

# The *Graeco-Buddhist style of Gandhara* – a ‘Storia ideologica’, or: how a discourse makes a global history of art

Michael Falser

## Going transcultural: from World Art History to Global Art History

In the last two decades, the discipline of art history has entered a new stage of methodological debate. The ever-present challenge of what is generally summarized as globalisation (a term which, for our specific focus, describes the accelerating circulation of (a) migrating global elites, (b) aesthetic concepts and operative terms in the humanities, and (c) – last but not least – artefacts from all over the world *for* all kinds of exhibition environments around the planet) has certainly triggered this discussion. Various attempts have been undertaken to configure a kind of ‘World Art History’ – from David Summers’ *Real Spaces: World Art History and the Rise of Western Modernism* to John Onians’ *Art, Culture, Nature: From Art History to World Art Studies* in 2006; or from James Elkins’ volume *Is Art History Global?* (2007) to Kitty Zijlmans’ and Wilfried van Damme’s *World Art Studies: Exploring Concepts and Approaches* (2008). The term ‘World Art History’ can be – broadly speaking – understood as an additive container to bring together all different historical strands and traditions of art historical terminologies and investigative practices – be they (supposedly vernacular and/or culturally homogeneous) regional or national (institutionalized) – from the last one hundred and fifty years, into one globally valid super-discipline. But what about the term ‘Global Art History’?

In the German-speaking context, Hans Belting’s and Andrea Buddensieg’s 2011 exhibition *Global Studies: Mapping Contemporary Art and Culture* for the ZKM (*Zentrum für Kunst und Medientechnologie*) in Karlsruhe, used the term ‘Global Art’ in the context of contemporary artistic productions that staged primarily non-Western art – albeit through very Western lenses – within exhibitions and mega-shows. By this time, the first German-speaking Chair of Global Art History with Prof. Monica Juneja, had already been established (since 2008) within the *Cluster of Excellence Asia and Europe in a Global Context – The Dynamics of Transculturality* at Heidelberg University. In her contribution to the above-mentioned exhibition catalogue, Juneja focused on non-Western artists who were forced by Western curatorial practices to perform their cultural identity through an ever-recognisable kind of self-indigenising art practice. Additionally, she criticised various ‘World Art History’ approaches and formulated a rough questionnaire on how a new discipline of Global Art History could become operational. Was the originally Western discipline

of art history participating in the 19<sup>th</sup>-century 'territorial-cum-political logic of modern nation-states' by (a) establishing supposedly universal taxonomies of art forms from all around the world, and (b), labelling artworks as, for example, 'Islamic' or 'Modernist' and subordinating them hierarchically within the civilizational categories of Europe's institutional (such as violent colonial) regimes? A global approach would – according to Juneja's counter-position to the above-mentioned works advocating 'World Art History' – necessitate a decidedly transcultural methodology: 'Casting art history in a global/transcultural frame would involve questioning the taxonomies and values that have been built into the discipline since its inception and have been taken as universal'. This approach would call for: 'new units of investigation that are more responsive to the logic of objects and artists on the move [as] historical units and boundaries cannot be taken as given; rather, they have to be constituted as a subject of investigation, as products of spatial and cultural displacements, [being] defined as participants in and as contingent upon the historical relationships in which they are implicated'.<sup>1</sup> As Juneja explained further in her introduction 'Kunstgeschichte und kulturelle Differenz' to the themed volume *Universalität der Kunstgeschichte?* in the *kritische berichte* of 2012, the aim of a transculturally embedded art history was 'to flesh out the multiple processes of appropriation, differentiation, reconfiguration and translation in new correlations in order to interrogate the constitutive repercussions of these processes on the participating agents and visual systems'.<sup>2</sup> Following a conference in 2011 which I led for the *Chair of Global Art History* (at the same research cluster at Heidelberg),<sup>3</sup> an edited volume called *Kulturerbe – Denkmalpflege: transkulturell. Grenzgänge zwischen Theorie und Praxis* (2013) was published that set out the overall methodological approach for this paper. That is to say, it discussed the notion of 'transculturality' 'in the context of various architectural and stylistic configurations that had been conceived as *cultural heritage* through changing political and institutional regimes, individual scientific researchers and their applied disciplines of art and architectural history, archaeology and building conservation.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Monica Juneja, 'Global Art History and the "Burden of Representation"', in Hans Belting, Andrea Buddensieg (eds.), *Global Studies: Mapping Contemporary Art and Culture*, Stuttgart: Hatje Cantz, 2011, 274–97, here 281.

<sup>2</sup> Monica Juneja, 'Kunstgeschichte und kulturelle Differenz. Eine Einleitung', in Monica Juneja, Matthias Bruhn, Elke Werner (eds.), *Kritische Berichte – Zeitschrift für Kunst- und Kulturwissenschaften*, theme issue: Die Universalität der Kunstgeschichte, 40: 2, 2012, 6–12, here 7.

<sup>3</sup> The homepage of this conference, accessed January 11, 2015: <http://www.asia-europe.uni-heidelberg.de/en/research/d-historicities-heritage/d12/konferenz-kulturerbe-denkmalpflege-transkulturell.html>.

<sup>4</sup> Michael Falser, Monica Juneja (eds.), *Kulturerbe – Denkmalpflege: transkulturell. Grenzgänge zwischen Theorie und Praxis*, Bielefeld: Transcript, 2013. Relevant for this context see the volume's methodological introduction of the editors (17–34).

Tackling these open questions would – within the specific context here – also necessitate overcoming the old-fashioned methodology of so-called ‘Area Studies’, with their often reductive and rather exclusive historically or stylistically determined subjects of inquiry (such as ‘Hellenism’ or ‘Buddhism’), their territorially large – and therefore culturally often fuzzy – zones such as ‘South Asia’ or ‘Central Asia’, and their boundary-fixed nation state-like denominations such as India, Pakistan or Afghanistan. From this methodological viewpoint, we will be interested in the *concrete agency* through which different speakers over a long period of modern time – within an originally Western discipline of art and architectural history and changing institutional regimes – have helped to form a specific art historical and stylistic unit of investigation for very different ideological purposes.

### **Intentions and working steps: contextualizing the style of Gandhara**

This paper will not investigate the present globalized tendency to stereotype contemporary non-Western artists by their labelling with essentialist cultural denominations (such as ‘traditional’ or ‘Indian’) drawn from a reinvented long-gone past. Rather, we will take the opposite approach to show how a specific art historical entity of the past has, to this day, been (re)invented by Western colonial regimes and postcolonial nation-states alike to politically justify and culturally stabilize their own changing identities. This specific art form, which materialized almost 2000 years ago, has been identified by eminent archaeologists and art historians from the mid-nineteenth century to the present, as the *art* (and not the culturo-political entity) *of Gandhara*. It originates from a specific geographical area in the northwestern part of the Subindian continent which – from a European point of view – Alexander the Great reached around 326 BCE towards the end of his east-bound military campaign. He and his successors left considerable (in our case archaeological and art historical) traces, which remained until King Kanishka’s Kushana Empire (first and second centuries CE) and were considerably enriched through Roman influences far into the sixth century. From a mere geographical point of view, popular maps today locate Gandhara in the transborder-zone between Pakistan and Afghanistan (Fig. 1a). Maps with a historical, quasi pre-national approach focus on a core zone between the ancient cities of Peshawar and Taxila (Fig. 1b), even if some authors tend to blur this more precise denomination of Gandhara with adding Swat Valley to it. More recent research, however, tried to conceptualise Gandhara (a term already found in both Greek and Achaemenid sources) more as a social and political entity within the Kushana Empire than to describe it under mere art historical considerations of stylistic developments.



Figure 1a. The core area of ancient Gandhara in today's border zone between the actual nation states of Pakistan and Afghanistan [Asia Society Museum, *The Buddhist Heritage of Pakistan. Art of Gandhara*, New York: Asia Society, 2011, 40; Dirk Fabian, ingraphis.de (Kassel), for Kunst- und Ausstellungshalle Deutschland, Bonn]

Figure 1b. The core area of Gandhara with a dense network of historic cities and archaeological sites [Elisabeth Errington, Veste Sarkhosh Curtis (eds.), *From Persepolis to Punjab*, London: The British Museum Press, 2007, 213]

However, leaving this Classical 'Area Studies' approach aside in favour of the transcultural approach of a 'Global Art History', this paper does not provide an addition to the 150-year-long enquiry into the quasi-ontological, formal and iconographic characteristics of sculptures and architectural decorations which manifest the *Gandhara style* (dated by various art historians roughly from the first century BCE until the sixth CE). Instead, the following analysis will focus on the different authors of the discourses, narratives and cited material sources themselves which constituted Gandhara as an art historical, stylistic entity. These range from publications such as texts and photographs in guides, articles, books and lectures, to specific localities such as archaeological sites and museum displays. This topic has remained, from the beginnings of art history in the context of British colonialism around 1850, until the formation of the modern nation states of Pakistan and Afghanistan, a surprisingly hotly-debated issue.

In this context, this paper has three intentions:

- a) To question the stylistic essences such as 'classical Greek', 'Buddhist', or – in our specific case – 'Graeco-Buddhist', as well as that of the geographical and territorial/national attributions, such as 'European' or (Western, Southern etc.) 'Asian', 'Indian' or 'Pakistani'. We will move towards a historicisation of these labels as contested entities – through the identification of the agents involved in their institutional regimes, and ideological and aesthetic background convictions.
- b) The relativisation of the operational (supposedly neutral) terms of art history, such as stylistic 'purity and origin', 'influence, transfer and borrowing'. This will facilitate an understanding of the multi-faceted and ongoing processes of the negotiation and (re-)semantisation of stylistic entities (in our case Graeco-Buddhist), within changing culturo-political frameworks.
- c) The respective contextualization of the (originally Western) disciplines of archaeology and art/ architectural history, and their instruments of canonisation, within discourses about an antiquarian identity, and national or universal cultural heritage. This will reveal these disciplines' involvements in colonial and actual conflict-ridden phenomena of cultural fundamentalism and (re-) nationalisation.

This paper will discuss these three intentions with reference to certain agents who were of primary importance in influencing the 150-year-long trajectory of the Graeco-Buddhist style formation:

- 1) The Eurocentric establishment of the stylistic denomination 'Graeco-Buddhist' during British colonialism in India, and its development from the beginnings of colonial archaeology under Alexander Cunningham in the 1860s and later, through the style's integration into the first world architectural history by James Fergusson before and around 1900, to the archaeological investigations under John Marshall and the stylistic analyses of the French Orientalist Alfred Foucher of the 1920s. It concludes with an extended excursion into the parallel interpretation by the Austrian art historian Josef Strzygowski.

- 2) The Indian, anti-colonial and nativist-nationalist art/architectural historiography of the Sri Lanka-born art historian Ananda Coomaraswamy around the 1920s.
- 3) The period of independence and post-partition of India, Pakistan and Afghanistan of the 1950s to the 2010s with the methodological pluralizing, scientific internationalizing and – at the same time – stylistic regionalizing and diversification of the Graeco-Buddhist style formation; by quoting the British archaeologist Sir Mortimer Wheeler, his Italian counterpart Maurizio Taddei and the latest research initiatives in the area.
- 4) The phase of a re-nationalization (nationalist appropriation) of the Graeco-Buddhist style formation as part of a declared, nationally and/or universally valid cultural heritage of the nation states of Pakistan and Afghanistan (exhibitions play an important role), in the sense of a kind of ‘counter-iconoclasm’ in the aftermath of the destructive attacks of 2001 against the Buddha figures of Bamiyan and the World Trade Centre in New York.

### 1. Establishing the colonial notion of a ‘Graeco-Buddhist’ style of Gandhara

In his paper *Inside the Wonder House: Buddhist art in the West*, the art historian Stanley Abe noted that around 1820 the emerging enthusiasm of British colonial civil servants for investigating (primarily Buddhist) sites in India can be seen (a) as a result of the rising disciplines of classical archaeology and art history as a modern means of scientific investigation; and (b) as a side-effect of the neo-classical revival in the late eighteenth century in Europe, itself a symptom of romantic Philhellenism.<sup>5</sup> In line with the German archaeologist and art historian Johann Joachim Winckelmann’s periodizations of style as formative, mature and decadent (set out in his ground-breaking study of 1764, *Geschichte der Kunst des Alterthums*), Greek antiquity in the form of a European ‘classic’ was, according to Abe’s interpretation, associated with aesthetic and political authority. As a consequence, the myth of the conquest of Central Asia by Alexander the Great and his successors’ Hellenistic outposts from Bactria to Northern India (the area in which what was later called Graeco-Buddhist influence and style is found) accorded with the new European claim of political leadership in India, and its cultural mission to civilize the colonized sub-continent through a declared cultural heritage.<sup>6</sup> But how was the topos of a cultural transfer from Europe to Asia to be proved at this time? This was the early nineteenth century, after all, when concrete archaeological evidence was still extremely rare and the provinces of the Punjab and the North-West-Frontier

<sup>5</sup> Stanley K. Abe, ‘Inside the Wonder House. Buddhist Art and the West’, in Donald S. Lopez (ed.), *Curators of the Buddha. The Study of Buddhism under Colonialism*, Chicago and London: Chicago University Press, 1995, 63–106, here 70.

<sup>6</sup> Compare Michael Falser (ed.), *Cultural Heritage as Civilizing Mission. From Decay to Recovery*, Proceedings of the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Workshop on Cultural Heritage and the Temples of Angkor (Chair of Global Art History, Heidelberg University, 8–10 May 2011), Heidelberg, New York, Dordrecht and London: Springer, 2015.

were yet to be incorporated into the British-colonial hemisphere (this occurred in the second half of the century).

As a starting point, recently discovered ancient coins were used to substantiate the claim of a continuing Greek heritage in Central and South Asia. One of the earliest articles in this context was 'An account of Greek, Parthian, and Hindu medals, found in India' by Major James Tod,<sup>7</sup> and 'On the Greek Coins in the Cabinet of the Asiatic Society' in the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* by James Prinsep,<sup>8</sup> the secretary of the (*Royal*) *Asiatic Society* (founded in 1784 in Calcutta). In these studies, long series of similar images of kings from Macedonia to Bactria and the post-Alexander-Seleucids were depicted (Figs. 2a-c). More detailed publications followed, such as 'Coins of Indian Buddhist Satraps with Greek Inscriptions'<sup>9</sup> or 'Coins of Alexander's Successors in the East, the Greeks and Indo-Scythians'<sup>10</sup>. Both were written by the army engineer Alexander Cunningham (1814–1893) who was appointed Archaeological Surveyor to the government of India in 1861 and who became the first Director General of the newly-founded *Archaeological Survey of India* (ASI) in 1871. The depictions on one particularly well-known coin, of the Kushana king Kanishka from the second century AD on the obverse side, and Buddha (with the Greek form of the name 'Boddo') on its verso side (compare Figs. 6b or 11a), provided convincing evidence of both political and aesthetic Hellenistic influences in the region. In his 1871 publication *The Ancient Geography of India – The Buddhist Period including the Campaigns of Alexander and the Travels of Hweng Tshang*, Cunningham continued to substantiate this colonial claim by following old Chinese travel reports.<sup>11</sup> At the same time, he pillaged the most important Buddhist site in India in a much less scientific and archaeologically correct manner. Among others, these were the famous stupa of Dhamek in Sarnath, the site of the first prayer of Buddha, in 1843, or the stupa of Sanchi in the 1850s.<sup>12</sup> This dramatic impact on India's archaeological heritage was slightly softened when James Burgess succeeded Cunningham in 1885/86 as Director General of the ASI, at a time when the powerful

<sup>7</sup> James Tod, 'An Account of Greek, Parthian and Hindu Medals, Found in India', *Transactions of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 1, 1827, 313–342.

<sup>8</sup> James Prinsep, 'On the Greek Coins in the Cabinet of the Asiatic Society', *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1833, 27–43.

<sup>9</sup> Alexander Cunningham, 'Coins of Indian Buddhist Satraps with Greek Inscriptions', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 23, 1854, 679–713.

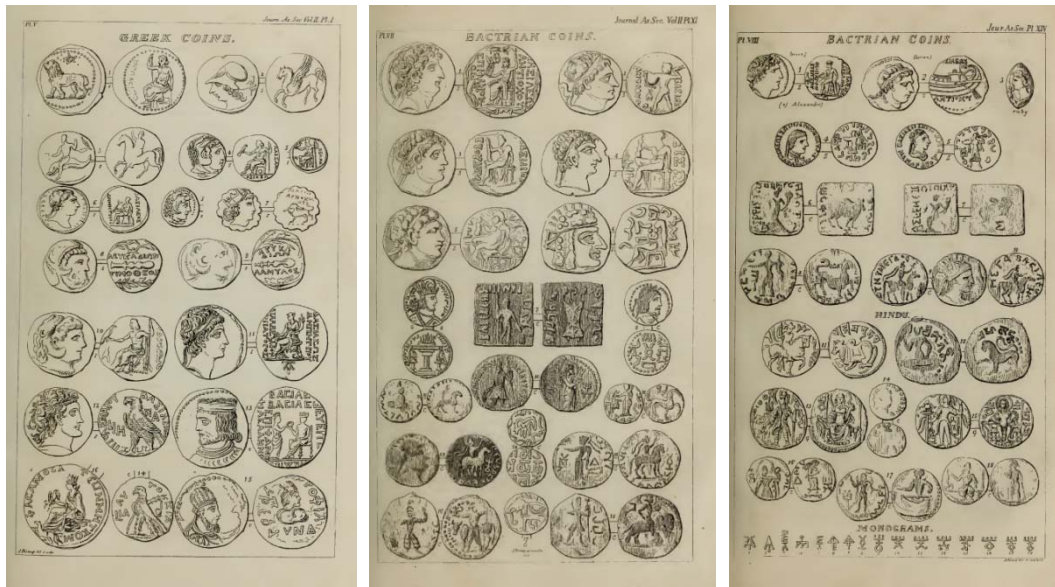
<sup>10</sup> Alexander Cunningham, *Coins of Alexander's Successors in the East, the Greeks and Indo-Scythians*, London, 1869.

<sup>11</sup> Alexander Cunningham, *The Ancient Geography of India. The Buddhist Period, including the Campaigns of Alexander, and the Travels of Hwen-Tshang*, London: Trübner and Co., 1871.

Compare Alexander Cunningham, *Coins of Ancient India from the Earliest Times to the 7<sup>th</sup> c. AD*, London: B. Quaritch, 1891.

<sup>12</sup> For an analysis of Cunningham's archaeological work, Abu Imam, 'Sir Alexander Cunningham (1814–1893): The First Phase of Indian Archaeology', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 95: 3–4, October 1963, 194–207; Abu Iman, *Sir Alexander Cunningham and the Beginnings of Indian Archaeology*, Dacca: Asiatic Society of Pakistan, 1966.

ideas of John Ruskin, and William Morris's Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (known as the 'anti-scrape movement') were reshaping conservation ideologies in Britain and its colonies.



Figures 2a–c. Greek, Bactrian and Hindu coins as depicted in James Prinsep article of 1833 *On the Greek Coins in the Cabinet of the Asiatic Society* [James Prinsep, 'On the Greek Coins in the Cabinet of the Asiatic Society', *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1833, plates V, VII, VIII]

When the Scotsman, indigo merchant, and classically-trained amateur architect James Fergusson (1808–86) published what was perhaps the first comparative world history of architecture in 1855, *The Illustrated Handbook of Architecture*, he still described the great civilizations from Mexico to India and China as without 'internal relations with those of the West', despite Alexander the Great's 'paths [...] to the boundaries' of India being briefly mentioned.<sup>13</sup> Just a few years earlier, his 1849 *Historical Inquiry into the True Principles of Beauty in Art, more especially with Reference to Architecture* had not only reconfirmed an already-canonised architectural history with its Eurocentric focus on a Mediterranean Antiquity from Egypt to 'Western Asia' (with Assyria, Syria and Asia Minor) and from Greece to Etruria and Rome. It had also reinforced a rough racial separation between the 'great Semitic race' – with its 'branches [of the] Arabs and Jews' – and the 'great Indo-Germanic race [emerging] from Central Asia' – with 'the distinct and powerful Pelasgic race [as] colonies from Western Asia' in later Greece and Italy.<sup>14</sup> What Fergusson described here mirrored the parallel efforts being made by comparative philologists interested in Sanskrit, to formulate a common Indo-

<sup>13</sup> James Fergusson, *Illustrated Handbook of Architecture*, London: John Murray, 1855, viii, 1.

<sup>14</sup> James Fergusson, *An Historical Inquiry into the True Principles of Beauty in Art, more especially with Reference to Architecture*, London: Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans, 1849, 263–264.



European culture in the form of a kind of ‘linguistic “race” [within] a prestigious and vivid social context’. This context was in fact pinned onto Victorian prejudices to prove India’s historical *and* contemporary ‘inferiority in order to justify British Indian imperialism’.<sup>15</sup>

On the basis of his own extended surveys, comparative photographic documentation, and Cunningham’s findings from the 1850s onwards (in his *Archaeological Reports* from the 1860s about Buddhist sites in North-western India)<sup>16</sup> Fergusson’s *History of Indian and Eastern Architecture* (1876) – which appeared as the third volume of his *History of Architecture in all Countries* – painted a more detailed picture. It was – necessarily, as we would like to argue – based on his audience’s ‘preconception born of [cultural, political and aesthetical] familiarity’.<sup>17</sup> For example, Fergusson’s appraisal of India’s Moghul architecture, such as the Taj Mahal, while downplaying Hindu architecture as exaggerated, barbarous and decadent, reflected the Victorian taste for stylistic elegance and order (which his British colleague Owen Jones had explored on a global scale in his ground-breaking work *Grammar of the Ornament* (1856)). But his study also echoed the imperial attitude and grandeur of the Western colonialists, as this late imperial architecture was projected onto the ambitions of the British Empire.<sup>18</sup>

However, the situation was a bit different when Fergusson tackled the issue of ‘Buddhist architecture’ in general, and of ‘Gandharan monasteries’ in particular. Having assumed that India’s ‘rock-cut temples’, such as Ajanta and Ellora, could be traced back to earlier traditions of timber structures in the north, Fergusson believed the stylistic change of these buildings to be affected not only by the introduction of Buddhism as the state religion under the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BCE reign of the Mauryan king Ashoka, but also – and more importantly in our context – by North India’s contact with Europe:

From this the interference seems inevitable that it was the consequence of India being brought into *contact with the Western world*, first by

<sup>15</sup> Joan Leopold, ‘British Applications of the Aryan Theory of Race to India, 1850–1870’, *English Historical Review*, 89: 352, 1974, 578–603, here 579 and 580; cf. Alexander Cunningham, ‘An Essay on the Arian Order of Architecture, as exhibited in the Temples of Kashmir’, *Journal of the Asiatic Society*, XVII: II, 1848, 241–242.

<sup>16</sup> Alexander Cunningham, *The Bhilsa Topes: Buddhist Monuments of Central India*, edited and revised edition, New Delhi: Aryan Books International, 2009; cf. Alexander Cunningham, *Archaeological Survey of India. Four Reports made during the Years 1862–65*, Simla: Government Central Press, 1871 (Reprint Rahul Publishing House Delhi 1994); Alexander Cunningham, *The Stupa of Bharhut: a Buddhist Monument illustrative of Buddhist Legend and History in the Third Century B.C.*, London: W.H. Allen and Co., 1879.

<sup>17</sup> Colin Cunningham, ‘James Fergusson’s History of Indian Architecture’, in C. King (ed.), *Views of Difference: Different Views of Art*, New Haven and London, 1999, 43–66, here 43.

<sup>18</sup> Stephen Kite, ‘“South Opposed to East and North”: Adrian Stokes and Josef Strzygowski. A Study in the Aesthetics and Historiography of Orientalism’, *Art History*, 26: 4, September 2003, 505–532, here 506.

Alexander's raid, and then by the establishment of the Bactrian kingdom in its immediate proximity, that led to this change. We do not yet know precisely how early the Bactrian kingdom extended to the Indus, but *we feel its influence* on the coinage, on the sculpture, and generally on the arts of India, from a very early date, and it seems as if before long we shall be able to fix with precision not only the dates, but *the forms in which the arts of the Western world exerted their influence on those of the East.* [italics MF]<sup>19</sup>

Even if he, in the introduction of the book, denied India the comparable 'intellectual supremacy of Greece, or the moral greatness of Rome', India's arts were described as 'through a lower step of the ladder [,] more original and varied' than in other regions of the East. Its architecture was appreciated as 'a still living art, practised on the principles which caused its wonderful development in Europe in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries'.<sup>20</sup> In what followed, Fergusson classified the great central Indian and 'purely Indian' sites 'Buddh Gaya and Bharhut [as being] absolutely without a trace of foreign influence'. He treated the stupas of Sanchi (today dated between the third and first centuries BCE), with their aniconic depictions of Buddha, as 'downward progress', in contrast to the north-western region's 'Graeco-Bactrian or Indo-Buddhist', or 'Indo-Roman or Indo-Byzantine' influence from Europe, which he saw as examples of a 'quasi-classical school'. In order to substantiate his hypothesis, he also cited the Doric pilasters around the Manikyala stupa near Taxila, and a Corinthian capital in the Jamalgiri monastery under the patronage of the first 'Buddhist king Kanishka', in the region of Peshawar and the Western Punjab (Figs. 3a-b).<sup>21</sup> With an unmistakable colonial undertone, placing ancient history in parallel with the contemporary British politics of a civilizing mission in India, he concluded once more that 'in the first centuries of the Christian Era the civilization of the West [had] exercised an influence on the arts and religion of the inhabitants of this part of India far greater than had hitherto been suspected'.<sup>22</sup>

By using the term *influence*, Fergusson and his colleagues underscored the colonizers' self-perception as the 'torchbearers upon the path of progress' and civilization,<sup>23</sup> in this case by transcribing it into an art historical pattern of thought which treated 'the West' as the active transmitter of art, and the Asian part as a mere passive receiver of stylistic expressions. From this point of view, Fergusson's writings 'occupied a fluid terrain between universal and national histories [and

<sup>19</sup> James Fergusson, *History of Indian and Eastern Architecture*, vol. 3 of *History of Architecture in all Countries*, London: J. Murray, 1876, 48.

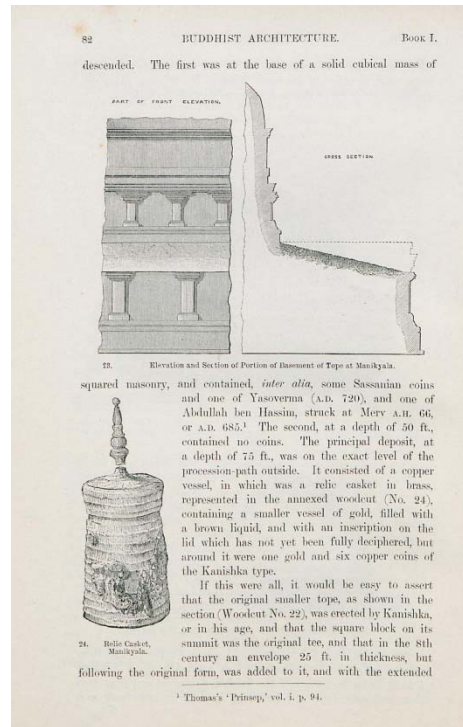
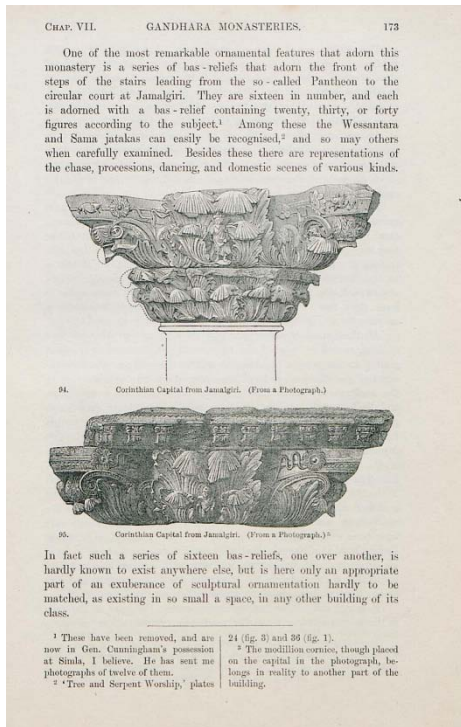
<sup>20</sup> Fergusson, *History of Indian and Eastern Architecture*, 4.

<sup>21</sup> Fergusson, *History of Indian and Eastern Architecture*, 34, 63, 74, 182.

<sup>22</sup> Fergusson, *History of Indian and Eastern architecture*, 184.

<sup>23</sup> Michael Mann, "'Torchbearers Upon the Path of Progress": Britain's Ideology of a "moral and material progress" in India', in Harald Fischer-Tiné, Michael Mann (eds.), *Colonialism as Civilizing Mission. Cultural Ideology in British India*, London: Anthem Press, 2004, 1–16.

were] addressed to many publics both in the metropole and in the colony'. The 'notion of difference set up by a series of oppositions [such as] between classical purity and opulent decay, between rationality and superstition, political freedom and despotism [which] needed to be domesticated [and] otherness to be mapped on to a familiar cultural horizon of the European readers of these histories'.<sup>24</sup>

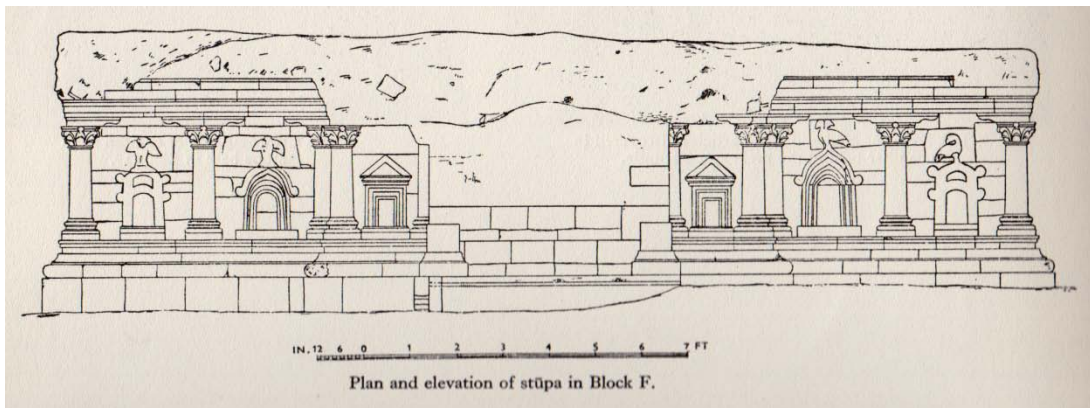
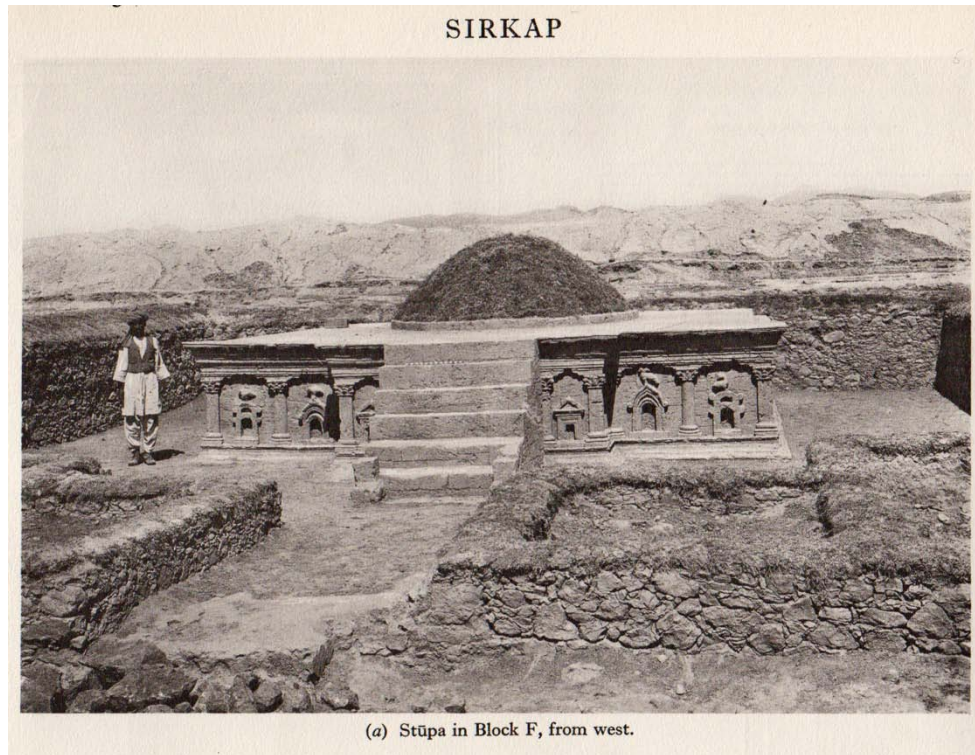


Figures 3a–b. Plates from James Fergusson's *History of Indian and Eastern Architecture* of 1878. Left: Corinthian capitals from Jamalgiri; Right: elevation and section of a portion of the Tope at Manikyala. [Heidelberg University Library]

This notion of Western influence in Buddhism continued also as a topos in British-colonial archaeology up to the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>25</sup> Its most famous proponent after Cunningham was – without a doubt – John Marshall (1876–1958). After his early archaeological experiences in Greece, he was appointed Director General of the ASI in 1902 by Viceroy of India, Lord Curzon. Besides archaeological investigations in Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa in today's south-central Pakistan

<sup>24</sup> Monica Juneja, 'Introduction', in Monica Juneja (ed.), *Architecture in Medieval India. Forms, Contexts, Histories*, New Delhi: Permanent Black, 2001, 1–105, especially 13–25, here 15.

<sup>25</sup> On the specific Buddhist significance in British-Indian archaeology, cf. Sourindranath N. Roy, 'Indian Archaeology from Jones to Marshall (1784-1902)', *Bulletin of ASI*, Ancient India, 9, 1953, 4–28; Sourindranath N. Roy, *The Story of Indian Archaeology 1784-1947*, New Delhi: Archaeological Survey of India, 1961; later studies include: Philip C. Almond, *The British Discovery of Buddhism*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988; Donald S. Lopez (ed.), *Curators of the Buddha: The Study of Buddhism under Colonialism*, Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1995.



Figures 4a-b. The *Shrine of the double-headed Eagle* at Sirkap as depicted in a photograph (above) and elevation drawing (below) in John Marshall's *Taxila* publication of 1921, here republished in 1951. [John Marshall, *Excavations at Taxila – the Stupas and Monasteries at Jauliāñ*, Calcutta: Superintendent Government Printing, 1951, plate 30, 28]

(dated to the third and second millennia BCE), Marshall continued Cunningham's focus on the Indo-Hellenistic civilization, with excavations in Taxila. In his *Guide to Taxila* (1918), and in the report *Excavations at Taxila* (1921), he resumed the topos of a penetrating Greek influence which was still visible through succeeding invasions of Scythians and Parthians, to the Kushanas, and up until the fifth century CE, when the Huns finally overran the region. Despite a creeping 'Indianization [...] the Hellenistic elements stayed', thus Marshall 'still in complete preponderance over the

Oriental'.<sup>26</sup> No building could show this enduring Greek superiority (in a certain sense an earlier version of an ongoing dominance of the West over the East) more clearly than the 'Shrine of the double-headed eagle' [of Sirkap], founded 'under supremacy of Indo-Greeks' in the second century BC (until the occupation of the Scytho-Parthian and Kusana epochs) (Figs. 4a-b): here, the 'Corinthian pilasters [and] pediment fronts of Greek buildings' predefined its overall composition, whereas Indian elements, such as the 'ogee arch familiar to "Bengal" roofs [or] Indian toranas' in the Mathura style, were simply there to fill up the remaining gaps.<sup>27</sup> It was exactly in this context that Marshall (less optimistic than his fellow countryman Fergusson four decades earlier), understood the supposedly limited, and even diminishing, stylistic penetration of Greek art into the Indian subcontinent as being linked with racial, moral and aesthetic elements of 'radical' difference:

Nevertheless, in spite of its wide diffusion, *Hellenistic art never took the real hold upon India* that it took, for example, upon Italy or Western Asia, for the reasons that the temperaments of the two people, were *radically dissimilar. To the Greek, man, man's beauty, man's intellect were everything and it was the apotheosis of this beauty and this intellect which still remained the keynote of Hellenistic art even in the Orient.* But these ideals awakened no response in the Indian mind. The vision of the Indian was bounded by the immortal rather than the mortal, by the infinite rather the finite. Where the Greek thought was ethical, his was spiritual; where the Greek was rational, his was emotional. And to these higher aspirations, these more spiritual instincts, he sought, at a later date, to give articulate expression by translating them into terms of form and colour. [italics MF]<sup>28</sup>

Published in 1960, two years after his death, Marshall's publication, *The Buddhist Art of Gandhara. The Story of the Early School, its Birth, Growth and Decline*, still followed the old-fashioned paradigm of progress and linear development in the arts, and a centre-periphery model of art history. Being separated into an 'Earlier School limited to the Peshawar Valley and neighbouring tracts west of the Indus', and a 'Later School [he called it 'Indo-Afghan'] extending from Taxila east of Indus as far to the north-west as ancient Bactria and the banks of the Oxus', the style configuration called Gandhara had made a full circle around a Hellenistic centre of influence in

<sup>26</sup> John Marshall, *A Guide to Taxila*, Calcutta: Superintendent Government Printing, 1918 (second edition 1921), 28.

<sup>27</sup> John Marshall, *Excavations at Taxila – the Stupas and Monasteries at Jauliāñ*, Calcutta: Superintendent Government Printing, 1921, 76; compare John Marshall, *Taxila: An Illustrated Account of Archaeological Excavations carried out at Taxila under the Orders of the Government of India between the Years 1913 and 1934, in three volumes*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1951.

<sup>28</sup> Marshall, *A guide to Taxila*, 33.

Bactria, as discussed by Marshall : 'It was there, in the north of modern Afghanistan, where the Kushans had long before become imbued with the brilliant cultural legacy of provincial Hellenism'.<sup>29</sup>

However, to a much greater extent than archaeological building excavation, it was the mid-19<sup>th</sup>-century discourse around the Greek essence within Gandharan *sculpture* which supported the aesthetic supremacy of an ancient (as well as modern) colonialism in India. And it was no accident that, only a few years after the British annexation of the Punjab region in 1849, the first articles in the official journal of the *Asiatic Society* established the hypothesis of the early Greek influence in the northwest of India which became – during its progressive fusion with Indian art – more and more 'impure [and] decadent'<sup>30</sup>. But the explicit term 'Graeco-Indian', or 'Graeco-Buddhistic', in the sculptural context 'of Greek influence' was only established in 1871, in the journal *Indian Public Opinion* by the Austro-Hungarian Orientalist Gottlieb Wilhelm Leitner. As a British employee, he was based at the north Indian Punjab Museum in Lahore (established in 1864) and formulated his



Figure 5. Depictions of Graeco-Buddhist artefacts as discussed by Gottlieb Wilhelm Leitner in 1871, here published in a reprint of 1894 [Gottfried Wilhelm Leitner, 'Graeco-Buddhistic Sculpture', *Asiatic Quarterly Review*, 7: 13–14, January and April 1894, between pages 186 and 187]

<sup>29</sup> John Marshall, *The Buddhist Art of Gandhara: the Story of the Early School, Its Birth, Growth and Decline*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960, 110, 112.

<sup>30</sup> Abe, 'Inside the Wonder House', 71.

stylistic definitions after his excursions to the Buddhist monastery Takht-i-Bahi near Peshawar (Fig. 5).<sup>31</sup> James Fergusson took over this hypothesis for his publication *Archaeology in India* (1884)<sup>32</sup> a few years before Vincent Smith of the Bengal Civil Service, in his own important article 'Graeco-Roman influence on the civilization of ancient India' (1889), added Rome and cities such as Palmyra (in present-day Syria) to the list of important mediators of a Gandharan-style configuration.<sup>33</sup>

The Orientalist rhetoric of a civilising mission also reached the discipline of art history itself, in about 1900, at the peak of Europe's expansionist imperialism. Leitner had spoken in his article, 'on the broader basis of Universal History', about the Hellenic cultural essence through which 'the West – through the Greeks – carried its law and civilization to the East'.<sup>34</sup> However, no other Orientalist art historian at this time had more influence in this debate than the Frenchman Alfred Foucher (1865–1952), who, with his giant oeuvres *Les bas-reliefs gréco-bouddhiques du Gandhâra* (1905), and *L'art gréco-bouddhique du Gandhâra. Étude sur les origines de l'influence classique dans l'art bouddhique de l'Inde et de l'Extrême-Orient* (1918/1922/1951), took the study of the philhellenic (now even pan-Hellenic) topos in the context of the Far East to a new level.<sup>35</sup> To demonstrate his mode of arguing, we shall focus on the essay *L'origine grecque de l'image du Bouddha*, which he presented at the Parisian *Musée Guimet* in 1912, and which was later published under the English title 'The Greek origin of the image of Buddha'. Within this paper, an essential shift could be observed: the term 'image of the Buddha' no longer referred only (a) to the anthropomorphic effigy of Lord Buddha as the major innovation of Gandharan art *per se*, but also to (b) a specifically Eurocentric, art historical viewpoint on the essential Greek role in the evolution of the Buddha image, and to (c) the Western colonial strategy of controlling knowledge production on Buddhist-Indian culture as a whole. The latter referred to the geographical

<sup>31</sup> His comment of 1871 was reprinted in Gottfried Wilhelm Leitner, 'Graeco-Buddhistic Sculpture', *Asiatic Quarterly Review*, 7: 13–14, January and April 1894, 186–89.

<sup>32</sup> James Fergusson, *Archaeology in India*, Asian Educational Services, 1884 (reprint Delhi: K. B. Publishers, 1974), 36.

<sup>33</sup> Vincent A. Smith, 'Graeco-Roman Influence on the Civilization of Ancient India', *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 58, 1889, 107–198, here 172. Compare with Strzygowski later in this article.

<sup>34</sup> Leitner, 'Graeco-Buddhistic Sculpture', 186.

<sup>35</sup> Alfred Foucher, *Les bas-reliefs gréco-bouddhiques du Gandhara*, Paris: Leroux, 1905; cf. Alfred Foucher, 'Sculptures gréco-bouddhiques (Musée du Louvre)', *Monuments et mémoires de la Fondation Eugène Piot*, 7: 1, 1900: 39–64; Alfred Foucher, 'Notes sur la géographie ancienne du Gandhara', *Bulletin de l'École Française d'Extrême-Orient*, 1, 1901, 322–369. For a commented bibliography and elaboration on Foucher's work cf. Pierre-Sylvain Filliozat, Jean Leclant (eds.), *Bouddhismes d'Asie, monuments et littératures: Journée d'étude en hommage à Alfred Foucher (1865–1952), réunie le vendredi 14 décembre 2007 à l'Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres*, Paris: Acad. des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, 2009.

surveying of the region, the archaeological rediscovery of its historic layers, and the comparative collection of its facts and artefacts with their parallel 'archaeological' and museum-like presentation and gradual integration into a universally valid canon called cultural heritage.<sup>36</sup> From this point of view, it was not surprising that Foucher's illustrations for the article started with an archaeological display of Buddha figures in the Lahore Museum (Fig. 6a), and introduced the first (and supposedly oldest) Graeco-Buddhist sculpture from nearby Hoti-Mardan through means of a Eurocentric voyeurism:

Look at it at leisure. Without doubt you will appreciate its dreamy, and even somewhat effeminate, beauty but at the same time you cannot fail to be struck by its Hellenic character. [...] if it is indeed a Buddha, it is no less evidently not an Indian work. Your European eyes have in this case no need of the help of any Indianist [...] All the technical details, and still more perhaps the harmony of the whole, indicate in a material, palpable and striking manner *the hand of an artist from some Greek studio*. [...] you will not hesitate to ascribe to an occidental influence the formal beauty of the work. [...] a compromise, a hybrid work [...] Graeco-Buddhist [...] *a Hellenized Buddha, unless you prefer to describe it as an Indianized figure of Apollo*. [italics MF]<sup>37</sup>

Foucher justified the Greek influence with the afore-mentioned series of coins with the famous Greek 'Boddo'-image (Fig. 6b), and with illustrations of the archaeological findings of sculptures from a land where one could 'literally walk on ruins', a land (of the Punjab) which had been 'a Greek colony, in the same ways as it afterwards became Scythian, Moghul, and finally English'.<sup>38</sup> (Fig. 6c) However, Foucher's strategy of an art historical, Hobsbawmian 'invention of tradition' went even further: the image of Buddha had now become a 'trade-mark of the workshops of Gandhara [where] the Indian material was poured into a western mould', and celebrated its 'most widespread and most durable successes that the history of art has ever chronicled [as it was] adopted with enthusiasm by the entire Buddhist

<sup>36</sup> For the discussion of colonial strategies to display material artefacts in an archaeological mode, compare Michael Falser, Monica Juneja (eds.), *"Archaeologizing" Heritage? Transcultural Entanglements between Local Social Practices and Global Virtual Realities*, Proceedings of the 1st International Workshop on Cultural Heritage and the Temples of Angkor, 2–4 May 2010, Heidelberg University, Heidelberg, New York, Dordrecht, London: Springer, 2013.

<sup>37</sup> Alfred Foucher, 'The Greek Origin of the Image of Buddha', in Alfred Foucher, *The Beginnings of Buddhist Art and other Essays in Indian and Central-Asian Archaeology*, Paris: Paul Geuthner, 1917 (reprinted in New Delhi: Asian Educational Services, 1994; Orig. version 'L'Origine grecque de l'image du Bouddha', *Bibliothèque de vulgarisation du Musée Guimet*, 38, 1913, 231–272), 111–137, here 119, 120, 128.

<sup>38</sup> Foucher, 'The Greek Origin of the Image of Buddha', 124, 126.





Figures 6a-c. Depictions of Alfred Foucher's presentation of 1912 *The Greek Origin of the Buddha Image*. [Alfred Foucher, 'The Greek Origin of the Image of Buddha', in Alfred Foucher, *The Beginnings of Buddhist Art and other Essays in Indian and Central-Asian Archaeology*, Paris: Paul Geuthner, 1917 (reprinted in New Delhi: Asian Educational Services, 1994, plates XI, XIV, XIII)]

world'.<sup>39</sup> As he summarized in his 'conclusions', the spread of this influence went along the Silk Road as far as China and Japan.<sup>40</sup> And even this was not enough. In its

<sup>39</sup> Foucher, 'The Greek Origin of the Image of Buddha', 130, 131.

characteristics, this Indo-Greek 'Buddhist school' of Gandhara found itself, by its origins', said Foucher, 'in contact with our Christian art' – a statement which he tried to prove using the comparison of a 'Graeco-Buddhist Buddha' with a 'Graeco-Christian Christ'.<sup>41</sup>

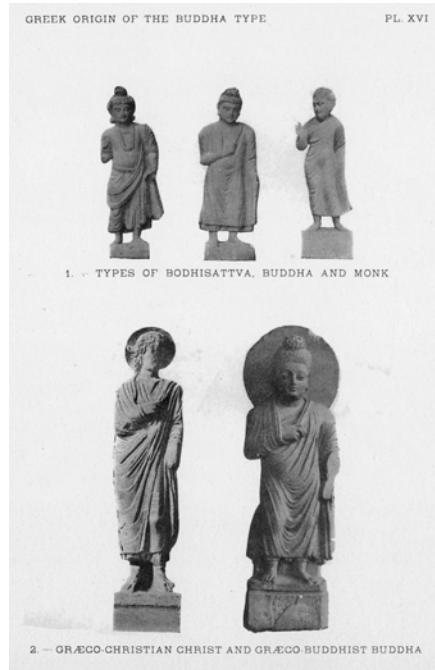


Figure 7a. In the lower row: Sculptures of what Foucher called in his 1912 presentation a 'Graeco-Buddhist Christ' (left) and a 'Graeco-Buddhist Buddha' [Alfred Foucher, 'The Greek Origin of the Image of Buddha' in Alfred Foucher, *The Beginnings of Buddhist Art and other Essays in Indian and Central-Asian Archaeology*, Paris: Paul Geuthner, 1917 (reprinted in New Delhi: Asian Educational Services, 1994, plates XVI).

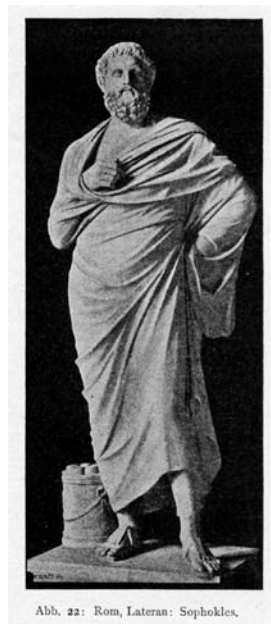


Figure 7b. A relief with Christ 'in the style of Minor Asia' as depicted in Josef Strzygowski's *Orient oder Rom* of 1901. [Josef Strzygowski, *Orient oder Rom: Beiträge zur Geschichte der spätantiken und frühchristlichen Kunst*, Leipzig: J.C. Hinrich'sche Buchhandlung, 1901, pl. III].

Figure 7c. A Sophocles statue from the Lateran Museum in Rome, as depicted in Josef Strzygowski's *Orient oder Rom: Beiträge zur Geschichte der spätantiken und frühchristlichen Kunst*, Leipzig: J.C. Hinrich'sche Buchhandlung, 1901, illustration 22 on page 59]

<sup>40</sup> Alfred Foucher, *L'art gréco-bouddhique du Gandhâra. Étude sur les origines de l'influence classique dans l'art bouddhique de l'Inde et de l'Extrême-Orient*, 3 vols, Paris: Leroux, 1918, 1922 and 1951, here his volume of 1922, 741–796.

<sup>41</sup> Foucher, 'The Greek Origin of the Image of Buddha', 135, 136.

Interestingly, Foucher had taken his Christian example from a larger illustration of a sarcophagus from Asia Minor (Fig. 7a, compare Fig. 7b) which the Austrian art history professor Josef Strzygowski (1862–1941) had used in his 1901 publication *Orient oder Rom: Beiträge zur Geschichte der spätantiken und frühchristlichen Kunst* ['Orient or Rome. Contributions to the History of Late Antique and early Christian Art'].<sup>42</sup> Following Strzygowski's own examples, although with contradicting interpretations, Foucher could now establish, within the Euro-Asian contact zone, a narrative in which a *Greek Classic* helped to situate Graeco-Buddhist art in an eminent position within a truly universal history of art. Both the Indian and Christian images were now considered stylistic derivatives (Foucher called them 'cousins-german'), since both were part of a 'legacy *in extremis* [sic] to the old world by the expiring Greek art'.<sup>43</sup> Both had also developed from the same source, as he tried to prove with (again Strzygowski's!) example of a statue of Sophocles from the fourth century BC, in the Lateran Museum in Rome (Fig. 7c). At the end of his article, it was finally this 'Eurasian prototype of Buddha' which Foucher declared to be 'one of the most sublime creations [which had] enriched humanity'.<sup>44</sup>

Returning to our inquiry into the various attempts to appropriate the Gandharan style for different ideological ends, we shall turn to Strzygowski himself as another, rather unique, example. He was never directly involved in on-site archaeological surveys, and his interest in the subject underwent a long development, from his initial interest in the Near East (with Syria and Egypt – he would later call it 'Western Asia') to the Middle East (Armenia and Iran), and finally to the Far East (India and China). In his 1901 monograph *Orient oder Rome*, Strzygowski gave examples of Palmyrene paintings and sculptures, sarcophagi of Asia Minor, early Christian ivories from Egypt, and Coptic textiles, attacking the largely philology-based, Classical humanist focus on the Mediterranean. Based on his own hypothesis of Oriental (and not Roman) origins of Late Antique and Medieval art, he established the topos of an Oriental strand of Nordic-Aryan tendencies as opposed to a Mediterranean (Roman) starting point.<sup>45</sup> In 1902 he presented his findings more straightforwardly with the article 'Hellas in des Orients Umarmung' ['Hellas in the Embrace of the Orient'] in the Munich *Beilage zur Allgemeinen Zeitung*. Here, he could again formulate his decided rebuttal of Alois Riegl and Franz Wickhoff (of the later so-called 'Viennese School') – the former had published both *Altorientalische Teppiche* in 1892 and (parallel to Strzygowski's *Orient oder Rom*), his *Die spätromische Kunstindustrie nach den Funden in Österreich-Ungarn*

<sup>42</sup> Josef Strzygowski, *Orient oder Rom: Beiträge zur Geschichte der spätantiken und frühchristlichen Kunst*, Leipzig: J.C. Hinrich'sche Buchhandlung, 1901, 40–64.

<sup>43</sup> Foucher, 'The Greek Origin of the Image of Buddha', 136.

<sup>44</sup> Foucher, 'The Greek Origin of the Image of Buddha', 137.

<sup>45</sup> Jas Elsner, 'The Birth of Late Antiquity: Riegl and Strzygowski in 1901', *Art History*, 25: 3, June 2002, 358–379; Carola Jäggi, 'Ex Oriente Lux: Josef Strzygowski und die "Orient oder Rom" Debatte um 1900', *Kunsthistorische Hefte*, special issue: Okzident und Orient, 6, 2002, 91–111.

*im Zusammenhange mit der Gesamtentwicklung der Bildenden Künste bei den Mittelmeervölkern in 1901* ['Late Roman Art Industry'].

Both protagonists emphasised the dominance of the art of Late Antiquity in the cultural peripheries of Europe's extreme south-east, which seemed to have almost logically followed the Greek influence deep into the *Alte Orient*. While accusing his colleagues of 'not knowing the Orient' and 'having [only] Rome in their blood',<sup>46</sup> Strzygowski quoted his version of the Orient, giving examples from the Near East, but also the Middle East. Here, he intended to prove – while pointing to an advancing Byzantine style into Europe since the fifth century CE – that the local artistic cultures and their styles in the Orient had resisted, and finally prevailed over, style imports from a rather weak imperialist Rome and Hellas:

I see the pure and perfumed psyche of Hellas [*reine, duftige Psyche von Hellas*] from the beginning surrounded by legacy hunting enemies *who outstretched their hands to embrace and finally to crush it*. As long as this beautiful child is bursting with strength and growing up in happy oblivion in her own land, these lurking evils have no strength. They wait, and as soon as they seek Hellas in their own land, they gain first influence, then power, and finally victory. The tenacious nature of the Orient cannot be overcome; it appears in *the image of the eternal Jew*. [...] The Hellenic, or better the Hellenistic, that survives, appears with Byzantium and then in the art of the Caliphs in a totally new disguise. As a consequence, the development cannot be described as a gradual expansion and a final all-dominant position, but that its penetration into the Orient encountered its limits in an early phase and a reverse effect took place in so far, as Hellas and Rome step by step drew back and the Orient finally not only regained its own lands, but also conquered the territory of Hellas and Rome. [*italics MF*]<sup>47</sup>

<sup>46</sup> Josef Strzygowski, 'Hellas in des Orients Umarmung', *Allgemeine Zeitung*, Beilage, 40, February 18, 1902, 313–317; 41, February 19, 1902, 325–327, here 313.

<sup>47</sup> 'Ich sehe die reine, duftige Psyche von Hella, von vornherein umringt von erbgessenen Feinden, die gierig die Arme austrecken, sie zu umfassen, zu erdrücken. Solange der Organismus des schönen Kindes von Vollkraft strotzt und sie in glücklicher Selbstvergessenheit im eigenen Lande aufwächst, gewinnen die Lauernden keine Macht. Sie warten, und erst als Hellas sie im eigenen Lande aufsucht, da erlangen sie zuerst Einfluß, dann Macht, endlich den Sieg. Die zähe Natur des Orients ist unüberwindlich, sie tritt auf im Bilde des ewigen Juden. [...] Das Hellenische, besser Hellenistische, das sich hinüberrettet, tritt in Byzanz, wie dann in der Kunst der Khalifen, in ganz neuem Gewande auf. Die Entwicklung verläuft eben nicht so, daß der Hellenismus Schritt für Schritt vordringt und schließlich alleine dasteht, sondern, daß seinem Eindringen in den Orient frühzeitig eine Grenze gesetzt wird und dann der umgekehrte Prozeß eintritt, Hellas und Rom Schritt für Schritt wieder zurückweichen und der Orient schließlich nicht nur dem heimathlichen Boden, sondern auch den Boden von Hellas und Rom für sich erobert'. Strzygowski, 'Hellas in des Orients Umarmung', 315, 317.

While reading Foucher's and Strzygowski's texts, with their opposing ideological purposes, one nevertheless encounters the same assumptions of external or alien *influence*, similar one-dimensional movements from defined *origins* and proposed *beginnings*, and a comparable claim of, and search for *purity*, coupled with a disgust towards a decadent *impurity* of style configurations.

If Foucher's 'Orientalist' engagement with Gandhara was grounded on his fieldwork, and was in direct collaboration with the British colonial archaeological enterprise under John Marshall,<sup>48</sup> Strzygowski tackled this same area, only in later steps. Around 1900, *his* Orient was enmeshed in another ideological battle (both regional and national, political and racial) which needs brief mention in order to understand his later comments on Gandhara. Indeed, Strzygowski's attacks against his Viennese colleagues Riegl and Wickhoff – and their supposedly 'ultramontane direction [in] the conviction that all roads lead to Rome' – may have been, on an institutional level, directed 'against cultural and educational policies' of Habsburg, including the *Institut für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung*.<sup>49</sup> With its Romanist orientation, this Institute certainly helped to construct a cultural legacy for the ethnically diverse Habsburg Empire, through an (art) historical and archaeological focus on the Late Antique and her actual territory, which included the south-eastern crown lands. Strzygowski's line of reasoning was directed against Rome, its enduring relevance in Late Antiquity, and the formative role of the Renaissance conquering Nordic Gothic art, and was instead in favour of a Greek art which supposedly originated in the North and continued in Nordic-Germanic arts. It fostered a new geographical 'South-North' and 'East-West' constellation, while bypassing an exaggerated influence of Late Imperial Rome and valuing the role of the Near Eastern Orient. But it also brought an aggressive (some critics even call it proto-Nazi Aryan) racism;<sup>50</sup> as the contact with the Semitic element ('the eternal

<sup>48</sup> For example, Foucher wrote the stylistic analysis 'The Decoration of the Stuccoed Stupas' in John Marshall's 1921 *Excavations at Taxila – The Stupas and Monasteries at Jauliāñ*, c.f. Marshall, *Excavations at Taxila*, 22–39.

<sup>49</sup> Georg Vasold, 'Riegl, Strzygowski und die Entwicklung der Kunst', *ARS*, 41: 1, 2008, 95–109 [English translation in: Johanna Vakkari (ed.), *Towards a Science of Art History*. J. J. Tikkanen and Art Historical Scholarship in Europe, Helsinki: Society of Art History, 2009, S. 102–116. Reprinted in *Journal of Art Historiography*, 5, December 2011, 5-GV/1]; cf. Ulrich Pfisterer, 'Origins and Principles of World Art History – 1900 (and 2000)', in Kitty Zijlmans, Wilfried van Damme (eds.), *World Art Studies: Exploring Concepts and Approaches*, Amsterdam: Valiz, 2008, 69–89. I would like to thank Georg Vasold for his advice for this paper. For a more detailed exploration on Strzygowski's engagement with Gandhara see Julia Orell's paper 'Early East Asian art history in Vienna and its trajectories: Josef Strzygowski, Karl With, Alfred Salmony' in this issue of the *Journal of Art Historiography*.

<sup>50</sup> In her 1994 article, Suzanne Marchand termed Strzygowski a 'para-academic type' on his 'antihumanist crusade'. See Suzanne L. Marchand, 'The rhetoric of artifacts and the decline of classical humanism: The case of Josef Strzygowski', *History and Theory*, 33:4, 1994, 106 – 130. For a more balanced analysis see Heinz Schödl, *Josef Strzygowski – Zur Entwicklung seines Denkens*, PhD Vienna University, 2011.

Jew', see Strzygowski's quotation above) had not only hindered Hellenic high art's reception in the Near Eastern Orient, it also posed a problem through its reverse infiltration into the Aryan societies and arts of Europe's North and West. Riegl's direct response, entitled 'Spät-Römisch oder orientalisches' in the same *Beilage zur Allgemeinen Zeitung* of April 1902, heavily criticized Strzygowski, and again propagated the 'Late Antique [as] the most important and far-reaching problem in the whole history of humanity'. Riegl's exclamation 'Evolution, not revolution' reflected a 'continuing and reciprocal pervasion' of styles (and not the stylistic concurrence put forward by Strzygowski), in this specific case of Oriental and 'Indo-Germanic' elements.<sup>51</sup>

In his 1914 article *Ostasien im Rahmen vergleichender Kunstforschung* ['East Asia in the context of comparative research on art'], which was published in the famous Berlin *Ostasiatische Zeitschrift*, Strzygowski explored wider paths of art historical enquiry into Asian culture. He transcribed his Rome-Europe paradigm – with its originally ideological, Austro-Germanic background – onto a far-distant Greece-India constellation. From the afore-mentioned background, it becomes clear why, in his section on 'Buddhist Art', he severely criticized the Eurocentric master narrative of the Gandhara style *à la* Foucher. Instead, he was arguing that it had in fact been the Greek influence which had destroyed pure Indian art, threatening to place it on 'Greek crutches':

It seems to be an established axiom that Buddhist art is unthinkable without the pre-condition of Greek art. An explanation is easily found. *The Indian art has indeed passed a Greek filter when Buddhism crossed India's North-western frontier and expanded into Turkestan to China.* Bypassing the mountains it had to transit the above-mentioned Greek enclave of Eastern Persia [...] Gandharan art is – after the show of some samples by Leitner during the Viennese World Fair of 1873 – rightly called *graeco-Buddhist*. It is another fact that it was to a good extent this *Graecized art of India* which became the starting point of a further development of Buddhist art in Central and East Asia. This would however mean to throw out the baby with the bath water and to lead art historical research [*Kunstforschung*] on the same wrong track as in the field of Europe and the Near East [*Vorderasien*], by concluding from this fact that there had not been an autochthonous Buddhist art. This means throwing India and Gandhara into one and the same pot, and assuming for the whole Indian art a Greek underlay. *As in the Occident Rome should be the giving part, so now Hellas*

<sup>51</sup> Original: 'Im Kunstleben gibt es keinen Tod, sondern bloß ewig fortschreitende, wechselseitige Durchdringung alles einmal Gewesenen in einer endlos fortlaufenden Wellenlinie, die sich einmal dem extrem materiefreundlichen orientalischen, das andere Mal dem psychophilen indogermanischen Pol nähert, ohne jemals einen der beiden vollständig zu erreichen, denn das wäre der Tod der bildenden Kunst'. Alois Riegl, 'Spät-römisch oder orientalisches?', *Allgemeine Zeitung*, Beilage, 93, April 23, 1902, 153–156, and 94, April 24, 1902, 162–165, here 153 and 154.

*for overall Asia. The absurdity of such an assumption is easily felt, and art historical research stays in its European nest and does not emancipate itself from historical research [Geschichtsforschung]. [...] A universal historian working on a systematic fundament would never dare to put a millennia-old Indian art on Greek crutches.<sup>52</sup> [...] The monuments of pure Indian art are found in plastic art, e.g. in Bharhut, Sanchi and Amaravati. The art historian omits the best material by believing that these objects and figures, forms and emotional contents were not grown on purely Indian soil. It was precisely the Greek influence which had destroyed to a certain extent the beautiful regional colour of that peculiar symbolism which avoids depicting the figure of Buddha in countless reliefs. It was also Hellenism which brought clear rationality into objects [...] and new types of forms through which the delightful flavour of the specific Indian character [reizvolle Duft des spezifisch indischen Gehaltes, compare the 1902 quotation of the reine, duftige Psyche von Hellas !] was lost. [italics MF]<sup>53</sup>*

In *Die Baukunst der Armenier und Europa* ['The Architecture of Armenia and Europe'], written in 1918, Strzygowski tried to establish an 'Indo-European geographical axis'<sup>54</sup> as an Aryan domain. This domain, he believed, radiated from the nodal point of Armenia and Iran as birthplace of Christian art, to Europe, with its climax in the Germanic 'North' of mediaeval, Gothic art (Figs. 8a-c). His explanation, in his 1920 publication *Ursprung der christlichen Baukunst* ['The Origin of Christian Church Architecture'], of the so-called 'Semitic wedge' dividing the Western and Eastern Aryans ['semitischer Keil', compare his term the 'eternal Jew', quoted above],<sup>55</sup> was a racial twist on an earlier philological discourse about the 'Aryans' and Indo-Europeans. As mentioned earlier, this discourse had already influenced James Fergusson's idea of a universal history a few decades earlier, in differentiating between north Indian culture and its southern Hindu counterpart. Was Strzygowski's approach a later reflection of what the German Sanskritist Friedrich Max Müller had, in the 1830s, called 'the common descent and [...] legitimate relationship between Hindu, Greek, and Teuton',<sup>56</sup> after the Aryan conquest of

<sup>52</sup> Original: 'Dem auf systematischer Grundlage arbeitenden Universalhistoriker wird es nie einfallen können, die Jahrtausende alte indische Kunst auf griechische Krücken zu stellen'.

<sup>53</sup> Josef Strzygowski, 'Ostasien im Rahmen vergleichender Kunstforschung', *Ostasiatische Zeitschrift*, 2, 1913/14, 1–19.

<sup>54</sup> Christina Maranci, 'Armenian Architecture as Aryan Architecture: The Role of Indo-European Studies in the Theories of Josef Strzygowski', *Visual Resources*, 13: 3–4, 1998, 363–380, here 364; compare Josef Strzygowski, *Die Baukunst der Armenier und Europa. Ergebnisse einer vom Kunsthistorischen Institute der Universität Wien 1913 durchgeführten Forschungsreise*, Vienna: Schroll, 1918; vol. I, page 157, illustration 182 (7a); volume II, page 621, illustration 624 (7b); volume II, page 627, illustration 630.

<sup>55</sup> Josef Strzygowski, *Ursprung der christlichen Kirchenkunst: neue Tatsachen und Grundsätze der Kunstforschung*, Leipzig: J.C. Hinrich'sche Buchhandlung, 1920, 2.

<sup>56</sup> Quoted in Leopold, *British Applications of the Aryan Theory of Race to India*, 582.

India?<sup>57</sup> When Strzygowski wrote this in the late nineteenth century, a specific Indo-Germanic notion was developing as a counter-identity to the Semite.<sup>58</sup> It was this rather blatant anti-Semitic element which would bring Strzygowski close to later Nazi ideologies, which he is still accused of espousing today.

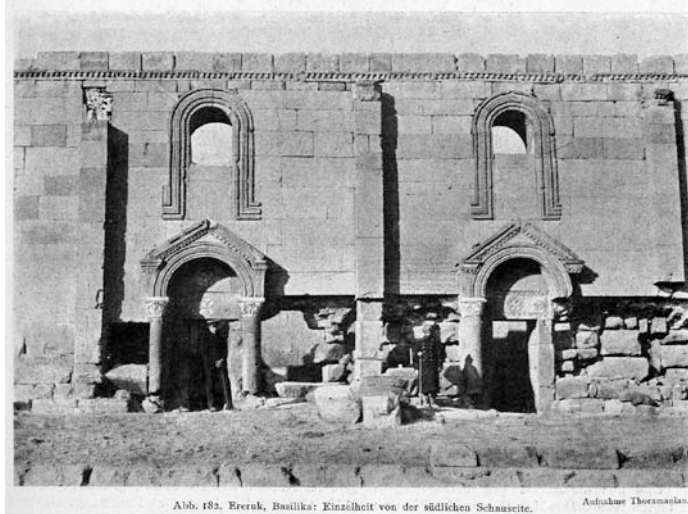


Abb. 182. Ereruk, Basilika: Einzelheit von der südlichen Schauseite. Aufnahme Thoramian.

Figures 8a-c. Illustrations from Josef Strzygowski's *Die Baukunst der Armenier* of 1918.

8a: The southern facade of the Basilica of Ereruk.



Abb. 524. Pandrethan, Tempel: Ansicht. Aufnahme Cole.

8b. A photograph of the Pandrethan temple in Kashmir

<sup>58</sup> Kite, "South Opposed to East and North", 505, 511.



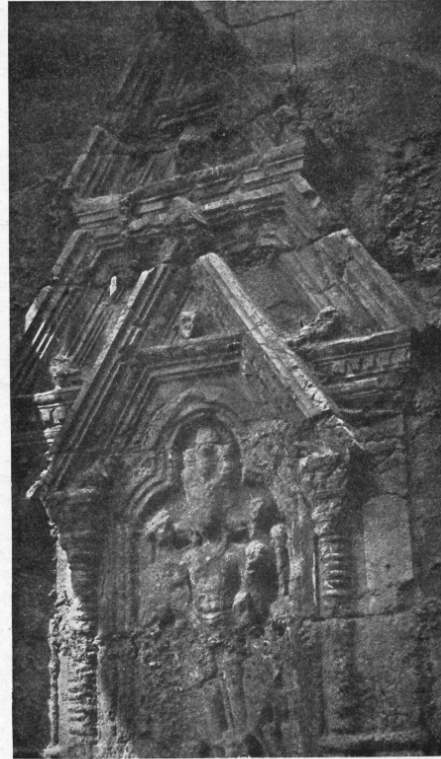


Abb. 630. Martand, Tempel: Schmucknische. Aufnahme Cole.

8c. A photograph of a decoration on the temple of Martand in Kashmir.

In the 1920s Strzygowski developed his ideas, establishing a large, unified Nordic world-zone of art which encompassed other continents. In his 1928 paper for *Art Bulletin*, 'North and South in the History of American Art', he even transposed the 'North-South-divide' from the European and Western Asian focus onto the Americas.<sup>59</sup> In the same year, his English paper 'The Orient or the North' in the newly-founded American journal *Eastern Art*, finally put a stronger focus on India. By 'separating the Orient from the North', the boundary of 'Asia proper' with its 'emphatically Northern' essence, ran directly through Northern India, in which the 'Aryan migration' from North to South had created a kind of 'bridge'-like situation 'in the history of art'.<sup>60</sup> Strzygowski transferred his previous North-South-debate in the European context to the Indian subcontinent a few years later, for a discussion of Gandharan art's 'Intrinsic Characteristics'. He made two crucial assumptions: firstly, 'Northern art [did] not build in stone', and through an artistic 'Indo-Aryan movement', Northern wood constructions aesthetically re-materialized in the South- (visible, for example, in the stone cave ceilings of Ellora) – as 'Greek temples [which had] transformed northern wood forms into stone'. Secondly (and more important

<sup>59</sup> Josef Strzygowski, 'North and South in the History of American Art', *The Art Bulletin*, 10: 3, March 1928, 274–278.

<sup>60</sup> Josef Strzygowski, 'The Orient or the North', *Eastern Art*, 1: 2, 1928, 69–85, here 69 and 70.

for our discussion), 'Northern art did not [originally] represent the human body', and only a subsequent Southern 'Indianization of plastic representations of the human form' (not vice versa!) fostered this artistic tendency.<sup>61</sup>

Strzygowski's giant volume *Asiens bildende Kunst in Stichproben, ihr Wesen und ihre Entwicklung. Ein Versuch* (1930) was – as he repeatedly reconfirmed himself<sup>62</sup> – far less racist, Eurocentric and Germanic-nationalist than one may think, given the radical nature of Austro-German politics during these years.<sup>63</sup> If this work was conceived as a courageous 800-page long 'attempt' ['Versuch'] to write a universal history of art within the Eurasian contact zone, this could only have been achieved

<sup>61</sup> Strzygowski, 'The Orient or the North', 75, 76, 77, 83.

<sup>62</sup> In the concluding parts of his book, Strzygowski declared: 'One of the gravest faults for the research on Asia is a preoccupation with the Aryans. To deal with the question of the Aryans [Arierfrage] still means, even today, to overrate the Aryans as representing all that is good and beautiful'. Additionally, he mentioned, in the context of 'Asia as *Lebensraum*', that the 'European bloodsucker [still] paralyzed all independent forces of Asia', and 'Asian art was [unfortunately] still the plaything [*Spielball*] of Humanists', in Josef Strzygowski, *Asiens bildende Kunst in Stichproben, ihr Wesen und ihre Entwicklung*, Arbeiten des 1.

Kunsthistorischen Instituts der Universität Wien, 45, Augsburg: Filser, 1930, 738, 740, 747.

<sup>63</sup> It is important to mention that Strzygowski was also an important teacher and his 'students', far from being radicalized in the Germanic mode, were also involved in questioning the position of Gandharan art. One forum for their comments was the Journal *Wiener Beiträge zur Kunst- und Kulturgeschichte Asiens* which was published between 1927 and 1937. Emmy Wellesz' contribution of 1928 supported Strzygowski's main hypothesis when she located 'a third element of Gandharan art besides Hellenism and the Indian [with art forms from] Iran, Mesopotamia and Syria which expanded both towards Mediterranean and Gandharan art.' See Emmy Wellesz, 'Drei Reliefs aus dem Wiener Ethnologischen Museum. Ein Beitrag zu den Stilfragen der Gandharakunst', *Wiener Beiträge zur Kunst- und Kulturgeschichte Asiens*, Jahrbuch 1927/28, vol. III (1928), 49-57, here 55. However a more comprehensive contribution was published few years earlier, see Emmy Wellesz, *Die Buddhistische Kunst von Gandhara*, Leipzig: Seemann, 1924. Heinrich Glück contributed a review of Strzygowski's *Asiens bildende Kunst* and underlined that his teacher 'may have been the only one worldwide in the current army of specialists to have undertaken this venture [...] to point European or Non-European specialists to the whole thing [europäisches oder außereuropäisches Spezialistentum auf das Ganze hinweisen].' See Heinrich Glück, 'Josef Strzygowski: Asiens bilden Kunst (review)', *Wiener Beiträge zur Kunst- und Kulturgeschichte Asiens*, Jahrbuch 1928/29, vol. IV (1930), 79-80, here 79. Stalla Kamrisc added in her detailed study of 1930 on Gupta art a comment on the 'Hellenistic art which had acclimatized over time [in the region of Gandhara] so that its origin [Ursprung, originality] had lost its intrusive foreignness and was even forgotten to reach new artistic heights.' See Stella Kamrisc, 'Die figurale Plastik der Guptazeit', *Wiener Beiträge zur Kunst- und Kulturgeschichte Asiens*, Jahrbuch 1929/30, vol. V (1931), 15-39, here 33. Finally, Melanie Stiassny as the reporter of the journal dedicated the journal's whole issue of 1933 (vol. VII) to 'our honoured master and teacher [who had initiated] a research group on Asia [asiatischer Arbeitskreis] between the journal's *Verein der Freunde asiatischer Kunst und Kultur* and the Art History Department of the Vienna University', see *Wiener Beiträge zur Kunst- und Kulturgeschichte Asiens*, Jahrbuch 1931/32, vol. VII (1933), 3.

through specific ways: the use of long series of highly selective and elitist artworks ['Hauptvertreter'], and the inclusion of over 650 illustrations of often decontextualized analogical 'samples' ['Stichproben'] from very different places, represented an approach which was, back then not too far from what is referred to today using the oft-criticised term *World Art History*. Judging by the title alone, Strzygowski's method neglected the inherent circulation history of these objects (in the case of mobile artefacts), and the history of subsequent structural modifications and social re-appropriations (in the case of immobile objects, such as buildings). These topics are now in the centre of the emerging discipline of *Global Art History* which has as its focus the 'dynamics of transculturality'<sup>64</sup>.

In this 1930 volume, Strzygowski's idea of a great unified Nordic world-zone of art was now applied to the whole Eurasian contact zone (Fig. 9), or, as Strzygowski put it more generally in the introduction:

What we have called an Asian or a European spirit [Geistigkeit] is not Europe or Asia proper with their primordial character [ursprüngliche Art], but both seen through the eyes of the Greeks and Romans, or the Humanists of today. [...] Seen from the Mediterranean, Asia proper [das eigentliche Asien] is not the East (Orient), but the North. This North had been neglected in Asia as it had been in Europe. This volume aims [...] at correcting this error in the context of Asia.<sup>65</sup>

Already in the book's introductory overview on 'Asia proper' [Das eigentliche Asien], Strzygowski subsumed 'Bactria and Gandhara' under 'Western Asia', its 'natural role [being that of] a funnel [Trichter] for the movements of the Eurasian North' having been tragically neglected in the history of art – with the only exception 'as soon as it became, under the name of Bactria in post-Alexandrian times, the outermost region of an expansion of Hellenistic art'. Strzygowski, on the other hand, with his research on Armenia and Iran, and his emphasis on north-south dynamics, focused on the Indo-Scythians who migrated from the East-Iranian 'stronghold of Mazdaism in Bactria', towards the Indian south. Kanishka as their 'essential figure' had then adopted, fostered, and transformed Buddhism, the art of which was primarily Indian. Therefore – contrary to Foucher's claims – 'Greek influences in the area of Gandhara only played a secondary role'.<sup>66</sup> On 'Buddhism', in the section on 'Spiritual Values [Geistige Werte]', Strzygowski again emphasized 'a Nordic attitude [Nordische Gesinnung] in the Buddhist, even there, where stone

<sup>64</sup> This approach is at the centre of the Cluster of Excellence 'Asia and Europe in a Global Context – The Dynamics of Transculturality' at Heidelberg University, where the author is a project leader at the Chair of Global Art History. See its homepage: <http://www.asia-europe.uni-heidelberg.de/en/>.

<sup>65</sup> Strzygowski, *Asiens bildende Kunst in Stichproben*, XVI and 4.

<sup>66</sup> Strzygowski, *Asiens bildende Kunst in Stichproben*, 49, 50, 52.



1. Asien: Das eigentliche Asien und die vorgelagerten Gebiete.

Figure 9. 'Asia proper' [Das eigentliche Asien] as located in Josef Strzygowski's *Asiens bildende Kunst in Stichproben, ihr Wesen und ihre Entwicklung. Ein Versuch* of 1930 [Josef Strzygowski, *Asiens bildende Kunst in Stichproben, ihr Wesen und ihre Entwicklung. Ein Versuch*, Arbeiten des 1. Kunsthistorischen Instituts der Universität Wien, 45, Augsburg: Filser, 1930, page 7]

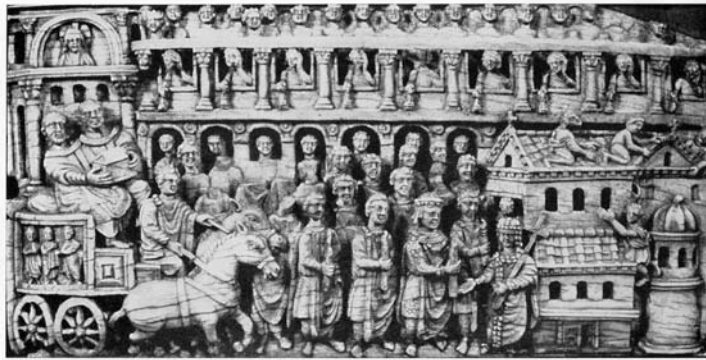
and human depiction had been taken over from the south'. He conjectured, drawing on 'examples of buildings and depictions where Buddhist and Christian art came strangely close', that 'a giving centre' would arise for both.<sup>67</sup> Strzygowski explained this 'gebende Mitte' again in the culminating part of the book on 'Development', repeating his claim of a 'discovery of Western Asia as an independent artistic area [Kunstkreis<sup>68</sup>], relevant for the art of Asia Proper, Northern Europe and Islam alike'.<sup>69</sup> Towards the end of the book, Strzygowski returned to his own ideological

<sup>67</sup> Strzygowski, *Asiens bildende Kunst in Stichproben*, 326.

<sup>68</sup> Here Strzygowski transformed the term 'Kulturkreise', having borrowed it from the German ethnologist Leo Frobenius who had applied it in his research on Africa after 1900; Frobenius introduced the term 'Kulturseele (Paideuma)' [cultural soul] in the 1920s and might have influenced Strzygowski with his approach of an Aryan, 'Nordic attitude [Nordische Gesinnung]' in its global dimension, as Strzygowski quoted Frobenius in his 1930 publication; compare Strzygowski, *Asiens bildende Kunst in Stichproben*, 527.

<sup>69</sup> Strzygowski, *Asiens bildende Kunst in Stichproben*, 566.

starting point in 1900, by criticizing his Viennese colleagues Riegl and Wickhoff for their focus on Roman Late Antiquity in European art. He warned against its application to the Asian scene. In the section on 'Movement', Strzygowski condemned the 'Humanists' trial, first, to apply their dogma of a Mediterranean genealogical tree [Mittelmeerstammbaum] to Asia', and second, 'to declare the Hellenistic if possible the creator of all real Asian art forms, [as a] rape of the discipline of art history'.<sup>70</sup> However, Strzygowski's art historical fetish, as it were, of a global north in the Indo-Germanic mode and a central, Altai-Iranian distribution centre towards the east and west, led Strzygowski himself to distort the interpretation of the development of Buddhist iconic art for his own ideologically grounded ambitions. After he had called Greek art a 'Nordic blossom on Southern grounds' (compare his paper of 1937 'Iran, Indiens Hellas'<sup>71</sup>), so India's early Buddha images now turned out to be 'a Northern art altered toward the depiction of the human figure'.<sup>72</sup> (Figs. 10a-c)



647. Trier, Domschatz: Elfenbeinschnitzerei.



648. Santschi, Stupa, Tor: Teilansicht.

10a. An ivory carving from a collection in Trier/Germany (above), and a detail of the gate of Sanchi in India (below).

<sup>70</sup> Strzygowski, *Asiens bildende Kunst in Stichproben*, 651.

<sup>71</sup> Josef Strzygowski, 'Iran, Asiens Hellas', *Ars Islamica*, 4, 1937, 42–53.

<sup>72</sup> 'Die griechische Kunst [...] eine nordische Blüte auf Südboden' and 'Indien als Ausgangspunkt einer auf die menschliche Gestalt umgestellten Nordkunst', see Strzygowski, *Asiens bildende Kunst in Stichproben*, 709, 681. Figures 10a-c. Reliefs as depicted in Josef Strzygowski's *Asiens bildende Kunst in Stichproben, ihr Wesen und ihre Entwicklung. Ein Versuch* of 1930.



584. Gandhara,  
Belege ausgesprochen griechischen Einflusses.



654. Amaravati, Stupa: Stupenverehrung.

10b: A relief from Gandhara; 10c: The veneration of a stupa as depicted on the Amaravati stupa in India. [Josef Strzygowski, *Asiens bildende Kunst in Stichproben, ihr Wesen und ihre Entwicklung*, Arbeiten des 1. Kunsthistorischen Instituts der Universität Wien, 45, Augsburg: Filser, 1930, page 728, illustrations 647 and 648 (10a); page 657, illustration 584 (10b); page 734, illustration 654 (10c).]

## 2. National oppositions

In his presentation at the *Musée Guimet* of 1912, Foucher alluded to a growing opposition to his Greek-focussed argument: 'At present, owing to aesthetic bias or to nationalist rancour, it is the fashion to make the school of Gandhara pay for its manifest superiority, by a systematic blackening of its noblest productions'.<sup>73</sup> Even British art historians working in colonial India considered Foucher's Eurocentric hypothesis exaggerated. Ernest Binfield Havell may have been one of the most prominent of them, when, as principal of the *Government School of Art* in Calcutta between 1896 and 1906, he pleaded (in collaboration with his colleague, the Indian poet Abanindranath Tagore) both for a more 'India-focussed' education and system of artistic practice, and for a stronger notion of 'Indianness' in a nationally framed history of Indian art.<sup>74</sup>

However, Foucher's most visible opponent was, without a doubt, Ananda Kentish Coomaraswamy (1877–1947). Although born in Sri Lanka as part of the British colonial sphere in South Asia, he was – ironically for this context – raised and educated in Great Britain and spent the last decades of his life as a curator of, and researcher in, US museum collections of Indian art. He became famous for his life-long resistance (rather coloured by Indian nationalism), to the over-simplified epistemological assumptions made by the West to explain and depict 'the Orient' in terms of its ancient and contemporary art production.<sup>75</sup> Roughly summarizing, he tried to provincialise Gandhara as a minor regional school and argued in a comparably essentialist mode (we may call it a kind of 'Orientalism in reverse'<sup>76</sup>) for

<sup>73</sup> Foucher, 'The Greek origin of the image of Buddha', 136.

<sup>74</sup> Certainly responding to Foucher's publications a few years earlier, Havell strongly criticized the Eurocentric view of Indian art, as he had explained in the preface of his 1908 publication *Indian Sculpture and Painting*: 'No European can appreciate Indian art who does not divest himself of his Western prepossessions, endeavour to understand Indian thought, and place himself at the Indian point of view'; compare E.B. Havell, *Indian Sculpture and Painting. Illustrated by typical Masterpieces with an Explanation of their Motives and Ideals*, London: John Murray, 1908, v, vi. In chapter III on 'The divine ideal in Indian art', he also explored, among other things, 'The Gandhara school and its true position in Indian art', cf. E.B. Havell, *The Ideals of Indian Art*, London: John Murray, 1911. See the analysis of this topic in Partha Mitter, *Much maligned Monsters: History of European Reactions to Indian Art*, Oxford: Chicago University Press, 1977, 274–276; Partha Mitter, 'Decadent art of south Indian temples', in C. King (ed.), *Views of Difference: Different Views of Art*, New Haven and London, 1999, 95–118.

<sup>75</sup> Compare Roger Lipsey, *Ananda Kentish Coomaraswamy: Selected Papers, 3 vols.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977; Rama Coomaraswamy (ed.), *The essential Ananda K. Coomaraswamy*. Bloomington: World Wisdom Inc., 2004.

<sup>76</sup> This term refers to a review article by Sadik Jalal al-Azm, where the author took up the tendency in Edward Said's ground-breaking 1978-book *Orientalism* to essentialise the Occident, in much the same way that he accused the Orientalists of essentialising the Orient. As a consequence, al-Azm pledged to read the Oriental (in his case Arab) discourse about

the existence of a specifically 'Indian' cultural identity rooted in an age-old continuous civilization. Already in his short paper *The Influence of Greek on Indian Art* (1908), Coomaraswamy argued that there was 'a certain prejudice [which] has led European investigators to think of Classical Greece naturally as the source of all art, and to suppose that the influence of Classical Art must have been as permanently important in the East as in the West'. He argued instead that 'late Graeco-Roman' art in its decadent phase had 'ultimately neither [been] very profound nor very important'.<sup>77</sup> If elements of this argument sound similar to the Austrian Strzygowski's, Coomaraswamy's underlying ideological mind-set (anti-colonial), was different, as his critical reference to the then-current British presence in India shows:

So far from foreigners having given to India the ideal type of Buddha, the Gandhara sculptures should perhaps be regarded as the work of late Graeco-Roman craftsmen striving in vain to interpret Indian ideals. The sculptures themselves show little artistic value which the Western world had at this time to offer to the East. *History repeats itself: the result of foreign influence on Indian art during the first few centuries of the Christian era was not, perhaps, of any more value than the influence of Western art on Indian at the present day.* [italics MF]<sup>78</sup>

The question about the value of Gandharan art could only be solved, following on from Coomaraswamy, not by mere archaeological findings in stone, but through religious and philosophical considerations. He played out the 'Olympian aspect of Greek religion' with its 'gods [as] grand and beautiful men' against the 'Indian art [as] essentially transcendental and not concerned with the representation of perfect men, but with the intimation of the Divinity [...] beyond Appearance'.<sup>79</sup> As a consequence, Coomaraswamy referred to the early phase of Indian art as ephemeral, if not totally aniconic, with untraceable images, long since vanished, of deities in wood, brick, and clay. A long series of studies followed, such as *The Significance of Oriental Art* (1919),<sup>80</sup> *The Invention of the Buddha Figure* (1924)<sup>81</sup> in the *Ostasiatische Zeitung* (compare Strzygowski 1913/14), and *The Indian Origin of the Buddha Image*

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the West as a sort of 'orientalism in reverse'; compare Sadik Jalal al-Azm, 'Orientalism and Orientalism in reverse', *Khamsin. Revue des Socialistes révolutionnaires du Proche-Orient*, 8, 1981, 5–26 (reprinted in: A.L. Macfie (ed.), *Orientalism. A reader*, Edinburgh; Edinburgh University Press, 2000, 217–238).

<sup>77</sup> Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, 'The Influence of Greek on Indian Art', read at the Fifteenth International Oriental Congress, Copenhagen, August 1908, Broad Campden: Essex House Press, 1908, 2.

<sup>78</sup> Coomaraswamy, 'The Influence of Greek on Indian Art', 1.

<sup>79</sup> Coomaraswamy, 'The Influence of Greek on Indian Art', 2.

<sup>80</sup> Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, 'The Significance of Oriental art', *Art Bulletin*, 2: 1, 1919, 17–22.

<sup>81</sup> Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, 'The Invention of the Buddha Figure', *Ostasiatische Zeitschrift*, XI, 1924, 51–55.

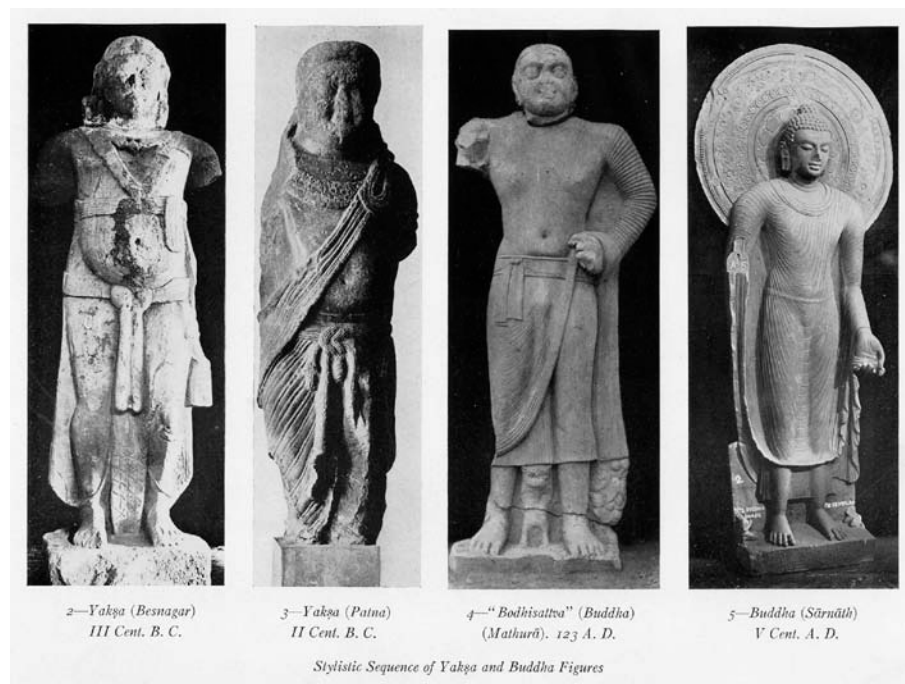


(1926).<sup>82</sup> This last essay, in which Coomaraswamy speaks as a representative of a Western institution *par excellence*, the Museum, in this case of the Fine Arts in Boston, was ironically published in the *Journal of the American Oriental Society*. Finally, Coomaraswamy's fifty-page long article for *Art Bulletin*, 'The Origin of the Buddha Image' (1927), summarized his main hypothesis on the topic. Following the classical topoi within the originally Western discipline of art history, Coomaraswamy now pitted the idea of an *influence* of 'Graeco-Buddhist [or] Indo-Hellenic art' against the concept of an indigenous, quasi *natural origin* of the Buddha image. In a general approach astonishingly similar to Foucher's dealing with anthropomorphic Bodhisattva and Buddha images, he cited a stylistic series of coins, already mentioned, and, as a new dimension, a series of *Yaksa-* or *naga-*cult figures (Figs. 11a-b). These Hindu, Jain, and Buddhist nature and tree gods, or guardians and tutelary gods, respectively, from the third century BC pre-dated all Indo-Greek sources. Termed *purely* Indian, these examples could now, without artistic resistance or stylistic competition, be declared by Coomaraswamy to be part and parcel of the early Buddha images of the central-south Indian School of Mathura, which existed *parallel* to the School of Gandhara during the Kushana era: 'When we realize in this way how *naturally* the demand for the Buddha image must have arisen, and how readily available were suitable types, we may be less inclined to jump to the conclusion that the cult image of the Tathagata was of extra-Indian *origin* [italics MF].'<sup>83</sup>

Ironically, or rather tragically, Coomaraswamy died in September 1947, only a few weeks after the partition of the Indian subcontinent, and therefore the separation of the ancient region of Gandhara from India, and its integration into the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. The art historical quarrels over the role of the Gandhara style – relating to British (and French) colonialism and cultural imperialism (including their scholars), the European focus on the Roman Late Antique or an all-comprising Philhellenism (or its criticism), and finally Indian (and now Pakistani) nationalism – had reached a new intensity arising from religious fundamentalism and violent demarcation lines.

<sup>82</sup> Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, 'The Indian Origin of the Buddha image', *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 46, 1926, 165–170.

<sup>83</sup> Ananda Coomaraswamy, 'The Origin of the Buddha image' *Art Bulletin* 9: 4, 1927, 287–328, here 300.



Figures 11a-b. Stylistic series as depicted in Ananda Coomaraswamy's article *The Origin of the Buddha Image* of 1927; 11a (above): Coins including the Kanishka-and-Boddo coin, as depicted in the upper right; and 11b (below): Yakṣa and Bodhisattva figures from Barhut, Sanchi and Mathura [Ananda Coomaraswamy, 'The Origin of the Buddha image' *Art Bulletin* 9: 4, 1927, page 292 (11a); page 291 (11b)]

### 3. Internationalism

During the following decades, the international community of (predominantly) Western art historians were largely responsible for the pluralizing of interpretations of the Gandhara style (into either a strictly Greek *or* Indian mode), its stylistic diversification, and its 'regionalization' into stylistic sub-categories (following further archaeological findings in the northwestern part of the Subindian continent and across inner Afghanistan to the southern parts of Central Asia across the Oxus River). One of the leading figures was the British archaeologist Sir Mortimer Wheeler (1890–1976). As Director General of the (ex-colonial) *Archaeological Survey of India* after the Second World War, he became a consultant to the Pakistani government, for whom he set up a new national museum and a national archaeological department. His book on *Five Thousand Years of Pakistan* (1950)<sup>84</sup> helped to establish this new nation's cultural identity, constructed from archaeological evidence (one of the strategies of post-colonial nation states with a rich material past<sup>85</sup>). In his work, he built on a variety of scientific treatises on the topic.<sup>86</sup> In a presentation, *Gandharan Art: A Note on the Present Position*, which he gave at the 8<sup>th</sup> International Congress of Classical Archaeology in Paris (the theme being *The Diffusion of the Greek and Roman Civilizations to Peripheral Cultures*), he summed up the pluralization of the post-war debate on our topic. In contrast to the elitist interpretations of Foucher and Coomaraswamy, Wheeler now used the term 'borrowing' to characterize the art of Gandhara as eclectic and hybrid:

Gandhara art is specifically Buddhist art. [...] Of course it assimilated frankly Hindu elements, and these may have become more emphatic as time went by. That is to say no more than that Buddhism was historically a Hindu concept. It in no way robs Gandhara art of its Buddhist monopoly. And that art was created by the Buddhists for their new needs, not on the basis of any local idiom but as *a sort of Esperanto compiled artificially from international borrowings*. Hence, incidentally, our persistent uncertainty as to what to call it, or how to arrange it chronologically. *It was an Ersatz or Esperanto contrivance*. [...] In analysing an art so complex in its origins and, at present, so unordered in its manifestations, we have all of us erred. Or rather, we have none of us been

<sup>84</sup> R.E. Mortimer Wheeler, *Five Thousand Years of Pakistan: an Archaeological Outline*, London: Johnson, 1950; compare Islay Lyons, Harald Ingholt, *Gandharan Art in Pakistan*, New York: Pantheon Books, 1957.

<sup>85</sup> Compare Ian C. Glover, 'Some national, regional, and political uses of archaeology in East and Southeast Asia', in Miriam Stark (ed.), *The Archaeology of Asia*, New York and Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2006, 17–36.

<sup>86</sup> Compare Benjamin Rowlands, 'A revised chronology of Gandharan sculpture', *Art Bulletin*, 18: 3, 1936, 387–400; Benjamin Rowlands, 'Gandhara, Rome and Mathura: The early Relief Style', *Archives of the Chinese Art Society of America*, 10, 1956, 8–17; Hugo Buchthal, 'The Western Aspects of Gandhara Sculpture', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 31, 1945, 151–176.

more than half-right. In our half-truths we have over-emphasized this feature of that, and so falsified our perspective, have got our focus wrong. [...] *Above all, it was Gandhara art, an aggregate which transcended the sum of its parts.* [italics MF]<sup>87</sup>

Just as with the earlier analyses, there was an assumption that Gandharan art came to life only because of an artistic vacuum at its very centre. Wheeler located at least four major characteristics of the Gandharan style. Firstly, there was an ‘over-all Hindu element’ (*à la* Coomaraswamy), hitherto underestimated, through which in Gandharan art the concept of the Buddha had remained a Hindu ‘raja-saint’.<sup>88</sup> Secondly, there was what he called a ‘much-advertised Western element’. Wheeler did not, however, mean pure Greek art as Foucher had, but a stylistic ‘compromise [called] Graeco-Roman’. He saw the influence of the ‘Roman’ (Rome had important trade routes via Alexandria and Begram, and through Gandhara towards China) as being of rather more significance than its art historical connotation as a mere ‘decadent’ sub-category of the Greek allowed it.<sup>89</sup> As important evidence of such stylistic migration, Wheeler quoted Buchthal’s 1945 study on everyday objects such as toilet trays (Fig. 12a), and reliefs on late Roman and early Christian sarcophagi (Figs. 12b-c), which supposedly triggered the depiction of continuous narratives of the life of the Buddha within the art of Gandhara. Thirdly, there was a Parthian element of the ‘Graeco-Iranian influence’, seen in ornaments, and found in cities such as Palmyra, Dura Europos, and Hatra. Finally, there was a Kushan art itself which was imported to Gandhara from regional centres such as Surkh Kotal (Figs. 13a-b), a temple site which was discovered in the 1950s by the French archaeologist Daniel Schlumberger.<sup>90</sup> His 1970 publication *L’Orient hellénisé: l’art grec et ses héritiers dans l’Asie non Méditerranéenne*<sup>91</sup> had, as the Italian archaeologist Maurizio Taddei described it, ‘the merit of not considering Gandhara [any longer] as an island of “Greekness” surrounded by the rough waves of “Oriental” culture’.<sup>92</sup>

<sup>87</sup> Mortimer Wheeler, ‘Gandhara Art: A Note on the Present Position’, in International Congress of Classical Archaeology (ed.), *Le rayonnement des civilisations grecques et romaines sur les cultures périphériques*, vol.1 (texts), Paris: Éditions E. de Boccard, 1965, 555–565, here 558 and 564.

<sup>88</sup> Wheeler, ‘Gandhara Art’, 559.

<sup>89</sup> Compare A.G. Soper, ‘The Roman Style in Gandhara’, *American Journal of Archaeology*, 55, 1951, 301–319.

<sup>90</sup> Daniel Schlumberger, ‘Descendants non-méditerranéens de l’art grec’, *Syria*, XXXVII: 3, 1960, I: 131–166, II: 253–318.

<sup>91</sup> Daniel Schlumberger, *L’Orient hellénisé: l’art grec et ses héritiers dans l’Asie non méditerranéenne*. Paris: Albin Michel, 1970.

<sup>92</sup> Maurizio Taddei, ‘Buddha e Apollo’, in Antonio Semino (ed.), *Le grandi avventure dell’archeologia*, vol. VI, Rome: Armando Curcio, 1980, 1943–64 (translated as a ‘Summary’ in Giovanni Verardi, Anna Filigenzi (eds.), *Maurizio Taddei. On Gandhara. Collected Articles. 2 vols.* Naples: Università degli Studi di Napoli, 2003, here vol. I, 249–254, here 254. Cf. another important publication is Taddei, Maurizio, *Arte narrativa tra India e mondo ellenistico*



FIG. 9. Dionysiac Scene. Calcutta, Indian Museum



FIG. 10. Cover of Roman Mirror-Case. London, British Museum



FIG. 27. Christ's Entry into Jerusalem. Detail of Sarcophagus. Rome. Lateran Museum

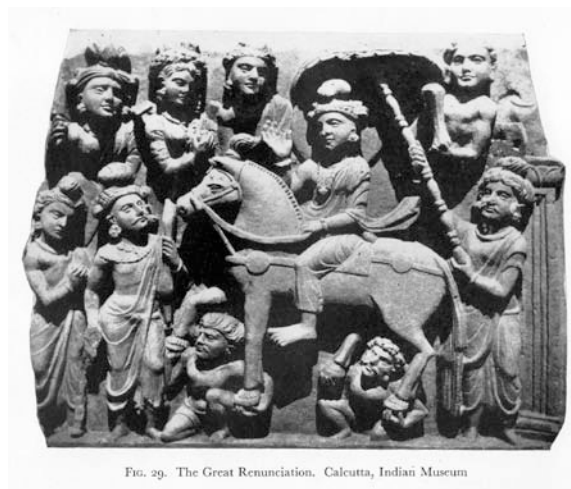


FIG. 29. The Great Renunciation. Calcutta, Indian Museum

Figures 12a–c. Photographs as shown on Hugo Buchthal's article *The Western Aspects of Gandhara Sculpture* of 1945; 12a: Roman Toilet tray and mirror case; 12b: A Roman sarcophagus from the Lateran Museum; 12c: A Gandharan relief from the Calcutta Museum [Hugo Buchthal, 'The Western aspects of Gandhara sculpture', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 31, 1945, figs. 9 and 10 (12a); fig. 27 (12b); fig. 29 (12c)]

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(*Conferenze IsMEO 5*), Rome: IsMEO, 1993. This seminal Italian paper was recently translated into English under the aegis of the Cluster of Excellence 'Asia and Europe in a Global Context. Dynamics of Transculturality' of Heidelberg University, under title 'Narrative Art between India and the Hellenistic World', *Transcultural Studies*, 1/2015, 34-74, <http://dx.doi.org/10.11588/ts.2015.1.22215>.



Figures 13a-b. Illustrations from findings of Surkh Kotal with comparative samples (13a); and narrative reliefs from Palmyra, Shotorak and Gandhara (13b), as depicted in Daniel Schlumberger's article *Descendants non-méditerranéens de l'art grec* of 1960 [Daniel Schlumberger, 'Descendants non-méditerranéens de l'art grec', *Syria*, XXXVII: 3, 1960, plates VII (13a) and XII (13b)]

It may be true that no art historian and archaeologist has contributed more widely than Taddei himself (1936–2000) to a pluralisation, diversification, and, at the same time, ‘de-ideologisation’ of Gandhara’s positioning within a global history of art across national borders and ideological orders. In 1967 he became director of the Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan. Already in his 1970s publication *India for the Ancient Civilizations* series, Taddei had added a critical appendix ‘Archaeology in India from the End of the Eighteenth Century to the Present Day’, in which he summarized the colonial mission in archaeological and art historical research as being ‘to demonstrate the links between the culture of ancient India and the British Raj’.<sup>93</sup> In the chapter on ‘The Influence of Gandhara’, he once again pointed to this art’s ‘composite culture’ (compare Wheeler’s term of an ‘aggregate’ or ‘Esperanto’) – however, and this was a totally new sense for the specificity of Gandhara, with ‘a creative individuality of its own’.<sup>94</sup> In his 1980 article *Buddha and Apollo* (clearly referring to Foucher’s stylistic comparison of 1912 between a ‘Hellenized Buddha or Indianized Apollo’, see above), Taddei may have been one of the first to describe a one-hundred year old discussion about European elements of the Gandhara style as a ‘*storia ideologica*’ (see the title of this article). Or, as he puts it in a 2003 publication on his most important Italian articles and critical reviews (in English translation):

In our modern Western culture, Gandharan art has at times been defined as ‘Graeco-Buddhist’ and at times as ‘Romano-Buddhist’ art, though nowadays it is more wisely denoted only by the ancient name of the region where the main production centre was, namely Gandhara. *As we shall see, the history of its knowledge is, more than anything else, the history of an idea* [*storia ideologica*].  
[italics MF]<sup>95</sup>

In this article – and here we see where Stanley Abe got most of his storyline for his own 1995 article without even quoting the Italian archaeologist! – Taddei unfolded for his reader a full story of European Orientalism: (a) ‘The Gandharan production, being “influenced” by classical art, was evidently privileged and practically served the purpose of ideological propaganda’; (b) it was staged in museums in England such as the British and the Victoria & Albert Museums, and exhibited during the Vienna World Exhibition in 1873; (c) it was defined by Foucher after 1905 as ‘evolving from a maximum of Greekness (with a minimum of Indianness) to a minimum of Greekness, that is to say, a Greekness which became more and more debased or Indianized’; (d) it was re-nationalized by Coomaraswamy, ‘in whose hands the heated argument about Gandharan art became red-hot’; (e) it was only occasionally modified into ‘Romano-Buddhist art [...] by preferably British scholars [until the end of the colonial project in India, MF], who looked upon themselves as

<sup>93</sup> Maurizio Taddei, *India*, Ancient Civilizations series, London: Barrie & Jenkins, 1970, 227–234, here 323.

<sup>94</sup> Taddei, *India*, 173.

<sup>95</sup> Taddei, ‘Buddha e Apollo’, 229.

guardians of a coveted *pax Britannica* after the model of the *pax Romana*’; and finally (f), it was pluralised in the post-partition era, with French, English, Russian, German, and Giuseppe Tucci’s (and Taddei’s) Italian archaeological missions in the area and throughout the whole of Central Asia.<sup>96</sup>

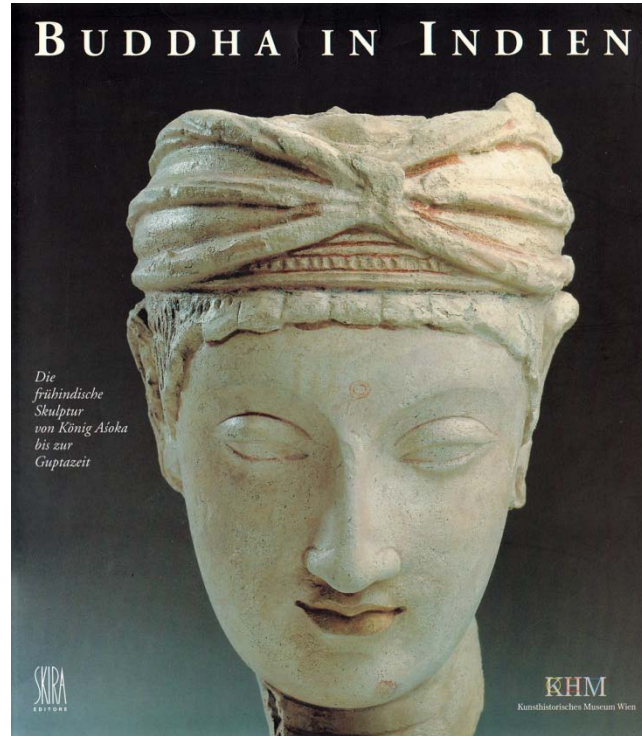


Figure 14. Cover of the Viennese exhibition catalogue of 1995 *Buddha in Indien* [Deborah Klimburg-Salter (ed.), *Buddha in Indien. Die frühbuddhistische Skulptur von König Asoka bis zur Guptazeit*, exhibition catalogue of the Kunsthistorisches Museum Vienna, Milan, Vienna: Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien, 1995, cover]

<sup>96</sup> Taddei, ‘Buddha e Apollo’, 249–253. What Taddei meant by the staging of Indian art in Europe and of the Britains as ‘guardians of a *pax Britannica* after the model of the *pax Romana*’, referred to a display mode of architectural plaster casts which were exhibited by Leitner in Vienna in 1873, and in their most astonishing form in the twin Cast/Architectural Courts in the South Kensington Museum (opened in 1874) where – in a kind of ‘three-dimensional imperial archive’ – a replica of the Sanchi gate from India in the ‘Oriental court’, and of the Trajan’s Column in the ‘European court’ had to mirror Great Britain’s Asian and European patronage of cultural heritage (inheritance). See Tim Barringer, ‘The South Kensington Museum and the colonial project’, in Tim Barringer, Tom Flynn (eds.), *Colonialism and the Object*, London and New York: Psychology Press, 1998, 11–27, here 11. About this ideologically contested display mode of cast replicas within upcoming architectural museum spaces in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in London, Paris and Berlin, see Michael Falser, ‘From Gaillon to Sanchi, from Vézelay to Angkor Wat. The Musée Indo-chinois in Paris: A Transcultural Perspective on Architectural Museums’, *RIHA Journal*, 0071, June 19, 2013, accessed October 16, 2014. <http://www.riha-journal.org/articles/2013/2013-apr-jun/falser-musee-indo-chinois>



The discussion of Gandhara became ever more diversified over the next two decades. The tracing of the Buddha image between India and the Asian world were fine-tuned further,<sup>97</sup> theories of (an)iconism in Buddhist art discussed,<sup>98</sup> and the Western role in the reception of Gandhara explored in detail.<sup>99</sup> Meanwhile Indian voices in the Gandhara debate oscillated between the search for ‘contributory influences’,<sup>100</sup> – by embedding it within the 3000-year long history of Indian sculpture<sup>101</sup> – and an ongoing debate on ‘Gandhara versus Mathura’.<sup>102</sup>

At the end of a long series of publications up to the late 1990s, we shall turn briefly to the excellent Viennese exhibition catalogue from 1995, *Buddha in Indien. Die frühbuddhistische Skulptur von König Asoka bis zur Guptazeit* (Fig. 14), edited by Deborah Klimburg-Salter, back then professor at the Institute of Art History in Vienna, (as a matter of fact the same institution at which Strzygowski had taught between 1909 and 1933). Building on his decades of research in the field, Taddei used his introductory essay for the catalogue,<sup>103</sup> to summarize the latest insights into

<sup>97</sup> Compare Madeleine Hallade, *Gandharan Art of North India and the Graeco-Buddhist Tradition in India, Persia, and Central Asia*, New York: Abrams, 1968; David L. Snellgrove (ed.), *The Image of Buddha*, London: Serindia, 1978.

<sup>98</sup> Compare J.C. Huntington, ‘Origin of the Buddha Image. Early Traditions and the Concept of the Buddhadasanapunya’, in A.K. Narain (ed.), *Studies in Buddhist Art of South Asia*, New Delhi: Kanak Publications, 1985, 23–58; S.L. Huntington, ‘Early Buddhist Art and the Theory of Aniconism’, *Art Journal*, 49, 1990, 401–408; Rob Linrothe, ‘Inquiries into the Origin of the Buddha Image: A Review’, *East and West*, 43: 1/4, December 1993, 241–256. Compare the summarizing comments of Susan L. and John C. Huntington in Julia A.B. Hegewald (ed.), *In the Shadow of the Golden Age. Art and Identity in Asia from Gandhara to the Modern Age*, Berlin: EB-Verlag, 2014.

<sup>99</sup> Compare Elisabeth Errington, *The Western Discovery of the Art of Gandhara and the Finds of Jamalgarhi*, PhD SOAS, 1987. More recent research from the same scholar includes Elisabeth Errington, ‘Exploring Gandhara’, in: Elisabeth Errington, Vesta Sarkhosh Curtis (eds.), *From Persepolis to the Punjab. Exploring ancient Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan*, London: The British Museum Press, 2007, 211–226.

<sup>100</sup> Awadh Kishore Narain, *The Indo-Greeks*, Oxford: Clarendon, 1957; Awadh Kishore Narain, ‘First Images of the Buddha and Bodhisattvas: Ideology and Chronology’, in Awadh Kishore Narain (ed.), *Studies in Buddhist art of South Asia*, New Delhi: Kanak Publications, 1985, 1–21; Lolita Nehru, *Origins of the Gandharan style: A Study of Contributory Influences*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1990.

<sup>101</sup> Pramod Chandra, *The Sculpture of India. 3000 BC – 130 AD*, Washington: Harvard University Press, 1985.

<sup>102</sup> Yuvraj Krishan, *The Buddha Image: Its Origin and Development*, New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, 1996; Yuvraj Krishan, ‘The Emergence of the Buddha Image: Gandhara versus Mathura’, *Oriental Art*, 34, 1988–1989, 225–275.

<sup>103</sup> Maurizio Taddei, ‘Was bedeutete der Buddhismus für die frühe indische Kunst?’, in Deborah Klimburg-Salter (ed.), *Buddha in Indien. Die frühbuddhistische Skulptur von König Asoka bis zur Guptazeit*, exhibition catalogue of the Kunsthistorisches Museum Vienna, Milan, Vienna: Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien, 1995, 41–49. I would like to thank Prof. Deborah Klimburg-Salter for her important input for the initial conception of this paper.



Figures 15a-c. Buddha sculptures Gandhara/Pakistan of the 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> c. CE (15a) and from Mathura of the 2<sup>nd</sup> c. CE (15b) and 5<sup>th</sup> c. CE (15c) as depicted in the Viennese exhibition catalogue of 1995 *Buddha in Indien* [Deborah Klimburg-Salter (ed.), *Buddha in Indien. Die frühbuddhistische Skulptur von König Asoka bis zur Guptazeit*, exhibition catalogue of the Kunsthistorisches Museum Vienna, Milan, Vienna: Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien, 1995, pages 158 (15a, © Indian Museum at Calcutta, India), 129 (15b, © Archaeological Museum at Mathura, India), 220 (15c, © Archaeological Museum at Mathura, India)]

a larger kind of *Kushana art* which has given rise to the two different, however parallel and artistically equal schools of Gandhara and Mathura during one and the same Kushana empire (Figs. 15a-c).<sup>104</sup> Additionally, a post-Kushana art of Gandhara was identified as having an important afterlife in Afghanistan, and in India until the Gupta period of the fifth century AD. In the two articles *Some Reflexions on the*

<sup>104</sup> For an approach to Kushana art from a multi-layered (linguistical, numismatic, political, and altogether cultural) perspective see Deborah Klimburg-Salter, 'From an Art Historical Perspective: Problems of Chronology in the Kushana Period', in Michael Alram and Deborah Klimburg-Salter (eds.), *Coins, Art and Chronology. Essays on the pre-Islamic History of the Indo-Iranian Boderlands*, Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1999, 3-18. In an earlier paper, Taddei admitted that perhaps the first person who 'proposed a compromise by acknowledging that the idea of representing the Buddha [was] Western, but that this idea could have been put into practice at the same time in Gandhara and at Mathura' (Taddei, 'Buddha e Apollo', 1980, 251) was Henri Deydier in his post-war publication *Contribution à l'étude de l'art du Gandhâra: Essai de bibliographie analytique et critique des ouvrages parus de 1922 à 1949*, Paris: Adrien-Maisonneuve, 1950; cf. J. Ph. Vogel, *La sculpture de Mathura*, Paris: Librairie Nationale d'Art et d'Histoire, 1930; Dieter Ahrens, *Die römischen Grundlagen der Gandharakunst*, Münster: Aschendorffsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1961; J.E. van Lohuizen-De Leeuw, 'Gandhara and Mathura. Their Cultural Relationship', in Pratapaditya Pal (ed.), *Aspects of Indian Art*, LA Symposium, Leiden: Brill, 1972, 27-43; J.E. van Lohuizen-De Leeuw, 'New Evidence with Regard to the Origin of the Buddha Image', in Herbert Härtel (ed.), *South Asian Archaeology 1979*, Conference Proceedings, Berlin: Reimer, 1981, 377-400.

*Formation of the Buddha Image* and *The Buddha Image* (compare the similar titles by Foucher and Coowaraswamy!), which date from 1999, the year before his death, Taddei showed once more the ‘ideological factors’ in the Gandhara-Mathura debate to be based on the wrong ‘assumption that the iconic depiction [of Buddha had been] a conquest in itself, not a choice’. He concluded: ‘The real question is not so much to establish where the first image was produced, but rather to understand its process of formation and to identify its possible models’. Mathura may have produced the first ‘anthropomorphic image of the Buddha as an [isolated] icon’, while Gandhara might have created the first chronological scenes of Buddha’s life, in which he ‘became a powerful vehicle of religious messages, and the narrative cycle the model of an ethic and gnoseologic ripening process which the devotee could somehow keep track of’.<sup>105</sup>

After 2000 highly innovative collaborative research methods continued to compile and compare older with fast-growing, newer material data collections on archaeological sites. A pertinent example is the ongoing Italian archaeological mission in the wider Gandharan region, from which Taddei had also drawn his insights from the 1970s onwards.<sup>106</sup> Summarizing the Italian research in a 2012 paper, entitled *Orientalised Hellenism versus Hellenised Orient: Reversing the Perspective on Gandharan Art*, Anna Filigenzi called for an ‘unbiased [re]interpretation’ of ‘the *voxata quaestio* of the inception of Gandharan art and the inclusion of Hellenistic element into the local figurative languages’, through the combination of ‘objective evidence with a sympathetic standpoint of aesthetic relativism’. However, her claim that archaeology could ‘provide a more robust analytical tool [for] a safe retrieval of material data’<sup>107</sup> brings us back to the central question of this paper: wasn’t it precisely the Western discipline of archaeology (together with art history, epigraphy, philology, and ethnography) – with its paradigms of pure origins, artistic influences, developmental stages of style, radiating centres and cultural peripheries – which constituted the very research entity of Gandhara itself? And isn’t the demand for an unbiased approach to, and a disinterested interpretation of, archaeological data collection, just another aspect of the continuing ‘game’ to do with Gandhara and the relevant culturo-political dynamics, institutions and agents (with their epistemological convictions as laid out in this paper)? Even if we cannot present

<sup>105</sup> Maurizio Taddei, ‘The Buddha Image’, in Renzo Freschi (ed.), *L’arte del Buddismo dall’India alla Cina*, Milan: Renzo Freschi, 1999, 4–8 (translated in Verardi and Filigenzi 2003, vol. II, 497–502, here 498 and 500).

<sup>106</sup> The *IsIAO* (*Istituto Italiano per l’Africa e l’Oriente*) was founded in 1995 by merging the *Istituto italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente* (*IsMEO*, created in 1933 by Giovanni Gentile and Giuseppe Tucci) with the *Istituto italo-africano* (*IIA*, founded in 1906). I would like to thank Anna Filigenzi for her critical comments on my draft paper and her useful hints at actual ongoing archaeological research.

<sup>107</sup> Anna Filigenzi, ‘Orientalised Hellenism versus Hellenised Orient: Reversing the Perspective on Gandharan Art’, *Ancient Civilizations from Scythia to Siberia*, 18, 2012, 111–141, here 111–3.

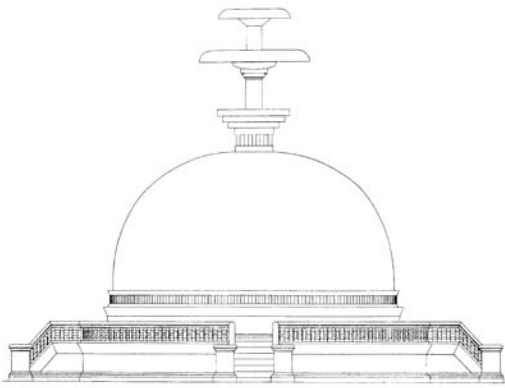
here a detailed exegesis of its precious and highly complex archaeological enquiries and findings, we propose that – following localized Eurocentric, Indocentric and universalist approaches (see above) – the Italian research enterprise is part and parcel of a wider *regionalist turn* in recent projects and publications, to tackle the ongoing *vexata quaestio* over Gandhara's role in the history of art and architecture.<sup>108</sup>

One Italian focus was, and still is to some extent, the Swat Valley in northern Pakistan, where research on the Buddhist settlement of Butkara (its life span was dated from the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BCE to the 9<sup>th</sup> century CE) has provided evidence of the historic appropriation of Hellenistic features within Buddhist traditions in art and architecture (with the late Domenico Faccenna as a central personality).<sup>109</sup> The establishing of a 'secure stratigraphic sequence to itemise diachronic variations of technical and stylistic patterns' in order to identify the site's different built structures brought to light a 'successful [architectural] amalgamation of the traditional stupa model with elements of western origin' (Fig. 16a). Furthermore, through creative attempts by local builders to a) adapt decorative structural elements such as Doric friezes to serve as innovative new framing systems for the depicted narrative cycles of Buddha's life, and b) develop new decorative elements and stylistic features (Fig. 16b), have allowed 'Western sources [to be] assimilated towards a new language' of 'neither "Indian" nor "Greek" but of Gandharan' character.<sup>110</sup> A second case-study geographically close-by – the main stupa of Saidu Sharif from the 1<sup>st</sup>-century CE – was investigated as another outstanding specimen of genuine Gandharan style. This architecture not only 'translated in architectural form a mandalic concept of the

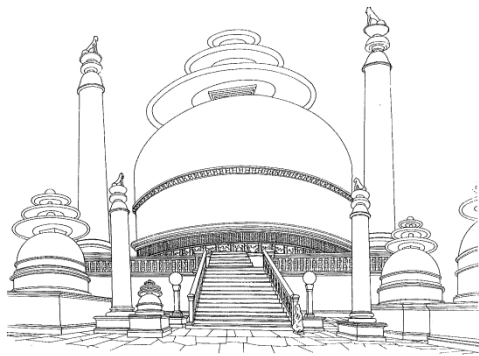
<sup>108</sup> Here we can only name the publications of the US-trained art historian, now curator of New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art, Kurt Behrendt, cf. Kurt Behrendt, *The Buddhist Architecture of Gandhara*, Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2004; Pia Brancaccio, Kurt Behrendt (eds.), *Gandharan Buddhism. Archaeology, Art, Texts*, Vancouver, Toronto: Washington University Press, 2006. However, Behrendt's work had been questioned in Gérard Fussmann's very instructive critique in the *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies*, 27/1 (2004), 237–249.

<sup>109</sup> In 2003, a one-hundred-page summary of fifty years of ongoing research was published in: Domenico Faccenna, Anna Filigenzi, Pierfrancesco Callieri, 'At the Origin of Gandharan Art. The Contribution of the IsIAO Italian Archaeological Mission in the Swat Valley, Pakistan', *Ancient Civilizations from Scythia to Siberia* 9 (2003), 277–380. This section comprised five studies: Domenico Faccenna, 'The Butkara I Complex: Origins and Development' (277–286); Domenico Faccenna, 'Early Evidence of Figurative Art: Artistic Centre and the Stylistic groups' (287–306); Domenico Faccenna and Pierfrancesco Callieri, 'The Buddhist Sacred Area of Saidu Sharif I' (307–318); Domenico Faccenna, 'The Frieze on the Main Stupa of Saidu Sharif I' (319–349); Anna Filigenzi, 'Narrative Art in Gandhara' (350–380). Samples of the main literature include: Domenico Faccenna, *Butkara I (Swāt, Pakistan) 1956–1962* (IsMEO Reports and Memoirs III. 1-5.2), 6 vols. Rome, 1980–1981. And: Domenico Faccenna, 'The Artistic Centre of Butkara I and Saidu Sharif I in the Pre-Kusanna Period', in D. M. Srinivasan (ed.), *On the Cusp of an Era: Art in the Pre-Kusāna World*, Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2007, 165–199.

<sup>110</sup> Filigenzi, 'Orientalised Hellenism', 114–7.



Figures 16a-b. Reconstruction sketch of the stupa of Butkara I (16a) and a detail of the cornice of stupa 14 (16b) [Domenico Faccenna, *Butkara I (Swāt, Pakistan) 1956–1962*, Rome: IsMEO, 1980–1981, vol.I, fig. 30 (16a), and vol. V.I, plate 139b (16b)]



Figures 17a-b. Reconstruction sketch of the main stupa of Saidu, Swat (17a) and a figured curvilinear frieze of Saidu Sharif in two registers, with Buddha's life scenes [Domenico Faccenna, *Saidu Sharif I (Swat, Pakistan)*, Rome: IsIAO, fig. 282 (17a); Siadu Sharif, Swat Museum (17b)]

ritual space' (Fig. 17a). It also introduced a unique decorative system of a cornice, balustrade and mouldings, to frame a narrative frieze of 42 m in circumference. On its sixty-five big panels to depict (another invention of Gandhara) Buddha's life was 'in the new perspective of an ethical biography entering into the human dimension of historical time' (Fig. 17b). However progressive and inventive this new form of archaeological data collection, cross-referencing and scientific deduction may seem, the final interpretations were still constrained by the old art historical paradigms of artistic individuality, developmental stages of style, and centre-periphery explanatory models. The previously mentioned Gandharan art and architecture was now understood as being a) 'a nodal point where techniques, materials, architectural settings, and iconographic schemes coalesced', b) the 'apex of an artistic season' within c) 'a frontier land where regionalism and universalism found

a melting pot [with] Hellenistic models offering a bridge to elsewhere and anywhere' and, finally, d) 'not strictly "Indian", but cosmopolitan'. At this point the classical (Eurocentric) Winckelmannian topos of stylistic maturity was simply applied to Gandhara itself, and Foucher's previous claim of a radiating Greek influence into Asia was now reversed and regionalised, since Gandhara itself was now proclaimed to have exerted 'a vast impact on the coeval Buddhist world' around it.<sup>111</sup>

#### 4. Global implications

We could say that the period between the 1950s and 2010s (summarized briefly above), brought a gradual internationalisation and pluralisation to scientific research on Gandhara, through a) a parallel classification of the same into trans-regional artistic and commercial networks, and ever more fine-tuned stylistic sub-branches, and b) a higher appreciation of regional creativity which absorbed external influences into a totally new and independent artistic language. If this is so, then the year 2000 signified a dramatic turning point (or even, a sudden crisis) within the public arena: the traumatic, if dramatically spectacular, blasting of the two Buddhas of Bamiyan (late 6th-early 7th CE), in Afghanistan.<sup>112</sup> This happened in March 2001, some six months before the terrorist attack of September 11 in New York. The world press and the globally connected World Heritage (UNESCO and ICOMOS) community condemned the incident as 'barbarity and vandalism'<sup>113</sup> (*per definitionem* a spontaneous act without motive) by the fundamentalist Taliban (Figs. 18a-b). On the contrary, we might see this tragic loss of such extraordinary sculptural artworks as a clearly motivated act of 'performative iconoclasm'.<sup>114</sup> The Taliban leader Mullah Omar, had officially planned, announced, and finally

<sup>111</sup> Filigenzi, 'Orientalised Hellenism', 130, 131, 132, 136.

<sup>112</sup> For the positioning of the art in Afghanistan in general and Bamiyan in particular in relation to Gandhara, see Maurizio Taddei, 'Afghanistan §II, 1(ii)(b): Sculpture: c. 4<sup>th</sup>-c. 1<sup>st</sup> century BC; (c): Sculpture: c. 1<sup>st</sup>-c. 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD; (d): Sculpture: c. 4<sup>th</sup>-c. 9<sup>th</sup> century AD; (iii)(a): Painting: c. 4<sup>th</sup>-c. 1<sup>st</sup> century BC; (b): c. 1<sup>st</sup>-c. 5<sup>th</sup> century AD; (c): c. 6<sup>th</sup>-c. 9<sup>th</sup> century AD.', in J. Turner (ed.), *The Dictionary of Art*, Macmillan vol. 1/1996, 194-203.

<sup>113</sup> ICOMOS, the advisory body of UNESCO, called it in its *Heritage @ Risk* series an 'incredible act of vandalism' and 'an act of barbarity'. See in ICOMOS, Dinu Bumbaru et al. (eds.), *Heritage at Risk. ICOMOS World Report 2001/2002 on Monuments and Sites in Danger*, Munich: K.G. Saur, 2002, 13. Compare for the UNESCO World Heritage context in: K. Warikoo (ed.), *Bamiyan. Challenge to World Heritage*, New Delhi: Bhavana, 2002; Juliette van Krieken-Pieters (ed.), *Art and Archaeology of Afghanistan: Its Fall and Survival. A Multi-disciplinary Approach*, Leiden: Brill, 2006.

<sup>114</sup> Michael Falser, 'Die Buddhas von Bamiyan, performativer Ikonoklasmus und das "Image" von Kulturerbe', *Zeitschrift für Kulturwissenschaft*, special issue Kultur und Terror, 1, 2010, 82–93 (published in English as 'The Bamiyan Buddhas, Performative Iconoclasm and the 'Image' of Heritage', in Simone Giometti, Andrzej Tomaszewski (eds.), *The Image of Heritage. Changing Perception, Permanent Responsibilities*, Florence: Polistampa, 2011, 157–169.

executed the destruction (in part in response to the gradual isolation of his violent regime through UN sanctions), in front of a helpless world public – whose media presence helped to eternalize this event in the global memory via internet video clips on *YouTube* (Fig. 18c). As a matter of fact, the act was directed not so much against a religious (in this case Buddhist), icon in an Islamist state, but rather – together with the looting and destruction of the National Museum of Kabul – against the Western and increasingly globalized concept of listed and protected cultural heritage, museums, and collections, and the aesthetic and ideological embedding of this concept within modern nation states (Figs. 19a-b).<sup>115</sup>

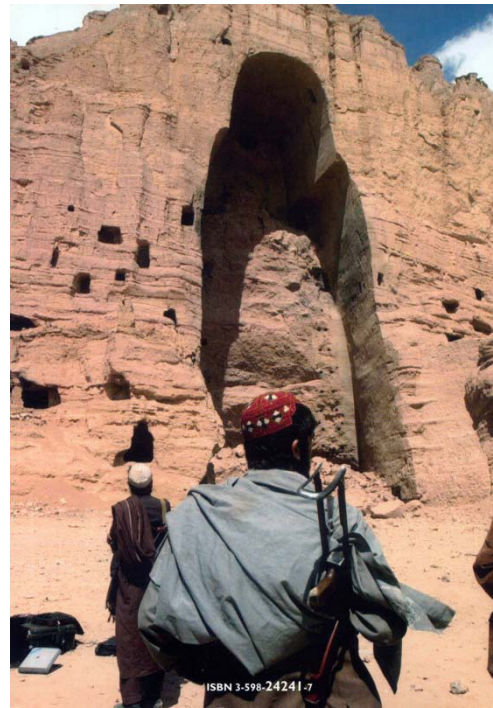
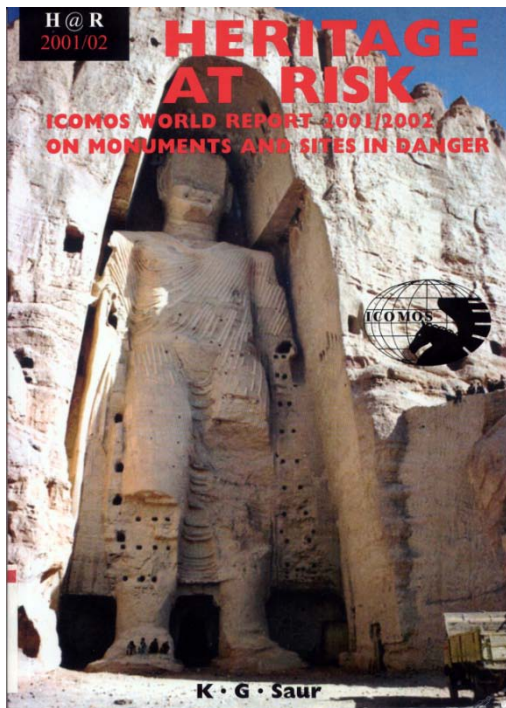


Figure 18a-b. The Bamiyan figures in Afghanistan before and after their destruction in 2001, as shown on the cover (18a) and back cover (18b) on the ICOMOS' *Heritage @ Risk*-series of 2001/2 [in ICOMOS, Dinu Bumbaru et al. (eds.), *Heritage at Risk. ICOMOS World Report 2001/2002 on Monuments and Sites in Danger*, Munich: K.G. Saur, 2002, cover, back cover]

<sup>115</sup> Compare Jean-Michel Frodon, 'La guerre des images, ou le paradoxe de Bamiyan' *Le Monde*, March 23, 2001, 15; Finbarr Barry Flood, 'Between Cult and Culture: Bamiyan, Islamic Iconoclasm, and the Museum' *Art Bulletin*, 84: 4, 641–659.



Figure 18c. The moment of blasting the Bamiyan Buddhas in a video of the event on YouTube in 2010 [YouTube 2010]



Looting of the Museum in Kabul

Figures 19a-b. Depictions of the Kakrak Buddha near Bamiyan (19a), and of a militant guardian in front of an exhibit in the Kabul Museum (19b), as in the ICOMOS' *Heritage @ Risk*-series of 2000 [ICOMOS, Dinu Bumbaru et al. (eds.), *Heritage at Risk. ICOMOS World Report 2000 on Monuments and Sites in Danger*, Munich: K.G. Saur, 2000, pages 41, 42]

Even more relevant for this article, however, is the hypothesis that this act of *iconoclasm* (lit. image-breaking) can be seen in causal correlation to the art historical and (post)colonial constructedness (developed above), of the 'image of Buddha' within the stylistic entity of Gandharan art. Foucher himself – in the political context of the *Great Game* in Central Asia, and of Afghanistan's independence in 1919 after the Third Anglo-Afghan War – had negotiated with King Amanullah Khan a 30-year French monopoly on archaeological excavations in the region, and was himself the



first director of the newly founded *Délégation Archéologique Française en Afghanistan* (DAFA) of 1922.<sup>116</sup> With his own expertise, and with the help of his colleagues André Godard and Jean Hackin, the Bamiyan site was not only reinvented as a Kushana caravan stop between Peshawar and Bactria, but it was also embedded into a Greek (therefore Western) and at the same time globally valid canon of Gandhara art. The two Buddha figures, 37 and 55 metres high, dating from the sixth century CE (Fig. 20), were praised as being, in dimension and glory', the 'largest manifestation of Graeco-Buddhist art'<sup>117</sup> – at a time when the French had also helped to establish the National Museum in Kabul as a place for exhibiting archaeological finds. As a consequence, the late Gandharan art from Bamiyan prefigured what would later become Afghanistan's national canon of cultural heritage. As in the Gandharan case (see Foucher's illustrations above), an archaeological site, the art historical practices of classifying and aestheticising artefacts, and museological display modes, were drawn together to enable a cultural entity to become a fixed element within an elitist canon of world art.

Defending the lost Graeco-Buddhist heritage in the name of humanity against barbarity after the 2001 incident encouraged a two-fold re-semanticisation of Gandhara style formation (in terms of public rhetoric, rather than scientific research). This consisted of: a) its further *globalization* into a peaceful element within a history of world or universal art, and b) its *regionalization* into an unproblematic cultural entity and quasi natural element of today's Muslim (and , after 9/11 less popular internationally ?) nation states of Pakistan and Afghanistan.

<sup>116</sup> Compare Utard Olivier, *Politique est Archéologie: histoire de la Délégation Archéologique Française en Afghanistan (1922–1982)*, Paris: Éditions Recherche sur les Civilisations, 1997; Paul Bernard, 'La mission d'Alfred Foucher en Afghanistan', *Comptes rendus des séances de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres*, 151: 4, 2007: 1797–1845; Annick Fenet, 'Les archives Alfred Foucher (1865–1952) de la Société asiatique (Paris)', *Anabases*, 7, 2008, 163–192.

<sup>117</sup> André Godard, et al., *Les Antiquités bouddhiques de Bāmiyān*, Paris: Van Oest, 1928; cf. Alfred Foucher, 'Correspondance (Notice archéologique de la vallée de Bamian)', *Journal Asiatique*, CCII: 2, April-June 1923, 354–358; Joseph Hackin, *Nouvelles Recherches Archéologiques à Bāmiyān*, Paris: Van Oest, 1933; Joseph Hackin, *L'oeuvre de la Délégation Archéologique Française en Afghanistan (1922-1932). I. L'archéologie Bouddhique*, Tokyo: Maison franco-japonaise, 1933; compare Alexander Burnes, 'On the colossal idols of Bamiyan', *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 23, November 1833, 561–564; Zmaryalai Tarzi, *L'architecture et le décor rupestre des grottes de Bamiyan*, Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1977; Deborah Klimburg-Salter, *The Kingdom of Bamiyan. Buddhist Art and Culture of the Hindukush*, Rome: Istituto universitario orientale, 1989.



Figure 20. The Bamiyan Buddhas in a drawing by Alexander Burnes in 1833, reprinted in André Godard's *Les Antiquités bouddhiques de Bāmiyān* of 1928 [André Godard, et al., *Les Antiquités bouddhiques de Bāmiyān*, Paris: Van Oest, 1928, plate VIIb]

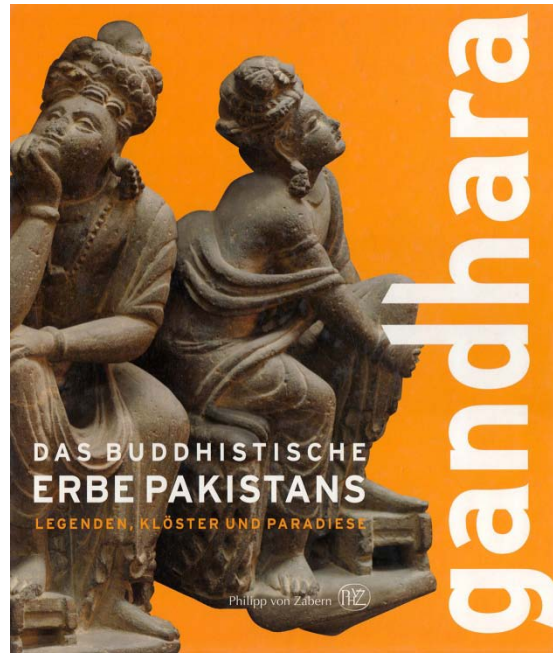
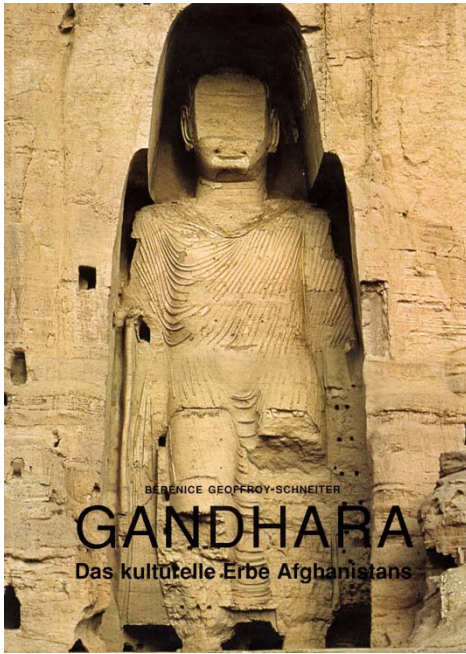
On one side of the latest development, 'trendier' terminologies used in latest archaeological approaches (see above) migrated into a rather politically-correct word choice to describe the Gandharan style phenomenon. As a reverse effect this trend risks fading out the necessary work to critically examine the role of the disciplines of archaeology and art history themselves, which had in fact produced 'Gandhara' as their research unit. If Taddei had only three decades earlier called the discursive formation of the Graeco-Buddhist style of Gandhara an ideologically highly contested entity, the Eurocentric institutional voices were now labelling (harmonizing) the same as an 'inter- or multicultural' meeting place of 'good old' peaceful times. A good example might be the international conference at the UNESCO headquarters in Paris on September 28-30, 2009, which focused on *Intercultural Encounters in the Hellenized Orient*.<sup>118</sup> If the latter term was (using one participant's work as an example of the latest globalizing trend words) somewhat romanticized (and trivialized?) as 'the most *multicoloured intermingling* of cultures in

<sup>118</sup> See the programme of the UNESCO Conference, accessed January 12, 2015:

[http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/files/39817/12538892101Programme\\_-\\_Conf\\_\\_28-30\\_Sept\\_2009\\_ENG.pdf/Programme%2B-%2BConf%2B%2B28-30%2BSept%2B2009%2BENG.pdf](http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/files/39817/12538892101Programme_-_Conf__28-30_Sept_2009_ENG.pdf/Programme%2B-%2BConf%2B%2B28-30%2BSept%2B2009%2BENG.pdf). Was it by accident that the first day of the conference,

entitled "From confrontation of civilizations to multipolar unity of the Hellenistic Orient", was opened (before representatives from Europe) by the ambassador and permanent delegate of Greece to UNESCO, and the president of the Hellenic National Commission for UNESCO, rather than by representatives of Indian, Pakistan or Afghanistan?

antiquity', Gandharan art in particular now became the 'most clear demonstration [of] the validity of Asian Hellenism as a means of communication and *intercultural dialogue*'.<sup>119</sup>



Figures 21 a-b. Book covers to re-nationalise Gandharan art for Afghanistan (21a), and for Pakistan (21b) [21a: Bérénice Geoffroy-Schneiter, *Gandhara. Das kulturelle Erbe Afghanistans*. Munich: Knesebeck, 2002, cover (original *Gandhara – La mémoire de l’Afghanistan. La rencontre d’Apollon et de Bouddha*, Paris: Assouline, 2000;); 21b: Dirk Fabian, ingraphis.de (Kassel) for Kunst- und Ausstellungshalle der BRD, *Gandhara. Das Buddhistische Erbe Pakistans. Legenden, Klöster und Paradiese*, Mainz: Zabern, 2008, cover]

From another perspective, , the 2001 attacks on New York’s Twin Towers and on the Bamiyan Buddhas weighed heavily on the ‘image’ of the relatively young and predominantly Muslim nation states of Pakistan and Afghanistan, as apparent hotbeds for international, Islamic terrorism. One possible exit strategy was a re-‘semantisation’ of what had been configured over the last one hundred years as Graeco-Buddhist (and therefore pre-Islamic) art. In a figurative sense ‘Gandhara’ could now be instrumentalised as a global, integrative, peaceful denotation, and at the same time could be provincialized (i.e. nationalized) into an optionally ‘Afghan’ or ‘Pakistani’ national mode – in contrast to its denomination as ‘Indian’ (Coomaraswamy), ‘trans-Aryan’ (Strzygowski), a Central Asian ‘aggregate or composite’ (Wheeler, Taddei), or as a part of ‘UNESCO’s Cultural Heritage of Humanity’ (since 2003). While one publication referred to Gandhara as ‘The cultural

<sup>119</sup> Antonio Invernizzi, ‘Remarks on the Intercultural Encounters in the Hellenized Orient’, *Parthica (Incontri di Culture nes Mondo Antico)* 14 (2012), 89–108, here 89, 100 [italics MF].

heritage of Afghanistan',<sup>120</sup> a touring exhibition from Bonn to Berlin and Zurich (2008–2010, and 2011 in New York) called it 'The cultural heritage of Pakistan [with its] legends, monasteries and paradises' (Figs. 21a-b), and, on its arrival in New York in 2011, 'The Buddhist Heritage of Pakistan: Art Of Gandhara'. In a rhetorical act of a kind of 'counter-iconoclasm', the curators of this exhibition, Michael Jansen and Christan Luczanits, opened the catalogue with a harmonious (politically correct?) tone, evoking, once again, a 'perfect [peaceful? MF] union of Western and Eastern elements' for the style of Gandhara:

Today the region of Afghanistan, the plain around the city of Peshawar and the valleys to the north are threatened by Islamic fundamentalism. From the art historical viewpoint the blasting of the colossal Buddha sculptures of Bamiyan [...] were the sad climax of this chapter. Exactly because of this fact it is the utmost concern of us and the Pakistani government to make this Gandharan culture of this conflict-laden region with its *perfect union of western and eastern elements* accessible to a wide public of the Western world. [italics, translation from German MF]<sup>121</sup>

Did the British colonial archaeologists Alexander Cunningham in 1870 or John Marshall in 1910 speak in this way? Did the French art historian Alfred Foucher or the Indian (Sri Lankan) Ananada Coomaraswamy around 1920 say this, or the Austrian Josef Strzygowski in 1930, or the Italian archaeologist Maurizio Taddei between 1970 and 2000? Was this the voice of the cultural representatives of the Pakistani and Afghan governments after New York's 9/11 and the Bamiyan explosions in 2001, or was it, finally, the globally acting conservation and reconstruction experts in the jargon of UNESCO World Heritage schemes? In the 150-year trajectory of a transculturally entangled history of an art called 'Gandharan', perhaps it was all of these at once.

As a discursive hybrid with local, regional, national, international, and global components alike, the 'Graeco-Buddhist' style of Gandharan was, and still is, a highly contested product of a global art historiography. After one hundred and fifty years of its (post)colonial, nationalist, and globalized manipulation, even the 'image of Buddha' has demonstrated – certainly the tragic Bamiyan incident in 2001 showed this – the potential for unforeseen and highly destructive chain reactions. A 2002 exhibition in the ZKM in Karlsruhe, Germany, had dubbed this general

<sup>120</sup> Bérénice Geoffrey-Schneiter, *Gandhara. Das kulturelle Erbe Afghanistans*. Munich: Knesbeck, 2002 (original *Gandhara – La mémoire de l'Afghanistan. La rencontre d'Apollon et de Bouddha*, Paris: Assouline, 2000)

<sup>121</sup> Kunst- und Ausstellungshalle der BRD, *Gandhara. Das Buddhistische Erbe Pakistans. Legenden, Klöster und Paradiese*, Mainz: Zabern, 2008, 12. Cf. Asia Society Museum, *The Buddhist Heritage of Pakistan: Art of Gandhara*, New York: Asia Society, 2011.

phenomenon, after Latour/Weibel, as 'iconoclash'.<sup>122</sup> And the discipline of art history has had, as we have hoped to show, a big stake in this process.

**Michael Falser** (MA, MSc, PhD) is an architectural historian and project leader for the Chair of Global Art History within the Cluster of Excellence 'Asia and Europe in a Global Context. The Dynamics of Transculturality', at Heidelberg University. His most recent publications are *Kulturerbe und Denkmalpflege transkulturell. Grenzgänge zwischen Theorie und Praxis* (with Monica Juneja), transcript 2013; *Cultural Heritage as Civilizing Mission. From Decay to Recovery*, Springer 2015, and *Angkor Wat. From Jungle Find to Global Icon. A Transcultural History of Heritage*, De Gruyter [forthcoming].

falser@asia-europe.uni-heidelberg.de



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<sup>122</sup> Bruno Latour, Peter Weibel (eds.), *Iconoclash, Beyond the Image Wars in Science, Religion, and Art*, exhibition ZKM Karlsruhe, 2002. Cambridge (Mass.): MIT Press, 2002. Here the Bamiyan incident was renegotiated in several contributions.