

## Dynamic Linkages of Buddhist Civilization with the Architecture and Art of Stupa: (A Detailed Survey of Gandhara)

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*Abstract: The Dynamic linkages of great Buddhist civilization with the architecture and art of stupa of Gandhara is the principal subject of the present research. The proposed study will be an effort to explore the Buddhist civilization and its link with stupas in Gandhara. Buddhism a great religious faith has marked one of the most important periods in the history of civilization and social development in the sub-continent. Stupa is known in other religious tradition too but its growth into most typical expression in Buddhist religion. In Gandhara this is very surprising element that from each part of this region. Chandragupta's grandson Asoka Maurya (272–237 BCE) was converted to Buddhism and became a great supporter of Buddhism and during his reign. Buddhism spread in Gandhara through missionary activities leading to Majjhantika (Sharma; 1989) who works ultimately made it a holy land of Buddhism and Gandhara became the cradle of Buddhist civilization. All sources agreed that Asoka opened eight original stupas in which the Buddha relics were enshrined and he seized them and kept them amongst 84000 stupas which he constructed all over his empire. The stupa consist of many parts; base, drum, dome, capital, umbrella and harmika. There is consistency in occurrence of double dome. The dome and drum constructed but at present umbrella disappeared possibly it made up of wooden material. In Gandhara all stupas made, raised on stones. This work is the study of Buddhist civilization of Gandhara through the rulers of Gandhara. Many Buddhist sites exhibit varied groupings consisting sculptures and artifacts coins and inscriptions. This data shows a good number of Buddhist period sites in Gandhara, the sites were found in Swat, Dir, Bajaur, Peshawar, Mardan and Taxila. This study offers and analytical over view of a relatively new phoneme of the Buddhist civilization and its link with stupa architecture and art in the context of Gandhara. This research would provide the new way of understanding of the Buddhist stupa and its link with Buddhist civilization. The main purpose of this work is to direct study of the Buddhist stupas and assess its religious, cultural and historical importance.*

**Keywords:** Civilization, Gandhara, Stupa Art, Architecture, Asoka Kushan, Mahayana

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## Introduction

The proposed research work entitled “Dynamic linkages of great Buddhist civilization with the architecture and art of stupa of Gandhara” is an effort to describe Buddhist civilization and its dynamic linkage with art and architecture of stupa in Gandhara. Historically the term Gandharan applied on North Western region of Pakistan around Peshawar valley. The geographical limitation of Gandhara extending to its cultural influence to the east and west and new term used was Greater Gandhara. The term Greater Gandharan (Rosenfield;2006:10)<sup>65</sup> used as a broader sense founded on Gandharan art and extent to some other region, particularly the Dir district, Malakand and Bajaur agencies. (Sharma:2004-45)<sup>66</sup> The history of Gandhara begins with the Rig Vedic reference. The earliest reference of Gandhara mentioned in Rig-Veda (1.126.7) Gandharidum” translated it “an awe of Gandharis.” (Macdonell&Keith: 1912; 2191)<sup>67</sup> In Historic period During the sixth and fifth centuries B.C the region formed part of the Achaemenian Empire of Persia. The Behistun inscription (528-519 B.C) of Darius shows that Gandhara is one satrapy of the Achaemenians Empire among 23 satrapy and was named „Gadara”. Gandhara was part of Achaemenians Empire until it was conquered by Alexander the great in 327 B.C. and occupied brief period in the fourth century B.C. Through his penetration, the Gandhara region came into contact with Greeks.

After the short period of Greek rule a powerful Maurya (315 B.C.) dynasty established its rule in the subcontinent. Further information of Mauryan rule in Gandhara is inscribed the stupa of Dharmarajika. The evidential record indicate that Indo- Greek kings from Bactria established their rule over north – west India in the post Mauryan period. The hoard of gold and silver coins is informative for the Kushan political status in the Gandhara. Through the coinage of Kushan’s, and Gandhara art and architecture are assumed as the follower of Buddhism. The ruler of the post Kushan period were Sassanians (241-358 A.D), Shahpur 11 defeated the Vasudeva in 340 AD. In 358 they authorized the Kidar Kushan (358-560 CE), In 460 AD White Huns (Ephthalites) barbaric people came from Central Asia destroyed Gandhara specially target Buddhist stupas and monasteries carried fire, who never recovered from this disastrous. (Warraich 2011)<sup>68</sup> After Huns Gandhara was under the control Hindu Shahis from 8th-11th century CE. After some time Sultan Mahmud Ghazni defeated them in the famous battle of Hund in the beginning of the 11<sup>th</sup> century A.D and unfurled the banner of Islam and the name Gandhara disappeared. All these foreign invasions Aryan to Hun contributed to producing several forms of art, among which Gandhara art, which flourished and faced unexpected changes for a long time.

There are great numbers of exploration/ excavation carried out by national and international scholar in Gandharan but very few numbers of works done about the relationship between the stupas and Buddhist civilization. The finding materials of stupas are toilet trays or palette, sculptures, reliefs, coins, oil lamps, beads, ornaments, precious and semi-precious stone, terracotta figurines, metal objects, pottery, seals and other minor objects of daily life found in all the excavated stupas and monastery in Gandhara. Hinayana, Mahayana both streams of Buddhism have flourished and influenced the culture of Gandhara. Some literary sources and accounts of foreign pilgrims also throw light upon Buddhism of that era in the region. It is generally believed that most of the early Buddhist stupa belonging the period when the Kushan and post Kushan were ruling over this region. The origin and home of Kushan is one of the most magnificent periods in the ancient history of Gandhara but among the collection of evidence, it is extremely difficult to come to a firm conclusion from the available source materials, literary, epigraphic, and numismatic which are important. Research on Buddhism is not new, it goes back to 18<sup>th</sup> century when it was first noticed and to begin with the Buddhist remains is without exception, the most interesting antiquity in the region. A large number of Stupa, viharas, inscriptions and sculptures of archaeological evidences have been found in Gandhara. A lot of work has been done on Buddhism in Gandhara.

## What is Civilization

Civilization started from that day when the first human being came to earth. It was started since about thousand years ago with the beginning of life on the earth and spread all over the world. Braudel (1995)<sup>1</sup> describes the origin of the word "civilization" which is derived from the Latin word "civilis" meaning civil. Another related Latin words are civis, means citizen, and civitas, meaning city. It's meaning metaphase through the passage of time. This word was used as identification of behavior in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Afterward, at the time of the French revolution the word meant humanity. It is written in the Cambridge dictionary of English (1998)<sup>2</sup> civilizations is a well-developed human societies with a social organizations or the culture and a way of life of a country at a particular time period. The Civilization is an advanced level of social, scientific and technological development, economic progress, good political organization, (Ashimi, 2016)<sup>3</sup> developed cities, laws for good governing, better human relationship and social conduct to control the behavior of the people, ethical and spiritual ideas that described the larger world. I do not think of civilization as just a system of political and social organization, it's more than it and a specific ways of thinking and believing, particular styles of art and architecture and other features of culture. (Hill, 2012)<sup>4</sup> The different people of civilization has been established different features but the some basic characteristics features of civilization mentioned by Duiker & Spielvogel (2016)<sup>5</sup>. They are shared like developed cities, organized political system, surplus agriculture, organized trade, developed writing system, social classes, religion, artistic and architectural structure. V. Gordon Childe (1936)<sup>6</sup> believed that every civilization is different from each other and prominent from other system of society by their living standards, settlement patterns, systems of government, urbanization, economic progress and education, However, a group of people living in a city consider to civilization. Mostly a civilization has a difficult system of possession of land and salable things. Thus far Charles Redman (2004)<sup>7</sup> reviewed the above features given by Gordon, He categorized these distinctive features into two groups, the primary characteristics and secondary characteristics. The Primary characteristics are the urban settlements, full time available specialists in all fields and all time. Activities for surplus production, class structure and state level organized government. Yet, the secondary characteristics can be considered as followed; massive public building, widespread trading networks, regular vast artwork, writing system and development of particular sciences. After all this discussion, we can say that civilization is an advance level of development characterized by advance social development, economic progress, and good political organization, scientific and technological development in any society. When human societies advanced in ideas and knowledge some new question arose about its existence, men sought the answers of these questions and finally created religion. (Robinson, 2010)<sup>8</sup> Huntington (1996)<sup>9</sup> said that religion is a central defining characteristic of civilizations. As such there is no doubt that religion had put effects on civilization's identification. There is very strong bond relationship between civilization and religion. Religion is a code of ethic and part of civilization. There are many civilizations in the world which are known from the religion for example Islamic civilization, Christian civilization Hindu civilization and Buddhist civilization, indicating that each religion has its civilization. In the history of Indian civilizations religion is also based of civilization like Hinduism and Buddhism.

## Buddhist Civilization

Buddhist civilization is a major universal civilization based on religion. The founder of Buddhism was Siddhartha Gautama, known as Buddha belongs to Shakya clan in Kapilavastu in the 6<sup>th</sup> century B.C. (Foucher, 2003)<sup>10</sup> He began to preach a new approach to the age old problems of salvation. He delivered

his first sermon in deer park at Sarnath. It is said to have in motion the wheel of the law. In the recorded world history it was a first missionary religion of the world. (Thera,1974)<sup>11</sup> Lord Buddha travelled the North India, teaching his doctrines, gathering followers and establishing monastic system that accepted people without of caste. (Omvedt,2003)<sup>12</sup>. He taught new Philosophy of life the four noble truths and eight fold path and the doctrines of rebirth and Karma supposing that the deeds performed by a being define the state of life into which he will be reborn. However, he gave new meanings to Karma. He offered the doctrines of transience or continuous fluidity or soullessness. (Rahula,1974)<sup>13</sup>. After the Mahaparinibbana of Buddha the First Buddhist council held in Rajagaha preside by Mahakassapa. The senior 500 monks attended this council; Ananda and Upali were the most important all of them. The Sutra and Vinaya (monastic discipline) settled in this council under the direction of Ananda and Upali. (Mukherjee,1994)<sup>14</sup> The detailed of the first Buddhist council are mentioned in CullavaggaXLI. About one hundred years after the death of Buddha the second Buddhist council was held in Vasili. Some Vinaya rules discussed in this council and a group of monks want to change ten points but Sthavarivada monks said there would be no changed in the rules. As a result a group of monks left the Sanga and made a new sect called Mahasanghika. After this council Buddhist Sangha divided into two sects for example Sthavarivada and Mahasanghika. (Peter,2013 )<sup>15</sup>

The term Buddhist civilization is surrounded from two thoughts: Buddhist and civilization. Therefore it means a civilization based on Buddhism which is also a religion of comprehensive way of life describe Mahathera (1998)<sup>16</sup>. It is also a civilization that includes a group of people whose culture is based on Buddhism. Buddhism a great religious faith has marked one of the most important periods in the history of civilization and social development in the sub-continent. Buddhism exercised a vast impact on the intellectual, religious and cultural life. The teaching of the Lord Buddha is not only a message of the human relief from suffering of life but it is a vision of a new civilization. In this perspective Trevor Ling (2013)<sup>17</sup> said Buddhism is something bigger than religion, as prescriptions for civilization and Buddhism started not as a religion but as a civilization. By civilization is meant a code of social conduct, such as in the Buddhist case, belief in non –violence, non-stealing, sexual restraint, truthfulness and the cultivation of virtues such as generosity. Buddhist civilization has covered a large region of Asia, at present 535 million<sup>18</sup> 9% to 10 % <sup>19</sup>of total population of the world people of different races and cultural backgrounds is a part of Buddhist civilization. This civilization contributed to the world in the field of moral teaching, monastic system,, Education, Languages, Literature, economics, trade and commerce, music, dance, dresses, social custom, against caste system, nonviolence attitude, simplicity, good method of teaching, and easy ethical code, simple religion, preaching of universal brotherhood, peace, attitude towards women, protection of animal life but According to Sarwade & Marathwada (2015)<sup>20</sup> the major contribution of Buddhism in the field of art and architecture. Buddhism is not only given the ethical code of human beings but also produces a great heritage in the form of sculpture art and architecture. In a sense of art and architecture provide mirrors to reflect a civilization on religion. The Buddhist religious architecture comprises on stupa, monastery and Chatyia.

### Origin of Stupa Architecture

The stupa erected after the death of Lord Buddha. His remains were cremated with royal honour. After the cremation his relics (or ashes) were distributed to eight kings who erected stupas over them for veneration in the eight different parts of India. (Nanamoli,1992)<sup>21</sup> The Third Mauraya emperor Asoka (273-232 B.C) dug out original seven stupas in which the Buddha relics were enshrined and reburied them amongst 84000 stupas which he constructed all over his empire. (Mookerji,1928)<sup>22</sup>. After this the Stupa is recognized as a most sacred form of Buddhist architecture. Stupa was well known pre



Buddhist tradition in India. Actually stupa was connected with the burial mounds of great personality in India and the trend to pay great respect to the great men, (Mc Crindle; 1901)<sup>23</sup> but its growth into most typical expression in Buddhist religion after the Buddha's death. The stupa developed in Buddhism as a nucleus architecture of Buddhist faith and worship but its origin cannot be regarded as Buddhist, the point is that the earliest stupa which was not necessarily Buddhist and built before 2500 years ago. (Fussmana: 1986)<sup>24</sup> Stupa is a Buddhist commemorative monument or mound containing the sacred relics associated with Buddha and other saint with hemispherical structure and a place of meditation. It is an architectural symbol of death or burial mounds of relics. (Pant, 1976)<sup>25</sup> The stupa served as a focus for respectful feeling and a considered as a monument for worship Furthermore stupa was associated to the ritualistic and honoring and it was bound with the social -economic life of people. It is a most significant monument and can be found in every country in which where Buddhism has been practiced and region of ancient Gandhara is one of them.

### Stupa Building in Gandhara

Gandhara received a Buddhist missionary after the third Buddhist council, dispatched by Asoka for the preaching of Buddhism, under the leadership of Madhyantika, (Warraich, 2011)<sup>26</sup> which was successful in his mission. The people of Gandhara were converted into Buddhism and Gandhara became the cradle of Buddhist civilization. Ancient Gandhara played important role in the spread of Buddhism, evolution, development and transformation of Buddhism and in the creation of one of the most significant art known as Gandhara art. (Khan& Lone, 2004)<sup>27</sup> Before Asoka Buddhism was only a small sect of India. He made Buddhism his state religion around 260 BC, and propagated it and preached it within his domain and worldwide from about 250 BC. Emperor Ashoka undoubtedly has to be credited with the first serious attempt to spread of Buddhism.(Seneviratna ,1994)<sup>28</sup>. The history of Buddhism and stupa in Gandhara might be dated from the time of Asoka Maurya. It is believed that Gandharan which had also received its share of the relics of Buddha and Dharmarajikastupa in Taxila(Marshall;1960)<sup>29</sup> and Butkarhal in Swat (Stein:1972:77 )<sup>30</sup> are the earliest stupas of Gandhara, erected on the orders of king Asoka and contained the real relics of the Buddha. The architectural experiments of the different generations and cultural influences of foreigners, together greatly contributed to the development of the Buddhist architecture in Gandharan. (Ahmad; 2013:411)<sup>31</sup>

The Indo Greeks rulers ruled Gandhara with new philosophical and cultural approaches and giving new dimensions to the architecture and art of Gandhara but we have lacking information about Buddhist architecture during the Indo Greeks period. The presence of Buddhist stupa in the early half of the 1<sup>st</sup> century A.D was very limited. (Errington: 1994)<sup>32</sup> Next the Indo-Scythian and the Indo-Parthian set new trends in the local traditions. The Kushan dynasty was established in the first half of the first century after the decline of Scythian Parthians. In this period Gandhara developed commercial relationship with western and eastern countries. The Kushan ruled proved more innovation in the field of Buddhist art and architecture. Kanishka-I(78 A.D) is considered the golden age of stupa architecture in Gandhara. A number of places marked which associated to the events of Buddha previous life as a Bodhisattva. The mostly stupas were built for the respect of Buddha and the relics of the Master. (Kuwayama, 2010)<sup>33</sup> Besides the Buddha, the high rank monks were also honored by building the stupas. Almost all Buddhist monuments in Gandhara are belonged to Kushan period and (Pugachenkova & Dar; 1996)<sup>34</sup> Stupas are the most important all of them. The place of a stupa is a complete building complex and the Stupa basic sacred building in the Buddhist shrines in the whole complex, the other shares like monastery, chapels, votive stupas, temples, meditation hall, and other community places within the Buddhist complex are the supporting elements, which is form similarity in whole recorded

Buddhist shrines found in Gandhara. These stupas are very remarkable and widely scattered all over the region. Chinese pilgrim Hsüan-tsang observed a great number of stupas erected by king Kanishka throughout Gandhara. (Beal, 1984)<sup>35</sup> In Peshawar Kanishka built a stupa consisting of thirteen stories with a total height of 213 meter. (Spooner; 1908)<sup>36</sup>

### Architecture of Stupa

In India the early stupas were consists on a low circular base, a drum, umbrellas and harmika. The whole of the great stupa of Sanchi is encircled by a railing and four gateways which are richly decorated with relief sculptures depicting the Jatakas stories of Buddha and Bodhisattva and popular mythological figures. (Khan & Lone: 2006:71)<sup>37</sup> The stupas of Gandhara are seen different from India. The design of the stupa was changed time to time and we found many types of stupas in Gandhara describe by Irwin (1979)<sup>38</sup>, Franz (1980)<sup>39</sup> Dobbins (1971)<sup>40</sup>, Dar(1989)<sup>41</sup> and Behrendt (2004)<sup>42</sup>. The stupa thus became a funereal monument, ideologically similar to the Roman tombs (Kuwayama, 2002)<sup>43</sup>. The stupa has three main fundamental structure as an architectural representation the base or drum, the dome (anda) and third harmika. (Chauley, 2013)<sup>44</sup> The dome has kept on the drum and fixing a terrace called medhi according to Divyavadana. (Cowell & Neil; 1886)<sup>45</sup> The sacred relics of Buddha and monks were compulsory buried in the middle of the central axis in the hollow space of the dome of the stupas at the time of construction. (Kuwayana, 2007)<sup>46</sup> it was considered good for lay people and monks. The relics were put in reliquary or relic casket made of stone and other precious metals of various sizes. (Dani, 1999)<sup>47</sup> The relics were generally put together with coins and precious gem. The harmika is the upper part of the stupa with a square structure, inserted on top by umbrellas (chhatra) and staircase (leading to the terrace). Besides of these elements Torana (entrance gate), Vedika (railing), pradaksinapatha also the important part of stupa. The Vedika (railing) is not found in the Gandhara region. The early stupas were built with circular bases, solid shaped structure in modest size over which was built a cylindrical drum and an hemispherical dome, put on top by umbrellas (chhatra), one above the other is harmika. (Marshal: 1951)<sup>48</sup>. The later period the structure of the stupas and designing of the lower part of stupa was changed and started square base construction in place of circular plinth in which were dome and drum. It was installed at the bottom and supported the initially circular form. The below square podium had always been the essential part of the stupa. (Zwalf 1997)<sup>49</sup>

In Gandhara the high square podium was the most popular form of the stupa was used to increase the height of the stupa to adopt as a substitute structure. Another form of stupas is found in Gandhara with double plinth of a square or rectangular podium on the lower basement.. Another form is circular drum and square structure built on the base. We observed a similar structure of a circular drum on a square podium in the early tomb of imperial Rome. The influence of Rome on the stupa structure of Gandhara is quite possible because there is the close trade relation between the Kushan Empire and the Western world. (Kuwayama, 2002)<sup>50</sup> The third form found in Gandhara stupa is crossed shaped. The stupa of Gandhara built with the same classical and unique South Asian techniques. While there are a number of architectural structures that show the deriving from the Western world but the early inspiration is founded on regional elements. The basic tendency of the upward movements of Gandhara architecture was an expression of the deeply spiritual attitude of Buddhist taught.

### Art of Gandhara

Gandhara become more famous as a great center of Mahayana Buddhism. During the reign of Kanishka Buddhism took a new turn and developed into Mahayana Buddhism (the Great Vehicle). In the Mahayana Buddhism of Gandhara a sort of comprise is found to have been attained between the

pure symbolic form of stupa and the one decorated with sculptures for teaching the law of Buddhism. (Nadiem: 2008)<sup>51</sup> Mahayana Buddhism gave birth to the most tangible form of Gandhara art (Zwalf; 1996)<sup>52</sup> for the ornamentation of Stupas. The term Gandhara art applied to the Buddhist art and architecture that flourished in Gandhara region 1st century to 5<sup>th</sup> century C.E. Emperor Kanishka gave physical shape to Buddha and first Buddha figure was inscribed in Gandhara (Dani: 2004)<sup>53</sup> and the most significant contribution of Gandhara art is the depiction of Buddha in human form because the need of his worship was felt and artist started producing images of Buddha. The Buddha image was not present in the earliest Buddhist art in the human form. (Ali & Qazi: 2008)<sup>54</sup> Rather, his presence was shown through symbolic representation and not physically. This early form of Buddhist art flourished generally in India, particularly under the Maurya found Sanchi and Bhauratstupa. It is a debatable point where and when the first image of the Buddha was made in Gandhara or at Mathura. (Coomaraswamy, 1926:165)<sup>55</sup> Probably, it developed both places at the same time, one developing directly out of native Indian art and the other (Gandhara) borrowing its features from the Western world and known as Indo-Greeks, Indo-Hellenistic and Indo-Bactrian (Grunwedel; 1985)<sup>56</sup> Graeco-Buddhist, Romano-Buddhist (Dani, 2008)<sup>57</sup> art etc. The French scholars Alfred Foucher called it 'greco-bouddhique' art (Foucher, 1905)<sup>58</sup> We can say however that the Buddhist art of Gandhara developed out of the amalgamation of Greek, Roman, Persian and Indian artistic influences. (Tanveer & Amanulla; 2004)<sup>59</sup>

The Gandhara artist adopted several foreign techniques in terms of art and architecture and introduced a new kind of art that was totally Buddhist in nature and Gandhara in expression. (Dar; 1980)<sup>60</sup> In Gandhara art the rich visual documentation preserved in the narrative sculpture, where scenes from the Buddha's life are staged in the Gandhara world. Reliefs showing the worship of stupas, the veneration of images and relics, and the community honoring the figure of the Buddha all define the Gandhara character. (Brancaccio & Behrendt; 2006:4)<sup>61</sup> The erection of stupas was not done alone; sculptures and relief of stone, stucco and clay were also made along with it (Luczanits 2010).<sup>62</sup> The main purpose of Gandhara art is the spread of Buddhism. The base of stupa was ornamented with figures depicting scenes from the life of Buddha. The core body of the stupa drum was decorated with the sculptures of Buddha and Bodhisattvas. Gandhara iconography shows some important Bodhisattva like Siddhartha, Maitreya Avalokiteshvara (also called Padmapani and Manjushri. (Aslam & Bukhari, 2017)<sup>63</sup> The rectangular frieze of Buddha life scenes was fixed against the bases of stupas and those secular subjects used as stair-risers and fixed with iron nails and hooks. The curved panels were fixed against the tiered drums of the stupa. In many respects then, it may be seen that the continued development of the study of Buddhist stūpas over the course of the twentieth century has not only improved our knowledge of these monuments and their associated remains, but has also greatly benefited the study of ancient Buddhism and ancient Indian history in general. At the same time, however, for all of the methodological and theoretical developments that have taken place within these disciplines, Buddhist stūpas and their remains have continued to be studied in very traditional ways.

## Conclusion

Many dynasties, Maurya, Indo Greeks, Indo Scythian Parthian, Kushan and numerous groups of people contribute to the structure of Buddhist civilization in Gandhara. These dynasties had been provided support and shelter art and architecture like stupas, monasteries or Viharas and their related material sculptures, paintings, coins, potteries and other pieces of art which were mainly used for the purpose of propagating of Buddhism. The main period of prosperity of Gandharan Buddhist civilization was under the Kushans. After Kushan period Buddhism was declined could have been impact in

political, economic, religious and social changes in the region The invasion of the White Huns 515 C.E was the major reason of destruction of Buddhist architecture in Gandharan. (Mitterwalner; 1986))<sup>64</sup>. The stupas were rediscovered in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries by the European officials. The Buddhist stupa in Gandharan are very remarkable and widely scattered all over the region. The stupa is a great part of Buddhist civilization. However hundreds of Buddhist sites have been explored and reported of which a few have been excavated and reports on even rarer available there has been no attempt to assimilate the details of the findings to understand the essence of regional characterizes, their development with relation to the regional religious atmosphere and with diverse socio economic and political conditions. The number of Buddhist stupa having Buddhist associations, if properly documented may outstrip the shrines and sites of other religions. This can be gleaned from the vast number of Buddhists sites spread throughout the whole region. There are more than thousands sites reported from the region among of them only some are excavated. In the present study an attempt to a transitory view of the different aspects of the stupa. The Buddhist Stupas were observed in its several expressions in the whole region however the main attention was noticed in the Swat valley, Taxila valley and Peshawar valley . Many Buddhist mounds wait to be properly excavated and studied. From the surface studies of the mounds ,it can be observed there were large Buddhist establishments spread over vast of lands having good number of structures and images which are found scattered all over them. The observable architectural ruins are unique; each site has its own personality and individuality in showing the stupa in various shapes, dimensions and mediums along with their iconographic features.

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