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Book Review

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BOOK REVIEW

Kurt A. BEHRENDT, *The Buddhist Architecture of Gandhāra*, Handbuch der Orientalistik, section II, India, volume seventeen, Brill, Leiden-Boston, 2004, ISBN 90-04-11595-2 (also written 90 04 13595 2).

I am used to reading bad books with pretentious titles, but seldom till now (and I am 64 years old) with such amazement and growing indignation. Amazement, because here is a book which, by its lack of methodology and basic knowledge, pushes back this subject by more than one hundred years. Indignation because being published in a well known series, till now renowned for its scholarly standards, it will become easily available, somewhat popular, deceive all the beginners and give our colleagues not specializing in this field a wrong and outdated impression of the standards we usually achieve. To say it in a few words, this is not a handbook, but a Ph.D. by somebody who does not know any of the main languages of Ancient Buddhism; does not seem to have read any Buddhist treatise even in English translations; has a very limited knowledge — and even comprehension — of modern Buddhist scholarship; uses the word “architecture” only as a substitute for “planning, masonry, iconic decoration” and “Gandhāra” as a substitute for Pakistan.

If this book was, as sometimes happens now, a Ph.D. written in a remote university fifty years ago and published as an act of filial devotion by the son or grandson of the deceased author, the review could stop at that. But this is a Ph.D. of the University of California, Los Angeles, where I have many respected colleagues and even friends. Its supervisor was Robert Brown, Professor of Art History in its Center for Southeast Asian Studies¹. The General Editor of the series is my respected colleague and foremost Buddhist and Sanskrit scholar Johannes Bronkhorst, Professor of Indian Studies at Lausanne University. Anyone would believe that, being backed by these authorities, K. Behrendt’s book cannot deserve such appreciations. So let us go in more details.

K.L. Behrendt knows well that Gandhāra, properly speaking, is the ancient name of the Peshawar province. He makes a distinction, which the title of the book skillfully skips, between “the Peshawar basin or...ancient Gandhāra ...and Greater Gandhāra...used here for the large cultural sphere that includes parts of Afghanistan, Kashmir, and the Swāt valley, as well as the Peshawar basin”(p. 2)².

¹ Whom I know mainly through his paper on “The Walking Tilya Tepe Buddha: A Lost Prototype” in *Bulletin of the Asia Institute*, 14, 2000 [2003].

² References to pages given between brackets without any other indication refer to the book here reviewed.

One could question this terminology, for Behrendt's Greater Gandhāra overlaps what some scholars call (wrongly also, to my mind) Greater Kashmir. One could also question the concept, because if Eastern Afghanistan, Swāt, Ancient Gandhāra and parts of Northern Panjab (i.e. Taxila) compose, despite local differences, a cultural unit with a common language (gāndhārī), script (kharoṣṭhī), artistic idiom (Gandhāran art) and distinctive history (having been included in the Achaemenid Empire), ancient links with Kashmir are elusive. But the title would not have been deceptive if the book were about the Buddhist architecture of Ancient or Greater Gandhāra. It is not. It is a book whose scope is limited to Pakistan, and its scope is limited to Pakistan probably because K. Behrendt does not master French enough for using its scholarly literature. The exclusion of Afghanistan is thus explained: "Documentation of many excavations conducted in Afghanistan before the Soviet invasion is poor, because many of the archaeologists have died, leaving excavation descriptions unpublished. In light of these problems, the material from Afghanistan is covered here only in a limited extent" (p. 22). Let us comment that somewhat surprising sentence. The archaeologists in charge of Buddhist excavations in Eastern Afghanistan "before the Soviet invasion" (1978) who have died are Barthoux, Meunié, Hackin and Carl whose excavations done before 1940 are published and easily available. One may criticize the way they were done, specially when one does not know under which constraints they worked; one may criticize the way they were published, sometimes posthumously, but, to cite only one instance, the site of Shotorak near by Begram is much better documented than any site near by Peshawar and many sites near by Taxila, which are much commented upon by K. Behrendt. The first Afghan explorer of Haḍḍa near by Jelalabad, Chaïbaï Moustamindy, also has died, but nobody expected any new publication from him. The last excavator of Haḍḍa, Z. Tarzi, is well alive and easy to meet: he is Professor at Strasbourg University. Prof. Kuwayama is retired, but alive and K. Behrendt met him. The last explorer of Buddhist monuments around Kabul, i.e. myself, met K. Behrendt in Kansas-City in 2000. As for Ghazni, if it is also to be included in K. Behrendt "Greater Gandhāra", K. Behrendt was lucky enough to meet M. Taddei before his untimely death and to work in the Istituto Orientale di Napoli where G. Verardi holds a chair for years (p. xxvii). He could also use the reports and papers they both wrote, and he even lists the two main ones (p. 21 n. 24).

Although only Eastern Afghanistan was part of the Gandhāran cultural area, the long note 23 pp. 20-21 includes Bāmiyān, which cannot be said to be part of Gandhāra, and lists the Afghan Z. Tarzi among the French archaeologists, while referring to only one of his Haḍḍa papers. Note 25 p. 21 gives under the page subtitle "Overview of Greater Gandhāra" a bibliography of Japanese publications which includes not only Bāmiyān, but also Chaqalaq Tepe and Haïbak, well to the north of Hindukush, i.e. in Southern Bactria.

"The western edge of Greater Gandhāra includes the area of Kashmir, which is currently (2003) inaccessible because of civil war. The early Buddhist architectural

tradition from Kashmir has been documented only sparsely; it is not included here” (p. 22). I must confess that if there are/were remains of early Buddhist architectural monuments in Kashmir proper (let us say the vale of Śrīnagar and its immediate surrounding), I do not know them. But since 1979 we know, further north, detailed engravings of stūpas along the Karakoram Highway leading to Xinjiang, well and meticulously documented by our German colleagues from Heidelberg. Inscriptions and comparative archaeology demonstrate they were made by people coming from or through Gandhāra and Kashmir. A huge part of the bibliography is in German and French, but there are also numerous English papers and, in anyway, pictures are self-speaking for archaeologists. No reference is made to them although the importance of the Karakoram route is recognized³.

These kinds of shortcomings are usual in Ph.D. where you have to circumscribe the theme to complete the work in a few years and where many students like to demonstrate their erudition by listing titles of books and papers they never read. But this is sold as a handbook, supposed to give a detailed survey of Gandhāran Buddhist architecture which thus does not include Sotorak; nor the only Buddhist column still standing a few years ago (the Minar-i Cakri, near by Kabul); nor Haḍḍa with its wonderful decorated rooms, its subterranean meditation room, and its well documented “stucco”⁴ sculpture; nor the some of best evidence we have of the entire shape of Gandhāran stūpas (the Karakoram engravings, see below). Indeed this is a book about Taxila, with a few developments on Gandhāra proper (the so-called Peshawar basin) and Swāt although “because the Taxila sites are beyond the Indus river, they cannot be included in Gandhāra proper, although they share many common features” (p. 23 n. 28), which sentence is perfectly right. The lack of documentation about the monasteries on the right side of the Indus valley, most of them were dug out at the end of the 19th c. or the early 20th c., may explain the choice of Taxila as the starting point of a study of Gandhāran Buddhist architecture, but it should have been said openly not to deceive the

³ “The Peshawar basin was a vital trading center because of its strategic location adjacent to the Karakoram and Khyber passes crucial to the India-China trade. The major urban and Buddhist centers of Taxila were constructed near the mouth of the Hunza valley (*sic*), which provides access to the Karakoram pass (*sic*). As long as the Karakoram route was the main transit point (*sic*) into and out of south Asia, the economy in the Peshawar basin probably thrived, and many Buddhist monasteries and sacred areas were built” (p. 23). These amazing sentences probably come from a quick reading of one of Prof. Kuwayama’s papers on Chinese pilgrims’ itineraries. I doubt whether the Karakoram route was ever a major trade route and in any case trade with Iran and Western Central Asia (former Soviet Central Asia), much more important than trade with China, never passed through the Karakoram. As for Hunza, which is so far away from Taxila (a two or three-months journey before the invention of cars and modern roads), let us suppose it is a slip for Hāripur. But this is a benevolent explanation for here are other instances of K. Behrendt’s geographical accuracy: “Bactria: Ancient name for a region in Afghanistan”; “Kābul basin: Agricultural region in Afghanistan; now includes the modern city of Kābul” (pp. 306-307), etc.

⁴ It is plaster.

potential reader. In any case, one wonders whether the good starting point now is not the Swāt valley with many monasteries perfectly dug out and published by our Italian colleagues and so many inscriptions, recently discovered and published, shedding light on the religious beliefs of local rulers and monks. But K. Behrendt does not care neither for inscriptions nor Buddhist literature.

* * *

Although A. Foucher's *L'art gréco-bouddhique du Gandhāra* (Paris 1905-1951) is almost never referred to by K. Behrendt⁵, it set a standard for studying Buddhist art and is still, by far, the best book on its subject. Foucher's method is quite obvious. Buddhism being a living religion with a huge ancient literature, the study of early Buddhist art should be based on a good knowledge of early Buddhist literature and contemporary inscriptions, thorough examination of the archaeological remains and observation of present day Buddhist practice, with a caution against anachronism. Foucher was a good Sanskrit scholar. He had some personal knowledge of the Nepalese, Ceylonese and Cambodian monastic life. He was well travelled and studied in details most Indian Buddhist sites. He was able to weave all these threads together and produce a pioneering study which is not yet outdated nor surpassed. It is not outmoded either: most of the scholars I know are happy to recognize their debt towards this great and witty archaeologist.

Foucher's information is now outdated. Many more Indian texts are now published or available, either in the original Indian language or in early Chinese and Tibetan translations. Many inscriptions have surfaced in the last twenty years. The relative chronology and succession of rulers begin to rest on a sound basis. Many excavations were made and published since 1905. Thousands of sculptures, many of them outstanding, were and are being sold in the antiquity markets. The exodus of Tibetan monks since 1959 enormously increased our knowledge of Buddhist doctrines and monastic customs for, as pointed out by so many scholars, Tibetan buddhism is the direct heir of Kashmiri and Gangetic buddhism. There is thus scope for a new handbook of Gandhāran architecture. But K. Behrendt does not seem to be acquainted with Buddhist literature, even in translations. He does not care for inscriptions, even the two sets of Apracarāja and Oḍirāja inscriptions recently published, in journals easily available, by scholars he was able to meet and who are not close-fisted, as Buddhists used to say. He does not even quote from the Senavarma inscription, the most detailed document on early Gandhāran Buddhist creed. He quotes some inscriptions, but only when published in excavations report and fitting his theses. If I am not wrong, three inscriptions only are fully quoted. The first was found in Ranigat. "The inscription incised on a stone frame reads *Vasudeva Maharaja Devaputrasya Agrabhaga Parihasadaha*

⁵ Although not quoted, Foucher's book is the direct (if K. Behrendt was able to read it) or indirect source of the typology used pp. 27-38. This is not the sole instance where K. Behrendt does not acknowledge its debt to the French scholar.

Bhava(tu), or as the excavator translated, “May the great king of Vasudeva be given supreme happiness”” (p. 98, n.52, *sic*, without any comment). The English and Indian wordings are so strange that I often wondered whether it is not a joke faked by a Japanese student of my respected colleagues from Otani University.

The other inscription is the famous silver scroll dated in the year 136 of Azes found in a side chapel of the Dharmarājika stūpa. The translation by Konow is quoted from Marshall’s *Taxila*, p. 256, without reference to the *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum* (1929) where Konow prints a slightly different reading and translation. This is no great problem because neither Konow’s reading nor the two other comments printed since, do not modify the main meaning of the inscription. K. Behrendt’s own comments are, to say the least, a bit naïve. “Thus, we know that an individual had relics of the Buddha placed in his own two-celled shrine...That a single patron possessed a relic of the Buddha and that this person from the distant town of Nocha in Bactria chose to donate this shrine is highly significant. It is unfortunate that we do not know the meaning of the donor’s reference to this structure being a Bodhisatvagahami, translated by Marshall as a bodhisattva chapel” (p. 75). Neither Marshall nor Konow commented upon *bosisatvagaha* (*sic*) because the meaning is obvious: it is a room (*grha*) with an image either of a bodhisattva, most probably Maitreya or Avalokiteśvara, or of the Buddha still called *bodhisattva* at that time in Mathuran inscriptions and on some Kushan coin legends, or even a small stūpa for the stūpa represents the Buddha. The meaning of *tanuvae* may be questioned but the translation “his own” is now agreed upon. So the inscription has nothing surprising. It states that the chapel was built with the donor’s own money and that he deposited relics inside to get more merits. Dozens of inscriptions mention such deposits. From the wording of some of them it is quite clear that the donors claimed responsibility, i.e. a kind of property, for such buildings. They could call them “my stūpa” and also care for stūpas built by their fathers and forefathers as if it was an inherited possession. The Senavarma inscription is quite clear about this. As for the Bactrian origin of the donor, as pointed out by Konow, it is only a guess by Marshall. A nice guess, but still a guess.

The third inscription is the well known Kālawān copper plate dated in the year 134 of Azes. Behrendt quotes its translation as printed in an early paper by Marshall, without referring to any of the two papers by Konow nor to subsequent partial editions. For the convenience of the reader, I give here a translation of the inscription which makes use of everything published about it till now, including present day agreed upon interpretations of its terminology. As far as Behrendt’s purpose is concerned, there is no major difference between Konow’s *princeps* translation and the following one. “In the year 134 of Azes, on the twenty-third 23 of the month Śrāvaṇa, at this term, Candrābh(ā)⁶, a female-worshipper, daughter of the wealthy (*grhapati*) Dhrama, wife of Bhadrāpāla, in Chaḍaśilā, establishes

⁶ Better than Konow’s Candrābhī.

corporeal relics⁷ in the/her chapel-stūpa⁸. With⁹ her/his brother the wealthy Nandivardhana, with her/his sons Śama/Śyāma and Sacitta and her/his daughter Dhramā; with her/his daughters-in-law Rañjā and Indrā; with the *ācārya* Jīvanandin son of Śama/Śyāma. Given in trust (*parigrahe*) to the Sarvāstivādins. The kingdom and its corporations are honoured. All beings are honoured. May it be for <their and our> obtainment of *nirvāṇa*”.

Here are Behrendts' comments (p. 83). “The inscription shows that the source of patronage for a major devotional structure, used by the public and occupying a prominent position within the sacred area, came from a member of the lay community. It shows that this individual financed an important religious building critical to the function of the Kālawān sacred area. The inscription shares the merit generated from this donation with other members of the donor's family... This shrine is described in the inscription as being for the common good and veneration of all beings (can this be understood as public use?)...The direct reference to the Sarvāstivāda Buddhist sect is intriguing...The nature of this 1st century C.E. religious sect is not well understood.” There is no mention in the inscription neither of a sacred area (see below) nor of a shrine, less so of an “an important religious building critical to the function of the Kālawān sacred area”. As can be seen from Marshall's description and a look at the plan he published, the small building where the deposit was found is a later and minor building. The stūpa built inside was, like every other stūpa (at least till the advent of *vajrayāna*), open to the reverence of every people, even if protected inside a room (*grha*) which could be closed. More than half of the Buddhist donations were made by lay people. The fact is so well known and expected that G. Schopen had to write a paper to remind us that monks and nuns could also be donors and were often so. The donor's goals do not differ from goals expressed in most other inscriptions, as can already be seen from Konow's introduction to his *Corpus* (p. cxvii). Is it necessary to explain to anybody who are the Sārvāstivādins and what is a Buddhist *nikāya*? There is nothing in this inscription which deserves K. Behrendt's amazed comments, except for the date, often commented upon, and the social context, never commented upon. The donor is a lady, probably belonging to a wealthy family of (traders?)¹⁰, having personal savings and property,

⁷ The inscription does not say whose these relics are.

⁸ So Konow, who explain it as “evidently a *stūpa* standing in a *grha*, i.e., a roofed building. For we have already seen that our *stūpa* was situated within a chapel that had been roofed over” (*Ep. Ind.* XXI, 1931-1932, 252). Marshall and Behrendt translate “*stūpa* shrine” although *grha* never means a shrine. H. Falk (2003) wonders whether the compound could not be understood as meaning *garbha-grha-stūpa*, which, on philological grounds is equally possible. But this terminology would be new.

⁹ That means she gives a share of the merits accruing from her gift to the below-named people.

¹⁰ This seems to be the meaning of *grhapati* and would explain why corporations are honoured, i.e. are given a share of the merits.

probably widowed and under the care of her brother for she does not share her merits with her husband, probably family-related to the *ācārya*, who would be quite young for he was the son of her son or nephew Śama/Śyāma. The personal names of the members of this family show that they did not care too much for the distinction we now make between Hinduism and Buddhism.

Let us not dwell any more about epigraphy and the usefulness of reading translated inscriptions and texts (preferably also reading them in their original language) for a study of patronage and meaning of religious architecture¹¹. K. Behrendt does not quote any text, probably because he did not care to read them¹². So that he feels quite free to invent Buddhist categories. I shall only comment — and briefly so — two expressions which recur as a leitmotiv in his study: “sacred area” and “double-celled relic-shrine”. Sacred area is now fashionable. It is conveniently used by anthropologists to make a distinction between religious places and living quarters. Many archaeologists use it as a shortened designation of that part of a Buddhist monastery where most of devotional buildings (stūpa, statue-chapels, etc.) stand as opposed to the living quarters of the monks. That works well as long as these convenient designations are not transformed into a concept, i.e. into a radical opposition between cultic space and habitations. K. Behrendt uses it that way, at almost every page as can be seen from quotations already given, opposing “monastic area” and “sacred area”. This is purely non-sense. There is no way to translate “sacred area” in an Indian language. In Western languages the expression refers to a space which cannot be approached except by authorized people (mainly priests), should be respected, and is so much filled with divine presence that it can be dangerous (Latin *sacer*, Arabic *ḥarīm*). In an Indian context, in this restricted sense, “sacred space” can only refer to the inner sanctum of a Vedic sacrificial space, of a Hindu temple (*garbha-grha*) and of a *vajrayāna* cultic room. There is no evidence of *vajrayāna* in Gandhāra, except may be for an Haḍḍa *maṇḍala*, but drawn in an open place. Let me remind that stūpas were to be built at cross-roads, i.e. in places where every kind of people and animals would come. There is another meaning, “bringing religious merit and profit”, Sanskrit *punya*, which could be used for describing Buddhist Gandhāran sites. But in this sense, no distinction can be made between living quarters and cultic space. For building a monastery or giving alms to the monks brings as much merit as paying homage to a stūpa as can be seen not only from direct observation of present day monasteries, but from the story of Anāthapiṇḍada and

¹¹ Just a word about the famous Bruxelles Buddha dated in year 5. If Behrendt had only phoned to any specialist of kharoṣṭhī epigraphy (they are many in the States now thanks to Prof. R. Salomon’s teaching), he would have known that the palaeography of the inscription makes sure its Kushan date. That would have spared him his comments on p. 287, as well as his at least dubious terminology (Śrāvastī devotional icon).

¹² It seems that most of his Buddhist information derives from a meeting with G. Schopen at Kansas City in 2000. G. Schopen is not a bad informant. But he was interviewed too late and too briefly to improve a manuscript probably already almost finished.

so many inscriptions. Indeed the main stūpa is part of the monastery. If it often stands outside the living quarters of the monks, either to be built in a prominent position and be seen from far away or/and make monks' life quieter, there are many instances of its being entirely surrounded by the monastic quadrangle, e.g. at Paharpur. Indeed, this is the main characteristic of Foucher's "saṃghārāma des plaines". The verb *pratīṣṭhāti*, "establishes", used in the inscriptions for the depositing of relics, refers to a huge ceremony conducted by monks, which means that most often building a "main" stūpa in a place where there was none before (*apratīṣṭhita*) entailed the building of cells for monks, so that they could care for the daily upkeep of the stūpa. Let us add that any cell inside the living quarters where a monk teaches or meditates is as much a "sacred area" as a stūpa. To stop short at that, the Buddha's cell (*gandhakuṭi*), when there was one, stood inside the cell-quadrangle: that was the "most sacred space" of the whole monastic area, including its main stūpa¹³!

"Double-celled relic-shrines" would be, according to K. Behrendt, a kind of specific Gandharan way to build "relic-shrines". This should be one of the main novelties of his book: there were almost everywhere in Gandhāra relic-shrines, housing relics which often could and would be readily displayed to pilgrims or local believers (his whole chapter III). There exists indeed some evidence that corporeal relics could be exhibited during festivals. K. Behrendt cites the well-known evidence from Haḍḍa (outside his Gandhāra!) and the Chinese Famensi. He could have added the better known Kandy tooth etc. But the same Chinese pilgrims who refer to the Haḍḍa bone-skull (*uṣṇīṣa*) do not refer to any other display of corporeal relics in Gandhāra. As for material relics, only the Buddha's bowl in Peshawar is referred to: as every one knows this is the only material possession of the Buddha which could have been preserved from the funeral fire. Now we have dozens of inscriptions commemorating the establishment of relics, some of which have even been recovered, sometimes in situ. The overwhelming evidence shows that these tiny fragments of bones or particles of ashes supposedly recovered from the Buddha's funeral pyre where buried under huge heaps of earth and stone, never to be seen again. When by accident, either a storm or an earthquake (see the Senavarma inscription), they were brought to light, they were buried again by devout donors. The Aśokan legend of the distribution of relics also points to the practice of burying relics for ever. Buddhist sūtras and vinayas, as far as I know, never refer to the display of Buddha's relics. One can surmise that the personal belongings or ashes of a respected *ācārya* could be kept and displayed at times, but there is no other evidence as Tibetan. Nevertheless, according to K. Behrendt, keeping of relics in accessible rooms and periodical or selective display of them would have been a major practice of Gandhāran buddhism. His

¹³ Although K. Behrendt's knows G. Schopen's paper about the meaning of *gandhakuṭi*, he uses this very specialized compound to designate small niches which never bore this name (p. 171 and 306).

almost sole evidence are the oversized and many times whitewashed relic chambers of a Jaṇḍiāl B stūpa, a huge pit in the Sirkap apsidal temple D, and the unfilled, many times white-washed, relic-chamber of stūpa A 4 at Kālāwān. The Jaṇḍiāl B stūpa was excavated by Cunningham and, before that, had been opened by treasure-seekers. The Sirkap apsidal temple D was excavated by Cunningham whose report Marshall did not trust. The Kālāwān evidence is the only indisputable. But none of these relic-chambers had doors nor stairs. They were dug deep into the ground, and not accessible from above, otherwise remains of an empty access room would have been found above the closed relic-room. The drawing in Marshall, *Taxila*, pl. 73 d is perfectly clear. Indeed the section gives the explanation of this mystery. When a stūpa breaks down, it cannot be repaired. It is encased in a new stūpa. If the digger (and the standards of Marshall's excavations, even if equal to the best standards of his student's times, cannot be compared to modern standards), digging from upside and searching for a reliquary, does not understand he is digging inside a previous rubble stūpa, he will empty it entirely. Its outer walls only will stay. They can even entirely disappear, leaving no other trace as the former outer whitewash, which then looks like being the whitewash of the later walls, in fact built against them. This is no supposition. In some Afghan stūpas emptied by Masson, the whitewashed shape of an earlier *aṇḍa* could still be seen 20 years ago.

As for "double-celled shrines", they are very well known everywhere in India, but not called so. In Hindu temples, they are the *garbha-grha* and its preceding antechamber. In Buddhist monasteries, they are the monk cell and its antechamber, where his trainee (*antevāsīn*) used to sleep. When this cell was used to house a statue or stūpa, or when it became the model for a small shrine, it constituted this so-called "double-celled shrine". It developed in the huge statue halls well known e.g. from Nālandā and every living Buddhist monastery in the world. There is nothing special in Gandhāran double-celled shrines. They only testify to the development of *pūjā* being made to statues. That is known since the beginning of the study of Buddhist "iconic" art.

* * *

From the title of this so-called handbook we could expect a technical study of architecture, with new drawings, plans and systematic explanations. In this respect also the title is deceptive. There are 127 illustrations, gathered at the end of the volume, of quite good quality. All, except three of them, are reprinted from earlier publications. Photographs do not call for many comments. They are usually well chosen, although more meant to illustrate K. Behrendt's assertions than to give an overall view of Gandhāran architecture, as should be expected in a handbook. The plans are also well reproduced, most often from excavations reports. But in most instances, they are "slightly modified from <the original>" without any indication about the nature of these modifications. So that you

need go back to the original to be sure that no important detail has been “modified”. K. Behrendt is responsible for three drawn illustrations only: two chronological charts, i.e. lists (fig. 6 and 7), and one drawing of his reconstruction of a “phase II small stūpa” and the terminology he uses to describe it (fig. 8). We could expect more original drawings in an original study of architecture, specially drawings and maps which would have summed up in a visible and easily understandable way K. Behrendt’s conclusions, e.g. a map of the sites belonging to his so-called “phase I (or II, III)” (see below) or a typical (ideatype) monastery plan.

But K. Behrendt is not interested in technical details. There is no indication whatever about the roofing of the residential buildings, about the average width of the walls, doors and gates, about the average outer and inner dimensions of buildings (e.g. the average width of the cells), no discussion about the possibility to guess the destination of bigger rooms and call them e.g. *uposatha*-room, or dinner-hall or kitchen etc. The words “pilaster” and “capital” do not appear in the index, and very seldom in the text. Nor do I remember having seen the words cupola, lintel, beam etc. There is no reference to Greek, Roman, Central Asiatic nor Indian architectures. I do not remember having read any comment by K. Behrendt on the material constraints faced by the builders (nature of the ground, earthquakes, rains, heat, availability of water, physical characteristics of local building materials, skills of the masons and architects, etc.). Nor is there any attempt to check whether the plans of Gandhāran monasteries fit the Vinayas precepts about monks’ life, nor any comparison with other Buddhist sites in India nor present day direct observations of living monasteries. There is no allusion whatever to the *navakarmika*, the monk in charge for new buildings and repairs, now well known from inscriptions. Patronage is sparsely mentioned (we quoted above two of Behrendt’s main references) although much information can now be derived from recently published inscriptions and G. Schopen’s papers. As for nuns and nunneries, they are entirely inexistent although we know both from texts and inscriptions, and, in Gandhāra proper, from the Senavarma inscription, that they were female Buddhist communities. K. Behrendt is not interested in trying to know whether and how it could be possible to distinguish a nunnery from a male monastery.

The ignorance and lack of inquisitiveness of the author of this so-called handbook result in an amazing handling of the archaeological data. To give only a few instances, K. Behrendt did not see that there is a difference, all important for planners and builders, between an isolated building (*vihāra*) and a compound (*saṃghārāma*). He often uses *vihāra* with both the meanings. This difference is well known to every student of Gandharan art since Foucher, *Art Gréco-bouddhique*, p. 99 (published in 1905). A look at the PTS *Pāli-English Dictionary s.v. vihāra* demonstrates that even if lexicographers do not make such a sharp difference as Foucher, they still make it. Worse, as K. Behrendt uses *vihāra* both for isolated cells (p. 33) and compounds (p. 140), there are instances where one

cannot know whether he refers to small buildings, big quadrangles or groups of buildings (e.g. p. 139; see also p. 37).

Some sentences are highly amazing. “Large multi-storied quadrangular monasteries were generally preferred not only because monks could (*sic*) live together, but also probably because these large buildings surrounding a courtyard offered more security from passing bandits. The foundations of tower-like structures can be seen at several sites” (p. 33). It is well known that many Indian monasteries were multi-storied and looked like fortresses with corner-towers. There is no doubt either that they were bandits in Ancient India, and even invaders. But Indian and, more specifically, Gandhāran quadrangular *saṃghārāmas* were not planned as fortresses: they were copies of Indian big houses, called *catuḥśāla* in Sanskrit, well known to any Sankrit beginner. The corner-towers were not meant as defense-towers but as buttresses. Some late monasteries in the Gangetic plains, e.g. in Nālandā, could number as much as seven storeys, not in Gandhāra, one of the places in the world most prone to earthquakes. We can expect that, like most NWFP traditional buildings till now, they used to be at most two-storey high (ground-floor and upper-floor), and even this has to be demonstrated. The presence of staircases (p. 93) is no evidence whatever: anybody having stayed in an Indian house would have known that, even in one-storied buildings, stairs are more convenient than ladders to climb on the top of roofs, a most important living space, specially during the hot season. The existence of many storeys should be deduced from the amount of building materials recovered from the excavated ruins, the width and nature of the walls: a thin wall made of rubble cannot support the weight of many storeys; on the contrary, these may be expected if the ground-floor walls are much larger than usual.

K. Behrendt does not care for this kind of architecture. His architecture is limited to planning and masonry. Planning is mainly reduced to oppositions between mountainous/flat grounds, sacred area/living quarters, shrines/stūpas and its evolution is retraced by using as main (indeed almost unique) criterion the typology of masonry as made by Marshall for Taxila, with slight modifications: phase I (early): rubble or *kañjur*; phase II: diaper masonry; phase III: semi-ashlar or ashlar masonry. These phases are thus not very different from Marshall’s periods and I, II, III could easily be replaced by dates. Phase I = before Kujula Kadphises, i.e. before the Kushans, i.e. Indo-Scythian and Indo-Parthian.; Phase II = from Kujula Kadphises up to 200 C.E., i.e. during the Great Kushans; Phase III: from 200 C.E. till the end. It would have been much more convenient to label them so.

We may wonder whether it was sound to choose Taxila as a starting point. Taxila was badly dug out, almost round the year, by hundred of workers without the presence of any trained archaeologist. Marshall used to spend here a few weeks every year and write down the information given to him by the foremen. Many data of his final report cannot be checked anymore in the field, or when checked, look wrong. T. Fitzsimmons is perfectly right in writing that “Marshall’s treatment of masonry.. is not systematic or consistent enough to serve as

the foundation for a reevaluation of the sites”¹⁴. As “conservation work” in Taxila means rebuilding the walls every year after the rains, nothing sure can be said about the original masonry, less so when the building was already rebuilt or enlarged in antiquity. That is the main reason why no archaeologist ever trusted Marshall’s typology-based chronology. Indeed, if masonry should be used as a reliable chronological criterion, the starting-point should be Butkara I, so well dug out and published by our colleague D. Faccenna. Reference is made to his typology, but it is not used.

One may benevolently suppose that K. Behrendt used the Taxila evidence because Taxila, being the largest city in early North-West India, we can expect its influence being felt in the whole area, not the other way round. Not even this is quite sure. Even if Taxila’s influence was felt around, a thesis which is not unsound, we do not have any evidence for its being felt immediately. At times also, Greek and Central-Asiatic influences would have been stronger or earlier around Peshawar, most probably a Kaniṣka’s foundation¹⁵, than in Taxila whose true relative importance in Kushan times is not well known.

Moreover even if they are fashions and trends in masonry, they are restricted by material constraints. The type of masonry locally used mostly depends on the nature of building materials readily available. These are not the same in Peshawar, Butkara and Taxila. It also depends on the skills and habits of local masons and architects, which differed according to the importance of the locality and the price the donor was ready to pay. It would not be unexpected to find monuments of the same period, shape and destination being built with different types of masonries, depending on whether the masons or foremen were local people sticking to their traditional skills or innovative individuals or immigrants from another area. Patrons may prefer tradition to novelty or vice-versa. Repairs may be made so as to be undistinguishable from earlier masonry or according to a new fashion or using a type of masonry most fitted to the size or nature of the defects. Besides, one cannot use exactly the same type of masonry for a stūpa, whose surface was protected by a plastered or earthen painted coating, and a quadrangle, whose outer walls do not show any trace of such a coating. The building technology could not be the same in small and huge *stūpas*, in one-storied and multi-storied buildings, etc. So that the masonry criterion is of dubious use, as known since long. It is nevertheless the most used by K. Behrendt, and his starting point for dating sculpture and stūpa shapes.

Dating Gandhāran sculptures is still problematic for everybody, although there are fixed points which K. Behrendt does not seem to be aware of, e.g. the Bīmarān

¹⁴ T. Fitzsimmons, *Stupa Designs at Taxila*, Kyoto University, 2001, p. 7.

¹⁵ There is no reference whatever to the Gandhāran early capital, Puṣkalāvātī, although the name Charsaḍḍa appears p. 46 and although there is also a stray reference to Shaikhān Dherī (p. 176). A student reading this handbook would certainly have appreciated to be told that these are the modern names of the two (pre-Alexander and Indo-Greek) Puṣkalāvātī, that both sites have been excavated and their excavation reports published.

golden casket. Dating living quarters is also problematic because they usually had a very long life, whence many repairs and modifications of widely different dates. But there exists now a fairly large amount of evidence to date stūpas. Dozens of entire small stūpas, either recovered from roofed-over monastic rooms (*grha-stūpa*) or stūpa-shaped reliquaries, are now documented. Many of them can be surely dated, either from the associated finds (they are contemporary or later than the coins deposited with them, better: in them) or inscriptions they bear. The palaeography of kharoṣṭhī script is now precise enough, and the relative chronology of the rulers named in most dedicatory formula is agreed upon. This evidence is not used at all. Taxila's masonry evidence is supposed to be better.

Neither are the many drawings of stūpas engraved along the Karakoram Highway used as evidence although the accompanying inscriptions, made by or for the donors, are a sound basis for datation. There are thus at least seven different types of North-Western stūpas engraved in Chilas II. They all date back to the 1st c. C.E. and are published with detailed comments since 1989¹⁶. Some kilometers further North, many sites exhibit palaeographically dated drawings of later Buddhist stūpas. The most impressive is Shatial, which boasts no less than 138 such drawings, all published in 1997, many of them known since 1979¹⁷. This second and supplementary sound basis for a detailed and complex¹⁸ chronology Gandhāran stūpa architecture and decoration is totally ignored and untapped by K. Behrendt.

I stop at that. Listing all the mistakes and misconceptions of this entirely useless book would take us too far. Some may think that this review is already too long and too harsh. Remember: the book originates from a UCLA Ph.D. and is published in a till now highly valued series of handbooks.

Gérard Fussman, Paris.

¹⁶ G. Fussman, *in Antiquities of Northern Pakistan* I, Mainz 1989, vol. 1, pp. 1-33; vol. 2, Plates 1-43. A look at these plates (especially 6, 9, 16, 22) would have probably prevented K. Behrendt to write that "an intensive survey of the extant main stūpas in Swāt, Taxila, and the Peshawar basin shows that it was impractical or simply impossible to circumambulate at the level of the drum" (p. 53 n. 45). For these Chilas II stūpas, as well as some metal stūpas known for long, have stairs leading to a very narrow *pradakṣiṇa-patha* around the drum. An examination of the engravings as a whole (i.e. the entire scene, including both the donor(s) or worshipper(s) and the stūpa) shows that the stairs were used for climbing up to the level of the basis of the drum (*anda*), i.e. the level where many relic-caskets were found, and circumambulate it thanks to the protection afforded by a balustrade.

¹⁷ G. Fussman und D. König, *Die Felsbildstation Shatial*, Materialien zur Archäologie der Nordgebiete Pakistans 2, Mainz. The series, mainly authored by Dr. Ditte Bandini-König, now numbers five huge *in folio* volumes.

¹⁸ For many shapes overlap, i.e. you could find at the same moment in the same site stūpas whose outer appearance was quite diverse and one cannot exclude the possibility that a donor or architect preferred to order a stūpa being built according to an ancient and respected model (e.g. aśokean), not to contemporary fashion.