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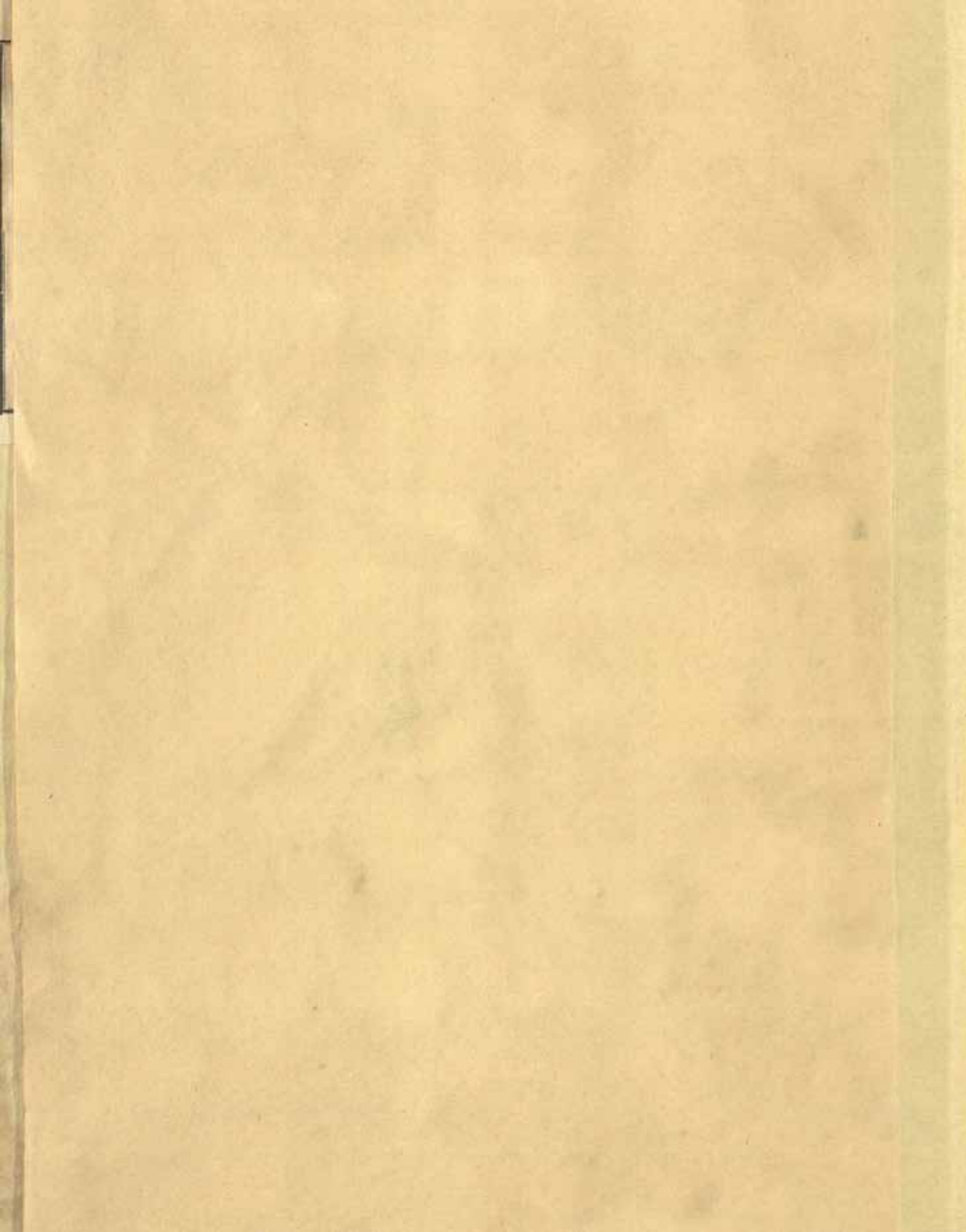
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ROMANA SCULPTURE



GANDHARA SCULPTURE



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in the
National Museum of
Pakistan

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Exhibit arranged by the Department of Archaeology
Government of Pakistan

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PRICE RUPEE ONE



The exhibit of Gandhara Buddhist sculpture in the National Museum in Frere Hall, Karachi, Pakistan, includes not only the museum's own collection, but also sculptures on long term loan from the museums at Peshawar, Taxila and Lahore. This exhibit opens appropriately in 1956, the 2500th anniversary of the birth of the Buddha.

The sculptures with few exceptions have come from the region around Peshawar, known in ancient times as Gandhara, and date from the 2nd to the 7th century A.D., that is seven hundred to twelve hundred years after the death of the Buddha.

Although the Buddha himself never came to Gandhara, the region was converted to Buddhism by the Indian Emperor Asoka in the 3rd century B.C. During the Kushan dynasty, particularly under Kanishka in the 1st century A.D., Buddhist sages made Gandhara a sacred region by the compilation of texts associating local sites with previous incarnations of the Buddha. Stupas were built in the region, and a great monastery grew up at Taxila.

Mediterranean influence, first from Greece by way of Iran, and more directly and for a longer period from the Roman Empire, gave Gandhara sculpture the character which distinguishes it from all other Buddhist art. Western contacts in the region were periodically renewed and destroyed by successive conquerors. Gandhara was a province of the Persian Empire under Darius. In 327 B.C., Alexander advanced as far as Taxila in his conquests, but in 324 the region was consolidated with the Indian Empire of the Maurya dynasty.

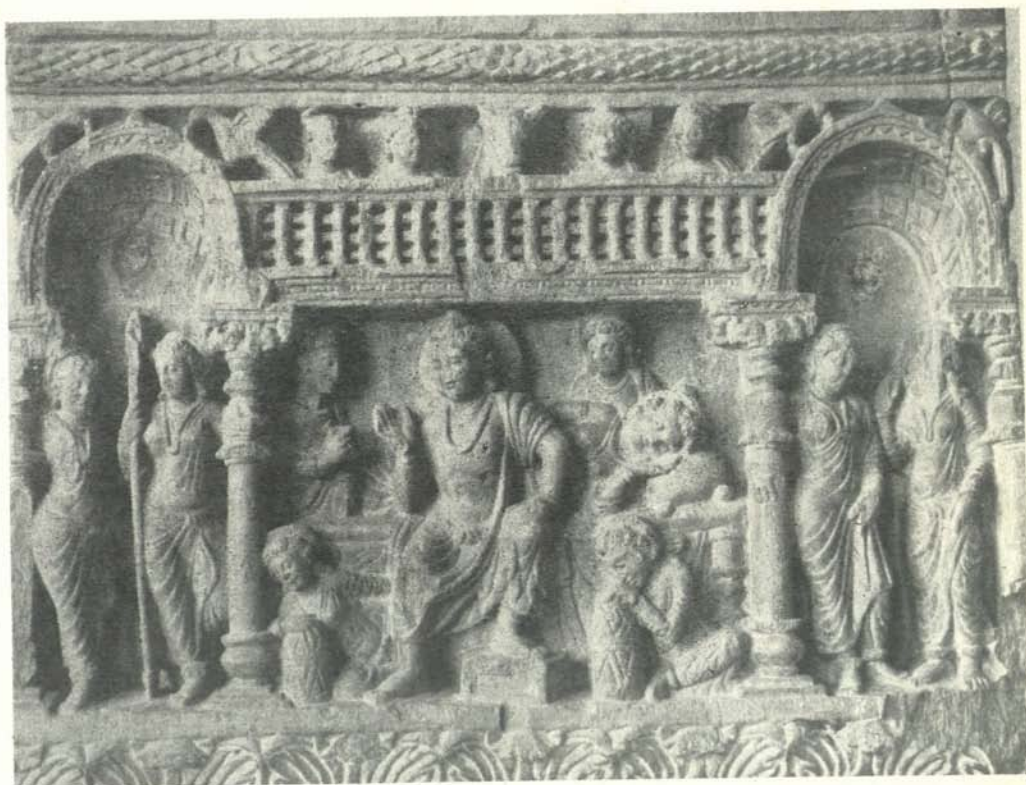


Bodhisattva

In 190 B.C., Gandhara was conquered by the Bactrian kingdom, which although cut off from Greece had perpetuated Hellenistic culture in the area of Iran. In the 1st century B.C., the area was conquered by the Kushans from Turkestan. Under the Kushan Emperor Kanishka in the 2nd century the Buddhist culture of Gandhara was at its height.

At this time the introduction of bands of foreign workmen from the eastern centres of the Roman Empire to provide images and decorated shrines for the devotional cult of Buddhism led to the creation of a Gandhara school. The fusion of Buddhist forms with Mediterranean humanistic style resulted in a unique art much prized today, and forming a part of Pakistan's own cultural heritage.

Gandhara Buddhist culture continued into the 5th century A.D. By the middle of the 5th century, the White Huns began to overrun Gandhara, and eventually destroyed all



The great departure

the Buddhist shrines. Shrines in the region of Afghanistan survived until the 7th century.

Sculptures in this exhibit are of several different types:

Reliefs depicting scenes from the life of the Buddha. These reliefs were used to decorate the walls of stupas. They are all of schist, a native slate, described by the contemporary poet Asvaghosa as "fresh rock dark blue as an elephant's ear". Stories from the life and previous incarnations of the Buddha were elaborated through the centuries, and were repeated continually in Buddhist art and literature. The main incidents were the Conception by a white elephant, the miraculous Birth of Prince Siddhartha to Queen Maya, his Great Departure from the palace in spite of the entreaties of his father and the attractions of his wife Yasodhara, the Great Enlightenment, and numerous miracles.

Figures intended for niches in the walls of stupas and monasteries. These are also of schist and represent either Bodhisattvas or Buddhas. The Bodhisattvas, or early incarnations of

future Buddhas, always have a head-dress, elaborately draped clothing belted at the waist, and jewellery typical of a contemporary ruler. Various symbols identify these Bodhisattvas as the Bodhisattva Sakyamuni, or other traditional Bodhisattvas. Jewels were sometimes set into the head-dress and neck ornaments. The Bodhisattvas are usually standing, as are all the examples in this exhibit with one exception.

The figures of the Buddha are sometimes standing and sometimes seated. None have head-dresses, but all have the ushnisha, and the simple beggar's robe draped from the shoulders. All originally had halos, some of which are still preserved. The webbed fingers, and urna or luminous whorl of hair on the forehead, are clear in some of the sculptures. The varying positions of the hands indicate different mudras, or attitudes. Surrounding figures, and reliefs on the pedestals refer to different incidents in his life.

Head in schist broken from figures of Bodhisattvas or Buddhas.

Heads in stucco from similar figures.

Heads in stucco of lay figures. The stucco medium results in a more plastic style, and also in greater vulnerability.

Figurines in bronze and stone, Gandhara in style, but not always Buddhist in subject.

Heads in terracotta from Kashmir and Jammu, variously assigned from the 6th to the 8th century, which show influences from Iran and Indian Gupta art.



Blossoms with devotional figures

Incidents from the life of the Buddha as told in Buddhist literature, which are illustrated in the Gandhara reliefs.

CONCEPTION OF THE BUDDHA

Jataka Nidakatana

Then . . . the consorts (of the Four Kings) having caused her to bathe in order to remove all human taint they dressed her in divine attire and anointed her with perfumes and decked her with ivine flowers . . . They prepared a divine couch facing the east and laid her upon it. Then the Bodhisatta having assumed the form of a noble white elephant . . . approaching from the north side . . . took a white lotus in his silver coloured trunk, and having trumpeted he entered the golden palace, and, having moved thrice around his mother's couch keeping his right side towards her he touched her right side and, as it were, entered her womb. Thus he had his conception at the end of the Midsummer-full-moon-festival.

BIRTH OF THE BUDDHA

Jataka Nidakatana

The lady Mahamaya, having carried the Budhisatta for ten months in her womb, like oil in a vessel, being near her time and desiring to visit her parents' home, said to Suddhodana the Raja, "I wish, lord, to go to the city of my family . . ." The Raja assented, saying "it is well" . . . and dispatched the lady with a great suite . . . Now between the cities there is a pleasure park of Sal-trees, called the Lumbini Grove . . . The lady on seeing it desired to disport herself in the Sal-tree park and her attendants bearing her entered the grove. Having reached the foot of a noble Sal-tree she wished to take hold of one of the branches . . . She stretched out her hand and took hold of the branch; and at that moment her pains began. Thus grasping the branch of the Sal-tree, and standing, she was delivered . . . Then the inhabitants of both towns took the Bodhisatta and carried him to Kapilavatthu

Buddhacarita i.28 f.

On seeing the miraculous birth of his son, (the Sakya King, Suddodhana) steadfast though he was, much disturbed, and from the affection of a double stream of tears flowed, born of delight and apprehension . . .

Buddhacarita i.60

And the great seer (Asita) wonderingly beheld the prince (with) the soles of his feet marked with the wheel, the circle of hair growing between his eyebrows . . .

MIRACULOUS DISPLAY OF SKILL AT ARCHERY *Jataka Nidakatana*

Whilst (the Bodhisatta) enjoyed much prosperity, these words were said in the assembly of his kinsmen: "Siddhatta's life is devoted to pleasure; not one practical art does he learn. If war broke out what could he do?"

Buddhacarita ii.24

And it took him but a few days to learn the sciences suitable to his race, the mastery of which ordinarily requires many years.

SHELTERED LIFE IN THE PALACE

Buddhacarita ii.25 ff.

But, as the king of the Sakyas had heard from the great seer, Asita, that the prince's future goal would be the supreme beatitude, he feared lest he should go to the forests and therefore he turned him to sensual pleasures. Then from a family possessed of long standing good conduct he summoned for him the goddess of Fortune in the shape of a maiden, Yasodhara by name, of widespread renown, virtuous and endowed with beauty, modesty and gentle bearing. . . Then in the pavilions, white as the clouds of Autumn, with apartments suited to each season and resembling heavenly mansions come down to earth, he passed the time with the noble music of singing-women. For the palace was glorious as Kailasa, with tambourine whose frames were bound with gold and which sounded softly beneath the strokes of women's fingers, and with dances that rivalled those of the beautiful Apsarases. There the women delighted him with their soft voices, charming blandishments, playful intoxications, sweet laughter, curvings of eyebrows and sidelong glances.

Buddhacarita ii.46

Then in the course of time the fair bosomed Yasodhara, bearing her own fame, bore to the son of Suddhodana a son, Rahula by name, with the face of Rahu's adversary.

FIRST TRIP OF THE BUDDHA FROM THE PALACE AND HIS FIRST EXPERIENCE OF OLD AGE, DISEASE AND DEATH

B. iii.18 ff.

Unquiet reigned in the windows then, as the women were crowded together in the mutual press, with their earrings ever agitated by collisions and their ornaments jingling. But the lotus faces of the women, emerging from the windows, and mutually setting their earrings in perpetual motion, seemed like lotuses stuck on to the pavilions. . . . From the narrowness of the windows the faces of these glorious women, with their earrings resting on each other's cheeks, seemed like bunches of lotus flowers tied to the windows. The women looking down at the prince in the street, seemed as if wishing to descend to earth. . . .

(The chariot driver) . . . told the prince the matter he should have withheld: "Old age, it is called, that which has broken him down—the murderer of beauty, the ruin of vigour, the birth-place of sorrow, the grave of pleasure, the destroyer of memory, the enemy of the senses."

"Who is this man with swollen belly and body that heaves with his paining? His shoulders and arms are fallen in, his limbs emaciated and pale. . . ."

Then the charioteer replied to him, "Good sir, it is the mighty misfortune called disease, de-

veloped in full force from the disorder of the humours, that has made this man, once so competent, no longer master of himself....”

Then as the king's son was going along... (he saw a) corpse being borne along. “Who is being carried along yonder by four men and followed by a dejected company? He is dressed out gorgeously and yet they bewail him”. Then the driver... explained the matter... “This is someone or other, lying bereft of intellect, senses, breath and qualities, unconscious and become like a mere log or bundle of grass. He was brought up and cherished most lovingly with every care and now he is being abandoned... This is the last act for all creatures. Destruction is inevitable for all in the world, be he of low, or middle or high degree.”

ATTEMPTS TO PERSUADE THE BUDDHA TO STAY IN THE PALACE

Buddhacarita vi.25 ff.

As if somewhat frightened, the women made gestures designed to cause rapture with brows looks, and blandishments, with laughter, frolicking and movements... Then surrounded by the women, the prince wandered through the garden, like an elephant through the Himalayan forest, accompanied by a herd of females.

Buddhacarita v.3

He went out, mounted on the good horse Kanthaka, the bells of whose bit were of fresh gold and whose golden trappings were beautified with waving chowries, and so he resembled a karnikara emblem mounted on a flagpole.....

Then the noblest of the women waited with musical instruments on him... But even those splendid instruments, like though they were to the music of the gods, failed to delight or thrill him; the one desire of the saintly prince was to leave his house in search of the bliss of the highest good, and therefore he did not rejoice.

“THE GREAT DEPARTURE” FROM THE PALACE

Buddhacarita v.47 ff.

Thereon the Akanistha deities... all at once brought sleep there over the women and distorted the gestures of their limbs. So one, as she lay there, supported her cheek on an unsteady hand, and, as if angry, abandoned the flute in her lap... Another lying with her bamboo pipe in her hands and her white robe slipping off her breasts... Similarly a third was sleeping, clasping her drum, as if it were her lover... So others, decked with ornaments of fresh gold... fell down helpless with deep sleep, like karnikara boughs broken by an elephant... Another again had her lotus-face bowed down... so that it took the likeness of a lotus with its stalk half curved, as it is shaken by a karandava bird standing on it.

He awoke the groom, the swift-footed Chandaka, and addressed him thus: “Quickly bring the horse Kanthaka; I desire to depart hence today to reach deathlessness.....”

Then he brought for his master that noble steed, who was endowed with strength, mettle, speed and breeding. A golden bit filled his mouth and a light stall blanket covered his back. . . The broad-chested prince embraced him and patted him with a lotus-like hand. . . . Thereon the good horse suppressed all noise, that would seem terrifying in the night-time or might awaken the attendants; his jaws were soundless and he silenced his neighing, as he went forth with steady steps. Then the Yaksas bowed down their bodies and bore up his hoofs off the ground with the tips of their hands, that thrilled with joy; their forearms were adorned with golden bands and their hands were like lotuses, so that they seemed to be throwing lotuses beneath him. The city gatehouses, which were closed with gates furnished with heavy bars and which could not easily have been forced even by elephants, opened noiselessly of their own accord as the king's son passed along.

CASTING OFF THE TURBAN

Buddhacarita vi. 56 ff.

Then he resolutely took from Chanda's hand the sharp sword which had a jewelled hilt, and drew it from its scabbard. . . . he cut off his decorated head-dress with the hair enclosed in it and tossed it with the muslin trailing from it into the air, as though tossing a goose into a lake. And the inhabitants of Heaven caught it reverently, as it was thrown, with the intention of worshipping it, and the divine hosts paid it due adoration in Heaven with celestial honours.

DONNING THE HERMITS OCHRE-COLOURED ROBE

Buddhacarita vi. 59 ff.

. . . . He looked at his garments with their embroidery of golden geese, and in his steadfastness longed for a hermit's robe.

Then an inhabitant of heaven took on the form of a hunter of deer and approached him, wearing ochre-coloured clothes. To him the scion of the Sakya king spake: "Your holy ochre-coloured robe, the mark of a seer, does not go with this murderous bow. Therefore, good sir, if you are not attached to it, hand it over to me and accept this one of mine." . . . Then with the greatest joy he took the hermit's dress and gave up the silk raiment.

ASCETICISM

Buddhacarita vii. 20 ff.

"Seeing that asceticism in its varied kinds is suffering by nature, and that the reward of asceticism is Paradise at the highest, and that all worlds are subject to change, truly this labour of the hermitages is to small effect. . . . And he who by the bodily toils known as austerities strives for the continuance of being in order to indulge passion, does not perceive the evils of the cycle of existence and seeks by suffering nothing but suffering. . . . But your dharma aims at Paradise, while my desire is for release from rebirth and leads me not to wish to dwell in this grove. For the dharma of cessation from activity is apart from the continuance of active being.

FASTING

Buddhacarita xii. 94 ff.

He undertook extraordinary austerities by starvation, thinking that might be the method for ending birth and death. . . . Carrying out many kinds of fasting that are difficult for a man to perform, for six years in his desire for quietude he made his body emaciated. . . . Whatever his body lost by reason of these austerities, just so much was made good again through his psychic power. . . . Though he had wasted away, so that only skin and bone remained, with fat, flesh and blood all gone, yet with undiminished depth of soul he shone like the ocean, whose depth never diminishes. . . . "This is not the way of life for passionlessness, for enlightenment, for liberation. . . . How can the result to be obtained by the mind be reached by a man who is not calmly at ease and who is so worn out with the exhaustion of hunger and thirst that his mind is unbalanced with the exhaustion?"

THE PASSIONS SPURNED

Buddhacarita xi. 19 ff.

Who would swallow the poison known as the passions, when he knows how paltry is the flavour of the objects of sense, how great the bondage, how incomplete the satisfaction, how much despised by the good, and how certain the sin? . . .

Since the pairs gain and loss. . . . are attached to everything in the world, therefore there is no man on earth who is absolutely happy or absolutely miserable. When I see how intermingled are the natures of pleasure and suffering, I deem kingship and slavery to be alike; for a king is not ever happy, nor a slave always in distress.

I deem the highest goal of a man to be the stage in which there is neither old age nor fear, nor disease, nor birth, nor death, nor anxieties, and in which there is not continuous renewal of activity.

Therefore whether a man be in the prime of life or old or a child, he should haste so to act that, purified in soul and endowed with dharma, he may come into possession of the desired continuance or cessation of activity.

DEFEAT OF MARA

Buddhacarita xiii. 18 ff.

Then as soon as Mara thought of his army in his desire to obstruct the tranquillity of the Sakya sage, his followers stood round him, in various forms and carrying lances, trees, javelins, clubs and swords in their hands; having the faces of boars, fishes, horses, asses and camels. . . . one-eyed, many-mouthed, three-headed with pendulous bellies and speckled bellies. . . . ashy grey in colour, tricked out with red spots, carrying ascetic's staves. . . . with pendant ears like elephants. . . tall as toddy-palms and grasping stakes or of the stature of children with projecting tusks. . . with dishevelled hair, or with top-knots and half-shaven polls. . . .

As they stood there in such guise horrible in appearance and manner, he was no more alarmed by them or shrank before them than before over-excited infants at play.

The less the sage was afraid of the fearsome troops of that array, the more was Mara, the enemy of the upholders of the Law, cast down with grief and wrath....

He went away dejectedly with the arrows by which the world is smitten in the heart.. Then his host fled in all directions, its elation gone... its logs, rocks and trees scattered everywhere, like a hostile army whose chief has been slain by the foe.

THE GREAT ENLIGHTENMENT

Buddacarita xii. 116 ff.

Then Kala, the best of serpents, whose might was that of the king of elephants, was awakened by the incomparable sound of his feet, and realizing that the great sage had determined on enlightenment, he uttered this eulogy.. "Since O lotus-eyed one, the flocks of blue jays circling in the air, proceed round you right-handed, and since gentle breezes blow in the sky, today without doubt you will become a Buddha".

Then he took up the supreme, immovable cross-legged posture with his limbs massed together like the coils of the sleeping serpent, saying, "I will not rise from this position on the ground till I achieve the completion of my task."

Buddhacarita xiv. 86 ff.

At the moment of the fourth watch when the dawn came up and all that moves or moves not was stilled, the great seer reached the stage which knows no alteration, the sovereign state of omniscience. When, as the Buddha, he knew this truth, the earth swayed like a woman drunken with wine, the quarters shone bright with crowds of Siddhas, and mighty drums resounded in the sky.

The companies of deities, who are devoted to salvation, rejoiced. Then for seven days, free from discomfort of body, he sat looking into his own mind, his eyes never winking.

INSTIGATION OF THE BUDDHA

Buddhacarita xiv. 96 ff.

Seeing that the world was lost in false views and vain efforts and that its passions were gross, seeing too that the law of salvation was exceeding subtle, he set his mind on remaining immobile.

Then when the two chiefs of the heavenly dwellings knew that the Sugata's mind had taken the decision to preach tranquillity, they were filled with the desire for the world's benefit, and, shining brightly, approached him... "O sage, having yourself crossed beyond the ocean of existence, rescue the world which is drowning in suffering, and, like a great merchant his wealth bestow your excellencies on others also... It is hard to find in this world or in heaven one who will be active for the good of the world." After thus addressing the great seer, they returned to the celestial sphere by the way they had come. After the sage also had pondered on that speech, the decision grew strong in him for the liberation of the world.

MIRACLE OF THE BEGGING BOWL

Buddhacarita xiv, 104

At the time for the alms-round the gods of the four quarters presented the seer with begging-bowls; Gautama, accepting the four, turned them into one for the sake of his dharma.

DEATH MAHA-PARINIBBANA-SUTTANTA

Then the Blessed One together with a great assemblage of mendicant brothers went onward to the other side of the river Hirannavati to the Kusinara Bend of the Mallans, the Sal-tree Grove. When he had come there he instructed the venerable Ananda saying: "Pray, Ananda, arrange for me the platform with its head to the north between the twin Sal-tree; I am tired, Ananda, and will lie down" . . . Then the Blessed One attained the first trance. . . Emerging from the first trance he attained the second trance; emerging from the second trance he attained the third trance; emerging from the third trance he attained the fourth trance. Emerging from the fourth trance the Blessed One immediately died. . . When the Blessed One died many Bikkhus there who had not overcome desire wailed stretching out their arms, fell prone, rocked themselves backwards and forwards saying: "Too soon has the Blessed One died" . . . But those Bikkhus who had overcome desire, self-scrutinizing, comprehending, endured saying: "Transient is individuality; and how in this case is it possible otherwise?"

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Edited by J. G. Jennings

Oxford University Press, 1947

THE BUDDHACARITA

Translated by E. H. Johnston

University of Punjab, Lahore, 1936



Hand holding bough



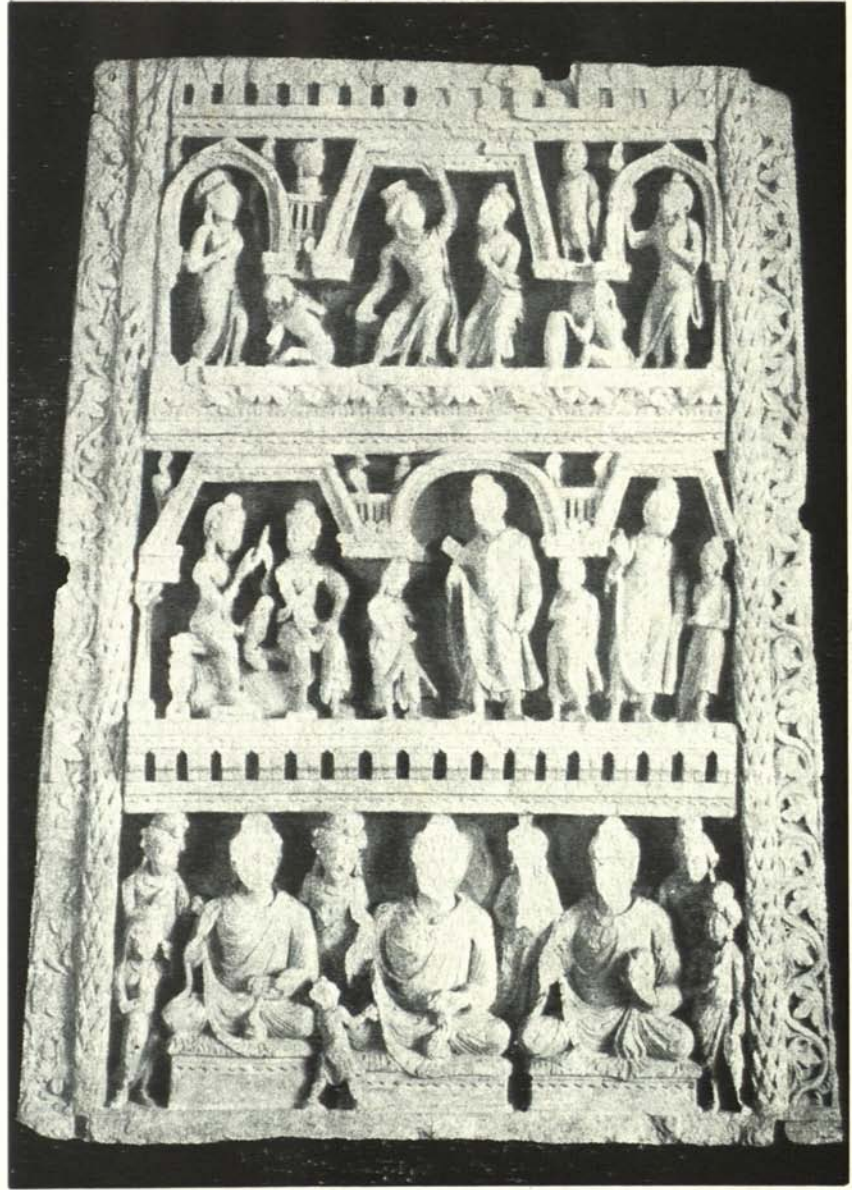
The Buddha



Queen Maya giving birth to the Buddha



Bodhisattva



Palace Scenes



The great departure



*The Buddha with an
Ascetic*



The great miracle of Sravasti



Bodhisattva in Abhaya Mudra



Victory over the Serpent



The Buddha in Dhyana Mudra



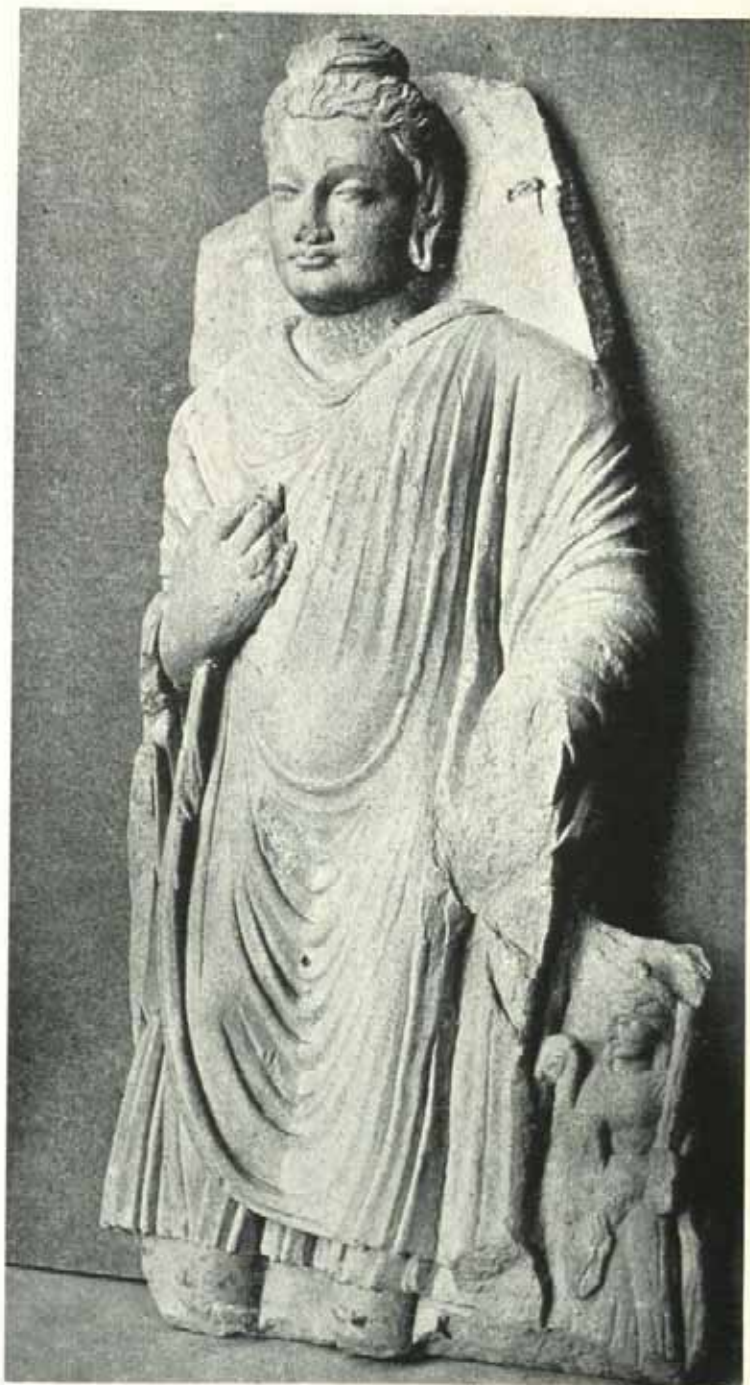
Bodhisattva



Bodhisattva in Dhyana Mudra



The Buddha in Dharmachakra Mudra



The Buddha



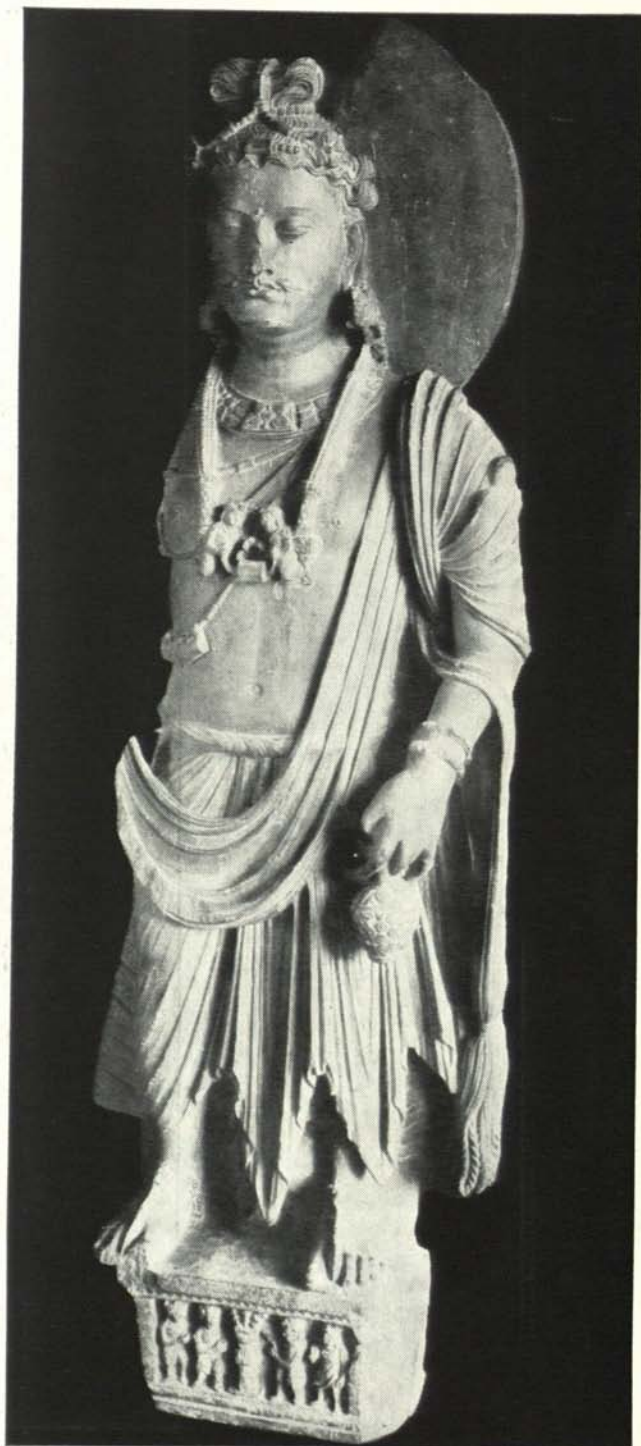
The Buddha



Bodhisattva



Bodhisattva



Bodhisattva



Bodhisattva



The Buddha in Dhyana Mudra



The Buddha



Relief head of Bodhisattva



The Buddha in Dharmachakra Mudra



Dharmachakra Mudra



Head with helmet



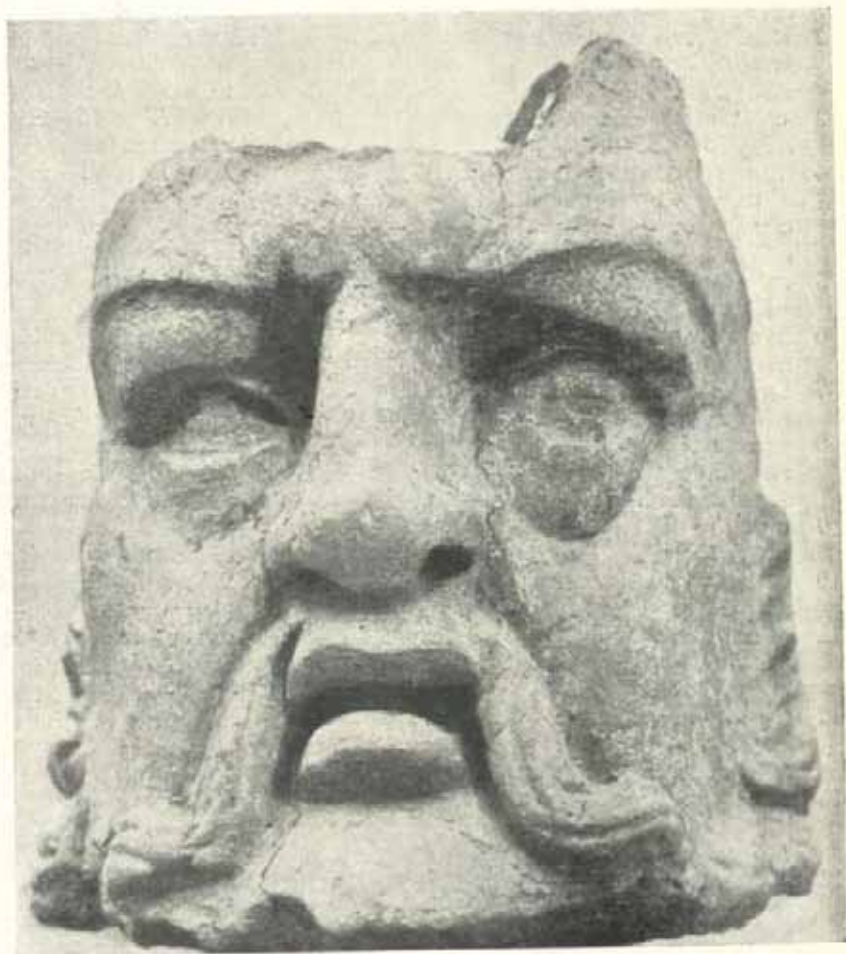
Head



*Female figurine holding
cloth bag*



Female head



Mask-like male head

Catalogue

Sculptures are of schist unless otherwise indicated. Dimensions are in centimeters; height precedes width. The museum of origin is noted, with former catalogue number when known, using the following abbreviations:

National Museum of Pakistan, Karachi—K.

Peshawar Museum—P.

Archaeological Museum of Taxila—T.

Central Museum Lahore—L.

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Siddartha and Yasodhara with baby
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Siddartha departing with horse's hoofs
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Siddartha departing on Kanthaka with
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<i>relief</i> 68½ × 52
Palace scene with musicians
Siddartha in palace
Seated Buddhas with attendant figures</p> <p>25 THE GREAT DEPARTURE
<i>relief</i> 62 × 46
Siddartha and Yasodhara entertained
by musicians
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dhara and musicians asleep—L. 567</p> <p>26 THE BUDDHA
<i>standing figure</i> 64 × 28</p> <p>27 WORSHIP OF THE BUDDHA'S BOWL
<i>relief</i> 33 × 19—P. 1702</p> |
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- 30 DEFEAT OF MARA
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standing figure on decorated pedestal
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