

The Frieze of the Buddha and the Nude *Vajrapani* at Jamal Garhi (Special Focus on the Amalgamation of Hellenistic and Indian Elements in the Particular Relief of the Buddhist Kushan Art)

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Gandhara school of art is distinct from other schools of art developed in ancient India around the 1st century BCE to 3rd century CE, during the time of Kushan dynasty. Prevailing archaeological evidence unearthed at the sites of Gandhara reveals art depicting the Lord Gautama Buddha and scenes related to the life of the Buddha. Jamal Garhi is one of the Gandharan sites which was initially excavated by the British archaeologist Alexander Cunningham. One of the reliefs illustrates the depiction of *Vajrapani* as the protector of the Buddha. Particular relief has not been analyzed to examine the fusion of cultures, yet it can be taken as a fine example. The significance of the selected relief is the illustration of *Vajrapani*, modeled after the Greek deity Hercules, who is depicted in full scale nude and turning backwards. None of the Gandharan art known hitherto has depicted *Vajrapani* in the particular manner and the Buddha without any Buddha mudra. The selected relief will be analyzed focusing on the amalgamation of Hellenistic and Indian elements. Examples from Greek art will be analysed in order to discuss how the Gandharan artist has amalgamated both the Indian and Hellenistic values, to present the stories related to the Buddha in the service of the Buddhist devotees. Further, it is evident that the artist is probably a foreigner who works in the service of Buddhism. The Hellenistic elements which can be seen in the relief supports the assumption that the artists should be a Greek or was influenced by Greek values. Further, it is evident that the artist is not aware of the Buddhist manner of depicting the Enlightened One.

Key words: Gandharan art, Kushan dynasty, Lord Buddha, *Vajrapani*, Cultural amalgamation