of different creeds according to demand. The spirit of secularism is seen in the depiction of decorative motifs, social and folk scenes common to all sects.

The assimilation of different artistic forms and their fusion into a distinctive style were the important features of the Mathura school. The natural reflection of contemporary social, religious and political movements has to be evaluated in proper perspective. Mathura art actually served as a bridge to correlate and unite indigenous and alien elements and



FIG. 35. Śālabhañjikā figure on a bracket. (From J. P. Vogel, *La Sculpture de Mathura*, plate XII, Paris/Brussels, 1930.)

successfully accomplished this through its adaptability, and its process of fusion, amalgamation and interaction.

The presentation of female beauty as a vehicle of art was a novel experiment of the Mathura school. In the earlier monuments of Bharhut and Sanchi womenfolk seem unconcerned with this. Their function is either to worship if represented in mundane form or to receive worship if elevated to the superhuman status of devatā or yakṣī. But in the Kushan period the sculptor at Mathura viewed feminine beauty from a different angle. Arrested by a beautiful face, long hair, heavy hips, voluptuous breasts graceful movements, attractive looks and inviting gestures, he transformed his subject into sculptural creations that blended the fervour of sensuous emotions in a religious and spiritual environment.

The names of artists of the Mathura school have been recorded on the pedestals of sculptures – Rāma, Dharma, Sanghadeva, Joṭisa, Dāsa, Śivara (kṣita), Siṅgha, Nāyasa, Deyahu, Vishnu and Jayakula.¹⁰¹

VISHNU

Early Brahmanism or Hinduism at Mathura was based on the Vishnu or Vāsudeva cult and Mathura artists made icons of Vishnu and his associates at an early stage. Vishnu figures have been found in different forms. The two-armed representation seems uncommon (Mathura Museum No. 1150). The four-armed images hold a mace (*gadā*) disc (*cakra*) waterpot (*kamaṇḍalu*) and the fourth hand either remains in protection (*abhaya*) or in boon-bestowing (*varada*) pose (Mathura Museum Nos. 15.912, 15.948, 28.1729 and 34.2520, second deity). Sometimes the mace is replaced by the conch (*śaṅkha*) (No. 15.4267). The lotus (*padma*) does not appear in this period. The eight-armed figures of Vishnu have hands that are broken so the attributes remain obscure (Nos. 15.1010 and 50.3550, and Lucknow Museum No. 49.247). In one sculpture the deity is seen mounted on his vehicle Garuda in bird form (No. 39.2858).

The concept of the incarnation of Vishnu was still in its infancy. The Lucknow Museum stela (No. J.610) probably shows the giant (*trivikrama* or *virāt*) form. The boar incarnation (*varāha*) has been identified in another stela (Mathura Museum No. 65.15) (Fig. 36). The deity is lifting the earth, which is seen personified on his left shoulder.¹⁰² A fragmentary sculpture in the Mathura Museum (No. 17.1344) has been interpreted as Vāsudeva crossing the River Jamuna with a basket over his head.¹⁰³ Another stela (No. 19.1563) is probably to be identified as Rāma and Sitā.

The cosmic (*caturvyūha*) form of Vishnu is seen in an image of the Mathura Museum (No. 14.392–5) (Fig. 37). Out of the central deity, Vāsudeva or Krishna, emerge other figures from his shoulders and head. Balarāma can be recognized from the snake canopy. The high crown and *vanamālā* (garland made of forest leaves and flowers) of Vishnu are noteworthy.

BALARAMA

The cult of Balarāma, the elder brother of Krishna, was already established at Mathura before the Kushans (Lucknow Museum No. G.215). In the Kushan period, figures of Balarāma have two or four arms holding a cup in the left hand with the right hand raised

¹⁰¹ Sharma, 1984, p. 139.

¹⁰² Joshi, 1972, p. 7.

¹⁰³ Ibid., p. 16.



FIG. 36. Boar incarnation. Buff sandstone. Second century A.D. (length 35 cm). Mathura Museum No. 65.15.

up in the protection pose (*abhaya mudrā*). Conceived as the incarnation of the cosmic serpent Śeṣa, Balarāma is shown with a snake canopy (Mathura Museum No. 14.406) (Fig. 38). Sometimes he carries a lion-staff plough (*siṃhalaṅgala bala*). Rarely, between Balarāma and Krishna, stands a female deity, identified as Ekānaśā, sister of the two brothers (Mathura Museum No. 67.529).

Numerous Śiva finds suggest that Mathura was also a seat of the Śiva cult. In the Kushan period Śiva is represented in two forms: *liṅga* the phallic form with the nut portion projecting from the shaft and fastened with a flat band (Mathura Museum No. 83.3) (Fig. 39), and *puruṣa* the anthropomorphic form. Quite often a combined aspect is seen and in this case the *liṅga* is shown with one, two, four or five faces. The beads known as *tatpuruṣa*, *aghora*, *vāmadeva*, *sadyojāta*, *īśāna* face east, south, west, north and upper direction respectively. The Ardhanārīśvara form (a composite figure of Śiva and his spouse Parvatī) is also from the Early Kushan period. In this form the right half is generally represented as male with matted hair, a half vertical third eye and the organ in an upward position (*ūrdhvaretas*). The left female half is shown as graceful with earrings and anklets (Mathura Museum No. 34.2520) (Fig 40, first deity).



FIG. 37. Bust of Vāsudeva in cosmic (*vyūha*) form. Buff sandstone. Second century A.D. (height 45 cm). From Saptasamudrī well. Mathura Museum No. 14.392–5.

KARTTIKEYA

Skanda or Kārttikeya was also a favourite deity in Kushan Mathura. The texts describe him as son of Śiva (*Matsyapurāṇa* Chapter 158, and *Kumārasambhava* of *Kālidāsa* 10.57–60) and also of Agni (*Mahābhārata*, *Vanaparva*, Chapters 225–30 and *Skandapurāṇa*, *Māheśvarakhaṇḍa*, Chapters 27–31). He is known as a god of war and commander of the divine army (*devasenani*). In the Kushan period he is shown as a two-armed young man, wearing a crown or turban, holding a long spear in his left hand with his right hand in the protection pose (Lucknow Museum No. 57.458). An image in the Mathura Museum (No. 42.2949) is dated Year 11. He is sometimes shown with a cock or a peacock (Mathura Museum No. 33.2332). A bronze plaque from Sonkh has been identified as Kārttikeya.¹⁰⁴ His nativity is sometimes shown with one or more mother goddesses (*mātrkās*) holding a child and with a jar (Lucknow Museum No. 0.250) (Fig. 41). Ganeśa, the younger brother of Kārttikeya, appears late in art; a post-Kushan statuette represents him as an

¹⁰⁴ Härtel, 1976, p. 91, Fig. 34.



FIG. 38. Head of Balarāma with snake canopy. Buff sandstones. Second century A.D. (height 35.5 cm). From Kachahrightat well. Mathura Museum No. 14.406.

elephant-headed nude dwarf, wearing a snake thread (*vyala yajnopavita*) and eating sweet balls (*laddu*) with his trunk (Mathura Museum No. 15.758).

SURYA

The sun god (Surya) in the Kushan period is shown squatting in a car drawn by two horses, wearing an embroidered coat, trousers and turban, and holding a stalked lotus bud in his right and a dagger in his left hand. The whole appearance suggests an alien treatment as marked as on the contemporary royal portraits (Mathura Museum No. 12.269) (Fig. 42). These tight features are subsequently relaxed, the number of horses increases to four (No. D.46), and a nimbus resembling the disc of the sun is added. The wings on his shoulders recall the early Vedic concept of the sun bird Garuda.¹⁰⁵

YAKṢAS

The dominating yakṣa cult of an earlier period at Mathura was overshadowed by other popular deities under the Kushans. The yakṣas, now grotesque and dwarfish with pot belly (No. C.3), served as attendants. Their mundane nature is depicted as excessive

¹⁰⁵ Banerjea, 1956, p. 434.



FIG. 39. Śivaliṅga. Near Kankali. Spotted red sandstone. First century A.D. Mathura Museum No. 83.3.

drinking (No. C.2), a scene sometimes explained as Bacchanalian, suggesting a Greek impact through Gandhāra art.¹⁰⁶

NĀGAS

Nāga (snake) worship was prevalent at Mathura. We find independent images of the nāga deities in human form but surmounted by snake hoods. The site of Sonkh has revealed remains of a nāga shrine of Kushan date.

One lintel depicts the nāgas and nāgīs with a snake scalp, while the devotees or visitors bear the turban (No. SOIV-36) (Fig. 43). A duel between the nāga and Garuda (bird deity) has also been represented (No. 41.2915).

OTHER FIGURES

A large number of female deities or mother goddesses have been recovered from Mathura. Important ones are Gaḷalakṣmī (No. 34.2520) (Fig. 40 above, third deity), Lakṣmī, Hāritī,

¹⁰⁶ Smith, 1889, Part 1, pp. 140, 156.



FIG. 40. Stela representing, from the left, Ardhanārīśvara, Vishnu, Gajalakṣmī and Kubera. Spotted red sandstone (length 26.5 cm). Mathura Museum No. 34.2520.

Yakṣīs, Mātrkās, Śaṣṭhī and nāgīs. A popular goddess of the age was Durgā (No. 33.2317). A few sculptures from Mathura suggest that efforts were made to avoid disharmony between different sects. An interesting stela in the Mathura Museum (No. 34.2520) represents four deities together: Ardhanārīśvara, Vishnu, Gajalakṣmī and Kubera (the lord of the yakṣas).

JAINA FIGURES

The excavations conducted by A. Führer at the Kankali Mound, Mathura, yielded hundreds of Jaina antiquities, most of which are housed in the State Museum in Lucknow.¹⁰⁷ These range from the second century B.C. to the twelfth century A.D., but the majority belong to the Kushan period. The āyāgapaṭas serve as the base for the development of the Jaina pantheon; some of them belong to pre-Kushan times and one records the name of the *mahākṣatrapa* Śoḍaṣa (Lucknow Museum No. J.1).

The āyāgapaṭas according to the central theme may be classified differently, that is, *Cakraṭapa* (representing the wheel, J.255), *Svastikaṭapa* (representing auspicious cross J.252), *Caityaṭapa* (showing the stupa or caitya, J.255; see Fig. 44), with a beautiful railing and gateway flanked by two female dancers and an inscription recording that the stone tablet was set up by the wife of the dancer Phalguyasa for the worship of Arhata, and the *arhatapaṭa* or *tīrthan̄karapaṭa* when the Jina (main deity; see Fig. 45) is shown, replacing

¹⁰⁷ Smith, 1901.



FIG. 41. Stela showing nativity of Kārttikeya. Buff sandstone. Second century A.D. (length 24 cm). Lucknow Museum No. 0.250.

the symbol (J. 252). Some of these tablets show a variety of beautiful motifs depicted as eight auspicious symbols (*aṣṭamaṅgalacinhas*).

Jina images of the Kushan period are generally broad-chested, stiff, with shaven head or little hair. The mark of *śrīvatsa* on the chest of a Jina is an essential feature at Mathura. Palms and soles are usually marked with a *triratna* or *cakra* as the mark of a great man (*mahāpuruṣalakṣana*). In the early period the halo is plain, devoid of any concentric band but carved with a scalloped border (*hastinakha*). With the passage of time the decoration on the field of the halo increases (Fig. 46).

It is not possible to identify all the Jinas of the Kushan period, because we do not know what developed subsequently. Ṛ Ṣ abhanātha can, however, be identified by the fall of hair on the shoulders, and Pārśva or Supārśva by the snake canopy. The depiction of life events of Jinas is rare, but a Kushan-period stela has been explained as illustrating the episode of the transfer of the embryo of the last Jina Mahāvīra from the womb of Brāhmaṇī Devananandā to that of Kṣatriyāṇī Triśalā (No. J.626). Neminātha, the twenty-second Jina, who is described as cousin of Krishna, was represented flanked by Balarāma and Krishna.



FIG. 42. Surya clad in northern style. Buff sandstone. From Kankali Mound. Late first century A.D (height 48 cm). Mathura Museum No. 12.269.



FIG. 43. Lintel showing the scene of nāga family. Red sandstone. From Sonkh. A.D. 100 (length 121 cm). Mathura Museum No. SOIV-36.

BUDDHIST SCULPTURES

Kushan art of Mathura earned its real fame in producing hundreds of excellent Buddhist images, which were both installed in Mathura region and exported. Before the Buddha was represented in human form, his presence was conveyed through different symbols: the elephant for his Birth; the horse for the Great Renunciation; the tree for his Enlightenment; the wheel for turning the Wheel of Law; and the stupa for his Death. The credit of introducing



FIG. 44. Inscribed ayāgapata carved with stupa railing. Buff and red sandstone. From Kankali Mound (50 × 70 cm). Lucknow Museum No. J.255.

the Buddha figure is sometimes given to Gandhāra and sometimes to Mathura, but there is some evidence that the evolution of the Buddha figure at Mathura came slightly before the commencement of Kushan rule.¹⁰⁸

Pre-Kanishka Buddha figures are characterized by the snail shell (*kaparda*) on the head, inconspicuous drapery marked by an incised line on the left shoulder, a deep navel, and a pedestal with three tiers or two lions supporting the seat.

The Buddha's corpulent body has a crude, primitive and archaic look. In due course a set formula and an ideal form of the Buddha was developed. He is shown in high relief, with a nimbus bearing a scalloped border, a back slab showing foliage of the bodhi tree, two celestials hovering in the sky and acolytes flanking the deity. The top of his hair is shaped like a snail shell, the rest of his head being smooth. He has small earlobes, a circular (*ūrṇā*) mark on his forehead, almond-shaped, wide-open eyes and a slightly smiling expression.¹⁰⁹ A good example is the Buddha from the Katra Mound (Fig. 47).

During the reign of Huvishka the Mathura school introduced a notable change in the Buddha's drapery, which now covers both shoulders (*ubhayān-sika saṅghātī*) (Mathura Museum No. A.4) (Fig. 48), and then becomes thick and stiff with broad pleats (Mathura

¹⁰⁸ Lohuizen-de Leeuw, 1949, p. 171.

¹⁰⁹ Sharma, 1984, pp. 176–7.



FIG. 45. Head of Tīrthānkara. Second century A.D. (From H. Zimmer, *The Art of Indian Asia*, Vol. II, plate 73, New York, 1968.)

Museum No. 76.17) (Fig. 49).¹¹⁰ The distinction between the Buddha and the Bodhisattva is now made clear – the Buddha being shown as a monk while the Bodhisattva is adorned with a crown and the ornaments lending him a princely look (Lucknow Museum No. B.26) (Fig. 50). Beside the protection (*abhaya*) pose, others are now introduced: meditation (*dhyāna*); earth touching (*bhūmisparśa*); preaching or teaching (*upadeśa* or *vyākhyāna*); and turning the wheel of law (*dharmacakrapravartana*). The Buddhist pantheon grew manifold.

IMPACT

The sculptural art of Mathura in the Kushan period was extremely creative (Figs. 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56,), and its products were in heavy demand throughout ancient northern India. Mathura borrowed several features from Gandhāra, but contributed much in

¹¹⁰ Sharma, 1984, pp. 220–3



FIG. 46. Inscribed *Sarvatobhadra* (quadruple) Jaina image with Pārśvanath on one side each. Red sandstone. From Kankali Mound (height 54 cm). Lucknow Museum No. J.235.

return. The *Jātaka* narration, the lotus seat, the drapery covering one shoulder of the Buddha and the lion throne were some of the important Mathura features later adopted in Gandhāra. The second phase of development at Amaravati owes much to Mathura, notably the change from the aniconic to the anthropomorphic representation of the Buddha; the impact of Gandhāra at Amaravati came through the Mathura school,¹¹¹ and the Sarnath school, which flourished in the Gupta period, developed from the Late Kushan art of Mathura.¹¹²

¹¹¹ Coomaraswamy, 1965, pp. 70, 71.

¹¹² Saraswati, 1975, p. 135; Sharma, 1984, p. 241.



FIG. 47. Buddha inscribed as Bodhisattva. Spotted red sandstone. Late first century A.D. From Katra Mound (height 71 cm). Mathura Museum No. A.1.



FIG. 48. Buddha with drapery covering both shoulders. Spotted sandstone. Second century A.D. (height 81 cm). Mathura Museum No. A.4.



FIG. 49. Buddha with Gandhāra influence on cloth. Spotted red sandstone. Second century A.D. From Govindnagar (height 115 cm). Mathura Museum No. 76.17.



FIG. 50. Crowned Bodhisattva head. Spotted red sandstone. Second century A.D. From Kankali Mound (height 50 cm). Lucknow Museum No. B.26.



FIG. 51. Railpost showing a woman squeezing her hair. Spotted red sandstone. Second century A.D. From Naroli (height 61 cm). Mathura Museum No. 18.1509.



FIG. 52. Stair railpost representing a woman with a basket. Red sandstone. Second century A.D. From Kankali well (height 59 cm). Mathura Museum No. 14.369.



FIG. 53. Railpost showing a woman fastening her garment. Red sandstone. First–second century A.D). From Bhuteswar (height 142 cm). Mathura Museum No. J.4.



FIG. 54. Bracket from a gate of the nāga shrine with a woman under a tree. Spotted red sandstone. From Sonkh (height 77.5 cm). Mathura Museum No. SOIV-27.



FIG. 55. Railpost showing Rṣyaśringa in ecstasy. Spotted red sandstone. First–second century A.D. From Chaubara Mound (height 80 cm). Mathura Museum No. J.7.



FIG. 56. Parasol carved with lotus and auspicious motifs. Spotted red sandstone. From Maholi-kipaur (111 × 105 cm). Mathura Museum No. 76.12.