

The Great Renunciation: Astral Deities in Gandhāra

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Thousands of narrative relief panels depicting different scenes of the life of the Buddha were carved in grey schist in Gandhāra. Among these, one episode can be singled out as showing several figures or symbols of the celestial bodies: the Great Renunciation immediately preceding the Great Departure, when Siddhārtha, after a night full of pleasure, dance and music, felt disgusted with the vanities of life and decided to leave his palace, abandon worldly life and accomplish the renunciation (*abhinīṣkramaṇa*). This event took place when he had attained the age of twenty-nine years.

Altogether thirteen relief panels of this event have so far been found that include representations of the celestial bodies (see the list given in the Appendix). In all reliefs Siddhārtha, the future Buddha, is shown in the bedroom of his palace, populated by musicians who have fallen asleep after a night of music and dance. Siddhārtha is generally shown in the act of stepping down from the edge of the bed to leave the palace and his sleeping wife Yaśodharā, who is lying behind him.

Typologically, the thirteen reliefs can be divided into four groups, according to the number of the astral figures and/or symbols and the way they are represented:

Group 1 shows five divine anthropomorphic/theriomorphic characters. It is the largest group comprising seven panels (nos. 1-7);

Group 2 shows six divine anthropomorphic characters. It is so far known from only one panel (no. 8);

Group 3 with three divine anthropomorphic characters is also known from only one panel (no. 9);

Group 4 shows only symbols of the celestial bodies; it comprises four panels (nos. 10-13).

Most of the panels are of unrecorded provenance, while an exact find spot is known for only four panels: no. 1 is from Jamrud; no. 5 from Gumbat; no. 10 is said to come from Zurumkot; and no. 12 hails from Jamalgarhi. Thus, it is hardly possible to either draw any conclusions regarding the geographical distribution nor the internal chronology of the panels. They all can roughly be dated between the second and fourth century CE.

In the following paper I will briefly describe the special features of the representations of the celestial bodies in the thirteen panels, which are by no means uniform and differ considerably among each other. Afterwards I will discuss their possible symbolic significance.

Panel no. 1 (Fig. 1) was found in Jamrud, about 12 km west of Peshawar, and is now kept in the National Museum of Pakistan, Karachi. It shows two scenes arranged in vertical order. In the top section Siddhārtha is seen reclining on a couch with his wife Yaśodharā seated to his right, fanned and entertained by female attendants with music and dance. The fateful scene of the Great Renunciation is shown in the lower section. Yaśodharā is now asleep lying on the bed, from which Siddhārtha steps down carefully; sleep has likewise overpowered the two female drummers seated on the ground in front. Five divine characters appear on the balcony above peering over the balustrade. The head of a bull

occupies the centre of the row, topped by a six-petalled lotus flower in the band dividing the two scenes. The bull, which probably symbolizes the zodiac sign Taurus, the birth sign of Siddhārtha,¹ is flanked by two nimbate busts, obviously the two luminaries, viz. the Sun-god on the proper right with a full round halo, the Moon-god on the other side with a semicircular halo, and two further busts of indistinct character without haloes who cannot be identified.² The six-petalled flower immediately above the bull's head may also bear an astral significance, as such a decorative motif does not appear in this position on other panels.

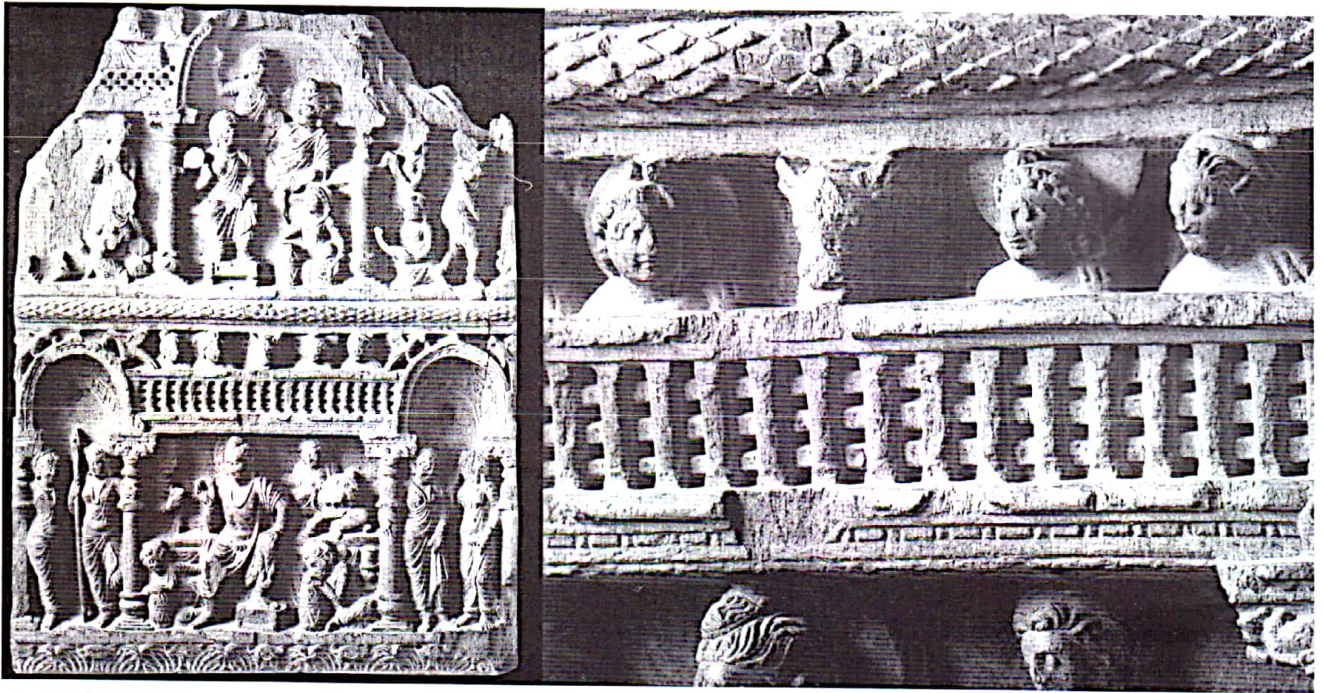


Fig. 1: Panel no. 1, from Jamrud, full view and detail; National Museum of Pakistan, Karachi (after GAP 1984:52-53).

Panel no. 2 (Fig. 2), now in a private collection, is very similar to the former, but unfortunately the lower section with the actual scene of the Great Renunciation is almost completely missing; only its top row with originally probably five (or perhaps six?) divine characters in the balcony is partly preserved. This row is split into two parts. The fully preserved proper right part shows the head of a bull, flanked on the right by the bust of the Sun-god, backed by a full round halo, and another bust of an indistinct figure (further right). The partly preserved proper left section shows the bust of the Moon-god, backed by a crescent, and remnants of another bust (damaged). We thus notice a similar arrangement of the divine figures as in the previous panel, viz. the bull flanked by the Sun-god on the right and the Moon-god on the left.

Panel no. 3 (Fig. 3) is kept in the Taxila Museum. Only three of the former probably five divine characters in the balcony, which is marked with a row of four-petalled lotus flowers, are preserved. Here the bust of the Moon-god, backed by a crescent, occupies the central position; he is flanked on his right by the busts of a bull-headed figure and another indistinct figure.



Fig. 2: Panel no. 2, full view and detail; Jimmy Bastian Pinto collection, Brazil (after Christie's New York, 20 September, 2006: lot 40).



Fig. 3:
Panel no. 3,
full view and detail;
Taxila Museum
(after Khan/Ul-Hasan/Lone
2005, II: pl. 14).

Of the five figures represented in the balcony of panel no. 4 (Fig. 4), now in the Musée Guimet, Paris, only the central one is clearly identifiable as the Moon-god by the crescent rising from his shoulders. His right hand is raised showing *abhaya mudrā*. The other four busts are partly damaged and cannot be identified.

The small fragmentary panel no. 5 (Fig. 5) was found at Gumbat, about 10 km south of the Swat River near Barikot; it is now in the Victoria & Albert Museum, London. Only the proper left part of a row formerly consisting of probably five figures is preserved. The Moon-god, again backed by a crescent, apparently once occupied the central position. The two nimbate figures to his left both hold long staffs in one of their hands and flowers in the other, but they are difficult to identify.



Fig. 4:
Panel no. 4,
full view and detail;
Musée National des Arts
Asiatiques-Guimet, Paris
(after Tanabe 1997/98: fig. 8).



Fig. 5:
Panel no. 5,
from Gumbat;
Victoria & Albert Museum,
London
(after Barger/Wright
1941: pl. III.4).

Panel no. 6 (Fig. 6) stands out for its special feature of depicting a full figure of the Greek Moon-goddess Selene in the centre above the scene. She is shown in her well-known Graeco-Roman iconography in flying attitude with a billowing cloth held above her head, which seems to be backed by a flatly carved crescent. A more prominent crescent projecting from the roof below further hints at her identity. In narrative panels from Gandhāra, Selene appears quite often in panels illustrating the episode of the Great Departure that immediately follows the Great Renunciation, but this panel is so far unique for including her image in the latter episode.³ She is flanked by four busts; the one to her left can probably be identified as the Sun-god on account of his pointed Scythian cap, while the one to her right might be the Moon-god shown with a Brahmanic hairstyle. The two outermost busts are too indistinct to be identified. That the figures above the roof of the pavilion are indeed located in the sky is further indicated by the interruption of the architectural decorative frame in the top centre of the panel.



Fig. 6. Panel no. 6, full view and detail; Museum für Asiatische Kunst, Berlin (Photo: Iris Papadopoulos, courtesy SMPK, Museum für Asiatische Kunst).

Panel no. 7 (Fig. 7), now in the Peshawar Museum, shows at least two busts of divine figures on either side of the balcony above the scene. Some are backed by haloes, but they are too damaged to be properly identified from the available photograph. The two groups are linked by a row of single upright lotus leaves above the roof, which may bear an astral significance. Of the former seven or eight leaves only five are discernible now.



Fig. 7:
Panel no. 7;
Peshawar Museum
(after Kurita
2003, I: pl. 143).

Panel no. 8 (Fig. 8) is the only panel depicting six divine characters in the balcony above, which is split in two parts. The centre of the proper right one is occupied by a nimbate figure, undoubtedly the Sun-god, with his right hand raised. He is flanked by two figures of which the one on his left is certainly female, while the one on his right is damaged. The centre of the opposite balcony shows the bust of the Moon-god backed by a crescent. The female figure on his right holds a billowing cloth above her head and can thus be identified as Selene (cf. panel no. 6). The last figure, on the left of the Moon-god, is quite damaged and has lost its head. An interesting detail of this panel is the depiction of the left foot of Siddhārtha which, in contrast to all other panels, is not shown as stepping on the small stool in front of



Fig. 8:
Panel no. 8;
location unknown
(after Freschi
1994:16-17).

the bed but is supported by the joined hands of a kneeling male figure looking up to him. This figure obviously represents his servant Candaka, as indicated by the head of the horse Kanṭhaka visible above, behind the edge of the bed.



Fig. 9: Panel no. 9, full view and detail; private collection, Japan (after Kurita 2003, I: pl. 141).

Panel no. 9 (Fig. 9) is the only one in which the balcony is populated by three divine characters. Two of them are easily identifiable. The Moon-god, backed by a crescent, occupies the central position. He is flanked on his right by the Sun-god whose nimbus is marked with faintly visible rays. The third bust is indistinct. Interestingly Siddhārtha's right hand, which was generally raised to some degree in all the previous panels, is here raised above his head towards the astral divinities, and he even seems to be looking up to the Sun-and Moon-gods.

Having dealt with anthropomorphic figures in all the previous panels, we now proceed to symbolical representations of the celestial bodies. Panel no. 10 (Fig. 10), now in a private collection, is said

to be probably from Zurumkot. The otherwise undecorated space above the scene is filled with a crescent moon in the centre, surrounded by six multi-rayed stars. The fact that two stars as well as the proper left end of the crescent are slightly cut off suggests that the scene continued on another panel above; in that case it is possible that more stars were originally depicted. As in the previous panel, Siddhārtha's right hand is raised, he even seems to point at the crescent with his outstretched index and middle fingers.

Panel no. 11 (Fig. 11), now in a private collection, belongs to a stele depicting four scenes; from top to bottom: the Dream of Queen Māyā, the Birth of Siddhārtha and the Seven Steps, the Great Renunciation, and the Great Departure. No figures of astral deities are shown above the Renunciation scene. However, a lying crescent occupies the centre of the narrow space above the roof of the pavilion, flanked by a row of eight circular disks on the proper right and nine on the proper left side, presumably symbolizing celestial bodies. The row of eight full-blown lotus petals that separate the scene from the one above may also be understood as symbolic representations of stars since such a band is rather uncommonly used for separating different panels in Gandhāran reliefs. Again Siddhārtha's right hand, here holding an indistinct longish object, is raised towards the crescent.



Fig. 10: Panel no. 10, probably from Zurumkot; priv. coll., Japan (after Kurita 2003, I: pl. 142).

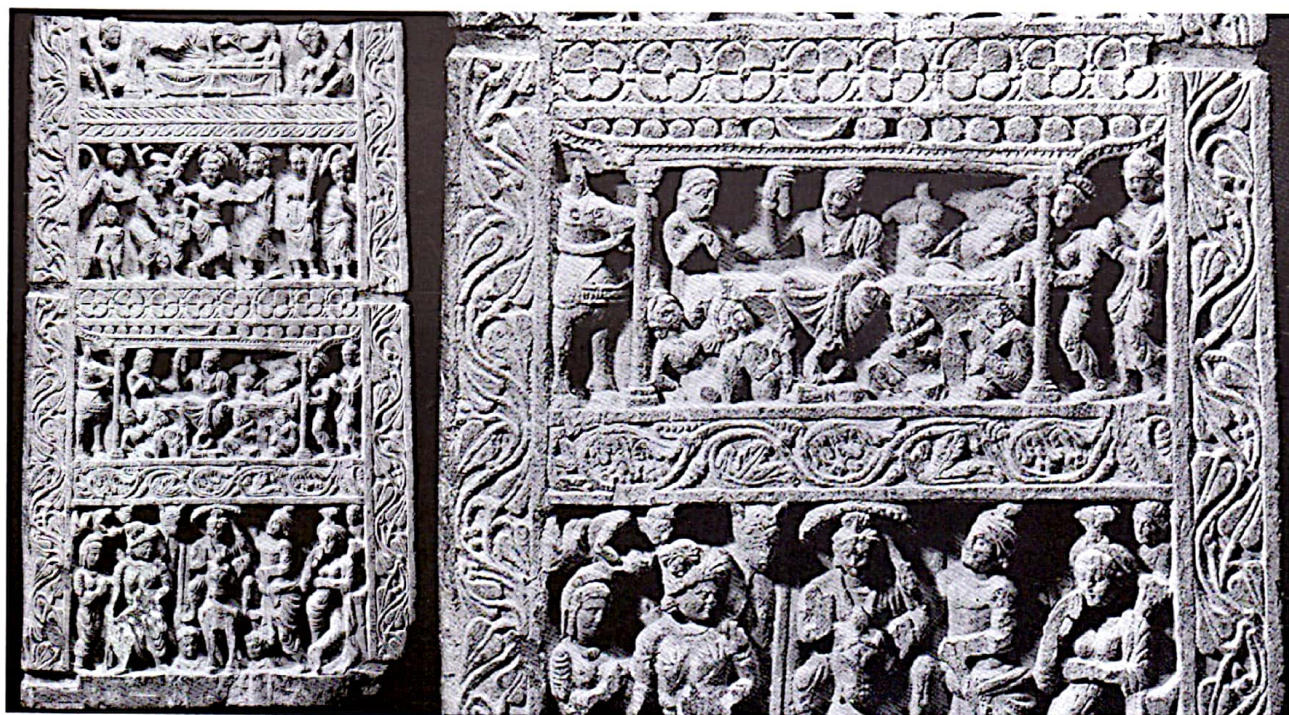


Fig. 11: Panel no. 11, full view and detail; private collection, Europe (after Kurita 2003, I: col.pl. P2-II).

Another interesting feature should be mentioned: At the top of the Great Departure scene occurs an animal's head in frontal view, similar in shape and size to the head of the horse on which Siddhārtha is seated. Since it is quite unlikely that a second horse is depicted in the scene, and since this head resembles the bull's heads seen in panels no. 1, 2 and 3, it may not be too far-fetched to interpret this head also as a symbol of the zodiac sign Taurus. As we have already noted, in panels depicting the Great Departure it is usually the Greek Moon-goddess Selene who symbolizes the night-time of the event.⁴ If our interpretation is correct, this panel is perhaps unique for showing the Taurus symbol in the Great Departure scene.

In the last two examples listed here, neither any divine figures nor a crescent have been represented. However, a row of lotus flowers above the scene may indicate symbolically the presence of astral bodies, as already presumed in panels no. 1, 3, 7 and 11.

Panel no. 12 (Fig. 12) from Jamalgarhi, about 12 km northwest of Mardan, now in the Indian Museum, Kolkata, belongs to a fragment depicting three scenes. The upper one, almost completely destroyed, probably showed the nightlife in the palace with music and dance, the lower one the Great Departure. Above the scene of the Great Renunciation in the middle section we see a row of eight four-petalled stylized lotus flowers, to which Siddhārtha looks up. He even touches the band with his raised right hand.

Panel no. 13 (Fig. 13), now in a private collection, forms part of a slab which represents the Four Encounters (also known as the Four Sights) on the neighbouring panel. Above the Great Renunciation scene we see a row of five rectangular lotus flowers which might symbolize astral bodies. Further, there is a larger, four-petalled half-lotus above, but similar ones are also visible above the neighbouring scene, so they cannot be taken as exclusively connected with the Great Renunciation.

Finally, another interesting and quite intriguing panel from a private collection in Pakistan deserves to be mentioned (Fig. 14), although it has to be excluded from our list proper for two reasons: (1) It shows a conception scene; and (2) Siddhārtha is not depicted. It can thus not be taken as representing the Great Renunciation. However, certain elements of the latter episode are found in this panel: (1) Yaśodharā is reclining on a couch and sleeping; (2) two female musicians are shown sleeping on the floor in front of the bed; and (3) two busts of divine figures occupy the balcony above the scene, the one on the proper left certainly representing the Moon-god, identifiable by the crescent behind his head. This latter feature makes it necessary to deal with the panel in the present context.

So far the relief is only known from two Japanese publications (*TLGB* 1992:11, cat. 2; Kurita 2003, I:349, fig. 10). It may be interesting to quote Isao Kurita (2003, I:308), who tentatively identified the scene as the conception of Rāhula in the night before the Renunciation: 'Figure 10 is a unique fragment of a relief. It is unfortunate that the quality of the photograph is not very good, but a commonly depicted scene of the Night Before the Renunciation where two females are leaning over the drums and sleeping below the bed where the Lady is laying down are represented. An elephant with a round halo is about to enter the body of the Lady on the bed. On the balcony above her a god is depicted with a crescent moon on its back. If you exclude the elephant, it illustrates the same scene as the Night Before the Renunciation; however, the prince is absent. If you exclude the lying musicians and the half moon deity, it is the same as the Dream of Queen Māyā. I do not think we can resolve this as simply a mistake by a sculptor. It may be a very important fragment that suggests the conception of Rāhula on the Night Before the Renunciation. [...] The story about his birth varies among the Buddhist scriptures. He was

either already born before the prince's Great Departure, born on the day of the Great Departure, or conceived on the day of the Great Departure and was born six years later when the prince attained the Enlightenment. However, in most of the Buddhist scriptures he was born after the Renunciation (or on the day). A child like figure does not appear in the scenes before the Renunciation in Gandhāran sculptures. [...] "Rāhula" means "hindrance" (the one who weakens the prince's determination for his renunciation), but at the same time it means "lunar eclipse". His name was derived from the lunar eclipse, which occurred on the day of his birth. [...] As we can see, there may be hints indicating Rāhula's conception in the scene from the Night Before the Renunciation in Gandhāran sculptures. New discoveries and research will probably clarify this issue.'

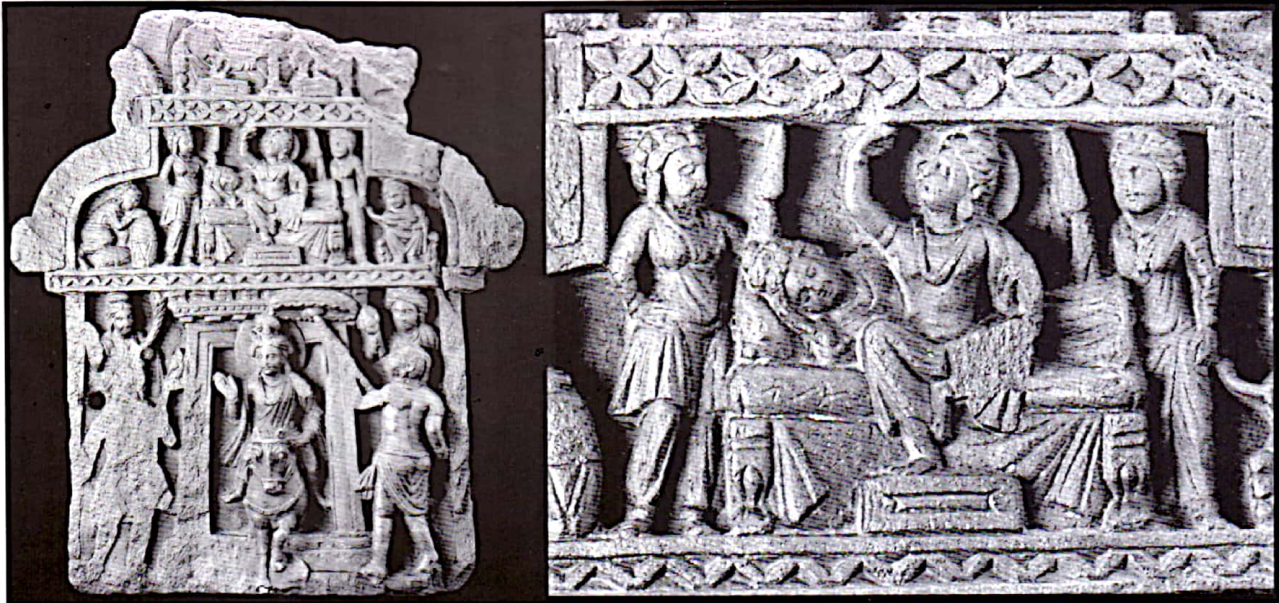


Fig. 12: Panel no. 12, from Jamalgarhi, full view and detail; Indian Museum, Kolkata (after Klimburg-Salter 1995: col.pl. 160).

Although I cannot claim to solve the problem of correct identification of this enigmatic panel, a few remarks may be added. The presence of apparently only two divine figures in the balcony above, in contrast to the usual three, five or six figures, is quite conspicuous, particularly as one of them can undoubtedly be identified as the Moon-god. Unfortunately the second figure seems to show no signs that would hint at its identity: the right hand is raised showing *abhayamudrā*, the left hand is held in front of the chest, both gestures apparently resembling those of the neighbouring Moon-god, though without *abhayamudrā*. There are, however, remnants of another figure on the proper left side of the Moon-god, which may have been depicted in the continuing part of the balcony, now broken off. Only a damaged raised right hand of this third figure is discernible, with rather scanty traces of what could have been a halo just above it. If this assumption is correct, the third figure could have been that of the Sun-god backed by a circular halo. In this case we would witness a similar arrangement as in panel no. 9, viz. three figures with the Moon-god and the Sun-god represented side by side, and the Moon-god being placed in the centre. Then, in both panels the neighbouring positions of the two luminaries could be taken as a figural illustration of the moment of the new moon, when the sun and the moon are in the same zodiac sign, and, by implication, of a lunar eclipse (in case of a solar eclipse one would expect the Sun-god in the centre). This way of reasoning would perhaps support Kurita's suggestion that we are dealing here with a representation of the conception of Rāhula in the night before the Great

Renunciation, though in that case this interpretation would perhaps also apply to panel no. 9. Be that as it may, the enigmatic new panel certainly deserves to be studied in more depth after proper documentation.

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Fig. 13: Panel no. 13, full view and detail;
Agon Shu collection (after *GABS* 2007-08:78).

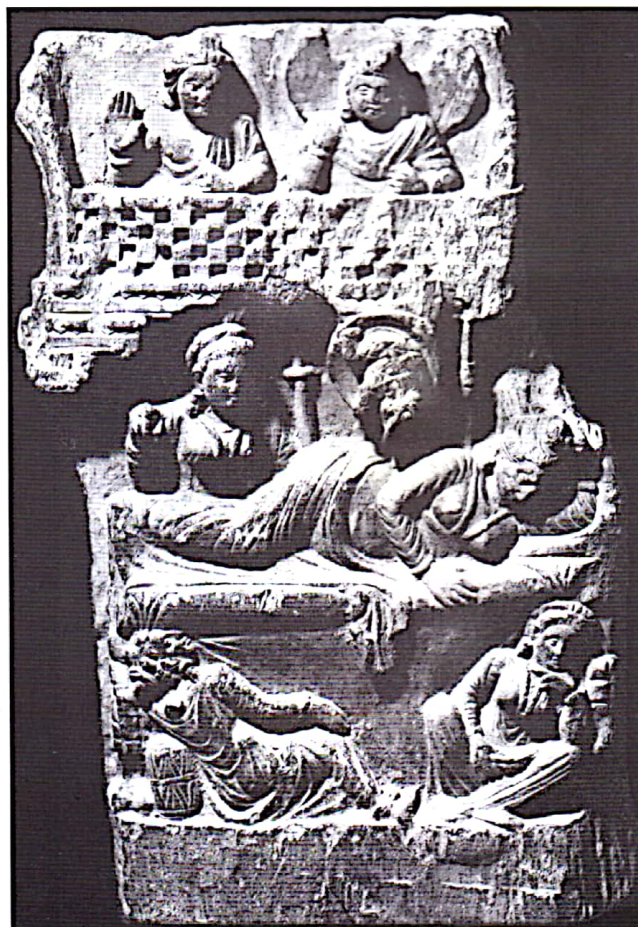


Fig. 14: Panel showing a conception scene with
sleeping musicians and the Moon-god above;
private collection, Pakistan (after *TLGB* 1992:11,
cat. 2).

To sum up: a head of a bull as the symbol of the zodiac sign Taurus, the birth sign of Siddhārtha, is represented in panels no. 1, 2, 3, and possibly also in the Great Departure beneath panel no. 11. Although in the texts the sign Taurus is not directly connected with the Great Renunciation⁵ (nor the Great Departure), it certainly refers to an awareness of astrological facts on the part of the artists or persons who were responsible for designing the reliefs. This applies also to the panels that show the Sun-god and the Moon-god in opposite positions (panels no. 1, 2, 6, 8), thus illustrating the time of the full moon when the sun and the moon occupy opposite signs.

The fact that the Moon-god is placed in the centre of at least four panels (nos. 3, 4, 5, 9; perhaps also in Fig. 14) and is represented as a crescent symbol in another three panels (nos. 6, 10, 11) indicates that the moon was given high importance in Gandhāra, and the fact that Siddhārtha is pointing to the moon with his raised right hand in three of these panels (nos. 9, 10, 11) shows that this moon-consciousness is also transferred to the image of Siddhārtha at the time of his decision to abandon worldly life. That the Moon-god played an important role in Gandhāran imagery can be deduced from

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Fig. 13: Panel no. 13, full view and detail;
Agon Shu collection (after *GABS* 2007-08:78).

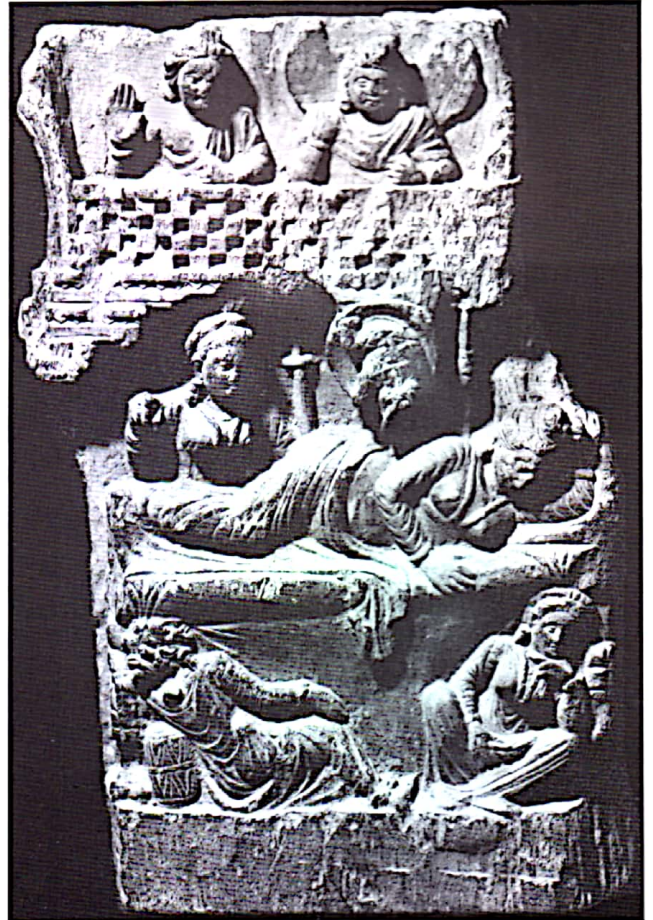


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the existence of one of the earliest independent images of that god, a sculpture hailing from Jamalgarhi, now in the Indian Museum, Kolkata.⁶ Although the figure is shown – like the early images of the Sun-god – seated on a *quadriga*, his identity as the Moon-god is deducible from the crescent rising behind his shoulders, similar to the depiction in panels no. 2, 3, 4, 5, 8 and 9.

The crescent as an iconographic marker of the Moon-god was introduced in South Asia around the middle of the 2nd century CE through gold coins issued by the Kuṣāṇa emperor Kanīška, which are inscribed with the god's Bactrian name Mao (Māh).⁷ He wears a long tunic and boots like the emperor himself. The attribute held in his right hand is a long sceptre. The representation of the Sun-god on Kanīška's gold coins, bearing the inscribed Bactrian name Miiro in Indo-Greek characters, is quite similar, the main difference being the radiating nimbus of the latter.⁸ A nimbus with sun rays is also seen in the bust of the Sun-god in panel no. 9.

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Siddhārtha's decision to abandon worldly life and the accomplishment of the Great Renunciation took place when he had attained the age of twenty-nine years, which is astrologically a very crucial time in the life of human beings, as it signifies the final step of growing up and entering adult life.⁹ The presence of astral divinities in the depiction of this event is quite significant. In Indian art, astral deities, especially the Sun-god, have been depicted from the very beginning on the outside of a sacred compound in order to demarcate the sacrosanct threshold. Early examples can be found in the Jaina cave 3 (Anantagumphā) at Khandagiri (Orissa),¹⁰ in the Buddhist cave at Bhaja (Maharashtra),¹¹ and on a corner pillar of the railing enclosing the Buddhist compound at Bodhgaya (Bihar),¹² all dating from the first century BCE. In Gandhāra, the Sun-god is frequently found on capitals, datable to about the third century CE.¹³ Though the original architectural context of these capitals is not known, the fact that they are carved only on one side suggests that they once formed part of wall-pilasters facing outwards, i.e. they probably demarcated the threshold as was the case with the early reliefs.

Another famous example of the Sun-god from the north-western region can be interpreted in this way: the mural once located in the vaulted ceiling immediately above the head of the colossal eastern Buddha at Bamiyan, i.e. the smaller Buddha of 'only' 38 m height, which was completely destroyed in March 2001 by the Taliban iconoclasts (Fig. 15). The painting was quite large, originally measuring ca. 8 m by 4 m; no traces of it remain today.¹⁴ Taking a closer look at the position of the Sun-god in the vault, we notice that he is not painted exactly above the Buddha's head but brought a little forward, i.e. he is depicted just in front of his forehead. Thus the image of the Sun-god can iconographically be regarded as a *lalāṭa-bimba*, a 'forehead-figure', for the Buddha below,¹⁵ and architecturally as guarding the threshold of the niche, the holy space in which the Buddha is/was standing.¹⁶ In Indian culture the forehead has always been regarded as that part of the body which is especially related to destiny and fate and thus has to be protected from evil forces, a function which was evidently served by the figure of the Sun-god at Bamiyan for about 1400 years until March 2001.

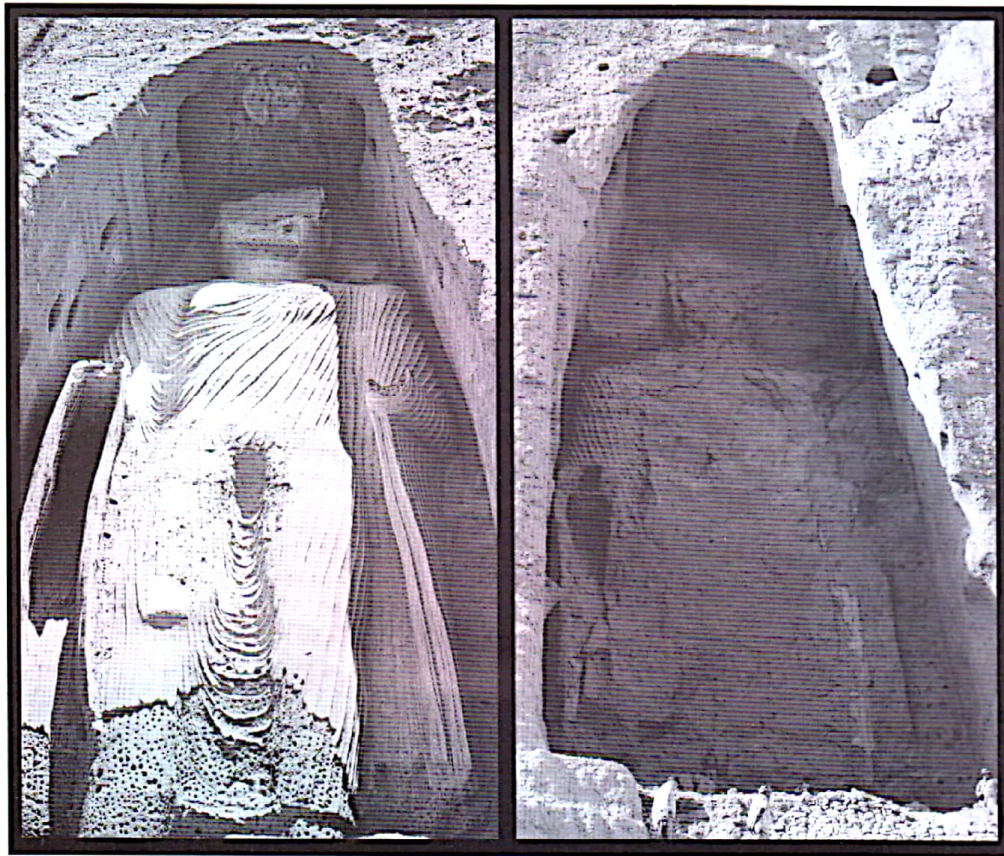


Fig. 15: Colossal eastern Buddha at Bamiyan with Sun-god above; left: before destruction (after *Gandhara* 2008:34, Abb. 4); right: after destruction (after Petzet 2009:50).

From the Gupta period onwards a row of planetary deities (*Navagrahas*) is found above the *lalāṭa-bimba*, adorning the entrance of hundreds, if not thousands of North Indian Hindu temples, demarcating the sacrosanct threshold.¹⁷

Thus, it can be concluded that in the Gandhāran reliefs illustrating the Great Renunciation, the astral deities and symbols placed above the pavilion signify not only two different layers of the time when this event took place, namely the time of the day (midnight) and the time of the month (full moon), but they also symbolize on the one hand the real threshold between the palace and the outer world and on the other the psychological threshold demarcating the edge between one life-period and another.

Appendix

List of Gandhāran reliefs of the Great Renunciation with astral deities or symbols

1. From Jamrud; National Museum of Pakistan, Karachi (inv.no. 507), formerly in the Lahore Museum (inv.no. 567); 61.5 x 46.5 x 9.5 cm (whole sculpture). **Fig. 1.**
Ref.: Grünwedel 1893:108-109, Abb. 41 (drawing); Burgess 1897:10, pl. 127; Burgess 1900:36, pl. 12.1; Grünwedel 1900:121, no. 62; Grünwedel/Burgess 1901:128-131, ill. 81 (drawing); Bloch 1908:648-650 (not ill.); Hargreaves 1914:16-17, fig. XII; Foucher 1918:162-163, fig. 391 on p. 173 (detail of balustrade); Ingholt/Lyons 1957:58-59 (with further references), pl. 39 A-B; Yamamoto 1974:30-31, ill. (erroneously labelled "The Prince Marries"); Pugachenkova 1982:115, pl.119; *GAP* 1984:52-53 (two col.pls.), 160, 228, cat. II-8; Nehru 1989:pl. 111; Tanabe 1997/98:215, 228 fig. 7; *BSBAA* 1998:115, 212, cat. 86 (ill.); *AGP* 2002:38-39, 120, cat. 21 (with two col.pls.); Kurita 2003, I:15, col.pl. P1-XII and pp. 307-308; *Gandhara* 2008:222, Kat.Nr. 156 (col.pl.); Miyaji 2008:141-142, fig. 19; Nadiem 2008:29, ill.
A plaster replica of the panel is kept in the Indian Museum, Kolkata (inv.no. GD 18).
Ref.: Majumdar 1937:42, no. 31; Sengupta/Das 1991:145, no. 1.
2. Provenance unrecorded; Jimmy Bastian Pinto collection, Brazil (inv.no. Ref.49); 36.8 x 31 cm. **Fig. 2.**
Ref.: Christie's New York, 20 September, 2006: lot 40; GAK, no. 5180
(<http://gandharan-archives.blogspot.com/2011/06/life-in-palace-2.html>).
3. Provenance unrecorded; Taxila Museum, Pakistan (inv.no. RD 322); 23 x 20.5 x 5.7 cm. **Fig. 3.**
Ref.: Khan/UI-Hasan/Lone 2005, I:81, no. 14; II:11, pl. 14.
4. Provenance unrecorded; Musée National des Arts Asiatiques-Guimet, Paris (inv.no. MG 4052); H. 27 cm. **Fig. 4.**
Ref.: Hackin 1923:22, pl. II.a; Auboyer 1982, pl. 36 (detail); Tanabe 1997/98:215, 228 fig. 8; HA, Scan No. 54544 (<http://huntington.wmc.ohio-state.edu/public/index.cfm?fuseaction=showThisDetail&ObjectID=30016257&detail=large>).
5. From Gumbat, Swat; Victoria & Albert Museum, London (inv.no. I.M. 91-1939); fragment, 10.5 x 18 cm. **Fig. 5.**
Ref.: Barger/Wright 1941:58, no. 75, pl. III.4; Ackermann 1975:52-52, pl. IVb.
6. Provenance unrecorded; Museum für Asiatische Kunst, Berlin (inv.no. I 5937); 26.3 x 34.2 cm. **Fig. 6.**
Ref.: Sotheby's London, 10th-11th June 1985: lot 335; Weis 2000:30, no. 41 (photo mirror-reversed); Johne 2004:223, fig. 3.
7. Provenance unrecorded; Peshawar Museum (inv.no. 1975); size unknown. **Fig. 7.**
Ref.: Kurita 2003, I:72, pl. 143 and p. 307.
8. Provenance unrecorded; present location unknown; 44 x 35 cm. **Fig. 8.**
Ref.: Freschi 1994:16-17, col.pl.
9. Provenance unrecorded; private collection, Japan; 15 x 19 cm. **Fig. 9.**
Ref.: Kurita 2003, I:71, pl. 141 and p. 308.

10. Probably from Zurumkot; private collection, Japan; H. 18 cm. **Fig. 10.**
Ref.: Kurita 2003, I:72, pl. 142 and p. 308.
11. Provenance unrecorded; private collection, Europe; H. 70 cm (whole sculpture). **Fig. 11.**
Ref.: Kurita 2003, I:74, col.pl. P2-II.
12. From Jamalgarhi; Indian Museum, Kolkata (inv.no. G 5/A 23259); 32.9 x 36.9 x 5.2 cm (whole sculpture). **Fig. 12.**
Ref.: Majumdar 1937: 43, no. 37 (not ill.); Nehru 1989:pl. 5; *TWB* 1993:26, cat. 10; Klimburg-Salter 1995:182 col.pl. 160, 275 cat. 160; Nagar 2010: 56 pl. 55, 310.
13. Provenance unrecorded; Agon Shu collection; 26 x 77 x 10 cm. **Fig. 13.**
Ref.: Kurita 2003, I:14, col.pl. P1-X; *GABS* 2007-08:78, cat. 42 (3 col.pls.).

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I am thankful to Martina Stoye, Berlin, for bringing panels no. 2 and 3 to my notice, and to Isabell Johne, Berlin, for supplying references of some panels depicting Selene listed in note 3.

Notes

1. This interpretation had first been suggested by Albert Grünwedel in 1893 and was accepted by James Burgess in 1900. It may be quite illuminating to quote from their texts *verbatim*: "... Above, from a balcony, the gods look down: Sûrya to the left and Chandra to the right of a bull, —that is, the sign of Taurus (*Tâvuri* or *Vaisâkha*). It was on Tuesday, at the full moon of Vaiśâkha in the Nakshatra or asterism of Viśâkha, that the legends say Gautama was born, and this representation would agree with that date. But the conception and renunciation are both placed at the full moon of Ashâḍha (June-July) in the Nakshatra Uttara-Ashâḍha. When the new moon or the sun is in Uttara-âshâḍha, at the full, she might be, as the legend says, in Pûshya, "the king of stars"; but then the sun would be in Cancer (*Karka*) and not in Taurus. The two figures, left of the sun and to the right of the moon, may be regarded as representing other supernal beings who are pressed into the legends; they have not the nimbus." (Burgess 1900:36). — The description of Albert Grünwedel (1893:109), slightly altered in Grünwedel 1900:121, and printed in English translation in Grünwedel/Burgess 1901:130-131, is quite similar, but not completely identical: "... Above, from a balcony, the gods look down: Sûrya (the sun) to the right and Chandra (the moon) to the left of a bull, that is the sign of Taurus (*Tâvuri* or *Vaisâkha*). It was on Tuesday, at the full moon of Vaisâkha in the Nakshatra or asterism of Viśâkhâ, that the legends say Gautama was born, and this representation would agree with that date. But the conception and renunciation are both placed at full moons of Ashâḍha (June-July) in the Nakshatra Uttara-Ashâḍha, when the sun would be in Karka or Cancer, and conjunction with Pushya (Tishya) "the king of stars." The representation then seems intended to show the sun in connexion with the constellation of the Bull, perhaps between two personified "houses" of the moon in the month Ashadha: evidently the night of that month on which the moon was full was thereby intended. Perhaps this is an indication of the date when, in the artist's opinion, Gautama's flight took place; but it does not agree with the tradition, but with the date of the birth. But this is by the way. What is important here is the similarity of the whole composition to early Christian ivory tablets." — For comments see Bloch 1908:648-650; Foucher 1918:163; Inghold/Lyons 1957:59.
2. According to different texts, apart from the Sun and the Moon other *devas* were present in the sky

when Siddhārtha left his palace, among them Brahmā, Indra, the Four Lokapālas, the star Puṣya as well as various stars and constellations; cf. Tanabe 1997/98:214-215, with references to several texts.

3. The panels depicting the Great Departure can be subdivided into two types: (a) frontal, and (b) profile (cf. Tanabe 1997/98, who, however, identifies the female figure as the night-goddess Nyx). Selene occurs in both types. See e.g. the following relief panels. **Frontal type:** (1) Musée Guimet, Paris, inv.no. MA 3397; Tissot 1985:196, pl. XXII.4; Tanabe 1990:59, 78, fig. 16 (detail); Cambon in Giès/Cohen 1995:239, fig. 183; Tanabe 1997/98:213, 216, 221, 224, 227 figs. 2-3, 232 fig. 26; *Alexander* 2003:135, cat. 134 (full view and detail); Kurita 2003, I:73, col.pl. P2-I. (2) From Butkara I, now Museo Nazionale d'Arte Orientale, Roma, inv.no. MAI 4028/MNAOR 1131; Nehru 1989:pl. 19; Tanabe 1997/98:216, 221, 224, 229, fig. 10. (3) National Museum of Pakistan, Karachi, inv.no. N.M. 1963.199; *GAP* 1984:50-51 (two col.pls.), 228, no. II-7; Tanabe 1997/98:214, 216, 224, 227, fig. 1; Tanabe 2000:1094-1095, fig. 6 (erroneously attributed to the Peshawar Museum); Kurita 2003, I:82, pl. 145; Tanabe 2005:376, 378, fig. 12; Nadiem 2008:30, ill. (4) Indian Museum, Kolkata; Foucher 1905:359, fig. 183; Tanabe 1997/98:216, 221, 224, 229, fig. 11. **Profile type:** (5) Hirayama Ikuo collection, Japan; Tanabe 1997/98:216, 221, 223-224, 229, fig. 13. (6) Hirayama Ikuo collection, Japan; Tanabe 2007:20 col.pl. I-9, 286. (7) Private collection, Europe; Kurita 2003, I:81, fig. 144. (8) Probably from Zurumkot, now private collection, Pakistan; Kurita 2003, I:85, fig. 154. (9) Probably from Zurumkot, now private collection, Japan; Kurita 2003, I:85, fig. 156. (10) Swat Museum, Swat; Tanabe 1997/98:216, 221, 223, 224, 229, fig. 12. (11) Private collection, U.S.A.; Kurita 2003, I:281, col.pl. 607. (12) Torino Museum, Italy, inv.no. IAp/156 (<http://www.maotorino.it/opera.php?id=63>). (13) Fragment with remnants of Selene, said to be from Swat; private collection, Japan; GAK, no. 5184 (<http://gandharan-archives.blogspot.com/2011/06/renunciation-2.html>). — A similar female figure holding a billowing cloth above her head is also found at least once in the scene of the Distribution of the Relics; see the panel in the Institute of Silk Road Studies, Kanagawa (*TLGB* 1992:80, cat. 79; *BSBAA* 1998:128, 212, cat. 99).
4. Cf. note 3 above.
5. Cf. note 1 above.
6. Inv.no. G 58/A23236; 20.2 x 12.5 x 6.1 cm. See Foucher 1905:207, fig. 83 “Sūrya”; Foucher 1918:163, where he corrects his previous identification to “Candra” (cf. also Foucher 1951:833, add. I, p. 207, and 857, add. II, p. 163); Majumdar 1937:113, 123, no. 154; Rowland 1938:fig. 5; Banerjea 1948:59; Bussagli 1955:18, 13 fig. 4; Sengupta/Das 1991:51, no. 87; *LoS* 2003:118, col.pl.; Quagliotti (2000:1144-1148, fig. 17, with further references) considers it as a syncretic image of Siddhārtha and Candra; Zhu 2003:fig. 4; Kurita 2003, II:179, pl. 517 (erroneously attributed to the Peshawar Museum).
7. Mao coin, British Museum, London (inv.no. 1879.5.1.4; diam. 18 mm, 7.4 g). See Markel 1995:36, fig. 9; *Gandhara* 2008:146, Kat.Nr. 79. See also Banerjea 1948:69, 97-98, and Pandey 1971:74, pl. 6B (2).
8. Miiro coin, British Museum, London (inv.no. 1894.5.6.17; diam. 21 mm, 7.91 g). See *Gandhara* 2008:145, Kat.Nr. 78; Pandey 1971:74, pl. 6B (2). A circular radiate halo is also found behind the head of the Parthian Sun-god Shamash/Mithra from West Asia, dating to ca. 2nd century CE; see,

- e.g., three images from Hatra: (1) a stone relief in the Mosul Museum (Ingholt 1954:23-24, pl. VI.2; Fukai 1960:159-161, pl. 19; Homès-Fredericq 1963:55-56, no. 31, pl. II.5); (2) a stone lintel (Ingholt 1954:24, pl. VI.3); (3) worn as a chest ornament of a headless marble statue (Fukai 1960:153-154, pl. 14; Homès-Fredericq 1963:50-51, no. 4, pl. I.2a). A similar radiate halo of the Sun-god is also seen (4) on a sculpture from Palmyra in the Musée du Louvre, Paris (Nehru 1989:pl. 70), and (5) on the silver plaque of Cybele from Ai-Khanum, Bactria, in the Kabul Museum, assigned to the 3rd century BCE (Nehru 1989:pl. 36; Bopearachchi *et al.* 2003: 114, fig. 6; Tissot 2006:42, He.p. AK. M. 80.1 and cover illustration; Hiebert/Cambon 2008:118-119, cat. 23, col.pl.).
9. Significantly, after 29 years the planet Saturn has completed the first full revolution in the horoscope.
 10. Frequently published; see e.g. Johnston 1939:2-3, 7 (ill.); Saraswati 1957:pl. VI.36; Mitra 1975:54, pl. XV.A; Gail 1978:336, Abb. 5; Sahu 1984:215, 218 fig. 1, 219-220; Quagliotti 2000:1151 believes it is a syncretic image; Leoshko 2010:12, 17 fig. 8.
 11. See Burgess 1910:pl. 178; Johnston 1939:pls. I-II; Gyani 1950-51:16-17, figs. 4-5; Saraswati 1957:pl. X.49; Rowland 1977:89, fig. 36; Bautze-Picron 1998:8-9, pl. I (with further references); DeCaroli 2000:271-272, fig. 3; Kannal 2003:*passim*, pl. 40; Srinivasan 2005:356-360, figs. 5-6; Gupta 2008:39-40, figs. 15, 17; Gupta 2009:pl. 5.1. The identification of this image as Sūrya is not accepted by some scholars.
 12. Now in the Bodhgaya Museum; see e.g. Rowland 1938:fig. 2; Sivaramamurti 1950:29, pl. III.A; Bussagli 1955:11-12, fig. 3; Agrawala 1965:73, pl. XI, fig. 33b (drawing); Rowland 1977:90-91, fig. 38; Sivaramamurti 1977:fig. 247; Gail 1978:225-336, Abb. 3; Leoshko 1991:figs. 1, 3; Srinivasan 1986/1992:64/41, pl. 3/5; Markel 1995:23, fig. 5; Tanabe 1997/98:222 (with further references), 231, fig. 22; Quagliotti 2000:1125 (with further references); Leoshko 2012:56-57, fig. 3.7. A replica is exhibited in the Indian Museum, Kolkata.
 13. See e.g.: (1) Present location unknown, L. 32.5 cm; Shah 2010:288-289, fig. 2. (2) Alsdorf collection, Chicago, 14.3 x 26.7 cm; Markel 1995:25, fig. 6; Pal 1997:49, cat. 53. (3) Hirayama Ikuo Silk Road Museum, 11 x 49.2 cm; GSRA 2002:cat. 170; Tanabe 2007:54-55 col.pls. I-46, 287; GABS 2007-08:113, cat. 85. (4) from Loriyan Tangai; Indian Museum, Kolkata, 47 x 96.6 cm; Majumdar 1937:113, 126, no. 242 (not ill.). (5) from Abarchinar, L. 45.7 cm; Barger/Wright 1941:61, no. 141, pl. VII.4; Bussagli 1955:18, 15 fig. 7; Goldman 1988:89. (6) from Butkara I; Swat Museum, Saidu Sharif (inv.no. B 1), 18 x 25 x 16 cm; Facenna 1964:pls. DLIX, DLXI; Goldman 1988:100-101, note 20; Gandhara 2008:239, Kat.Nr. 187. (7) National Museum of Pakistan, Karachi (inv.no. 663; 21 x 36 cm); Shah 2010:287-288, fig. 1. (8) Private collection; Tissot 1985:238-239, pl. XLIII.3; Goldman 1988:89, fig. 4. (9) Tokyo National Museum; Kurita 2003, II:179, pl. 516. (10) Private collection, Japan; Kurita 2003, II:179, pl. 518.
 14. For the painting of the Sun-god at Bamiyan, see Godard/Godard/Hackin 1928: 21-23, fig. 6 (drawing), pls. XXI, XXII (replica painting); Rowland 1938: *passim*, fig. 1 (drawing); Bussagli 1955:13, fig. 3 [=5]; Agrawala 1965: fig. 33a (drawing); Rowland 1977:174-176, fig. 119 (replica painting); Tarzi 1977:col.pl. C2 & pl. IA (drawing); Klimkeit 1983:18, fig. 2 (drawing); Goldman 1988:98-99, fig. 20 (drawing); Klimburg-Salter 1989:154-155, pl. XLIII, figs. 50-51; Grenet 1993:88, fig. 1 (drawing); Grenet 1994:45, fig. 11 (drawing); Grenet 1995:109, fig. 4 (drawing);

Zhu 2006: 687, 699, 710, 716, fig. 19 (drawing); *GABS* 2007-08:154-155, figs. 8 & 10 (drawing). See also Tarzi 1983:26 & notes 27 and 28 for further references.

15. An enigmatic female head from Mathura, now in the State Museum, Lucknow (inv.no. 46.80; H. ca. 25 cm), gives evidence that images of the Sun-god were even directly worn as emblems on the forehead; see Rosenfield 1967:192, fig. 18; Frenger 2005:445. Compare also the standing Bodhisatva sculpture from Gandhāra, now in the Royal Ontario Museum, Canada (inv.no. ROM 939.17.8; 122 x 45 x 20 cm). He wears a turban displaying on the crest an image on a *quadriga*, either the Sun- or the Moon-god; see Rowland 1938:fig. 7; Jongeward 2003:63-67, cat. 8. Quagliotti 2000:1141-1144, figs. 13-14 (with further references), argues for an identification of the crest figure as Candra. For another Bodhisatva with Candra in the headdress, see Quagliotti 2000:1140-1141, fig. 11 (Japanese collection), and with Sūrya in a detached turban, *ibid.*:1151-1152, fig. 19 (Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, inv.no. 1997.226).
16. For a discussion on *lalāṭa-bimba* and threshold symbolism, see Mevissen 2012:83-90.
17. For numerous examples, see e.g. Mevissen 2012:94-99, figs. 3-6.

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