



**Review of W. Rienjang and P. Stewart (eds.), Problems
of Chronology in Gandhāran Art, Proceedings of the
First International Workshop of the Gandhāra
Connections Project**

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complex picture emerges of a wide range of ways in which groups might be identified and delineated, going far beyond a simple dichotomy of elite versus non-elite. Whether it be the reserved seating in the amphitheatre at Nîmes, scrupulously allocating 25 places for the boatmen of the Ardeche and Ouvèze, and 40 seats for the boatmen of the Rhône and Saône (p. 88); or the reliance of an Iberian mining community on a mixture of additional skills, ranging from hydraulics engineering to the ancillary but privileged trades of barbers, shoemakers and fullers (pp. 92–93); or a vendor's claim that a certain slave was healthy and not given to straying (p. 99); or the epitaphs of gladiators that tallied their appearances in the ring (pp. 102–03): in these and a host of other ways, the social status both of local groups and individuals was in constant construction.

With similarly sharp relevance to the social historian as well as the archaeologist, R. turns to the archaeology of gender ('Gendering the Provinces', pp. 105–25) and age ('Age and Ageing', pp. 127–46). First, she ranges over dress and adornment; the 'provincial family'; the gendering of work; and the relation of gender to status and the imperial context. Next, she surveys notions about, and evidence for, the life course; and, by turns, looks at the phases of life, from infancy to childhood, adulthood and the elderly. These discussions could of course be considerably expanded. Each one is a major theme and a chapter apiece can only go so far. But R. touches nonetheless on a wealth of detailed points and possibilities. To take just two examples, she notes that women's experiences in areas from which many young men departed into military service were likely to be distinctive (p. 124); and that one reflection of regional differences in attitudes to age was that not every community was as given as every other to the commemoration of a person's age at the time of their death (p. 132).

R.'s book, as will be obvious, is ambitiously wide-ranging. She does not claim to have the final word on the topics she touches, nor does she claim any definitive precedence for her own choice of topics over others to which (as she urges) a social archaeology could be applied, such as religious or military identities, or disability (p. 147). One might well think of her study as an essay that is intended to serve as a *vade mecum*. In this, it succeeds. Not the least reason why it succeeds is that it offers a rich seam of provincial social life, for both archaeologists and historians to explore.

Virtual Centre for Late Antiquity, London

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W. Rienjang and P. Stewart (eds.), *Problems of Chronology in Gandhāran Art*, Proceedings of the First International Workshop of the Gandhāra Connections Project, University of Oxford, 23rd–24th March, 2017, Archaeopress Archaeology, Archaeopress, Oxford 2018, iv+164 pp., illustrations (many in colour). Paperback. ISBN 978-1-78491-855-2

This book is the first publication of the research project 'Gandhāran Connections' inaugurated in 2016 by the Classical Art Research Centre at the University of Oxford.¹ The papers were presented at a conference held in Oxford in March 2017, and the authors as

¹ Available at: <https://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/PublicFiles/media/final%20e%20version%20Problems%20of%20Chronology%20in%20Gandharan%20Art.pdf>.

well as the editors must be commended for the celerity of the publication.² The nine contributions cover numismatics, sculpture, epigraphy, archaeology, art history and architecture. They address the links between Gandhāran and Graeco-Roman art, as well as the problems associated with relative and absolute chronology. In their Introduction (pp. 1–5), the editors emphasise the lack of chronological data for history, archaeology and thus artefacts, as well as the need for archaeological context and written sources (stressed by the debate regarding eras), leading to a need for a multi-disciplinary approach.

In his contribution (pp. 7–34), Joe Cribb gives a detailed and comprehensive study of the various coinages related to Gandhāra, and discusses the hypotheses regarding the eras, including Kanishka I's.³ The paper overviews, sometimes in details, the coinages of the Indo-Parthians, Kushans, Kushano-Sasanians and Kidarites, and their relation to Gandhāran chronology. Cribb reminds us that the global chronological sequence of this region is based on dated inscriptions, numismatic sequence,⁴ historical texts, and Kushan and Indian eras. The summary of the debates surrounding the Kushan, Greek and Azes eras is both clear and useful: it is now widely accepted that the first began in AD 127, with the habit of dropping the hundreds, while the *Yavanajātaka* of Sphujiddhvaja and the Rukhuṇa reliquary's inscription both give strong arguments in order to pinpoint the relationships between them.⁵ Various overstrikes provide solid ground for the sequence formed between the Indo-Parthians and the first Kushan kings, although the overstrike of Soter Megas⁶ on a king Sasan's coin presents rather thin evidence: the highlighted type features seem to be part of the original type. After the Sasanians progressively took over Bactria in the 3rd century AD, the 4th century is characterised by severe political turmoil, as the Sasanians are replaced by the Kidarites and later by the Alchon Huns. What is more, the author argues against N. Schindel's numismatic sequence based upon the appearance of earrings, diadem ribbons, crowns and fire altars, which indeed lead to a hundred-year gap between Wima Kadphises and his son Kanishka I, by dating the latter's era to AD 227. Several useful tables are provided, which efficiently clarify the arguments.

Juhyung Rhi's contribution (pp. 35–52) aims to demonstrate that the various Gandhāran Buddhist imageries may potentially represent co-existing formal series rather than a unified chronological evolution. The author's discussion is based upon five major visual types which he identified in a previous article.⁷ Five inscribed Buddhist images are discussed:

² A second volume regarding the geography of Gandhāran Art has recently been published: W. Rienjang and P. Stewart (eds.), *The Geography of Gandhāran Art* (Oxford 2019).

³ This era is rather called 'Kushan era' in Cribb's paper, and we shall carry on with this name.

⁴ Itself based upon the denominations, metal quality, weight standard, drawing style, language and epigraphy.

⁵ Kushan era year 1 = Greek era year 301 = Azes era year 173.

⁶ Surprisingly enough, no bibliography is given regarding the numerous authors who defend the hypothesis of two distinguished kings regarding Soter Megas and Wima Takto M. Alram, 'Indo-Parthian and early Kushan chronology'. In M. Alram and D. Klimburg-Salter (eds.), *Coins, Art and Chronology. Essays on the pre-Islamic History of the Indo-Iranian Borderlands* (Vienna 1999), 19–48; R. Göbl, 'The Rabatak Inscription and the Date of Kanishka'. In Alram and Klimburg-Salter 1999, 151–75; O. Bopearachchi, 'Chronologie et généalogie des premiers rois Kouchans: nouvelles données'. *CRAI* 2006, 1433–47. It would indeed be premature to consider this important debate closed.

⁷ J. Rhi, 'Identifying Several Visual Types of Gandhāran Buddha Images'. *Archives of Asian Art* 58 (2008), 43–85.

the Buddhas of Mamāne Dherī (year 89), Loriyān Tangai (year 318), Hashtnagar (year 384), the Hārītī of Skārah Dherī (year 399) and a Buddha triad stele (year 5). While the first Buddha image is considered to refer to the Kanishka era, the second and third ones, given their high dating, would belong to the Yōṇa or Indo-Greek era (*ca.* 175 or 174 BC⁸). Although the Loriyān Tangai Buddha shows late features, possibly under the stylistic influence of India, it is chronologically prior to the one from Mamāne Dherī: Rhi thus postulates that, if the era may be regarded as another one, the Loriyān Tangai area may represent a separate regional unit. The Buddha triad stele (also called the 'Brussels Buddha') is problematic as, according to Rhi, it is difficult to match its iconography with contemporary statues: its date might be 105 rather than 5. While two statues, the Hirayama and Matsuoka Buddhas, may be regarded as the first attempts to create the image of the Buddha,⁹ Rhi emphasises that we must take into consideration the geographical distribution of sculptural production among several regions: Bajaur, the Swat Valley, the Peshawar Basin. In this context, a single and linear process for iconographical evolution seems less likely.

Stefan Baums focuses his paper (pp. 53–70) on relic inscriptions and how they contribute to Gandhāran chronology. Such relics of the Buddha are divided into *śārīraka* (bodily relics), *paribhoga* (objects used by the Buddha), *uddeśaka* (representations of the Buddha) and dharma (texts). The author provides detailed information regarding such deposits, such as the usual formula, its length, and data regarding the donor family. While literary quotations are canonical and therefore often unusable, Baums lists various potential chronological markers: a specific date; reference to an historical figure; notions expressed; palaeography (especially the evolution of the akshara *-sa*); progressive Sanskritisation of Gāndhārī; transition from phonetic to minimal phonetics; radiocarbon dating. Six new inscriptions are published, from the Museum Fünf Kontinente Munich and private collections.¹⁰ Apart from the Greek, Azes and Kushan (i.e. Kanishka I) eras, we found the Vijayamitra era as well, although it most likely rather referred to regnal years: except for the Kushan era, all of these are mentioned together on the Rukhuṇa reliquary. Baums records 32 inscriptions mentioning these four eras. The Azes era is the most frequently used until the beginning of the Kushan era: the latter is characterised by the mention of a ruler, of a Macedonian month, of a Greek or Iranian name, of a year above 300, and depending of the type of object. Baums's paper is completed by four valuable appendices, concerning the chronological sequence of inscriptions, the concordance between Macedonian and Indian months, the days mentions and dated Gandhāran images.

Luca Maria Olivieri and Anna Filigenzi present in their shared paper (pp. 71–92) the latest results of the Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan (IAMP) in the Swat valley, especially in Barikot, in the general context of Gandhāra. The city of Barikot, whose chronology extends from the mid-1st millennium BC to the Ghaznavid period, goes under an

⁸ These dates are based upon the research of Cribb, and Falk and Bennett.

⁹ Possibly during the 1st century AD, according to Salomon's chronology: R. Salomon, 'Dynastic and Institutional Connections in the Pre-and Early Kuṣāna Period: New Manuscript and Epigraphic Evidence'. In D.M. Srinivasan (ed.), *On the Cusp of an Era. Art in the Pre-Kuṣāna World* (Leiden 2007), 267–86.

¹⁰ These inscriptions, as well as many others, may be found on the web site dedicated to Gāndhārī inscriptions: <https://www.gandhari.org/>.

important refortification process during the Indo-Greek period in the mid-2nd century BC. The first traces of Buddhism may be detected at that time, possibly earlier. In the 3rd century AD, a unit ('Sacred Building B') held a tetrastyle worship complex (niches, stele, altar); likewise, a small Buddhist temple is located in unit D, where stood a stele with a bearded male figure, holding a chalice and a goat's head. This stele may be compared with several other Gandhāran sculptures, though without archaeological context. For its part, unit K held a distyle building ('Temple K') and a small shrine with stucco decoration and wooden doors. The dereliction of the main city is attributed to the global context of the fall of the Kushan Empire, while two major well-documented earthquakes occurred in a 50–70-year period. All things considered, and in comparison with other neighbouring sites such as Gumbat and Amluk-dara, Barikot illustrates well the transition from schist sculpture to stucco decoration in the 3rd century AD. Filigenzi's contribution draws some stimulating parallels with the Buddhist site of Butkara I, excavated by an Italian team between 1956 and 1962: during the Great Stūpa 4 period (2nd/3rd–7th century AD), stone sculptures were also progressively disregarded, highlighting major shifts in taste, techniques and materials. Reflecting on this evolution, Filigenzi raises the possibility that it may suggest some economic distress, by benefiting to local and cheaper material and techniques, and/or cultural influence coming from Afghanistan, southern Central Asia and Sinkiang/Xinjiang. In any case, these new and crucial archaeological data from Barikot help to better outline the chronology of Gandhāra.

In the wake of Baums's study, Wannaporn Rienjang's paper (pp. 93–102) focuses on the typology of *stūpa* deposits from eastern Afghanistan to northern Pakistan, notably the Dharmarājikā Buddhist complex in Taxila. This kind of deposits shows a clear evolution throughout time: the number of coins and the value of the depository gradually lower from the 2nd century AD onwards, which could indicate a possible change both in terms of merit-gaining and worship practices. Rienjang states that 'in the case of Dharmarājikā, [there is a] chronological correlation between coins, associated objects and the structures in which they were found', which indeed is possible, although it would have been interesting to see the author clarifying her thoughts a bit further. The deposits are mainly divided between those with or without relic containers, with sub-categories depending on the nature of the deposit. Thus, by combining the deposit type and the numismatic sequence (from the late Indo-Greeks to the Nezak Huns), Rienjang ends up differentiating five main chronological phases. The main shift occurs during the fourth phase, from the reign of Vasudeva I (ca. 190–227). The last two phases, IV and V, could thus separate events: the re-consecration of earlier deposits; new ritual practices such as the display of relics; or the cult of images of the Buddha which would progressively supersede relic establishments.

If Gandhāran art is widely recognised for its beauty, its place among the other Buddhist schools of art needs to be determined and explained, which is the subject of Monika Zin's paper (pp. 103–22). Among the finds from Butkara, a stele representing the Buddha's descent from the Trāyastriṃśa Heaven depicts a monk and a nun: while this is an evolution *vis-à-vis* the aniconic style, Zin dates it to after the time of the creation of the Buddha's image. On a broader scale, Gandhāran art (whether Buddhist or Brahmanical) emerged tardily compared to its neighbours. Zin links this lack of depictions to some kind of predominance of Brahmanism in this region: Indian authors are somewhat contradictory, since Gandhāra is depicted as a non-Brahmanical territory, while Taxila is described as

a centre of Vedic education. All things considered, it appears that Gandhāra stood as a conservative and traditional region, and that the major change in religious policy is due to the Kushan rulers. As for pictorial motifs, the artists partly tapped into both Indian (see the Thul-Mir-Rukhan relief from Hyderabad, or the Mohammed Nari stele) and Mediterranean traditions: as the visual phenomena progressively became more central than literary description, the narrative shifted to devotion. Zin emphasises well that this kind of pictorial language crossed the border of Gandhāra, and notably as far as western China (Kucha, Dunhuang).

Gandhāran toilet-trays are as famous as they are problematic, and Circo Lo Muzio's contribution (pp. 123–34) aims to deepen our understanding of their relationship to northern Indian Buddhist art. These objects, whose chronology remains uncertain (earlier or coeval with Gandhāran art), have successively been regarded as cosmetic trays, referring to the underworld and/or to wedding, and finally as libation trays. Based on a previous article,¹¹ the author states that the links with the Greek period are rather weak, and that the toilet-trays from Sirkap are contemporaneous with the Indo-Scythian and Great Kushans periods. The art of Bharhut, Bodhgayā, Sanchi and Mathurā are selected by Lo Muzio, revealing iconographic and formal similarities with the Gangetic plain. The lotus-flower motif, never depicted in full, is often associated with human figures, a combination which is never found in Gandhāran sculpture, while it is more common in Indian sculpture. Thus, not only are only a few rare toilet-trays related to Buddhism, but the motifs also are closely related to Indian iconography (such as winged lions or a drunken Dionysus/dead hero ascending into Heaven). These features led Lo Muzio to highlight iconographical links between these regions.

The somewhat peculiar title chosen by Robert Bracey for his paper (pp. 135–48) hides two broader questions of methodology: how to date objects without context or inscriptions, and whether it is the right method. Bracey bases his reasoning upon the Cleveland Dancers pillar from Mathurā. This piece is divided into four registers: grapes and foliage; onlookers playing instruments; four dancing female figures; two narrative scenes. The Hellenistic features may originate from Gandhāra, the closest source for such imagery. The female figures are discussed in detail: calling them 'nymphs', Bracey stresses that the belts which they wear are common in Mathurā but almost absent from Gandhāra, where naked figures are rather male while female figures wear long dresses. Thus, there would be a major cultural gap regarding genre and nudity between both regions. This piece would consequently possibly come from the Punjab, be the work of a non-local artist (from Gandhāra), or a forgery from the 1970s. Several interesting points of details are discussed afterwards: the origin of the grapes and foliage, the musicians, and the stone background. Bracey's conclusion emphasises that dating must be put into perspective by the understanding of workshop practices and patronage.

The final contribution (pp. 149–64) is from Kurt Behrendt and focuses upon how earthquakes are related to Gandhāran architecture, with respect to subsequent repair or replacement of the buildings. The latter is directly linked with the modifications made to sacred areas. The decline of Gandhāra from the 6th century AD may be connected to the

¹¹ C. Lo Muzio, 'Gandharan Toilet-Trays: Some Reflections on Chronology'. *ACSS* 17 (2011), 331–40.

arrival of the Hephthalites, the shifting of trade routes, or earthquakes. The latter could thus possibly explain the reuse of sculptures or repairs of the stūpas. The author then lists a series of sites to illustrate this hypothesis, such as Kālawān, Janliān, Mekhasanda and Ranigat. These sites do indeed present clear of repairs both regarding the buildings and the decoration, but Behrendt provides no concrete evidence to link them to earthquakes. Indeed, without an archaeological analysis of the remains, it is extremely difficult to prove this point, while no article or book regarding this subject is mentioned in the bibliography.¹² If the conclusions of this paper are useful, especially regarding the chronology of construction phases, one must remain cautious with linking them to the author's starting hypothesis.

This book is therefore an essential contribution to Gandhāran studies, by favouring an approach through various disciplines and paving the way for further studies. Gandhāran art forms an essential chronological and artistic phenomenon, both due to its sources of inspiration and its influence. As with the Kushan empire, which is closely related to this region, it is crucial to address these chronological issues in order to outline a general frame for Gandhāra and Central Asia, in the light of the latest archaeological and iconographical data.

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A.D. Rizakis, F. Camia and S. Zoumbaki (eds.), *Social Dynamics under Roman Rule: Mobility and Status Change in the Provinces of Achaia and Macedonia*, MEΛETEMATA 74, Fondation Nationale de la Recherche Scientifique, Institut de Recherches Historiques, Athens 2017, 445 pp., illustrations. Paperback. ISBN 978-960-9538-63-3

This volume presents 17 papers in English, French, German and Italian based on contributions at a 2014 conference in Athens and is edited by three contributors well known for their work on Roman Greece. One paper is based on archaeological evidence (house plans), the remainder mainly on epigraphy. Contributions take as their regional nucleus Achaia and Macedonia. Narrower geographical foci are the Cyclades (one paper), Delos (three), Athens and Sparta (combined in one comparative study), Corinth (one), Messene (one), Delphi (one), Larissa (one) and Macedonia (three). Four papers themed on social categories discuss priests in Roman Greece; Philostratean sophists; *paroikoi*; and associations of Roman citizens.

Contributors do not seem to have been constrained by a detailed brief as to what questions to tackle, models to use or abuse, etc. There is not much inter-disciplinarity, apart from two papers (C. Müller; N. Doukellis) explicitly drawing on sociological theory. As for methodological pitfalls, the reader is mainly alerted to these within the content of individual papers. An exception is the paper by J. Bartels which could almost serve as an introduction to the rest, since it offers an incisive overview of 'factors conferring social prestige'

¹² The scientific literature is however abundant on this subject, see, for instance, N.N. Ambraseys, 'Earthquakes and archaeology'. *Journal of Archaeological Science* 33 (2006), 1008–16, in which the author provides useful data regarding the effect of earthquakes on buildings and human remains.