

Problems of Chronology in Gandhāran Art

Edited by
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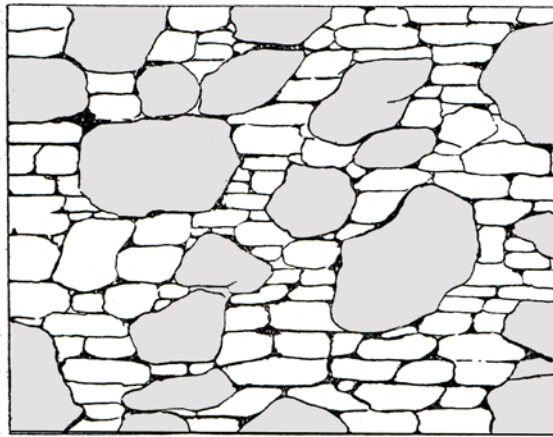
Architectural evidence for the Gandhāran tradition after the third century

Kurt Behrendt

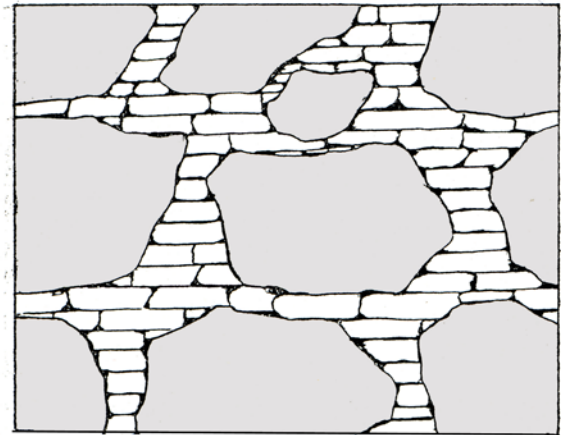
This study attempts to characterize the late horizon of Gandhāra's sacred architectural tradition in an effort to address larger questions of chronology. In particular, I examine the issue of earthquakes and the consequent repair or replacement of existing structures and imagery. In this light, the sudden or punctuated reconceptualization of the sacred precincts following the collapse of old structures is particularly telling as it reveals the changing interests of patrons. Focusing on the micro-chronologies of a series of small sites, this paper traces modifications to the sacred area. Changing structural typologies will be considered in conjunction with categories of recovered sculpture and numismatic evidence. After starting with the Taxila sites of Kālawān and Jauliāñ, where evolving masonry techniques allow chronologically distinct construction phases to be distinguished (Figure 1) (Behrendt 2004: 255ff.), developments in the Peshawar Basin are considered, focusing on the sites of Mekhasanda and Ranigat. Drawing on these micro-chronologies some broad observations can be made regarding the development of the massive sacred precincts of Takht-i-Bāhī, Butkara I, and the Dharmarājikā complex. Together I hope this evidence offers a foundation for better understanding the changing Gandhāran architectural and sculptural tradition.

The early seventh-century Chinese pilgrim Xuanzang describes Gandhāra as '1000 *sangharamas*, which are deserted and in ruins. They are filled with wild shrubs and are solitary to the last degree.' (Beal 1884: 98). Although seemingly categorical, clearly all the Buddhist sites were not abandoned as Xuanzang goes on to tell us of an inhabited monastery outside of the city of Pushkalāvati (Beal 1884: 110) and of the restoration of Kaniṣka's *stūpa*, which had been damaged by fire (Beal 1884: 103), that is probably the cruciform *stūpa* at Shāh-jī-kī-ḍherī (Kuwayama 1997). He notes other activity in the city of Po-lu-sha, likely Sahrī-Bahlol (Errington 1993), where he encountered a monastery with fifty priests (Beal 1884: 112). The decline of the Gandhāran tradition is attributed by Xuanzang and Sun Yun to the Hephthalites, and Marshall goes a step further to suggest iconoclasm and the burning of monasteries (Marshall 1951: 76-77). A more recent suggestion that trade routes shifted in favor of the Kabul Valley in Afghanistan seems reasonable as there was a clear economic decline in Gandhāra in the mid-sixth century (Kuwayama 2006: 124-127). In all of these scenarios it is possible that earthquakes could have played a key role in the rising and falling fortunes of the Gandhāran tradition and may well have caused the widespread destruction Xuanzang observed.

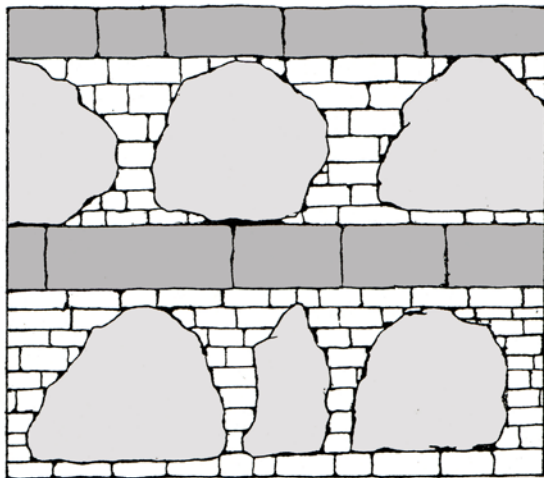
Understanding the Gandhāran sacred area in relation to earthquakes is important given the seismic instability of the region. Faccenna and Marshall both suggested that earthquakes created early phase I and II horizons of destruction at Taxila and Butkara I respectively (Marshall 1951: 118; Faccenna 1980 (1): 134-135). More recent excavations at the urban site of Barikot in Swat have uncovered levels of destruction that can be dated using C-14 analysis; here Olivieri notes earthquakes occurring circa AD 50, AD 120, AD 230, and AD 260 (Olivieri 2014: 140-41; cf. the paper by Olivieri and Filigenzi in the present volume). The periodic destruction of sacred areas also explains why so many damaged schist images were recovered in reuse contexts at sites like the Dharmarājikā complex, Kālawān, Sahrī-Bahlol and Takht-i-Bāhī (Behrendt 2009). Earthquakes may also account for the fact that essentially no narrative sculpture has been found in situ and why so many 'early' *stūpas* were rebuilt and adorned with stucco imagery. The pattern of destruction and rebuilding at sites across Taxila, the Peshawar Basin, and Swat suggests that much of what has survived in the archaeological record likely dates to the later stages of the Gandhāran Buddhist tradition.



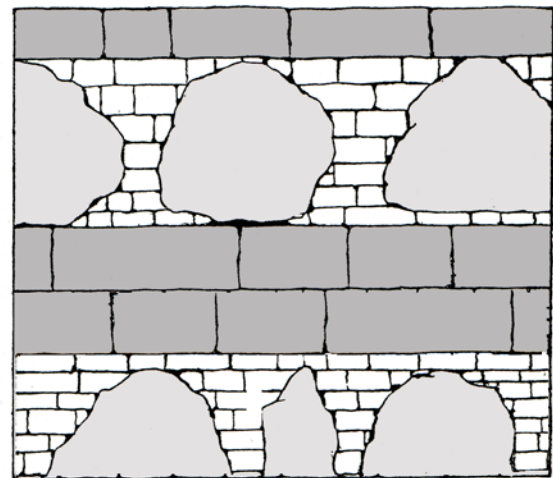
Rubble Masonry
Phase I



Diaper Masonry
Phase II



Semi-Ashlar Masonry
Phase III



Double-Semi-Ashlar Masonry
Late Phase III

Figure 1. Sketch showing main Taxila masonry types: phase I rubble masonry, phase II diaper masonry, phase III semi-ashlar masonry, and late phase III double-course semi-ashlar masonry (Kurt Behrendt, modified from Marshall 1916: fig. 1).

Over the last hundred years the seismic activity in and around the region of Gandhāra has been systematically documented, evidence that shows this region is subjected to numerous and sometimes massive earthquakes (Figure 2). Given Gandhāra's five-hundred-year tradition, major earthquakes must have periodically occurred and there would have been constant smaller quakes mirroring today's seismic activity.

Kālawān

The Taxila sacred area of Kālawān is a good place to begin as the founding structures were all constructed in diaper masonry during my phase II period (Behrendt 2004: 255-265). Subsequently, some of these structures were refurbished and the site was expanded using phase III semi-ashlar masonry (Figure 3). The early central monument at Kālawān is the A4 stūpa, with its oversized relic chamber (Behrendt 2006:

Recent Earthquakes in Pakistan and Afghanistan

Place	Date	Magnitude
Hindu Kush	2015	6.3
Hindu Kush	2015	7.5
Jarm Afghanistan	2015	7.5
Jalalabad	2013	5.5
Hindu Kush	2009	6.2
Ziarat	2008	6.4
Kashmir/NWFP	2005	7.6
Hindu Kush	2002	7.4
Dashkin	2002	6.3
Peshawar	1992	6.0
Hindu Kush	1991	6.4
Quetta	1990	6.1
Hindu Kush	1984	6.1
Hunza, Swat/NWFP	1974	6.2
Peshawar	1972	6.2
Gwadar	1947	7.6
Quetta	1935	7.5
NWFP	1909	7.2

Figure 2. Recent earthquakes in and around the area of Gandhāra (National Geophysical Data Center/World Data, NOAA).

92). Adjacent are the large conventional A12 stūpa and the A14 stūpa shrine. These three relic structures align with monastery C suggesting that they all might have been constructed together when the site was initially founded. Subsequently, additional stūpa shrines were added to the east (A1 and A13) and probably more stūpa shrines stood along the western edge of the sacred area, though these structures are too damaged for certain identification.

At some stage structures started to be made in phase III semi-ashlar masonry at all of the sites in Taxila, including Kālawān. The late modifications to the Kālawān sacred area include the construction of the sizable multi-storied monastery B along with image shrines and a stūpa shrine in the sacred area. Perhaps most interesting from the perspective of rebuilding are the A2 and A5 shrines that stand on the northern edge of the sacred area. These phase III shrines rest on multiple phase II diaper remains (Marshall 1936: 166). While we do not know the form of these earlier structures, the fact that the rest of this sacred area

to the east and west is enclosed by two-celled shrines done in diaper masonry suggests that similar structures originally stood in the north. The appearance of an early shrine format in phase III semi-

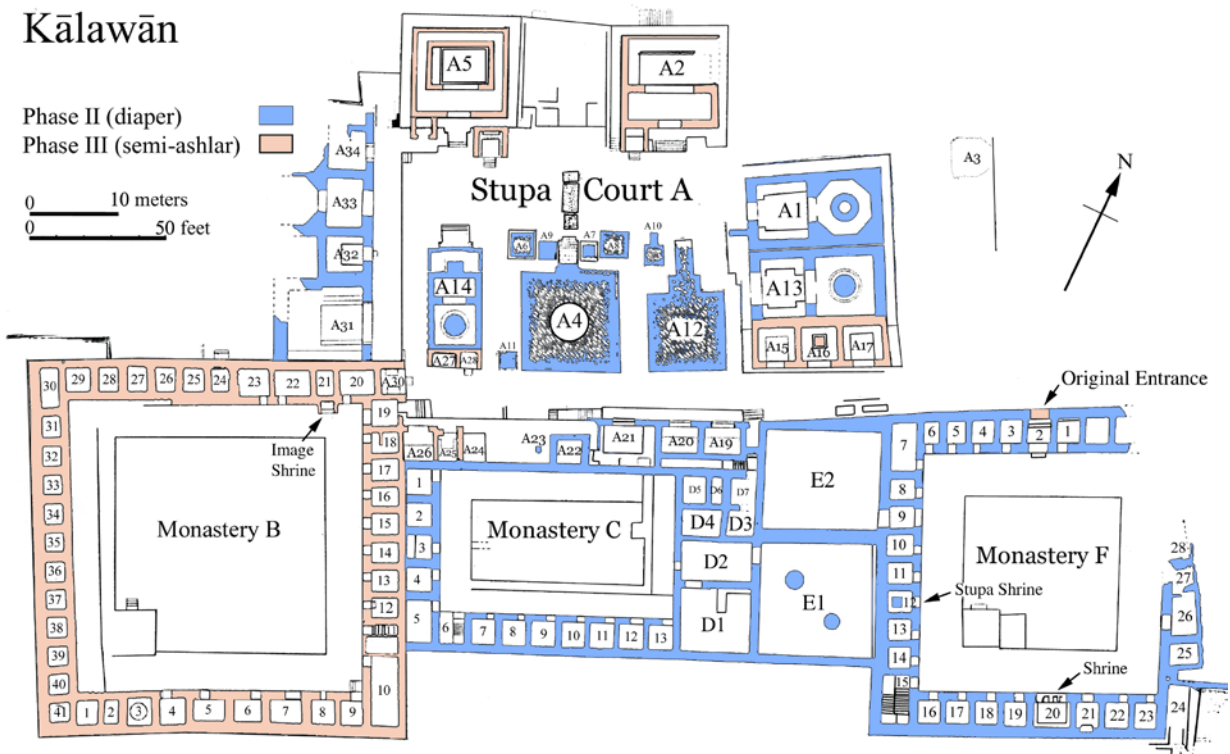


Figure 3. Plan of sacred area and monasteries at Kālawān, Taxila, with phase II and phase III construction indicated (Kurt Behrendt, modified from Marshall 1951: pl. 72).

ashlar masonry seems to indicate that these monuments were rebuilt because they were crucial to the devotional function of this sacred area. While not conclusive evidence of an earthquake it is noteworthy that no other two-celled shrines in semi-ashlar masonry are known from Taxila.

The inscriptional and numismatic evidence from this site indicates a first-century foundation and an occupation period well into the fourth century (Table 1). Next to a reliquary in *stūpa* shrine A1, a long donative inscription on a copper plate was found that mentions the 134th year of Azes – according to Marshall (1951: 53, 257) AD 86 or Cribb AD 88 (cf. his paper in the present volume). The 203 coins found at Kālawān comprise one Azes (57-10 BC), one Hermaeus imitation, five Wima Takto (c. AD 90-113), four Wima Kadphises (c. AD 113-127), seventeen Kaniška (c. AD 127-150), two Huviška (c. AD 150-190), 164 Vāsudeva (c. AD 190-227, mostly from a single hoard), three later Kushan, one Ardashir, four Kushano-Sasanian, two Hormazd (AD 285-300) (Marshall 1951: 322-341; Errington 1999: 216). These numismatic finds indicate a period of activity that is in accord with the kinds of sculpture recovered. They include twenty-three narrative fragments and related images that roughly can be placed in the time of the Great Kushans. From phase III or approximately the time of Vāsudeva and later are four large schist devotional images (some fragmentary) as well as sixty-three stucco heads and major fragments (Marshall 1951: 322-341). I have argued elsewhere (Behrendt 2009) that the narrative imagery and related fragments, which largely survive as heterogeneous broken pieces, belong to the early part of the site's life and were redeposited after being damaged (perhaps as the result of an earthquake). The later part of Kālawān's occupation, when the semi-ashlar phase III structures built, corresponds to the time when significant quantities of stucco imagery were added. This modification and repair of the site may correspond to an earthquake that damaged much of the schist imagery. Taken together this evidence suggests an early phase II foundation and an occupation that went to the middle of phase III. Kālawān is an important site as there is notably no late phase III evidence of monumental images or related massive shrines.

Jauliāñ

While the Taxila site of Jauliāñ was founded during phase II – founding structures include a main *stūpa* and monastery fabricated in phase II diaper masonry – most of the sacred area and corresponding surviving imagery dates to phase III (Table 1). In this later period the site was expanded with the addition of many semi-ashlar masonry shrines and small *stūpas* (Figure 4). Patronage continued late into the Gandhāran period as indicated by several monumental image shrines constructed in double-semi-ashlar masonry (C14-C16). This dating appears to be generally confirmed by the numismatic evidence. Of the 119 coins recovered at the site thirty-one were minted under the Great Kushans or before (four local Taxilan, one Apollodotus II (80-65 BC), one Gondophares (AD 20-45), one Kujūla Kadphises (AD 30-78), seven Kaniška I (AD 127-150), six Huviška (AD 151-189), and eleven unidentified Kushan). A late Kushan horizon is attested by thirty-seven coins of Vāsudeva (AD 190-226), but this group also includes later imitations (Vāsudeva II is AD 268-308 and later copies). There are at least fifty-one coins from the late Gandhāran period, which comprise one Varaharan II (AD 276-293), three Hormazd II (AD 300-303), four Shapur II (AD 309-79), two Shapur III (AD 383-388), twenty-four Indo-Sasanian and Sasanian, and seventeen late Indo-Sasanian (Marshall 1951:385-386; Errington 1999: 212). Taking into consideration the fact that some of these coins would have remained in circulation for a considerable time, this evidence supports a late occupation for the site in a period that largely postdates the Kushans.

The surviving sculptural evidence at Jauliāñ is consistent with this late dating as a huge amount of stucco imagery survives at this site – some of it at a very large scale. *In situ* stucco imagery survives on the main *stūpa* and embellishing many of the small *stūpas* (Figure 5) and one thousand small heads and many other fragments were found in the sacred area (Marshall 1951: 384). Stucco assemblages of figures with particularly late iconography occur in seven small shrines that were added to the monastery (Behrendt 2004: 171-174). In contrast, no phase II schist narrative reliefs were found. Of the five schist sculptures recovered from Jauliāñ three are large devotional icons and two are small fragments (Marshall 1951: 384).

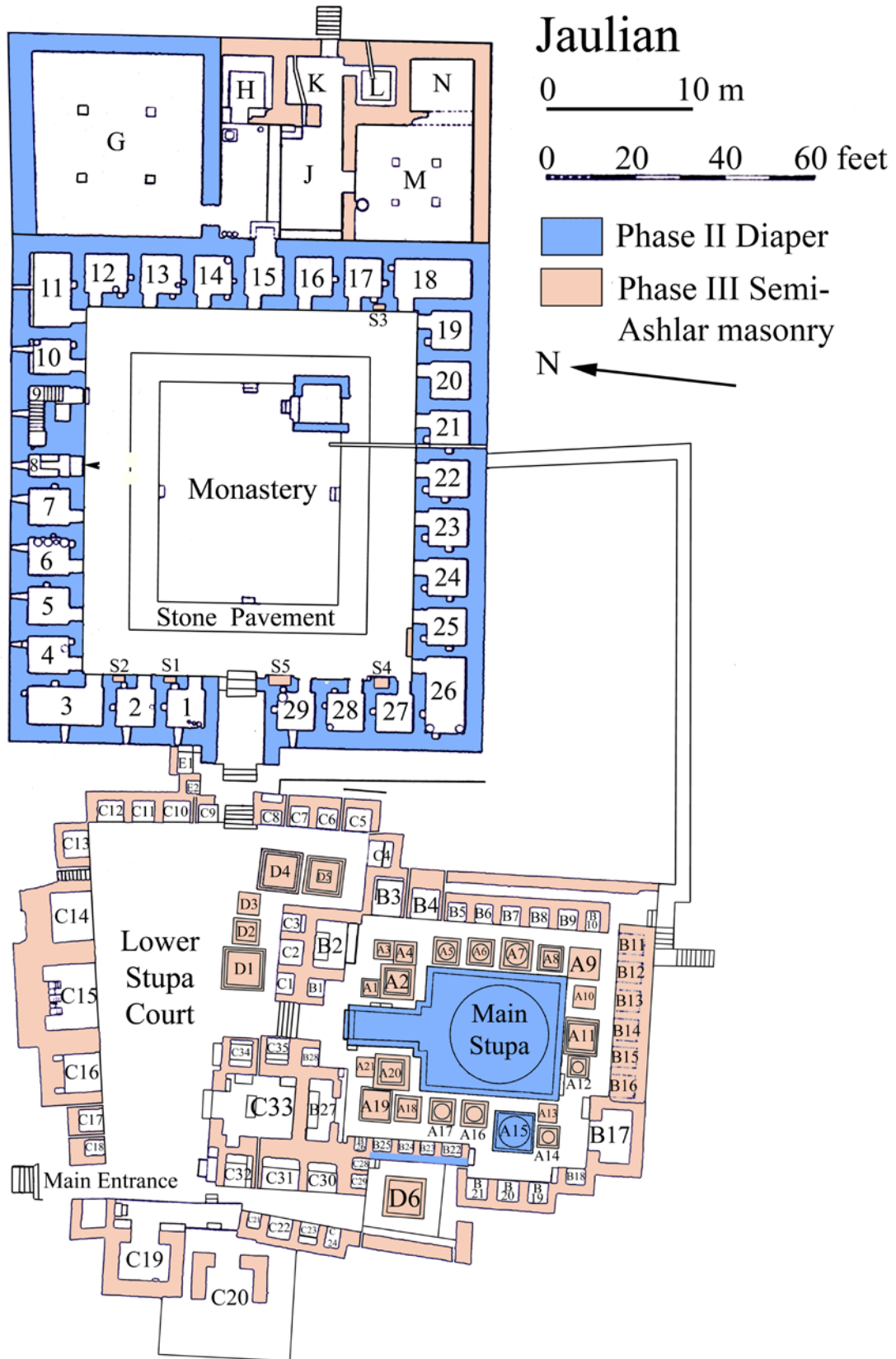


Figure 4. Plan of sacred area and monastery at Jauliān, Taxila, with phase II and phase III construction indicated (Kurt Behrendt, modified from Marshall 1951: pl. 101).



Figure 5. Jauliān small stūpa A15, south face; diaper masonry stūpa with later stucco Buddha images.
(Photo: Kurt Behrendt, 1992).

At Jauliān the compact placement of small stūpas around the main stūpa follows a consistent pattern that can be observed at many sites across Gandhāra, good examples being the lower stūpa court at Takht-i-Bāhī (Figure 11), Mekhasanda (Figure 7) and the early stūpa court around the main stūpa at Ranigat (Figure 8). A clear pattern emerges suggesting that the most desirable location for a patron to build a small stūpa is adjacent to the stairway of the main stūpa. However, at Jauliān the small stūpas in this location (A2 and A20) are fabricated in kanjur masonry sitting on bases done in semi-ashlar masonry, their surfaces being embellished in stucco imagery. Their location suggests they are likely replacements for earlier structures built in conjunction with the main stūpa. The only diaper masonry stūpa to survive in this court (A15) (Marshall 1921: 4) sits off to the side in a rather undesirable location indicating that it was added at a point when all the space bracketing the front of the stūpa had been filled with other stūpas; it too is embellished with fairly large stucco Buddha images, suggesting refurbishment (Figure 5).

In the later part of the site's history, patrons enclosed this stūpa court with banks of image shrines executed in semi-ashlar phase III masonry. These image shrines neatly fit around the small stūpas indicating that they must postdate their construction. These image shrines are fairly small. The fact that they could have housed images that are generally smaller than life-size suggests they were fabricated in the early or middle part of phase III. The presence of *in situ* stucco remains of sculptures in some of these image shrines supports this conclusion. The placement of the image shrines around the upper court at Jauliān indicates that they must postdate the small stūpas as they neatly fit around these relic monuments. Based on these observations it would seem that all of the image shrines belong to the later part of Jauliān's history, which on the basis of the numismatic evidence places them in the third century or later. Consistently, the micro-chronologies of Gandhāran sites indicate that the earliest shrines are

relatively small, as can be observed at Takht-i-Bāhī, Jamāl Garhī, Mekhasanda, and Thareli. In contrast, shrines large enough to house monumental images are the latest additions to a given sacred area, as is the case at Jauliāñ with shrines C14-C16 that were done in double course semi-ashlar masonry (Figure 1). Further, the vast majority of standing schist images recovered in excavations from Taxila and the Peshawar Basin range from about 1 m to nearly life-size, which seems in perfect agreement with the smaller image shrines that enclose the upper *stūpa* court at Jauliāñ (Figure 4).

Eventually when all the space in the upper *stūpa* court was exhausted, small *stūpas* and image shrines started to be constructed in the lower court, an area that was only fully enclosed at the end of the site's occupation with the construction of monumental image shrines along the north edge (C14-C16). An early foundation for at least part of the lower court is indicated by the fact that it provides access to an auxiliary small sacred area around *stūpa* D6. The eastern wall of the D6 court is done in diaper masonry. Although all of the other structures are in semi-ashlar this remnant may point to a phase II foundation for the D6 *stūpa*, which was ultimately refurbished. It is interesting that this small D6 *stūpa* must have had independent significance as no fewer than nine image shrines were added to the walkway leading into its enclosure, which were all done in semi-ashlar masonry.

Jauliāñ is crucially important because the form of its sacred area can be linked to complex architectural developments in the Peshawar Basin. The Jauliāñ phase III semi-ashlar image shrines can be directly compared to those found at the Peshawar Basin sites of Mekhasanda, Takht-i-Bāhī, Jamāl Garhī, Thareli, Ranigat, and Sikri. This is important because at Taxila the masonry development from rubble, to diaper to semi-ashlar and ultimately to double semi-ashlar provides a relative chronology (Figure 1). In the Peshawar Basin, limestone blocks were not available, resulting in a developed masonry construction technique that used interlocking irregular pieces of schist. While this technique was effective and allowed for the construction of monumental structures, it differs from site to site depending on available schist building materials and cannot be readily sequenced. Fortunately, structural typologies that appear in datable contexts in Taxila give us a broad relative chronology.

Mekhasanda

A key Peshawar Basin site that can be productively compared to the sacred precincts in Taxila is the small, relatively simple complex of Mekhasanda in the hills above the town of Shābāz Garhī (Figure 6). The site appears to have a phase II foundation and an occupation that continued into the late period of Gandhāran activity (Table 1). While only nine coins were recovered, they do support this dating. Relating to phase II are coins that include one of Kaniṣka I (AD 127-150) and one of Huviṣka (AD 151-189), with phase III corresponding to one of Vāsudeva (AD 190-226), five Vāsudeva imitations (AD 268-308 or later), and one Kushan-Sasanian coin (Mizuno 1969: 94-95). Fortunately, a considerable amount of sculpture was found that also helps in establishing the relative chronology. Phase II occupation is evidenced by three small *stūpa* domes, five narrative panels, fifteen fragments of narrative panels, four sections of schist false gables and 210 related schist architectural fragments (atlantes, lions, garland-bearers, rows of small seated Buddhas in niches and various decorative motifs) (Mizuno 1969: 90, pls. 39-49). Four of the narrative fragments were found in the debris of a looter's hole dug into the core of the main *stūpa*, damaged sculptures that appear to have been deposited at the time of the main *stūpa*'s encasement. Although the form of the original phase II main *stūpa* is obscure, the plinth of the core structure extends under the bases of small *stūpas* 2 and 4, suggesting that they were likely built in phase II soon after the original main *stūpa* was established (Mizuno 1969: 83). Small *stūpas* 3 and 5 may also have an early date though this is less certain. Here the evidence of refurbishment possibly following an earthquake is clear as no early *stūpas* are extant at the site, but considerable quantities of early broken sculpture are present. It seems that at some point all of the early monuments were refurbished.



Figure 6. General view of Mekhasanda, Peshawar Basin (Photo: Kurt Behrendt, 1993).

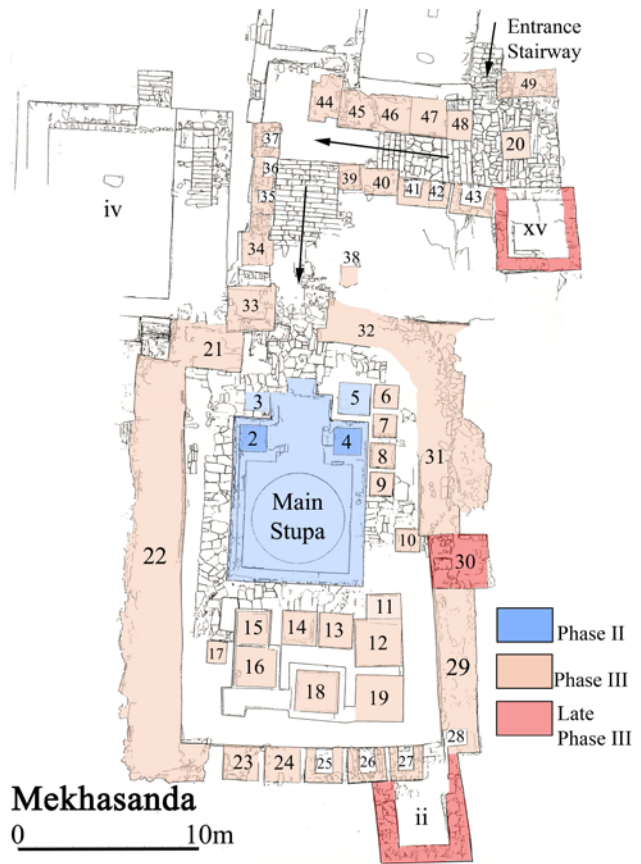


Figure 7. Plan of sacred area at Mekhasanda, Peshawar Basin, with phase II and III construction indicated (Kurt Behrendt, modified from Mizuno 1969: plan 2).

The late additions to Mekhasanda include many small *stūpas* embellished with *in situ* stucco imagery as well as image shrines enclosing the sacred area (Figure 7). This is a pattern which mirrors Jauliāñ (Figure 4) or the lower *stūpa* court at Takht-i-Bāhī (Figure 11). At all of these sites, a relatively small main *stūpa* was surrounded by a tightly packed group of small *stūpas* that in turn were enclosed in a court bounded by small to medium image shrines. Some of the small *stūpas* within the sacred area at Mekhasanda have stepped bases, which are generally comparable to semi-ashlar phase III *stūpas* at Jauliāñ (Behrendt 2004: 165-166). Although only a handful of image shrines survive along the edge of the sacred area (shrines 23-28), the sacred area is bounded by plinths for such structures (bases 21-22, 28, 30, 31). This is confirmed by the presence of a significant number of *in situ* schist and stucco sculptures found in association with these shrines that include a schist Buddha torso in shrine 21, a sculpture base in shrine 33, a schist bodhisattva image recovered to the left of shrine 33, an image socket in shrine 36, the base and feet of a schist Buddha in shrine 43, a schist bodhisattva head in shrine 45, and a large stucco head in front of shrine 45 (Mizuno 1969: 15, 85-89). The total sculptural production at Mekhasanda may help us to understand the relative proportion of schist to stucco devotional icons produced during phase III that once stood in these shrines. About twenty-two devotional icons executed in schist can be estimated (counting heads and bases as full images), while more than 180 stucco heads and body fragments survive. Even given the fragmentary nature of this stucco evidence and the looting that occurred, it seems likely that the majority of image shrines at this site originally housed stucco figures. In other words, there is strong evidence to suggest that the widespread construction of image shrines must have occurred in conjunction with sculptural production in stucco. Thinking in terms of earthquakes it would have been expedient to repair a sites using stucco, which could be moulded or fashioned more rapidly than schist.

Still this could equally reflect a change in sculptural media that occurred over time and not actually be tied to issues of refurbishment.

Late construction at Mekhasanda is limited to two monumental image shrines (shrines ii, xv), although shrine 30 probably can also be so identified. The recovery of a monumental Buddha head and fragments of a second monumental head show that massive images were part of Mekhasanda's sculptural program (Mizuno 1969: 91, fig. 17). Regardless of the placement of these monumental images, their presence demonstrates that Mekhasanda was still receiving patronage in the late part of phase III, at a time when construction of monumental images at other sites was common.

Ranigat

Ranigat is another site that fortunately has a very clear phase II, phase III and late phase III structures and imagery (Table 1). This extensive complex is located at the north-eastern most edge of the Peshawar Basin (Figure 8). As one of the first Buddhist sites to be discovered in Gandhāra (Cole 1883: 2), it suffered

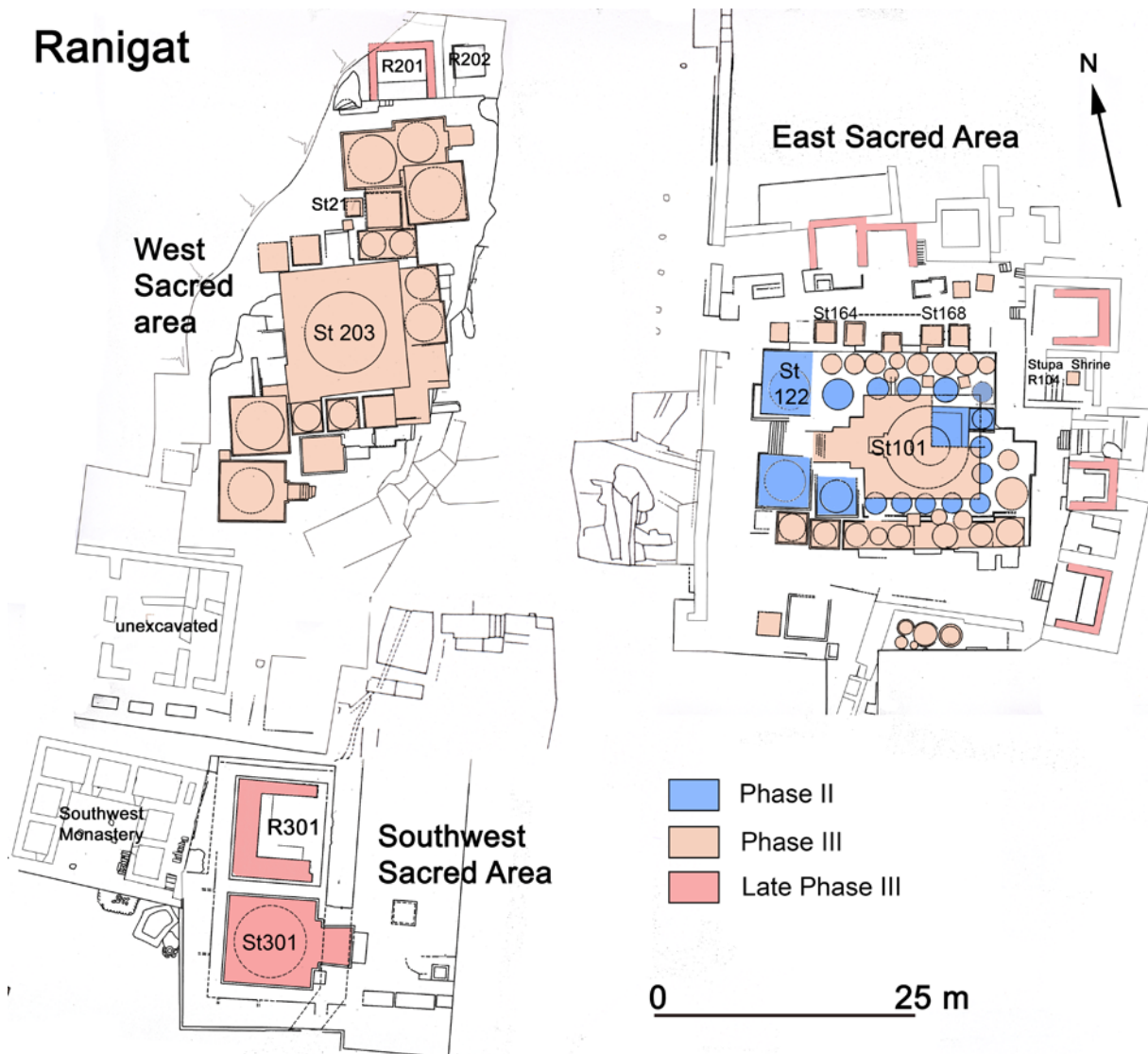


Figure 8. Plan of sacred areas at Ranigat, Peshawar Basin, with phase II and III construction indicated (Kurt Behrendt, modified from Nishikawa 1994: plans 1, 5, 6).

from early undocumented excavation and looting before ultimately being excavated late in the twentieth century. This complex helps to shed light on the chronological development of the Gandhāran sacred area because of the large body of sculpture that was recovered and photographed. The considerable early phase II sculptural record includes nearly eighty damaged narrative reliefs and more than 1600 schist elements including many fragmentary figures and architectural moldings plus 131 pieces of an early *vedikā* fence. Later sculptural finds include the remains of fifty-eight large schist devotional images. The sculpture done in stucco includes 136 heads, 230 fragments of figures, and a handful of *in situ* sculptures (Nishikawa 1994: plates; Behrendt 2004: 303-304). The excavators point out that some of the stucco *stūpas* must have originally been embellished with schist reliefs, which is consistent with patterns of refurbishment observed at the other sites discussed above (Nishikawa, Odani & Namba 1986: 85).

The early founding of the sites is borne out by the numismatic evidence, as eight coins of Wima Kadphises (AD 125-135) were found in conjunction with the core of the main *stūpa*, suggesting it was established during or not long after his reign (Nishikawa et al. 1988: 85, 89; Odani 2000: 838). The site may have had even an earlier foundation as two loose coins of Azes (57-10 BC) were found a short distance from the eastern sacred area in trench II (Errington 1999: 154; Nishikawa et al. 1988: 52, 109). During this early period, twelve phase II small *stūpas* were constructed surrounding the main *stūpa*. Much of the early narrative schist sculpture found at this site originally may have embellished these monuments. Since a later datable phase III encasement of the main *stūpa* engulfed this group of small *stūpas*, the relative time of their establishment is clear.

At the base of the encased main *stūpa*'s stairway *in situ* pavement stones were found that had holes bored in them for the donation of coins. Of the more than 180 holes, fourteen still contained coins that included an Azes II coin (AD 6-17), a single Kujūla Kadphises issue (AD 30-78), three of Huviṣka (AD 151), and eight of Vāsudeva (AD 190-226) (Nishikawa, Odani & Namba 1986: 92-93; Odani 2000:834-39). Errington has suggested that the pavement stone coins of Huviṣka and Vāsudeva date to a period of rebuilding (Errington 1999: 197). This group of coins shows that this slab was in place very early in phase III. Overlaying and hence postdating this datable paving stone is a stucco bodhisattva image affixed to the base of small *stūpa* 22 (Nishikawa, Odani & Namba 1986: 92-94). Although only the sandalled feet and traces of the robe remain, the fact that this sculpture can be so securely dated is quite remarkable and helps us to corroborate phase III as the main period of stucco production.

Following the phase III encasement of the main *stūpa*, many small *stūpas* were added to this part of the sacred area. The last of these was a group of eight small *stūpas* (St161-St168), which all have characteristic stepped bases and relatively intact stucco embellishment (Nishikawa 1994: pls. 26-31). These stepped based *stūpas* are directly comparable to similar small *stūpas* at Jauliāñ that were fabricated in semi-ashlar masonry (Behrendt 2004: 165-166) and this is a *stūpa* type also found in the phase III sacred area of Mekhasanda. At all of these sites the stepped *stūpas* were embellished with stucco imagery replacing the phase II *stūpa* type embellished with its schist narrative imagery. The latest structures to be added to this sacred area are a group of monumental shrines along the northern and eastern edges of this sacred area.

Although no excavation report was produced for the west area, photographs provide some information (Nishikawa 1994: pls. 53-87). The west area consists of a main *stūpa* (St203) and more than twenty tightly-packed small *stūpas* that fit well with phase III models. The extant structures appear to be built upon earlier monuments and one wonders if many of these monuments are refurbished earlier structures, especially since so many early schist phase II architectural fragments have been found at Ranigat. The configuration of the west sacred area is unique as the small *stūpas* in this area are so tightly packed around the major *stūpa* St203 that it would have been impossible to circumambulate or otherwise move through this area. While a monumental image shrine stands on the northern edge (R201), no other bounding shrines are extant, but structures have been lost due to erosion along the western edge of this area.

The last period of construction at Ranigat took place in the southwest sacred area at the very end of activity in Gandhāra. Of the ten coins found in this part of the complex, six were minted in the fourth and fifth centuries AD; it is worth noting that four late Alchon Hun coins were found in other parts of the site (Nishikawa et al. 1988: 101-102). This part of the site is composed of two structures, a fairly large *stūpa* (St301), and a massive image shrine (R301), the biggest image shrine thus far uncovered in all of the Peshawar Basin, Taxila or Swat. The shrine is 10.3 m wide and 9.1 m deep, with 2.1-m-thick walls; while there is no way to gauge how high it originally stood, remains of walls in the southwest corner stand 5.8 m high (Nishikawa et al. 1988: 98-99). Massive image shrines like this one have only been found at the Abba Sahib China site in Swat where there is a huge shrine sitting on an 8.2 m square base with extant walls 9.5 m high (Barger & Wright 1941: 25). The presence of this massive image shrine at Ranigat can also be loosely compared to the late colossal Buddha images being fabricated in Afghanistan at sites like Bamiyan. However, the Afghan examples would seem to be part of an even later phenomenon. In any case, evidence from Ranigat, Abba Sahib China, and probably even the Dharmarājikā complex provides us with a clue as to how images were being used at the end of the period of active patronage in the Peshawar Basin, Swat, and Taxila.

Late construction at the major sites of Takht-i-Bāhī, Butkara I and the Dharmarājikā complex

The above micro-chronologies offer some clear patterns regarding the expansion and transformation of the sacred area in Gandhāra. Based on these relative construction chronologies it is worth turning our attention to the major sacred areas of the Dharmarājikā complex in Taxila, Takht-i-Bāhī in the Peshawar Basin and Butkara I in Swat. While these huge, complex sites are less readily discussed, some broad construction patterns are evident. Let us start with the Dharmarājikā complex, as the changing masonry allows for early and late structures to be readily distinguished (Figure 9). The rubble and diaper masonry structures of phase I and II immediately give us a sense for the organization of this site from the time of its foundation through that of the great Kushans. While this is a topic beyond the scope of this paper (see Marshall, 1951), it is worth noting that even among these early structures there is clear evidence of repair and rebuilding; this is especially evident in the northeastern part of the circumambulatory path. When semi-ashlar masonry came to be used, and marking the phase III boundary, again there are many instances of earlier structures being repaired, reinforced, or simply replaced. During phase III the organization of the site changed with image shrines blocking the northern and western entrances into the circumambulatory path of the main *stūpa*. As this cut off major parts of the sacred area, one wonders if many of the earliest structures had been abandoned at this point in the site's history. It seems that the Dharmarājikā complex continued to receive ample patronage during the phase III period. Roughly speaking as many early monuments survive as do late ones and the *stūpa* was encased using semi-ashlar masonry. Monumental image shrines of truly massive proportions were added to the site, indicating patronage continued till the end of the Gandhāran tradition.

The massive complex of Butkara I in Swat roughly follows the same pattern that is observed in Taxila with the Dharmarājikā complex. While we lack the masonry evidence of Taxila, this is a site that was painstakingly excavated giving us a clear sense of its relative chronology (Faccenna 1980) (Figure 10). There is a clear early core of the site that can roughly be attributed to the time of the great Kushans and before (phase I and II). Again there is considerable evidence that these early structures were repaired and modified in phase III. In terms of patronage in the early and late periods there is clear evidence to show that about as many structures were built during phases I and II as were during phase III and later (Butkara has a very late occupation). This follows what was observed at the Dharmarājikā. It is worth noting that in phase III the organization of the site was considerably modified and that a majority of the later structures were clustered together, suggesting different parts of the site were important for the early and late communities.

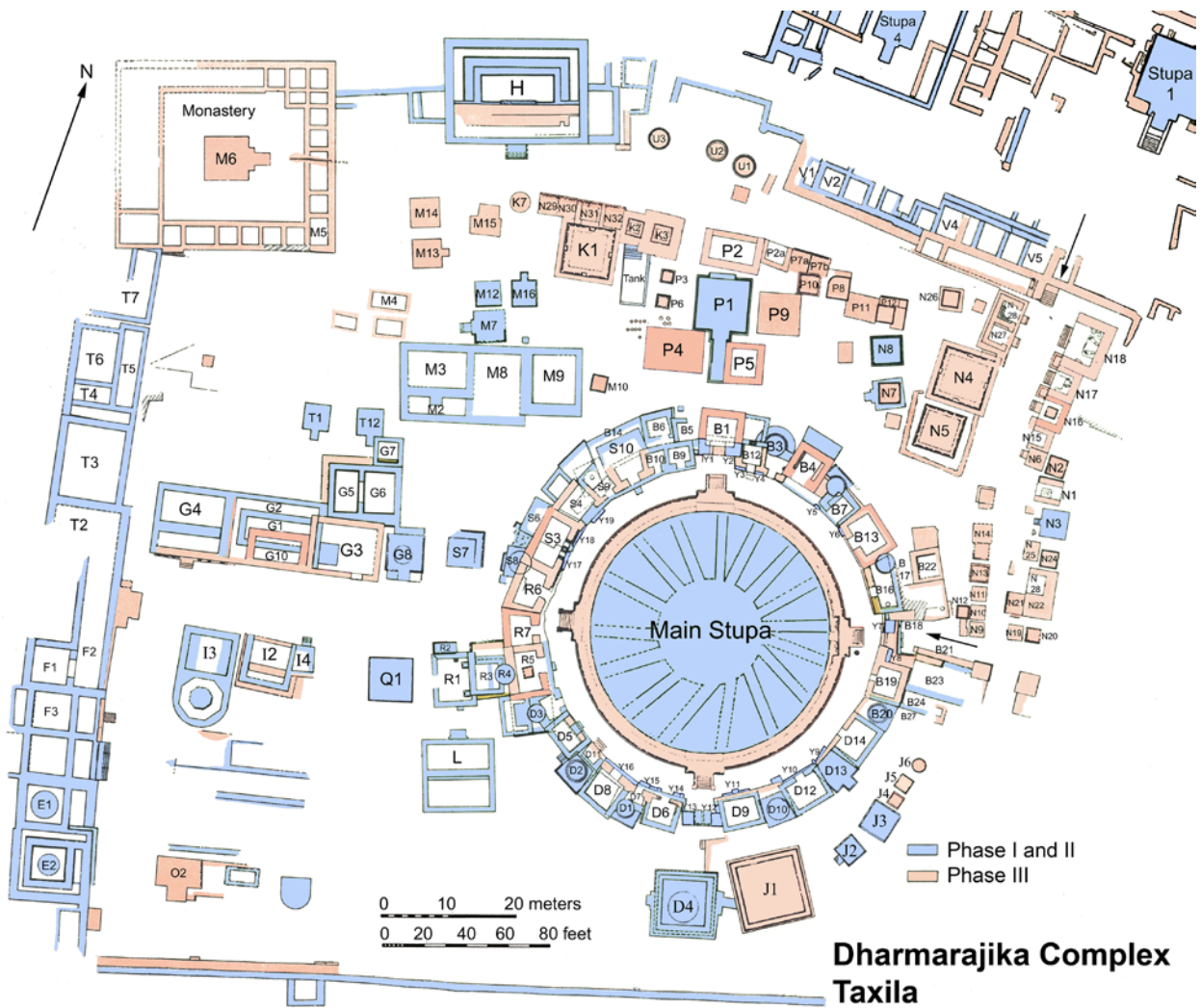


Figure 9. Plan of sacred area at the Dharmarājikā complex, Taxila, showing phase II and III construction (Kurt Behrendt, modified from Marshall 1951: pl. 45).

The Peshawar Basin site of Takht-i-Bāhī (Figure 11; Table 1) would appear to be somewhat later than the Dhārmārājika complex and Butkara I. The earliest part of the sacred area in the lower court is defined by the P1 main *stūpa* and a tight cluster of small *stūpas*, which in turn are enclosed by banks of image shrines built during phase III. There are also late phase III monumental image shrines in this area. The lower court at Takht-i-Bāhī is most comparable to the late sacred areas of Mekhasanda (Figure 7) or Jauliāñ (Figure 4). While large numbers of schist narrative relief panels were recovered at this site, nearly all of the small *stūpas* were embellished in stucco imagery. Considerable refurbishment is evident around the P1 main *stūpa*; at the time of the initial excavation early photos indicate that many of these small *stūpas* have stucco imagery (indicated with cross-hatching). While the excavations at this site took place in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, a rough sculptural count can be established. From phase II there are forty-seven narrative panels, forty-two fragments, and twenty-one false gable panels (some of these must date to phase III). From the phase III and later there are 110 un-photographed standing and squatting figures along with forty-six heads from an 1871 excavation (Wilcher 1871: 434-437). Photographed sculptures include twenty-four Buddhas and bodhisattvas, twenty-four heads, two bases, nine composite or ‘Śrāvastī’ panels, fourteen life-sized stucco heads, and one monumental head (for breakdown see Behrendt 2004: 297-300). The evidence suggests significant, but still limited, phase II

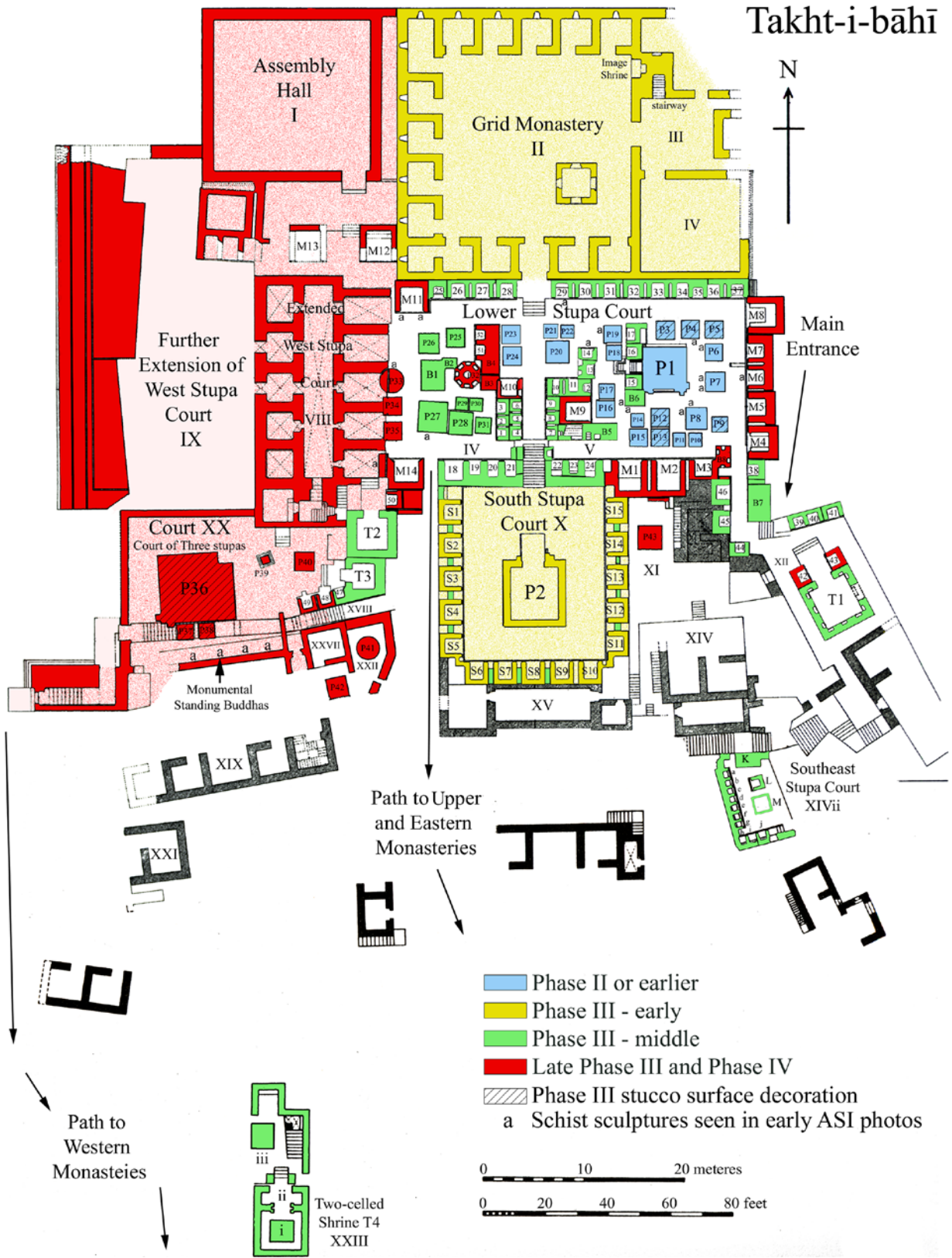


Figure 11. Sacred area and monastery at Takht-i-Bāhī, Peshawar Basin, showing phase II and III construction (Kurt Behrendt, modified from Hargreaves 1914: pl. XVII).

	Kālawān	Jauliāñ	Mekhasanda	Ranigat	Takht-i-Bāhī
Phase II and earlier	Diaper masonry	Diaper masonry	Irregular diaper masonry	Irregular diaper masonry	Irregular diaper masonry
Coins: pre-Kushan to Kujūla Kadphises	2	6		4	x
Coins: Wima Takto to Huviška	28	14 +11 unidentified	2	11	x
Early <i>stūpas</i> and fragments			210 fragments 3 <i>stūpa</i> domes	1730 fragments	x
Narrative and false gable panels	23		27	80	109
Phase III and later	Semi-ashlar masonry	Semi-ashlar masonry	Irregular diaper masonry	Irregular diaper masonry	Irregular diaper masonry
Coins: Vāsudeva and late Kushans	167	37	6	8	x
Coins: post-Kushan	6	51	1	10	x
Large schist devotional images	4	3 + 2 fragments	22	58	45 + 110 with no photos
Small to medium image shrines	5	49	9 + long bases originally ~50		58
Stucco heads and major fragments	63	1000+ heads and many fragments	180 heads many fragments	180 heads, 230 fragments	14 heads
<i>In situ</i> stucco imagery	some	great many	many	some	some
Stepped <i>stūpas</i> stucco		x	x	x	x
Monumental images		multiple large stucco images	2 heads		1 head
Monumental image shrines		3	2 + 1 base	7	14

Table 1. Summary of finds at selected sites.

sculpture survives at sites like Mekhasanda or Takht-i-Bāhī in conjunction with suitable image shrines. Considering these sites as a whole it appears that there was extensive construction during phase II which corresponds to the time of the Great Kushans. Perhaps surprisingly, the architectural evidence reveals as much if not more construction in the post-Kushan period, my phase III. Assuming earthquakes necessitated ongoing repair and given the wealth of these Gandhāran Buddhist establishments, it should not surprise us that so much late construction is extant in the sacred areas. Moreover in the late period, the sites continued to expand with the construction of many new image shrines, *stūpas*, and monasteries. When we consider the much debated issue of sculptural chronology it would seem that the latter half of the Gandhāran tradition witnessed the greatest construction of shrines suited to housing large devotional icons and that correspondingly much of this imagery must date between the third and fifth century, not to the time of the Great Kushans as is so often suggested.

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