

**Arts of Asia Lecture Series Fall 2015**  
**Asia's Storied Traditions**  
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**Text and Image: Early Buddhist Narrative Sculpture from Northern India and Gandhara**  
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**Chronology of Gandhara**

- 327 B.C. Alexander the Great (r. 336–323 B.C.) is in Gandhara, conquers Taxila, and arrives at the Indus River.
- 200 B.C. The first Buddhist sites are founded in Gandhara, but no religious imagery is known from this period.
- 2nd century B.C. – 1st century A.D. Carved stone dishes and secular luxury objects are produced.
- 1st century A.D. First appearance of sculpture embellishing Buddhist sites.
- 1st–3rd century A.D. Kushan dynasty controls much of Greater Gandhara and north India, reaching the zenith of its power under kings Kanishka (r. A.D. 129–155) and Huvishka (r. 155–193).
- 2nd century A.D. Period when many Buddhist sites are founded and when most Gandharan Buddhist narrative sculpture is produced.
- 3rd century A.D. Devotional icons of the Buddha and of bodhisattvas begin to be produced. Schist remains an important medium, but clay, stucco, and terracotta start to be widely used.
- 3rd–5th century A.D. Period of greatest prosperity in Gandhara; new Buddhist sacred sites are founded and older ones are greatly expanded. Most Gandharan Buddhist iconic sculpture is produced during this period.
- 4th–5th century A.D. Devotional icons become monumental, and the iconography of Buddha images becomes more complex.
- 5th–6th century A.D. Various Hun peoples take control of Gandhara. There is a decline in patronage and many of the Gandharan Buddhist sacred areas contract; old sculpture is reused and recontextualized during this period.

**Narrative**

Range and order of Gandharan narrative panels that would encircle a small circa 2<sup>nd</sup> c stupa (not all episodes will be included on a given stupa)

Dipaṅkara Jataka  
 Maya's Dream (Conception)  
 Birth of Buddha  
 First Bath and seven steps  
 Interpretation of the horoscope  
 1<sup>st</sup> Meditation  
 Renunciation of life in the palace  
 The great departure  
 The attack of Mara's Army  
 Enlightenment  
 The first Sermon  
 Conversion of Angulimala  
 Descent at Sankasya from Trayastrimsas heaven  
 The Death of the Buddha – Parinirvana  
 The cremation  
 The division of the relics  
 Enshrinement of relics  
 Maitreya – a bodhisattva currently sitting in heaven who will be the future

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