

Aesthetics is an important aspect of an art object is enhances the charm of viewing. Artists use designs, Motifs, symbols, accessory Figures and Patterns. In India the term Gandhara appears for the first time in the Rigveda. Where in it has been defined as a region on the north-western frontier of India. The term was also mentioned by the Atharvaveda, Apastamba and Budhayana also speak about it. It appears that in the Vedic times. The Gandharanes were settled on the Southern bank of the river Kubha upto its mouth in the Indus and for some distance down the east side of Indus itself. Mahabharata also mentions about Gandharas. However a more specific details about Gandhara are Provided in the accounts of Chinese Pilgrim Husan-Tsang.

Due to its situation on the great trade routes between Europe and Asia. This region witnessed the confluence of Several Streams of culture. As a result the style of art that emerged was distinct and unique. The Gandhara Sculptural art has such a distinctive look that it can easily be set apart from all other Indian types. Art scholars say that the Gandhara art was the product of the artists whose hand skill were of foreign but heart was Indian. It means that the style and technique was inspired from west (Greek, Achaemenia, Roman) but it spirit and theme was Indian (Buddhist mostly).

The Gandhara School of Art is best known because its most Prolific productions and important remains have become from Jalalabads. Hudda and Bamiyan in Afghanistan, the swat valley,

Taxila, Takhti-Bahai in the yusubzai country Bala Hissar, Charsada, Palath-Dhere, Ghazbhe etc. The material employed is usually a dark grey state stone in the early Period and stucco and terracotta are the favourite mediums in the late. In Indian sub-continent two main art forms were famous during this time. There were Gandhara School of Art & Mathura School of Art.

The term "Gandhara Art" is applied to the school of architecture, sculpture and painting which flourished in north-western India from the first to the Fifth centuries A.D. this designation comes from ancient name of the region and is to be preferred to Greco-Buddhist a term Sometimes applied to the same art but distinctly misleading, since it implies a derivation from Greek art. How it deviates from Greek Art, will be searched and analyzed in during proposed research work.

Buddhism was open for women, and hence we find many women in Buddhist art. The north-western Society of Gandhara and Kapisa was also not conservative and women had more active role in social life and less restrictions and more freedom. Therefore, the artist of Gandhara had full reason and opportunity to Portray-women in the sculptures art. Women of all walks of life and status were present so the art portrayed queens and attendants. Both Buddhist devotees, Goddesses, deities and female relatives of Gautama Buddha. Women depicted in Gandhara sculptures into the following categories. Related to Buddhism:- Buddha's Mother Mahamaya Prajapati Gautmi, Buddha's wife

Yasodhara etc. Buddhist Goddesses, Devotees and Disciples. Related to other religions like Hindu and Greek.

Now let's deal with Mathura school of art is regarded as an antithesis of ancient Indian School that flourished as centres of religious art back in 200 B.C. The magnificence of Mathura School of Art considered with the rule of the Kushanas under the reign of Kanishka and his successors. The city of Mathura was a centre of religious and artistic importance in the Gupta Period but gained prominence under the supremacy of the Kushanas. The ferrous of Brahmanism, Jainism and Buddhism is very well distinguished in the Paintings of Mathura school of art.

The Mathura school of art is renowned world wide for its vivacity and assimilative character of Indian themes, a tradition it has maintained till date unlike the Gandhara School of art which had the influence of Greco-Roman rules of art Mathura School of art holds a special place in the art history of India because of its exclusive pattern. The exquisite feminine figures created by the artists of Mathura bear a hallmark of elegance charm and sophistication. A yakshi is portrayed nude with globular breast perpetually covered; Smooth thighs and the lower garments either revealed as transparent or suggestively parted. The flamboyant and sensuous representations of the yakshis surpassed anything known in the arts of earlier Periods. Apart from depiction of beautiful damsels in different Poses and Scenes Sculptures also depicted various Jain deities of Jain images, the images

Ayagapattas or homage stone tablets, which are carved with auspicious symbols like box etc. The Provocative portrayal of the beauties bears a similarity to the carvings at Sanchi and Bharhut. Sculptures under the Kushans at Mathura school of art is in many ways an outgrowth of the styles of the archaic period, although at the same time it is undoubtedly influenced by innovations from Gandhara, what are those innovations it shall be studied in research work.

Buddhism was open for women, and hence we find many women in Buddhist art. The north-western society of Gandhara and Kapisa was also not conservative and women had more active role in Social life and less restrictions and more freedom. Therefore, the artist of Gandhara had full reason and opportunity to portrayn-women in the sulptureal art. Women of all walks of life and status were Present so the art portrayed queens and attendents, Buddhist devotees, Goddesses, deities and female relatives of Gautama Buddha. The Saka & Patithans Period:- Gandhara art came into being in the last century before the Christian era, when the Sakas were ruling in the northwest and when the prevalent Hellenistic art which they had inherited from their Greek Predecessors had already reached a decadent state. The character of this art and the way in which it declined under Sakas and was subsequently given a new lease of life offer the Parthian conquest is clearly apparent, albeit on a small scale, in a series of ornamental toilet trays of Gandharan workmanship

which were unearthed in the sirkap city at Taxila. They number thirty three in all. The subjects portrayed are few in number and all of a secular character. They comprise a pair of lovers in an erotic scene, figure reclining on couch with attendant females, drinking and dancing scenes, male and female holding drinking-cups, lions leogryphs, winged stags, hippocamps and the like with and without riders, and geometric and floral designs.

Its Style is distinctively Hellenistic and quite different from that of other trays of Saka and Parthian times. On the rim is beaded border encircled by a running spiral. In the centre, an erotic scene of a type familiar in Greek art, namely, a standing male figure wearing a hooded mantle of a pattern worn by Greek countrymen and, kneeling at his side, a woman wrapped in a himation or shawl which her companion is pulling from her. The modeling of the figures, which are in high relief is characteristic of Hellenistic sculpture.

The tray following came from the Fifth (Greek) stratum but was doubtless a stray from above and referable to the latter part of the last century B.C. It is made of grey schist. The scene is a familiar Greek one but the figures are very stiff and wooden by comparison with the preceding specimen. In the upper register is a man reclining on a couch with a wine cup in his hand. At the head of the couch is a woman seated on a stool also holding a wine-cup, and behind the couch another woman standing up with

a garland in her hand. The figures are clad in the Greek chiton and himation.

The most elaborate of all the toilet-trays unlike the foregoing examples. It is made greenish-gray steatite (Soapstone). Round its rim is a border of double arcading in the centre a drinking scene. At the top a man and woman are seated on a bench, the former clasping his companion with his left arm and holding a sceptre with his right, while she offers him a cup of wine. To the left of them is a draped woman. Seated and playing on a lyre and behind her a youth playing in the pan-pipes.

The style is typical of Hellenistic art of the first century A.D., and the scene is reminiscent of the "Wedding of Ariadne and Dionysus" Familiar subject to Graeco- Roman art. A feature of this tray that should be specially noticed is the figure of the woman seated beside her companion on the bench, with bared back and prominently developed buttocks. This Particular type of female figure occurs in other reliefs of the Parthian period. Is also of steatite and of approximately the same date as the foregoing. In the upper register is a sea monster ridden by a half draped female holding a baby in her left arm.

The renaissance of Hellenistic art under the Parthians played such a momentous part in the evolution of the Gandhara school. The small female statuette in the round comes from the third stratum in Sirkap and is referable to the latter part of the last

century B.C. the pose is rigidly frontal, with feet and legs together and hands on the hips. The figure is nude except for ornaments, which consist of anklets girdle, crossed breast-chain, armlets and bangles. The hair which is treated like a wig in front is taken back from the forehead and falls in a long double plait down the back, with a few curls on each shoulder. On the top of the head is a low "Polos".

The Other female statuette is made of the same variety of stone and is approximately of the same age but is modeled with relative freedom and not a little grace. The figure is nude save for a shawl or Sari, which falls over the left arm and below the hips in front the left hand holds the hem of the "Sari" in the Right hand, which is raised to breasts is a lotus. Her ornaments consist of a hipgirdle; a breast chain, crossed both front and back; bracelets, armlets, a narrow taenia across the forehead and a medallion at back of the head. The hair is taken back from the forehead and falls in a long double plait down the back, with a few curls on the shoulders. As usual at this early period the eyes are large and staring, their pupils marked with a drill point. But there is much greater freedom in the treatment of the hair than in example.

More advanced style is made of quartz-schist and is adorned with female deity (Devi). The Devi wears a close fitting long-sleeved garments, large circular ear ornaments, flat collarette long flexible necklace and bangles. In front of her breasts she carries and offering of fruit or flowers in both hands. The hair on the

forehead is confined by taenia, behind which it falls backward in long tresses and plaits over the shoulders. In the centre, above the taenia, is a circular medallion. The volute bracket is enriched with acanthus foliage on its sides and front the eyes are still unduly large, but the modeling of the torso is more mature than in the preceding examples.

The artist of early Indian school in Malwa who were commissioned to carve the gateways of great stupa at Sanchi, did not hesitate to include among their reliefs scene of a sensuous and erotic character which were flagrantly opposed to the first principles of Buddhist teaching with such a well-established precedent to guide them, It is not surprising that, after the revival of Hellenism under the Parthians, the sculptures of Gandhara followed a like course. At that time of a favourite theme of Graeco-Parthian secular art was the drinking-scene, and incongruous as it may seem this was one of the earliest theme to be adopted for the decoration of Buddhist stupas.

At the outset such themes were incorporated, just as they were and without any modification, among the stupa reliefs though no doubt appropriate labels, based on one or other of the life-stories of Buddha were readily invented for them. The change was a simple and effective one, but it is worth remarking that the drinking-scene was much too popular to be so easily suppressed or camouflaged. We find it recurring time and again in later reliefs of the Gandhara School. A good illustration of such scene, of a

purely Hellenistic character, is afforded. This relief was formerly in the guide's mess at Mardan and like the majority of their sculptured probably came from Swat, but its precise provenance is uncertain, nor have its able to ascertain the variety of stone of which it is made. It is now in Peshawar museum.

The drinking party comprises nine figures, namely, four male and five female. The women wear a long chiton and himation and garlands on their heads. The chiton is supported by twisted girdle under the breasts and is long enough completely to cover the feet, the himation is dropped over the left shoulder and arm and, round the hips and legs. The women also wear numerous bangles on their wrists but not on the upper arm.

An example of silver is shown in the characteristic features of these Parthian goblets are their carinated bodies, deeply flared mouths, horizontal flutings or bands, and disproportionately small bases which were evidently meant to support them only when empty. Although a drinking party, the men and women compassing it make a sedate, dignified group very different from the boisterous orgy depicted on the toilet tray.

Now let us go on to the next relief which is in the British museum. It is labeled "Presentation of the bride to Siddhartha" and it may well have been the label attached to it by the sculptor for the edification of Buddhist. But whatever the label, the scene portrayed is essentially the same as the drinking-scene of the

previous panel and the style too, is identical, indeed, so similar are the figures and faces of the men and women, their dress, ornaments etc.

The next significant step is made apparent in the three following illustrations in which the Greek setting is retained and the form and postures of the figures are Greek rather than local, but men and women alike are wearing local instead of Greek dress and all are carrying lotuses in their hands. Atlantes are familiar at all periods in Gandhara art and afford, as we shall see example made of the same stone and approximately of the same age is one of the oldest. It is bold masterly Figure, with narrow waist and powerfully developed chest and limbs, and rather crudely modeled wings. The leafy wreath twined in hair points to the influence of Dionysus-Silenus cult.

The influx of Hellenistic art began soon after the Parthian conquest of Gandhara in Circa AD 25 and ended abruptly with advent of the Kushanas soon after AD 60. But it left an enduring mark on the nascent school of Buddhist sculpture and its influence can be seen clear and unmistakable, long after that date. This period covered by the first four or five decades of Kushana rule, is in some ways the most fascinating in the history of school. It is the period when Gandhara art was in a formative, adolescent stage, when we can discern more clearly than at other times the efforts of the artists to overcome their initial difficulties, to reconcile Greek and local ideas, and to create from them a new synthesis of

religious art suited to the needs of the Buddhist church of all the sculptures dating from this period some of the earliest and most attractive are comprised in the collection which formerly belonged to the guides, Mess at Mardan.

For the Preservation of these sculptures we own no small debt to the officers of the guides but it could be wished that they had spared themselves the trouble of trying to brighten up the sculptures by occasionally blacking and polishing them, since the effect has been completely to obscure the surface texture and fine finish and to make it virtually impossible to secure satisfactory photographs. How disastrous for reproduction this maltreatment has proved can be seen by comprising, which was taken in 1927, with which was taken more than half a century ago when the relief was first unearthed. Sir John Marshall stress this point the more because many of the other illustrations which follow suffer from the same serious defect and it is important that full allowance should be made for it, if the merits of the sculptures are to be correctly assessed.

Closely linked in age and style with the foregoing the two reliefs illustrated in the one depicting the "Interpretation of Maya's dream", the other the "Seven steps of the Infant Buddha". The two Panels came from the same monument in Swat. Where these two small but excellent photographs were taken by Mr. Caddy sometime before the Panel passed into the possession of the Guides by the side of makes it all too clear that the first of the two

panels has suffered much from blacking and polishing before this later photo was taken. In the same way shows how much the other panel had suffered from mutilation, particularly to the infant Buddha's Legs. In the scene of the Dream interpretation king suddhodana is seated full face, on a richly decorated throne, on the back of which lean two women attendants with fly-whisks in their hands. Maya, who is usually present in later versions of this scene is absent from this one.

The close affinity with Partho-Greek reliefs described in the childhood of Gandhara art is evident in many features, in the formal, scenic character of the imposition and the self-conscious poses of the individual figures, in the careful delineation of the facial features notwithstanding their minute scale, in the careful draping of the robes and masterly precision in the modeling of their folds, and in the framing of the panels between pairs of rounded Corinthian pilasters.

On the other hand, there is a radical difference between these panels and their Partho-Greek predecessors. The latter, as we have seen, were little more than servile imitations of Hellenistic originals, with the actors sometimes dressed in local instead of Greek costume. Sometimes carrying a lotus instead of a wine-cup in their hands, to give a Buddhist atmosphere to the scene. But the changes are superficial and do not affect their essentially Hellenistic character. Here, in these two panels, it is different. The sculptor still has the Greek outlook, is still inspired by Greek

ideals, still employs the Greek technique and expresses himself in Greek Idiom But he is now moving in a new atmosphere, the religious atmosphere of Buddhism, is deeply immersed in its sacred traditions and is putting all his skills and artistry into the narration of its legends.

Reliefs of this character are manifestly too mature and complex to have been created overnight or by the genius of a single artist. They presuppose earlier efforts of a more empirical, less assured kind, and it may be hoped that examples of these may one day be turned up by the spade of the excavator. Meanwhile we must be content to recognize that, with these panels, we are now for the first time coming face to face with the real Graeco-Buddhist art of Gandhara art which was dependent for its life-blood as much on the traditions and inspirations of Buddhism as on those of the local Hellenism and which could have been born now-where else in Asia but on the soil of Gandhara.

The maturity of Gandhara art start when it reached its maturity only when it had evolved a distinctive style and character of its own, and when its sculptors had developed their technical skill and powers of imagination sufficiently to give worthy expression to the traditions and ideals of Buddhism. Another and perhaps more potent cause was the rapidly growing demand for this sculpture which followed the expansion of Buddhism under Kushan Patronage and the ever increasing number of Stupas and chapels which then came into being. In such conditions, when

quantity is more important than quality, art of any kind and particularly religious art, is bound to become repetitive and mechanical. A slab of greyish-white micaceous schist, came from the upper Monastery at Nathu, and is now in the Calcutta museum, Like from the lower Monastery at the same spot, it depicts the death of the Buddha, but is of the later date.

A comparison of the two panels is instructive. In both the faulty modelling of the eyes is conspicuous, and in both the drapery folds are coarse and rough. These defects are characteristic of the majority of the sculptures belonging to this group and persisted throughout most of its history.

The next relief also come for Nathu, and is now in the Calcutta Museum. It illustrates the presentation to Buddha of a mango grove by the caurtesan Amarpali. To indicate the occasion, the Buddha is portrayed seated under a canopy of Mango leaves and fruit on his right is Amarpali with her lady companions, on his left two of the Licchavi nobles, and beyond them the Vajarpani and a Deva. That Amarpali is in the act of making a gift is shown by the ceremonial water-vessel in her hands. The wreaths which she and her companions wear on their heads are survivals of the wresths so fashionable among the upper classes of Graeco-Parthian society, all the figures, in this panel, except the Buddha, have the same bulging eyes that we noticed in the preceding relief as well as.

Evidently the sculptor made a special, though not very successful, effort to avoid this distortion in the case of the Buddha, but when he came to the subsidiary figures, old habit proved too strong for him, as it did also when he was carving the small standing Buddha on the face of the adjacent pilaster. Other noteworthy features of this panel are the heavy canopy of mango leaves, a kin to the canopies in below, as well as to those on some of the Sikrislabs, e.g. and the modeling of the drapery folds, which shows a growing sense of line and substance, though the execution is still uncompromisingly hard. Observe, too how the ubiquitous Sala trees are still introduced, as a cliché to mark the Buddha's presence, though they have nothing to do with the episode of Amarpali's Gift. Sir John Marshall conclude the majority of Gandhara sculpture with a figure of Hariti, Consort of Pancika, which seems to sum up well the character of the Early Maturity Period.

The panel, which is now in the Peshawar Museum, came originally from Takht-i-Bahi, where it no doubt served as a spacer between larger. Panels in the decoration of a stupa. Such spacers, adorned with figures of female Guards, musicians etc, like those in were a common feature of Gandhara art from an early date. In this example the Devi is shown standing erect on a vase under a canopy of leaves. Her dress is Indian, her ornaments are necklaces, bracelets and anklets. On her head is a chaplet of leaves, from

which is a veil falls down her back. On her left hip she carries, in the local fashion, the youngest of her many children.

The figure of Harithi is, as usual, full and matronly, her pose dignified and stately, giving her a madonna-like appearance. Of the age of this carving, its restrained classic style and the maturity of the modelling leave no room for doubt. For it was only in the early part of the maturity period that work of this calibre was produced for the ungainly treatment of the lower folds of Harithi's veil, which resemble the shape of acanthus leaves, compare the decoration of a small stupa in Sirkap and on an early statuette of grey micaschist from the Dharmarjika.

It will thus appear that the railing round the Stupas was planned by the Mathura artisans in a new context and unique richness of motifs seldom seen before. It was a rich creation of beauty, artistic variety and a real joy drawn from life. The railing had now reached its highest point of perfection both for its themes and artistic treatment.

Mathura had become the centre of the Bhakti cult several centuries before the Christian era. This cult centered round the worship of Vasudeva-Krishna who was regarded as a divine incarnation in human form. Krishna was considered to be incarnation of Vishnu. There are several references to the worship of Vishnu in the Rigveda. He is mentioned there as Gopa (protector of the cows), Sakhivan (one having companions), which

epithets contain the germs of his later biography. In the Panini's Ashtadhyayi there is reference to the worship of Vasudeva and his associate Arjuna whose Bhakta or devotee followers were known as Vasudevaka and Arjunaka. This clear evidence is indicative of the high antiquity of the religious worship of Krishna. In the Mahabharata Santiparva there is a long discourse of about thousand slokas known as the Narayani Parva in which we find the worship of God Narayana as the regular feature of religious belief and side by side reference is also made to the Satvata doctrine amongst the Bhagavatas, the followers of which were known as Ekantin. Against these religious backgrounds can be explained the large number of sculptures of Brahmanical gods and goddesses in the Mathura school of sculpture.

This early formulation of the Brahmanical stone images representing the deities of the Bhagavata pantheon was a fact of supreme value in the evolution of image worship in ancient India. Surely this movement brought about far-reaching changes in the religious ideas of the people of all denominations and naturally could not have left the followers of the Buddha without coming under its influence. During the couple of centuries, i.e. from the first century B.C. to the first century A.D. a Bhagavata predilection for image worship gave such universal acceptance and momentum as ultimately culminated in throwing open the doors to the making of the image of the Buddha as well.

Images of Brahmanical gods and goddesses began to be made in considerable number in the beginning of the Kushana period at Mathura. The pantheon was gradually elaborated and became rather complex in the Gupta period. The following is the full list of the gods and goddesses whose images have been found in Mathura school of sculpture. Agni in the Panchala coins of Agnimitra we find a deity with a halo of flames. He is depicted on the Kushana coins as an Iranian deity under the name of Athso. No image of the early Kushana period has been found but there are several Gupta sculptures showing Agni as a Brahmanical deity with a halo of flames round the body and also with *Jatajuta*, a beard, *yajnopavita*, potbellied and holding *amrita-gata* in the right hand.

Lakshmi Gaja-Lakshmi is already known in the art of Bharhut, Sanchi, Bodhgaya and Udaigiri. At Mathura this ancient typical figure of Lakshmi continued to be depicted as female figure standing on a lotus, holding two lotuses in the two hands and with a pair of elephants sprinkling water on the head of the goddess with two inverted jars held in the two trunks. But the worship of *Lakshmi* as the goddess of plenty and prosperity became invariably popular so that freestanding images of the goddess in bigger size began to be made.

Durga there are images of Durga having four arms and seated on a lion assignable to the Kushana period but the form, which was more popular, was that of *Mahishasuramardini*, i.e.

goddess Durga in the form of killing the demon. Her images with two, four and six arms are found in considerable number in Kushana and Gupta art. The most eloquent description of her exploits and power is contained in the *Devi-Mahatmyam* of the Markandeya Purana. The worship of *Mahishasuramardini* became popular throughout the country and we find a magnificent representation of the conflict of the goddess riding on a lion with the demon Mahishasura in the early Pallava art.

Sapta-Matrika in the Kushana period the worship of the female goddess in the form of Reality as so many goddesses found its most tangible expression in the sculptures representing a group of the *Sapta-Matrikas* (Seven Divine Mothers), Brahmani, Vaishnavi, Ambika-Parvati, Indrani, Kaumari, Varahi, Narasirhhi, and Chamunda.

We find that various types of ornaments were worn by women during the period under review, as is evident from the literary and the archaeological sources. Women decked themselves with profuse ornaments because of their natural desire to shine, to look glorious and to improve upon what nature had given them in the form of body. The practice of wearing ornaments is still continuing. In North Eastern India probably no married woman is allowed to be seen without her jewellery, specially at the time of marriage and on festive occasions. It is only after the death of her husband that she is denuded of the jewellery. The jewellery is still regarded as an asset, a form of saving and a symbol of status for

the Indian women. Costume, Coiffure and Ornament have played a vital role in expressing the advancement of material culture of the human race from the beginning of the civilization.

This development in trade and industry reflects the prosperous economic condition of the people. Further, a large number of foreigners coming to India and Indians going outside the country for the purposes of trade and propagation of religion might have affected the costume, the coiffure and the ornament of country, the Sunga period, which immediately follows the Mauryan period, is clearly of the Mauryan attitude. Bharhut, Bodhgaya and Sanchi bas-reliefs do not follow the Mauryan court art. But still during the period, we get almost the same fashions of dress and ornament in "North Eastern India which were prevalent in the Mauryan period. In other parts of India, however, sleeved coat was also used by male persons and breast garment by females. Various types of head-dresses were worn by both men and women, 'but the arrangement of the hair was not so simple. It was arranged with a parting line in the middle and the mass of hair gathered together at the back and plaited into one or two long rolls hanging down as low as the waist or twisted or tied into a large knot at the back. Various types of ornaments were also used by both the sexes of which tiara and bangles may particularly be mentioned. Wristlets were used by men, while bangles and tiaras were used exclusively by women. Ornaments of this period also reveal that there were different classes of people and their

standard of living was more or less as in that of the Mauryan period. Even in this period, there was a remarkable progress in trade and industry. There were rich merchants. The Jetavana scene reveals that people had enough money with them and their purchasing capacity was so high that they could afford to spread gold coins over the land as a price of it. The wealth of the middle classes appears clearly from their dress and ornaments. There is no evidence of extreme poverty or pauperism. Thus, on the whole, people lived happily in peace and prosperity as in the Mauryan period.

In the Kushana period, there were some changes with regard to varieties of dresses and ornaments, but there is no significant change in this part of this country. From this period onward, we get a clear picture of the use of cut and sewn garments. Various types of dresses and ornaments are displayed in the Gandhara and the Mathura sculptures, but probably they did not affect the dress and the ornaments of North Eastern India. Here the same fashions were continuing which were prevalent in the Mauryan and the Sunga periods. The Kushana rulers, though might have extended their influence as far as Bihar and Bengal in the east, their new types of dresses could not influence the people of this area. The head-dress and the hair arrangement are more or less in the Bodhgaya fashion. Various types of ornaments were also worn by men and women, but no significant change is noticed in the nature and mode of wearing them. It is, however, for the first time that

we get the practice of covering the body in one sweep of the garment by the women. The period between 325 BC to 320 AD, therefore, on the whole, constitutes one period so far as the history of the costume, coiffure and ornament is concerned. It may also be pointed out here that foreign inspired dresses and ornaments came into vogue in this part much later, probably in the Gupta period.

Thus, we may conclude that costume, coiffure and ornament not only indicate different classes of people, but also judge standard of living and economic condition of the different classes of the people using them. Although, Gandhara and Mathura art was basically treating the Buddhist themes, it was realistic in nature and the depiction of human element was natural and real. There was lack of symbolism or stylization. The depiction of the companions and devotees of Buddha was also realistic and if taken separately appear to be truly normal and natural art.

The art reflects the social scene. Women in the North West and north enjoyed freedom and so it was not strange that women find good representation in Gandhara and Mathura art. Under the new technique of art a great care was taken to show the physical features, of a figure as close to natural as was possible. Much attention was paid in depicting each and every fold and turn of the dress. Rich ornaments, costumes and drapery were used and much attention was paid to importing physical beauty on the artistic specimens. A great importance was attached to refinement and polish

in Gandhara and Mathura School of art. Grey and red colour stone was used in Gandhara and Mathura art.

Gandhara and Mathura art specimens are found as either (i) Sculptures chiselled in stone (Schist and soft stone type) or (ii) Shaped in modeling material (like gypsum, clay, stucco). The work of Gandhara and Mathura artist could be as enormous as the gigantic Buddhas chiseled out of rocks at Bamiyan and north India or as small and delicate as engraved on several precious stones (in Lapidary work). The women in plaques and bands are depicted in pairs or groups, illustrating the events or episodes in separate niches, horizontal or vertical, generally adopts a common pattern forming a single element in the decorative and narrative scheme of a stele. Sunken panels enclosed with pilasters and decorated with geometrical patterns separate the scene.

The school of Gandhara and Mathura through its softer medium of stucco, introduces sinuous bodies, seductively beautiful women, highly ornate crowns and masses of jewellery, as formed elsewhere in India at the same time. Gandhara and Mathura then was Part of Indian art history and can only be understood as part of the great process from archaic to classic and to romantic. When once this basic principle is constructed, the Gandhara art becomes clear and logic and dating of the Graeco-Buddhist sculpture within fifty years the rule. "*All the datable pieces*", remarks Fabri, "become milestones and fit into picture of rational chronology....." Indeed, during the classical and baroque

period, this area produced some of the most notable, and sensitive work of art, of which India can justly be proud. The sculptures of Gandhara and Mathura art are, by no means, limited. The religious and aesthetic aspects have been meticulously brought within the compass of the sculptural art. The Gandhara and Mathura sculptures serve as welcome corrective and addition to the Buddhist canonical books, visualising the form of Buddhism in Gandhara and Mathura. The abundance of image of Hariti, Devi and Pancika, perhaps, meant to satiate the man's natural desire for offspring and riches.

This study describes the cultural life of Gandhara and Mathura female as depicted in sculptures and brings out the facets of contemporary rich material culture. An attempt has been made to locate the contemporary plastic parallels, to corroborate to material culture with the literary descriptions and finally to confirm the rich material culture from archeological evidence. All the sculptures recovered during the exploration and excavations and housed in the museum of various countries have been taken into consideration for the cultural survey of the people portrayed in Gandhara and Mathura reliefs.

Upon this basis we can conclude that both arts are two part of one coin. Gandhara and Mathura art has given quite reasonable and substantial place to women and depicted them full care and quiet natural. The main theme in Indian art is woman. Woman is not just divine beauty or fantasy, a spirit an idea but also creator of

new life. This work is not only a thesis about women in Gandhara and Mathura art. It is also an important document that has captured the significance of woman in ancient Indian society and richness of her life as she enacts her part in the social life and any other life related.