

## COURTESAN AND BROTHEL IN GANDHĀRAN ART

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### ABSTRACT

*This paper aims at presenting a new interpretation for Dionisiac Images of Gandharan sculptures according to investigating two stone vertical panels in the collection of the Hirayama Ikuo Silk Road Museum in Japan. First of all, the present author focused on both a woman having a vertical-handled mirror and a woman touching the chin of a man with right hand depicted on the panels. The gesture of the having a vertical-handled mirror reminds viewer the sexual action after the making up and the gesture of the touching the another man's chin with a hand signifies the entreaty, temptation, and courtship. Therefore, these two gestures share the sexual meanings. What is more, the present author identified two women depicted on the panels as courtesans living in brothel, especially Ganikā who is ancient Indian courtesan, on the bases of the Indian literally evidence in addition to Buddhist sutras. In conclusion, the scenes depicted on the two vertical panels symbolize some sexual pleasures given by apsaras in the paradise of the Trāyastriṃśa Heaven.*

**Keywords:** Dionisiac Images, Ghandhara, Ghandharan Sculptures, Silk Road Museum, Ganika, Buddhist Sutras, Sexual pleasure, Heaven.

### INTRODUCTION

Amongst the corpus of Gandhāran sculpture, there are schist relief panels that depict scenes of music, dancing, banqueting and male-female fraternization. These scenes were described as Dionysiac or Bacchanalian by A. Grünwedel, A. Foucher, B. Rowland, O. Takata and others (Grünwedel 1901: 149; Foucher 1905: 245-246; Rowland 1956: 9-11; Takata 1967: 196-198). They were considered to be images which do not immediately imply any Buddhist connotation in spite of the fact that they were unearthed or excavated beyond doubt from Buddhist temples in Gandhāra.

In the meantime, K. Fischer mentioned that Gandhāran relief panels that depict scenes of erotic fraternization served to warn monks and nuns against indulging in sexual pleasures that were likely to disturb their ascetic practices (Fischer 1982: 127; 1985:

637). However, his supposition is hardly acceptable. M. L. Carter, first regarded erotic pairs as representing Yakṣas and Yakṣīs, but later suggested that such a Dionysiac imagery should be interpreted in Buddhist context because Dionysiac motives in Kushan Buddhist sculpture are related to sensual pleasures obtainable in the Heaven of the *Cāturmahārājakāyika* (Four Great Kings) and the *Trāyastrimśa* (Thirty-three Gods), the two lowest Heavens of the Six Worlds of the *Kāmadhātu* (Realm of Desire) according to the Buddhist *Cakravāla* (circles piled up) cosmology (Carter 1968: 128-130; 1982: 253-256; 1992: 57-58). However, her conclusion to the effect that such a wine-drinking as related to festivities of Dionysiac imagery represents the pleasures of the Heaven (*Trāyastrimśa*) of the god Indra is based only on a few aspects of the *Cāturmahārājakāyika* indicated by R. Kloetzli (Kloetzli 1983: 33-34), and therefore hardly convincing. Lately, K. Tanabe remarked that Gandhāran relief panels that depict banqueting and male-female fraternization scenes deriving from Dionysus and his *thiasos* (followers) do not represent Dionysiac ritual nor cult but rather the pleasures of Buddhist paradise to be brought about by *nirvāṇa* or *pāramitā* (reaching the other shore after death) (Tanabe 2006: 119-144). However, his conclusion is not corroborated by any Buddhist sūtra, and then hardly tenable.

These various explanations above-quoted recognizing either Buddhist or other symbolic significance in Dionysiac imagery depicted on Gandhāran schist relief panels are not based on convincing literary evidence, and do not seem to have acquired unanimous consensus among art-historians of Indian and Gandhāran art.

Given the current state of our knowledge as outlined above, in this paper I will attempt to offer a new interpretation of Gandhāran Dionysiac imagery by investigating the two stone vertical relief panels (Figs.1, 2) in the collection of the Hirayama Ikuo Silk Road Museum in Japan, and also corroborating my investigation by Buddhist and Hindu literary evidence. These two relief panels might not appear to have Buddhist content at first glance because they feature clearly non-Buddhist secular and mundane aspects. The two relief panels were fabricated beyond doubt by the same sculptor or the same workshop, and were placed in the same location of a Buddhist temple because both share the same figural composition and style of pictorial representation.

On these two relief panels are depicted a woman having a vertical-handled mirror and a woman touching the chin of a man with her right hand. In my opinion, the interpretation of these two female figures is particularly important in order to clarify the subject and meaning of these two relief panels. Therefore, firstly, in this paper, I will attempt to describe the iconographical aspects of these two relief panels. Next, I will try to identify the roles of the two female figures, and finally, to elucidate the subject and meaning of these two relief panels apparently making a pair.

**DESCRIPTION OF THE TWO RELIEF PANELS**

These two relief panels (Fig.1, 2) now in the collection of Hirayama Ikuo Silk Road Museum are made of Gandhāran gray schist. Patina or calcic crystal material covers partially the surface of these two relief panels. This patina shows that these two relief panels had been buried in the earth for a long time. They were probably produced in Kushan period from the second to third century AD. The sizes of these two relief panels are almost the same, and the former (Fig.1) is 82 cm high, 20cm wide and 4cm deep, while the latter (Fig.2) is 82cm high, 19cm wide and 4cm deep. These two panels are likely to have been placed parallel to each other. However, it is not clear whether both panels were placed close to each other, or another relief panel was inserted between them.

Firstly, I will explain one relief panel (Fig.1). At the top of this panel is depicted an arbor having a spire-shaped roof covered with something like grass. Something like bird seems to be depicted on the arbor, but it is broken away. Below the arbor, holding a vertical-handled mirror in the left hand, a woman is arranging her forelock by the right hand (Fig.3).

In the middle register of this panel is depicted a two-story house furnished with two Indian type arches and a balcony. There is not depicted any figure at the balcony and a curtain is bundled up. Stairs are also installed in this building. Below the balcony a woman's head is depicted. She wears an earring and gathers up her hair.

In the lowest register there is a balcony and a crenelated wall, probably city-wall. At the balcony, there are depicted three female heads. All of them wear earrings.

Secondly I will explain the other panel (Fig.2). At the top of this panel is depicted also an arbor of the same kind of the other panel. Below this arbor is depicted an amorous couple (fig.4) with a woman touching a man's chin with her right hand. The man wears a turban, an earring, a bracelet, and a necklace. He looks like an Indian prince. On the other hand, the woman wears a necklace and an earring hanging down to the shoulder, and the long-sleeved tunic.

In the middle register of this relief panel is depicted also a two-story house, but its appearance is different from the one of the top register. This house is equipped with a balcony with an Indian style arch. This Indian style arch reminds us of royal palaces depicted on sculptures of Barhut and Sanchi. Furthermore, the stairs to climb up to the balcony are provided in this building. This building is two-storied. In this balcony there are two women facing each other. Their hairstyle and earring resemble those of the woman depicted in the top register.

In the lowest register are depicted a balcony and something like city-wall with crenellation. At this balcony, two women are looking at each other. They gather up their hairs and wear a slim earring.

These two luxurious buildings depicted on these two relief panels remind us of mansion of wealthy people living in city. It is quite difficult to understand why all the figures are female except a male figure at the top of the second panel (Fig.4). Such scenes as depicted on these two panels are quite strange and mysterious. It is apparent that these scenes do not represent any episode of the Buddha's Life Story. As a rule, male figure standing at balcony depicted in Gandhāran sculpture is Buddhist lay devotee or donor. Normally Buddhist lay devotees and donors depicted in Gandhāran sculpture have a lotus flower or a flower ball (*puspapuṭa*), garment (*utsaṃga*). On the other hand, as for the female figures depicted on the two panels, there is nothing to demonstrate that they are Buddhist lay devotees or donors. Therefore, male and female figures depicted on these two panels are not Buddhist lay devotees. Needless to say, they are not clerical. Most probably they are layman or laywoman and these two scenes should be regarded as mundane or secular, not religious or sacred.

As far as my knowledge goes, such scenes as depicted on these two panels are extremely rare in Gandhāran Buddhist relief panels. Then, what do these two relief panels mean? Keys to solve this problem might be a woman having a vertical-handled mirror and a woman touching man's chin with her right hand, who are depicted on the top registers of the two relief panels. Therefore, I will carry out my investigation by focusing on the two female figures in the following two chapters.

### **WOMAN HOLDING A VERTICAL-HANDLED MIRROR**

In this chapter I will investigate female figures holding a vertical-handled mirror depicted on Gandhāran schist relief panels.

As for mirrors, there are known various kinds of mirror: a horizontal-handled mirror, a mirror with circular cover, a vertical-handled mirror etc.

As far as Gandhāran sculpture is concerned, only a horizontal-handled mirror and a vertical-handled mirror are depicted. Although the examples depicting a horizontal-handled mirror are rare but several are known. One of them is found in a relief panel with vertical registers (Fig. 5) housed in the Hamanakonpou Silk Road Museum in Japan. At the top register of this relief panel, a woman having a horizontal-handled mirror and the other woman having a bowl, probably her maid, are depicted standing. In addition, on a relief panel now owned by the Government Museum and Art Gallery, Chandigarh, a woman showing the back and buttocks has a horizontal-handled mirror (Bhattacharyya 2002: 273, fig. 388). Moreover, a relief panel (Fig. 6) depicting a woman holding the same type of mirror was excavated from Butkara I (Faccenna 1962: 46-47, pls. CLXVI, CLXVII).

The mirrors depicted in the above-mentioned relief panels are of Roman origin and were brought to the Indian subcontinent from the Mediterranean world during Kushan period when the seasonal monsoon trade between the Red Sea, the Arabian Sea

and the Roman Empire, and south India was prosperous (Lerner1996:20-22; 1996:461-472). As a result, this type of mirror came to be depicted on some Gandhāran relief panels.

On the other hand, as regards Gandhāran sculpture depicting a vertical-handled mirror, many examples remain. There is a relief depicting a woman or Yakṣinī (Fig. 7) in the possession of the Asian Museum in Berlin. This female figure has a bronze vertical-handled mirror with the left hand and points to her own face by the forefinger of her right hand. This gesture resembles that of sitting Gandhāran Bodhisattva thinking and meditating (*dhyāna mudrā*). This female figure is apparently checking her makeup and hairstyle and therefore can be identified as courtesan waiting for her guest. Moreover, there is a Gandhāran relief panel (Fig.8) that depicts the story of handsome Nanda, cousin of the Buddha. On this relief panel Nanda's beautiful wife, Sundarī puts a vertical-handled mirror on a small round table and is making up for her husband.

In this way, on Gandhāran relief panels, both a horizontal-handled mirror and a vertical-handled mirror are depicted. From Gandhāra a bronze vertical-handled mirror (Fig.9) was unearthed and its handle is made of ivory that is now in the possession of the Hamanakonpou Silk Road Museum in Japan.

It is clear that vertical-handled mirror was actually used in Gandhāra. In addition, the social status of the people who owned these mirrors is assumed to be comparatively high because expensive material such as ivory, bronze and copper are used for making this type of mirrors. These luxury mirrors including imported ones might have been used by the upper class and wealthy people of Gandhāra.

Lastly I will look into symbolic meaning of the female figure having a mirror. The mirror has various symbolic meanings and it varies from area to area and from era to era. Several symbolic meanings of mirror in Gandhāra were already proposed by Katsumi Tanabe on the basis of symbolic meanings of mirrors in various regions: sexual appeal and love, afterlife and eternal youth, banquet and joyful event, virginity, chastity, proud, lust of woman (Tanabe 2005: 76-78).

As concerns the relief panel (Fig. 5) in the collection of the Hamanakonpou Silk Road Museum, Tanabe explains as follows as regards a woman having a horizontal-handled mirror depicted in the top register (Tanabe 2005:77-78).

Below the top register, a male-female fraternizing scene is depicted in the middle register. As the woman depicted at the top register is identifiable as the woman depicted in the middle register, the scene of the top is, beyond doubt, intimately connected with that of the middle. In other words, the woman having a horizontal-handled mirror foretells her encounter with the man in the lower scene and eventually sexual intercourse with him. Consequently, the woman depicted at the middle register seems to represent a courtesan receiving a 'guest' rather than a nuptial night or marriage life. Needless to say,

this interpretation may be only applicable under a special condition. The condition is that a female figure having a mirror means making up her face exclusively for sexually appealing and charming her lover or wealthy ‘guest’.

In my opinion, the above Tanabe’s interpretation is to be applied for the female figure holding a vertical-handled mirror (Figs.1, 3).

## **GESTURE OF TOUCHING ANOTHER’S CHIN WITH RAISED HAND**

### **A. GANDHĀRA**

First, I will show several Gandhāran materials in which the gesture of touching another’s chin with raised hand is to be recognized.

On a toilet-tray (Fig. 10) in the possession of the Peshawar Museum, is depicted a banquet scene. A man is seated on a chair holding a cup. Beside him, a woman wearing a garment resembling *himation* is also seated on a stool. She touches his chin with her left hand. On a toilet-tray (Fig. 11) in the possession of the Pakistan National Museum in Karachi, which was excavated from Sirkap in Taxila, a banquet scene with a couple is also depicted (Francfort 1979: 17-18, Pl. V). A bearded man is lying down on a couch and is touching a woman’s chin with his right hand.

On another tray (Fig. 12) with a banquet scene is depicted the same hand gesture is depicted. The upper part of the tray is surrounded by a canopy of grape vine and the lower half is filled with lotus petals, sacred symbol of Buddhism. This banquet scene is concerned with Dionysos and thiasos as grapes suggest. At the center, two couples are depicted. On the proper right side, a woman decorated with plain anklets is courting a naked man. Although the woman’s hand is abraded, she appears to be touching his chin with her right hand.

Other than these there is a toilet-tray on which the same hand gesture is depicted (Pons 2011: 167, fig. 25).

In addition to several toilet-trays that depict this hand gesture, there is known a gem seal (Fig.13) excavated by J. Marshall from Sirkap in Taxila. The seal is dated to the early Roman Imperial period by J. Marshall and according to him it was imported to Gandhāra from Roman Empire by trade (Marshall 1951a: 675-676, 681; 1951b: pl. 207, no. 30; Jansen / Luczanits 2008: 99, Kat. Nr. 31). On this seal, Eros and Psyche are depicted courting. Eros is touching Psyche’s chin with his right hand.

Amongst many schist Buddhist relief panels of Gandhāra, are attested several relief panels that depict the same kind of hand gesture. A relief panel with vertical registers (Fig.14) excavated by the Tokyo National Museum team from Zar Dheri depicts this hand gesture. This panel is divided into seven registers. In the middle is depicted an amorous couple (Fig.15) of which a man is touching the chin of his female partner with his right hand. On a relief panel (Fig. 16) owned by a private collector in Tokyo, two

amorous couples are depicted. On the proper right, a bearded man who seems to be Greek is touching his female partner's chin with his left hand. Another example (Fig. 17) belonging also to a private collection, depicts an amorous couple who reminds us of Eros and Psyche of the above-quoted gem seal. On the viewer's left, Vajrapāni is depicted and on the right a pseudo-Corinthian pilaster that depicts a man is touching a woman's chin with his right hand.

Generally speaking, figurative themes of Gandhāran toilet-trays derived mostly from Greek mythology and their images were executed in Hellenistic style (Francfort 1979: 91-95; Dar 1979: 148-149). In the 2nd century B. C, the Greeks of the Greco-Bactrian kingdom migrated to Gandhāra and founded the Indo-Greek kingdom. Needless to say, they introduced Hellenistic art to Gandhāra for the first time. Production of toilet-trays in Gandhāra started with the establishment of this Indo-Greek kingdom. Consequently, Hellenistic elements observed in Gandhāra toilet-trays and also in some of Buddhist relief panels of Gandhāra, might have derived from this Hellenistic art of the Indo-Greeks. On the other hand, Buddhist sculpture of Gandhāra could have been directly influenced by Roman Imperial art as some of our predecessors such as B. Rowland, Sir M. Wheeler and A. Soper argued and maintained (Rowland 1936, 1956; Wheeler 1949; Soper 1951).

Therefore, it goes without saying that the gesture of touching another's chin with one hand depicted in the art of Gandhāra was influenced by the gesture originated in the Mediterranean world either of Hellenistic or Roman Imperial period.

## **B. HELLENISTIC AND ROMAN IMPERIAL ART**

I will now show some materials that confirm the diffusion and inheritance of this hand gesture from Hellenistic or Roman Imperial art.

An example of Hellenistic art is the silver bowl (Fig. 18) that depicts a medallion with Dionysos and Ariadne embracing each other, now housed in the J. Paul Getty Museum (Pfrommer 1993: 218, pl. 127). Two meandering tendrils of grasping vine frame the figural composition. Seated with his back to the couple is a depiction of Silenus seated facing right with the thyrsus staff behind him. In this scene Dionysos is touching the chin of Ariadne with his left hand, rather than grasping it.

As for Roman Imperial art, a wall painting (Fig. 19) excavated from Pompeii depicts a naked lady and a warrior with two Cupids disposed around them. V. M. Strocka says that they represent Dido and Aeneas (Strocka 2006: 277-278, abb. 7). They are seated gazing at each other. Dido is touching the chin of Aeneas with her right hand as if attempting to stroke it. A sarcophagus (Fig. 20) housed in the Museo Nazionale Romano in Rome, depicts grape harvesting by Dionysos together with his companions (Matz 1969: 327-328, pl. 202, fig. 178; LIMC1986a: 548; LIMC1986b: 435, fig. 94). In the

center, surrounded by a Maenad at either side, a Satyr grasps a branch of grapes. The Maenad to the proper left side of Satyr, is touching his chin with her right hand.

### C. GREEK ART

The gesture of touching another's chin with one hand prevailing in Hellenistic and Roman Imperial period discussed above, actually originated in Ancient Greece.

A couple is depicted on the neck of a Greek vase (Fig. 21) dated to the 7<sup>th</sup> century B. C, whom A. von Salis identified as Theseus and Ariadne (von Salis 1930: 10, fig. 8; Reinsberg 1993: 191, fig. 108), although G. Neumann rejected this identification and identified the couple as married or betrothed (Neumann 1965: 68-69, fig. 32). In any case, they are nothing but an amorous couple, and the man is touching the chin of the woman with his right hand. The same hand gesture is depicted on a clay plaque excavated from Taranto in southern Italy dated to the 7<sup>th</sup> century B. C (von Salis 1930: 1, fig. 1). This hand gesture is mentioned by Homer in the first and the eighth volume of the *Iliad* dated to the 8<sup>th</sup> century B. C. In the first volume, he describes how the Goddess Thetis clung to the knee of Zeus with her left hand, while with her right she clasped him under the chin. In the eighth volume, Thetis kisses the knee of Zeus and clasps his chin with her both hands (Murray 1924: 40-41, 364-65; Knippschild 2002: 77).

There are also many homosexual scenes depicted in Greek black-figured and red-figured vase-paintings. On an amphora (Fig.22) produced in Cyprus and dated to the 6<sup>th</sup> century B. C, a bearded old man and a youth are represented standing (Lear / Cantarella 2008: 28, fig. 0. 2; Keuls 1985: 280, fig. 247). The old man is touching the chin of the youth with his left hand, and the penis of the latter with his right hand. On the other hand, the youth is grasping the left hand of the old man. J. D. Beazley and H. A. Shapiro, call the gesture of this old man as “up and down position”(Beazley 1947: 198-199; Shapiro 1981: 133-143). Needless to say, it signifies homosexual courtship.

Moreover, this gesture is depicted on the surface of a kylix (Fig. 23) dated to the 5<sup>th</sup> century B. C and now in the possession of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. On this cup, six prostitutes (*hetaerae*) and six male guests are dallying. A. Dierichs claims that the pairs are engaging in foreplay before having sexual intercourse (Dierichs 1993:122). One of the guests with a wreath on his head is seated on a chair, and a *hetaera* places her right leg on his left thigh and touches his chin with her left hand. To their proper left another hetaera extends her right arm to another male standing as if she is going to touch his chin with her right hand. A similar scene is also depicted on the surface of a vase in the possession of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts (Dierichs 1993: 67, fig. 116; Baggio 2004:96, fig. 30).

Thus, the gesture of a person touching his or her partner's chin with one hand is represented in Greek art from the 7<sup>th</sup> century to 5<sup>th</sup> century B.C.

As for the meaning of this Greek hand gesture, according to K. Sittl and G. Neumann, it signifies compliment, coquetry and entreaty (Sittl1890: 67-68; Neumann 1965: 68). In addition, Neumann claims that it subsequently came to mean caressing in courtship between men and women. Recently, M. Baggio proposes that this hand gesture signifies entreaty, temptation, and courtship (Baggio 2004: 95-99). Particularly, nude homosexual man and courtesan depicted in Greek ceramics, touch their partner's chin with one hand. These representations remind us of sexual behavior.

Therefore, at the present stage of our knowledge, it is almost impossible to give only one peculiar meaning to this hand gesture. We cannot help admitting that this gesture means a compliment, a flatter, a temptation, an appeal and an entreaty according to the situation depicted.

### **INTERPRETATION OF THE TWO SCENES OF THE TWO RELIEF PANELS**

In this chapter I will investigate the iconographical significance of the two relief panels in the possession of the Hirayama Ikuo Silk Road Museum (Figs. 1, 2). It is thought that the building depicted on these two panels is owned by a wealthy person living in city. However, strangely, only adult women live there, and no child, boy or girl, is depicted. Furthermore, both the woman having a vertical-handled mirror and the other touching a man's chin with her right hand are depicted in parallel to each other, and that seems to be a marked characteristic of these two panels.

As for these two female figures, their earring and clothes seem to be nearly the same, but it is not clear whether they are an identical person depicted twice or not because their hairstyles are not the same. However, a turbaned man depicted to the right side of a woman (Fig. 4) who is touching the man's chin, corresponds to a vertical-handled mirror held by the other toileting woman (Fig. 3) depicted on the other panel. Therefore, there is a clear correlation between the two female figures. In other words, the woman having a vertical-handled mirror shows the behavior just before the courtship of the woman touching the man's chin with the right hand.

Next I will attempt to identify the profession of the female figure on the basis of the above-mentioned premise. According to A. Foucher, among Gandhāran sculptures social status or profession of female figures cannot be distinguished by their clothes and ornaments (Foucher1918: 72-74). Then, female figures depicted on Gandhāran sculptures can be discriminated by her gesture, size, attribute and post. Therefore, the gesture of the female figures of the two panels (Figs.3, 4) is crucial element for identifying them.

What is more, there are known a lot of professions or social statuses of females depicted on Gandhāran sculpture: queen, princess, nurse, maid, servant, guard (Yavanī), dancer, flower seller and so on. These are, so to speak, normal and not shameful, because they are related, more or less, to the life story of the Buddha. However, the female figures depicted on the two panels (Figs, 1, 2) do not seem to be respectable and descent women,

because they have nothing to do with the life story of the Buddha and Buddhism. Although their headdress and attire is the same as those of noble lady, they seem to be engaged in notorious and disgraceful job and business in a disreputable and dubious house of women, and eventually we might be duly allowed to identify them as courtesan engaged in sex trade.

This identification is not abrupt and never absurd because courtesans are not only notorious but also quite famous in Ancient India and, according to D. M. Srinivasan, they were models of Yakṣinī images (Srinivasan 2005; 2006). Therefore, courtesans might have been used as figurative models of the female figures in Gandhāran art. At least, there are several Gandhāran reliefs depicting the story of the donation of the mango garden by Āmrāpālī, famous courtesan (*gaṇikā* in Sanskrit) of Vaiśālī. On these reliefs the courtesan, Āmrāpālī is represented just as a noble woman of high social rank as princess.

As for influential social position of *gaṇikā* we have a plenty of literary evidence. In the *Mahāvastua gaṇikā* named Kāśikāis mentioned to have lived in Vārāṇasī (Senart 1980: 375). *Gaṇikā* is also mentioned in Indian literary works such as the *Kāmasūtra* and the *Mṛcchakaṭīka*. In the *Kāmasūtragaṇikā* is explained to excel in culture and skill in addition to the fact that she is a young, beautiful hetaera. The number of skills and arts that each *gaṇikā* must acquire extends to sixty-four such as singing, playing musical instrument, dancing, painting and so on (Iwamoto1948: 58-63; Vatsyayana1967: Part1, Chapter III, Sutra14-16, 10-15). Because her guests and customers were rich people such as lord, nobleman, magnate and money lender who acquired high social status, she could not help mastering these skills and culture in order to easily have specific relationship with them and roll up money and goods from them. In the *Mṛcchakaṭīka* written in the fourth century AD a luxurious mansion possessed by a courtesan Vasantasenā is divided into eight rooms : a drawing room, a music room, kitchen, orchard etc. (Iwamoto1958: 69-71). In the *Kuṭṭanīmata* it is described that various techniques for a hetaera to rob a wealthy man of money are basically derived from make-believe love (Gupta1991: 941-952; Meyer 1903: 74-78; Shastri 1975: 110-126; Tanaka1985: 5-6, 90, 92, 95). The contents narrated in the *Kuṭṭanīmata* remind us of the fundamental attitude appropriate to courtesan.

From the above we are allowed to conclude that the gesture of the woman having a vertical-handled mirror (Fig. 3) is to make up elaborately before her courtship and the gesture of a woman touching man's chin with hand (Fig.4) is positively courting to a wealthy man. Needless to say, both kinds of women are courtesans. Other several women also depicted in the other lower registers of these two relief panels (Figs. 1, 2) are also either courtesans or prostitutes. Eventually, the buildings depicted on the two panels are nothing but brothels.

## CONCLUDING REMARKS

In the past, preceding studies no convincing interpretation of Gandhāran Dionysiac imagery has been offered. In this paper I took up the two relief panels (Figs. 1, 2) in the possession of the Hirayama Ikuo Silk Road Museum in order to present a new interpretation and assessment of Gandhāran Dionysiac imagery. The most plausible are that courtesans and a brothel are depicted on these two relief panels. The figure of the famous courtesan of Vaiśālī named Āmrāpālī is actually depicted on several Gandhāran relief panels just as noble lady, and therefore the courtesan does not seem to be recognized as such at all only by appearance (Tanabe 2013: Abbs. 3, 4, 5, 6). Therefore, the two female figures (Figs. 3, 4) depicted like noble lady in the top register of the two relief panels are most likely images of Gandhāran courtesan versed in sexual courtship.

What is more, as is generally known, Gandhāran art was influenced both by ancient Indian art and that of the Mediterranean world of either Hellenistic or Roman Imperial (Greco-Roman) period. The two relief panels that I investigated and discussed in this paper are no exception to this historical truth. The gesture touching another's chin with raised hand derived from Hellenistic or Greco-Roman art. It is quite reasonable for us to suppose that erotic images depicted on Gandhāran reliefs were produced under the influence of the imported Dionysiac imagery such as the nuptial banquet scene of Dionysos and Ariadne.

On the other hand, one of Indian influences is the thought to reborn after death in the Buddhist Heaven or Celestial World. The Theravada or Hinayana Buddhism was predominant in Gandhāran region. The Buddha taught that pious Buddhist lay devotees and a certain kind of monks could ascend to one of heavenly worlds of the Realm of Desire or that of the *Brahmaloka* Heaven after death. By holding a memorial service (building and donating a stūpa, offering flowers, making and donating a Buddha or Bodhisattva image etc.) and accumulating a lot of merit through good deeds, Gandhāran Buddhists, mainly lay devotees, believed that they could be reborn in one of these heavenly worlds (Realm of Desire) after death. In Gandhāra, lay Buddhist devotees and a certain kind of monks and nuns wished certainly to be reborn in a heavenly world such as that of the Thirty-Three Gods (*Trāyastriṃśa* Heaven) presided over by the god Indra.

K. R. van Kooij clarified that in Ancient Indian reliefs there are several depicting the paradisiacal images such as male-female banquet (van Kooij 1989:97-117). These might have been visualized based on Indian Buddhist amorous literature. For example in the *Saundarananda* written by Aśvaghōṣa, is narrated that when Nanda, half brother and disciple of the Buddha, wanted to abandon monastic life and return to secular life to live happily with his beautiful wife, Sundarī, the Buddha took Nanda to Indra's forest. Indra, who is a lord of the *Trāyastriṃśa* Heaven, has a forest in *Trāyastriṃśa* Heaven where apsaras live. Therefore, the Buddha showed to Nanda Apsaras far

more beautiful than his wife. Then, the Buddha told him that if he renounces the secular world and becomes a monk, he would be able to enjoy the sexual pleasure offered by these Apsarases (Covill 2007: 191-227). The Buddha told this story for monks. The Buddha rejected the sexual paradisiacal world. However, this rejection was destined for monks, but not for lay Buddhist devotees. In conclusion, the scenes depicted on the two relief panels (Figs. 1, 2) may share some sexual pleasures with the paradise of the *Trāyastriṃśa* Heaven.

What was the reason why such an erotic image was introduced to Gandhāran Buddhist art? K. Karen explained that *nirvāṇa* was conventionally demanded and praised by most of the monks (Karen 1999: 98). However, most of lay Buddhist devotees could not get *nirvāṇa* as the Buddha attained. Therefore, the thought to be reborn in one of the six heavenly worlds of the Realm of Desire was preached for them. From such a point of view the thought to be reborn in Heaven probably fascinated many lay Buddhist devotees far more than *nirvāṇa*. However, all the Buddhists could not witness what exist in the Realm of Desire, because nobody had ever been there. Accordingly, the image of the Realm of Desire must have been given to them in order to persuade them of the existence and also to visualize wonders of paradisiacal world and pleasures obtainable there. Therefore, the present author supposes that the reason why courtesan and brothel are depicted together on the two relief panels (Figs. 1, 2) is to remind vividly lay Buddhist devotees and a certain kind of monks of the pleasures to be obtained in the Realm of Desire, in particular, in the paradise of the *Trāyastriṃśa* Heaven.

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## FIGURES



Fig. 1 Relief Panel with vertical registers, Hirayama Ikuo Silk Road Museum, Japan, (K. Tanabe, *Gandhāran Art from The Hirayama Collection*, in Japanese, Koudansha, Tokyo, 2007, fig. I-60)



Fig. 2 Relief Panel with vertical registers, Hirayama Ikuo Silk Road Museum, (K. Tanabe, *Gandhāran Art from The Hirayama Collection*, in Japanese, Koudansha, Tokyo, 2007, fig. I-59).



Fig. 3 Woman holding a handled mirror, detail of fig. 1. (K. Tanabe, *Gandhāran Art from The Hirayama Collection*, in Japanese, Koudansha, Tokyo, 2007, fig. I-60)



Fig. 4 Amorous couple with a woman touching a man's chin with her right hand, detail of fig. 2. (K. Tanabe, *Gandhāran Art from The Hirayama Collection*, in Japanese, Koudansha, Tokyo, 2007, fig. I-59).



Fig. 5 Relief panel with vertical registers with a woman holding a round mirror with a horizontal handle, H: 47cm, Hamanakonpou Silkroad Museum, Japan., (Courtesy of Katsumi Tanabe).



Fig. 6 Relief panel with a man wooing a woman holding a round mirror with a horizontal handle, Butkara I, H: 53cm, Swat Museum, Saidu Sharif, Pakistan, (I. Kurita, *Gandhāran Art II, The world of the Buddha*. In Japanese, Nigensha, Tokyo, 1990, fig. 569)



Fig. 7 Woman or Yakṣinī holding a bronze hand mirror, H: 40cm, Asian Museum, Berlin (H. Cantz, *Kunst an der Seidenstrasse, Faszination Buddha*, Hatje Cantz Verlag, Hamburg/Bonn, 2003, pl. 10)

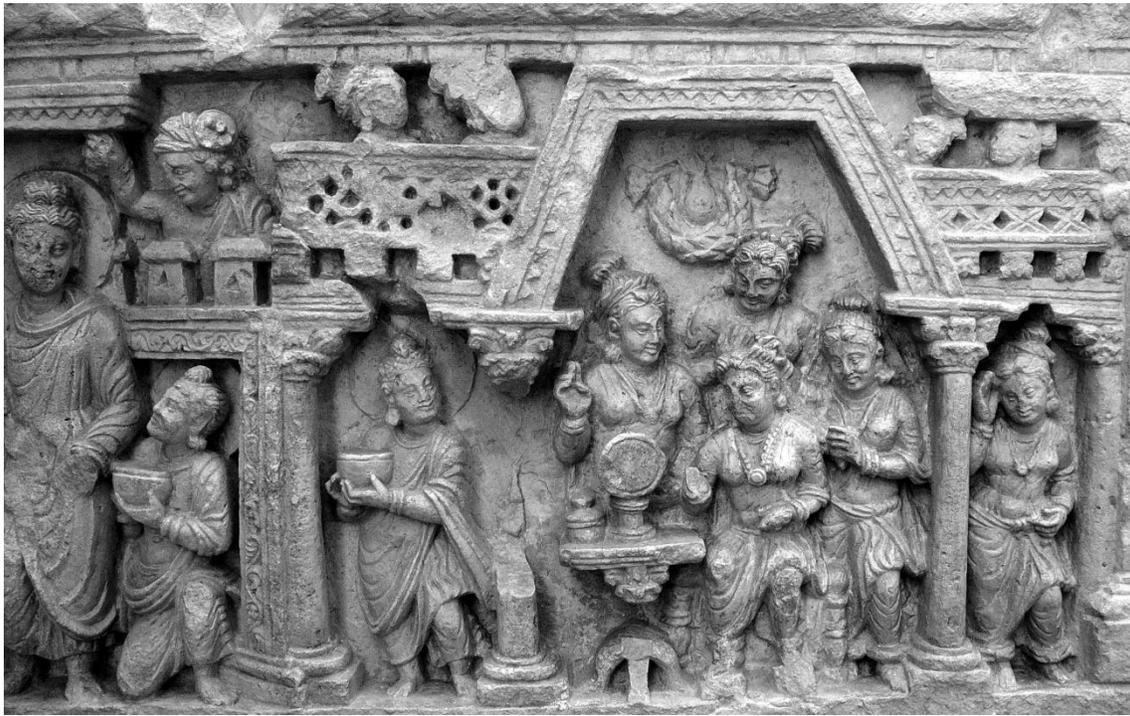


Fig. 8 Relief panel with the story of Nanda and Sundarī, H:30cm, British Museum  
(Courtesy of J. K. Bautze)



Fig. 9 Bronze handled mirror, H:20cm,  
Hamanakonpou Silk Road Museum  
(Courtesy of Katsumi Tanabe)



Fig. 10 Toilet-tray with amorous scene, D:9.8cm,  
Peshawar Museum (Frankfort 1979: pl. V-no. 10)



Fig. 11 Toilet-tray with amorous scene, D:10,7cm,  
Pakistan National Museum, Karachi  
(Frankfort 1979: pl. III-no. 5)



Fig.12 Toilet-tray with Dionysiac images, D:14.2cm, private collection, Japan (Courtesy of Katsumi Tanabe.)



Fig. 13 Gem seal with Eros and Psyche accompanied by a tiny Eros, Sirkap, H:3.4cm, National Museum of Pakistan, Karachi (J. Marshall 1951b: pl. 207, no. 30)



Fig. 14 Relief panel with vertical registers, H:132cm, Zar Dheri, Pakistan (By courtesy of Yoshihide Koizumi)



Fig. 15 Amorous couple, detail of fig.14  
(By courtesy of Yoshihide Koizumi)



Fig. 16 Relief panel with amorous scene, H:24cm,  
private collection, Japan (Author's photo.)



Fig. 17 Relief panel with Vajrapāṇi and amorous couple, private collection, Japan  
(Courtesy of Katsumi Tanabe)



Fig. 18 Silver bowl with Dionysos and Ariadne, D:14.4cm, J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles (Pfrommer1993: pl. 7)



Fig. 19 Wall painting with Dido and Aeneas, Pompei, 58 x 64cm, Archaeological Museum of Naples (Strocka 2006: 278, fig. 7)



Fig. 20 Dionysiac Sarcophagus, 220 x 91cm, National Roman Museum, Rome (P. Zanker&B. Ch. Ewald, *Mit Mythen leben, Die Bilderwelt der römischen Sarkophage*, Hrmer, München, 2004, fig.162)



Fig. 21 Greek vase with welcoming Theseus, British Museum (21Neumann1965: fig. 24)



Fig. 22 Greek vase with homosexual love, Martin von Wagner Museum der Universität Würzburg (22Lear&Cantarella 2008: 28, fig. 0. 2)

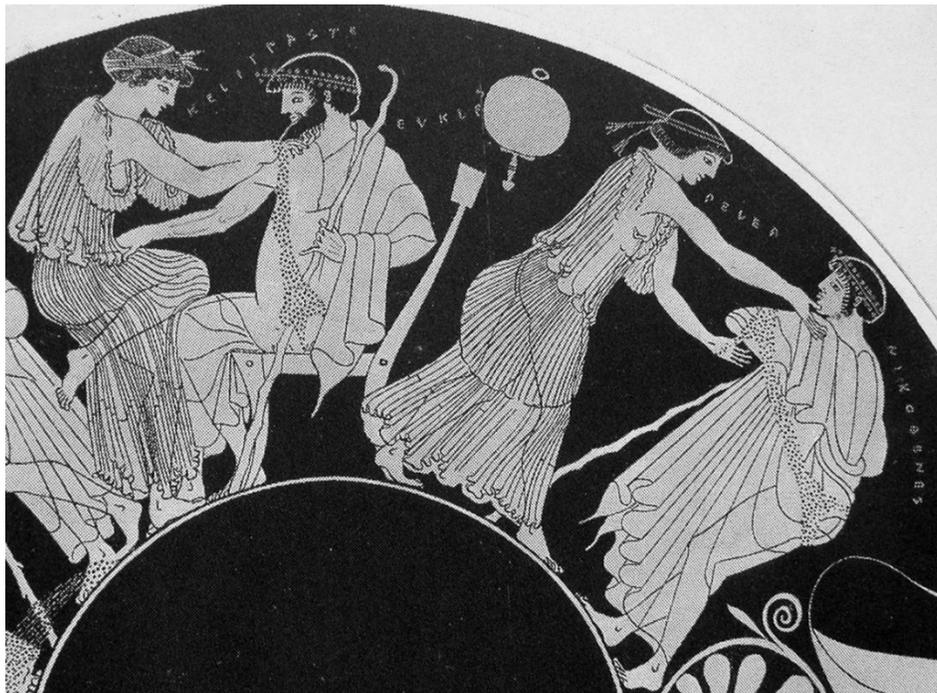


Fig. 23 Greek kylix with heterae and male guests, The Metropolitan Museum of Art (Dierichs 1993: fig. 214)