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SOME DETAILS FROM THE  
REPRESENTATIONS  
OF THE PARINIRVĀṆA CYCLE IN THE ART  
OF GANDHARA AND KUCHA:  
The Iconography of the Wandering Ascetics  
(Parivrājaka, Nirgrantha and Ājīvika)

**B**uddhism began representing narratives early, albeit with one challenge which the artists faced: they were required to abstain from depicting the Buddha as a person. Prior to (at least) 100 CE, and for some areas even later, symbols were substituted for the figure of Buddha's person, or the space where he would have been depicted was left empty, so that only the objects and accompanying individuals around that location made it possible for the viewer to determine where his figure was meant to be. Despite this hindrance, or perhaps because of it—as it was essential that the picture be legible even without the protagonist—Buddhist art rapidly created a complex and sophisticated system of pictorial rules which made it possible to illustrate narrative content.<sup>1)</sup> These rules are not always comprehensible to us. This is the case, for example, when a person or an animal appears twice in the same pictorial unit. The reverse is also true, where the protagonist appears only once although figures, animals, or objects nearby signalise that what

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<sup>1)</sup> For techniques of illustrations of the narratives in Indian art: Schlingloff (1981) and Dehejia (1997) (both with references to the earlier research), comparison of both studies in: Zin (forthcoming c).

we are seeing is not one episode taking place in one moment but instead several episodes which took place successively in different time periods, or even in different locations. Such method of representation is often called "conflated". Several episodes from the life-story of the Buddha (represented at first aniconically and later including the figure of the Buddha as a person) were likewise depicted in such a way.

The events from the life story of the Exalted One have frequently been represented dating back to the beginnings of Buddhist art. The wish to illustrate his *vita* in many episodes soon led to the creation of representations of entire narrative cycles. The story cycle of the *parinirvāṇa*—i.e. the events before, during, and directly after the death of the Buddha—belong among the most frequently illustrated<sup>2)</sup> which was certainly a result of the preeminent role of relics in the Buddhist religion. The literary tradition regarding Buddha's last journey, his death, the cremation of his body, and the sharing of the relics between different countries is very old and had already been extended in ancient times to include several episodes which appear to have been added.<sup>3)</sup> The earliest representations of the cycle dating from ca. 100 BCE—or even earlier—were preserved in Amaravati, where, among other examples, there is one surviving relief which shows several episodes from the Buddha's last journey in an aniconical manner. This relief depicts his journey from Vaiśālī to Kuśinagara, where he died. The episodes depicted in the relief have been subtitled with inscriptions.<sup>4)</sup>

The largest number of representations of the *parinirvāṇa* cycle come from Gandhara.<sup>5)</sup> The relief scenes are often clustered into groups showing a selection of the events: the Buddha on the road to Kuśinagara, his death, his coffin, the cremation of his coffin, the adoration of the heap of relics, warriors approaching Kuśinagara to get their share of the relics, their distribution and transportation to different countries. In most of the cases the episodes are ordered chronologically in registers on horizontal friezes.

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<sup>2)</sup> Ebert (1985) a comprehensive comparative study of the *parinirvāṇa* representations from Indian prototypes up to China.

<sup>3)</sup> For the literary tradition and analysis: Waldschmidt (1944–48); Bareau (1974); Schlingloff (2000/2013, no. 8(7)–(8), vol. 1: 64–71, vol. 2: 11–13).

<sup>4)</sup> Amaravati, Archaeological Site Museum, no. 62, cf. Ghosh & Sarkar (1964–65); the relief is illustrated in the article and also e.g. in Ebert (1985: pl. 4, fig. 6, fig. 1a (drawing)); Schlingloff (1987, fig. 25 (drawing)); Dehejia (1997, fig. 122 (drawing)).

<sup>5)</sup> Cf. e.g. Kurita (2003: vol. 1, part 4: 'The Great Passing of Śākyamuni', pp. 233–262).

This linear method of representation was used in Gandhara, and might be an influence from the Mediterranean world.<sup>6)</sup> In continental India, the linear and chronological ordering of episodes was not a matter of course. The events were often grouped according to their spatial affiliation and single scenes were modelled according to the previously mentioned conflated manner of representation.

The crucial scene of the cycle, the death of the Buddha, was, however, also in Gandhara represented in the conflated manner which is typical of India. The reason for this might be that the iconography of the *parinirvāṇa* scene was probably not invented in Gandhara, but instead in Mathura.<sup>7)</sup> The *parinirvāṇas* with the Buddha depicted as a person are, however, the creation of Gandharan artists who were influenced by the Western sarcophagi.<sup>8)</sup>

The iconography of *parinirvāṇa* representation has been scrutinised and discussed in several studies.<sup>9)</sup> The present work concentrates on episodes in which non-Buddhist ascetics appear, and will focus on their iconography. These non-Buddhist ascetics are a wandering Brahmanical ascetic (*parivrājaka*) and a naked ascetic who, according to different textual traditions, is to be understood as a Jaina (*nirgrantha*) or as an Ājīvika. The ascetics belong to the *parinirvāṇa* narrative; the texts, however, say nothing about their appearance, as this was certainly a matter of common knowledge and did not need to be mentioned.

To establish characteristics of the ascetics by means of the literary sources is generally very difficult.<sup>10)</sup> The texts, coming from different time periods and geographical areas, do not provide any clear statements. The following investigation of Gandharan reliefs and paintings on the northern Silk Road can at least provide an insight about the imagery of the members of the stranger religious groups from these particular areas and times which might perhaps be useful for further philological studies. It is important to remember that we are dealing only with the Buddhist notion of the appearance of the acolytes of unfamiliar religions, which was not necessarily correct—particu-

<sup>6)</sup> Cf. Taddei (1993, 1999).

<sup>7)</sup> For *parinirvāṇa* representations in Mathura cf. Gupta & Zin (2016).

<sup>8)</sup> Foucher (1928: 19); analysis of the Gandharan reliefs in Ebert (1985: 53–162).

<sup>9)</sup> Aside from studies listed in the foregoing footnotes the following should also be mentioned: Miyaji (1992); Brown (2006); Lee (2010).

<sup>10)</sup> Cf. e.g. the analysis of the descriptions of the wandering ascetics in Basham (1951: 99f) or Schlingloff (1994).

larly concerning the distinguishing of the mendicants—and not to mention errors in their doctrines or the names of their teachers, for instance.

In the *parinirvāṇa* reliefs in Gandhara, at least one of the non-Buddhist ascetics—and quite often both—appear. Let us start with one relief to illustrate the ascetics as well as to demonstrate the above-mentioned conflated manner of depiction with the Buddha represented once with several episodes around him.

The Buddha in the relief (Fig. 1)<sup>11)</sup> seems to have his eyes open—still alive—but the figures standing above him, gods or perhaps the citizens of Kuśinagara, are already mourning his death, as is one goddess in the tree foliage (she must have had a counterpart on another side of the relief which has not been preserved). We also see Vajrapāṇi letting his *vajra* droop: the Buddha has died. In front of the Buddha's bed there is an ascetic sitting with his head and body covered with a robe. This is Subhadra, the last convert. He, too, appears to be alive. Nearly all the texts relate that he died prior to the Buddha.<sup>12)</sup> The old monk bowing his head to the Buddha's feet is Kāśyapa, Mahākāśyapa. Kāśyapa was not present at the Buddha's death, as he had been wandering<sup>13)</sup>—the long slab he is carrying with a round shape on the upper end is certainly a *khakkharaka*,<sup>14)</sup> often depicted being carried by monks or the Buddha while *en route* or collecting food (Fig. 2).<sup>15)</sup> Kāśyapa arrived at Kuśinagara only after the Buddha was already lying in his coffin. The naked man behind Kāśyapa (his face has been broken off) is an ascetic whom Kāśyapa met on the road, far away from Kuśinagara, who informed him that the Buddha had died seven days earlier.

As we see, the representation is everything but a 'snapshot' of a particular moment from the story; it clusters episodes which happened in different intervals and places along the *parinirvāṇa* narrative. The image does not

<sup>11)</sup> Fig. 1: relief from Gandhara, London, Victoria and Albert Museum, no. I.M. 247–1927; illus. in: Ackermann (1975: pl. 41); Kurita (2003: vol. 1, fig. 482); drawing by the present author.

<sup>12)</sup> Analysis of textual versions in: Waldschmidt (1944–48: 232–235); the text which does not mention the death of Subhadra is the Pali *Mahāparinibbanasutta*, ed. *Dīghanikāya* XVI.5.30, ed. vol. 2, p. 153, tr. vol. 2, p. 169.

<sup>13)</sup> Analysis of the textual tradition in: Waldschmidt (1944–48: 285–293).

<sup>14)</sup> Cf. von Hinüber (1992: 47–50).

<sup>15)</sup> Fig. 2: detail of a painting in the barrel vault, Kizil, Cave 118 (Hippokampenhöhle), coloured drawing by Grünwedel, illus. Grünwedel (1912: fig. 239).

really illustrate the events but rather recalls them to the mind of the viewer. With this comes the fact that the depiction relies on conventional models, intentionally abstaining from realism; an artist who was able to depict the wrinkles in the faces of the men above or the roundish belly of one of the men, covered with little hairs, would undoubtedly have been able to depict the Buddha as an 80 year-old-man, dying. Yet the Buddha looks as young as ever. If he were to be turned 90°, his posture would appear as if he were standing. Everybody must have known, of course, that there was no high bed between the two *śāla* trees, where, according to the texts, the Buddha died, and certainly no such bed with pompous Roman legs.<sup>16)</sup>

It was not the reality which was of importance in the representation but rather its religious statement: here, the great Buddha is entering the final *nirvāṇa*. This is his last convert. Here comes Kāśyapa, to adore Buddha's feet, etc.

A question arises: how true are the details of the representations to images of real life? This question also encompasses the ascetics who are the subject of the present paper. We certainly can assume that we are dealing with clichéd images. However, the clichés themselves are also rooted in reality—pompous bed-legs are wholly unrealistic for this location, but they are accurate per se, and correspond quite precisely with Roman prototypes. Their role is to create a supreme dignifying pedestal for the dying Buddha. The extremely, even prohibitively expensive nature of the objects was intended to be visible at first glance.

As for the ascetics, the sculptor must have tried to represent them in such a way that they were comprehensible for the viewer. It seems that we might calculate these to be representations of reality, even when conventionalised, or at least representations depicting fixed clichés originating in real life.

Subhadra, the last disciple of the Buddha, who reached the Buddha only on his deathbed, is described in the texts as a wandering mendicant (*parivrājaka/paribbājaka*). The appellation signals that we are not dealing with a *vānaprastha*, a Brahmanical ascetic settled in an *āśrama* in the woods. This is confirmed by his appearance, as the *āśrama* ascetics, such as for example Urubilvā-Kāśyapa,<sup>17)</sup> were, as is generally known, depicted with long *jaṭa* hair, often piled high and not covered with cloth. In Gandhara, Subhadra

<sup>16)</sup> Analysis of shapes of the bed legs in Ebert (1985: 95–115), with several drawings.

<sup>17)</sup> For literary and textual tradition cf. Schlingloff (2000/2013, no. 67, vol. 1, pp. 381–395, vol. 2, pp. 74–78); Zin (2006b, no. 8, pp. 136–166).

is often, even if not always, represented with a cloaked head. It must have been no different in the southern tradition, because the Pali commentator Buddhaghosa refers to him as *channaparibbājako*, covered Parivrājaka.<sup>18)</sup>

In Fig. 1 it is evident that Subhadra's head is not entirely shaved; his hair is visible from underneath the wrap. Several reliefs show his hair more precisely: it is a single lock of hair above the middle of his forehead (Fig. 3).<sup>19)</sup> One particularly elaborately-worked relief, which represents Subhadra with his head uncovered (Fig. 4),<sup>20)</sup> demonstrates that the hair lock is actually the (knotted?) end of a wisp of hair coming from the back of the head along the crest.

Subhadra is not the only ascetic with such a lock of hair; the 'skull taper' is also depicted in the same way (Fig. 5).<sup>21)</sup> The story goes that he could recognize the future incarnation of a dead person while touching his or her skull.<sup>22)</sup> Like Subhadra, he is designated in the text as a *parivrājaka*, a wandering ascetic. The artistic consistency in illustrating the wandering ascetics must be examined; Mākandika, who wanted to offer his beautiful daughter to the Buddha as a wife, is denoted in literature as *parivrājaka* but the reliefs of Gandhara and paintings of Kucha depicted him as a typical *jaṭila* Brahmin.<sup>23)</sup> The reasons for this may, however, lay in the pictorial tradition, because the representations repeat the iconography of the offering of Yaśodharā to the Bodhisatva as a wife. Yaśodharā's father is always represented as a 'typical' Brahmin with his long hair piled high.<sup>24)</sup>

A particularly interesting relief was excavated in Zar Dheri. It displays diverse Brahmanical ascetics (Fig. 6),<sup>25)</sup> seemingly to illustrate the

<sup>18)</sup> *Manorathapūraṇī* ed. vol. 3, p. 334, cf. Schlingloff (1994: 72).

<sup>19)</sup> Fig. 3: relief from Gandhara, Washington, Freer Gallery of Art, no. 49.9, illus. e.g. in: Ebert (1985: pl. 16, fig. 28); Schlingloff (2000/2013, vol. 2, p. 11 (drawing)); Kurita (2003: vol. 1, fig. 483); drawing by the present author.

<sup>20)</sup> Fig. 4: detail of a relief from Gandhara, Victoria & Albert Museum, no. IS 7-1948, illus. e.g. in: Ackermann (1975: pl. 52); Ebert (1985: pl. 17, fig. 32); Kurita (2003: pl. P4-III); drawing by the present author.

<sup>21)</sup> Fig. 5: stucco figurine from Hadda, Gandhara, Paris, Musée Guimet, no. 17.131, illus. Hackin (1931: pl. 13); Kurita (2003: vol. 2, fig. 395); drawing by the present author.

<sup>22)</sup> For representations and literary tradition cf. Taddei (1979, 1983).

<sup>23)</sup> Zin (2005); Tanabe, Katsumi (2013).

<sup>24)</sup> Cf. e.g. Kurita (2003: vol. 1, figs. 105-108).

<sup>25)</sup> Fig. 6: detail of a relief from Zar Dheri, Mansehra, in Gandhara, Peshawar, Directorate of Archaeology and Museums of Khayber Pakhtun Khwah, illus. Nishioka (et al.)

Brahmakāyika deities<sup>26)</sup> (the corresponding right part of the composition shows deities wearing turbans and jewellery—apparently the Trāyastriṃśa gods). The artist made an effort and represented each individual in a dissimilar way, yet eight of the ascetics are still similar in one way; they are all depicted with long hair. Only the last one, the ninth, looks different. His hair is shaven and there is a wisp of hair on the top of his head; its end is visible above his forehead. He is the only one of the group depicted wearing a long piece of fabric across his left shoulder, which he could wrap around his head, like Subhadra or the “skull tapper”. The ascetic is holding a long object which is made up of long sticks and is covered on the top by something in the form of a grid. It is easy to discern what this object is on the *parinirvāṇa* reliefs in which Subhadra is represented twice, not only meditating in front of the bed, but also in an earlier time period, when he is approaching the dying Buddha (Fig. 7).<sup>27)</sup> His attribute is also shown twice. While carried, it looks like a bunch of sticks with something roundish on the top, and when standing it becomes a tripod (*tridaṇḍa* / *tidaṇḍa*), on which a sack, or rather a net, is hanging, certainly with a water bottle.

Textual references concerning the tripod, *tridaṇḍa*, were collected by Patrick Olivelle.<sup>28)</sup> According to his investigation it is not possible to ascertain whether the bearers of the tripods were followers of Śiva or of Viṣṇu (as the earlier research claimed), but it is certain that they belonged to the mainstream Brahmanical tradition. Several literary works, mostly mediaeval commentaries, list *tridaṇḍa* among the items that a *parivrājaka* should always carry with him. There are also descriptions of the object as being made of staffs of bamboo of equal lengths, tied together at one third of the length. Olivelle quotes Aśvaghōṣa’s *Buddhacarita* where the *tridaṇḍa* is explicitly mentioned as a characteristic of Subhadra.<sup>29)</sup>

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(2001: pl. 2.1); Khan & Lone (2004: 27); Nishioka (et al.) (2011: pls. 176, 185); drawing by the present author.

<sup>26)</sup> For the iconography of Brahmas and Brahmakāyikas cf. Zin (2003/(forthcoming), no. 33).

<sup>27)</sup> Fig. 7: detail of a relief from Gandhara, Kolkata, Indian Museum, no. A2323, illus.: Ebert (1985: pl. 9, fig. 15); Kurita (2003: vol. 1, fig. 485); drawing by the present author.

<sup>28)</sup> Olivelle (1986–87: vol. 1: 35–54), reprinted in Olivelle (2011: 231–248).

<sup>29)</sup> *Buddhacarita* 26, 1–24; in Johnston’s translation from Tibetan and Chinese versions (p. 91) ‘Subhadra, a holder of the triple staff’.

Among the objects the mediaeval commentaries list as those always carried by wandering ascetics—Olivelle provides a quotation from the *Liṅgapurāṇa* in Yādavaprakāśa's *Yatidharmasamuccaya*<sup>30</sup>—the *śikhā*, the topknot, appears as well. This must be the designation of the wisp of hair on the top of Parivrājakas' heads.

Interestingly, we do not only encounter the iconography of Subhadra and the “skull-tapper”—i.e. of the Parivrājakas in Gandhara. One pillar from Amaravati which represents the events shortly before the enlightenment—the Bodhisatva had crossed the River Nairāñjanā (the upper part of the pillar) and received his first meal after the austerities from the village girls (central medallion). The lower part (Fig. 8)<sup>31</sup> shows him (depicted aniconically as footprints under the tree) surrounded by several men who are offering him cloths. All but one of the men look like gods or highly ranking citizens. The one that does not look similar to the previously-described Parivrājakas. Unfortunately, the story depicted here is not familiar from the literary sources, as is often the case in the art of Andhra for which literary sources are not transmitted. If turbaned persons in the relief were meant to be seen as deities, the iconography of the wandering ascetic was perhaps used here to represent a Brahmakāyika deity of a particular Brahma (compare Fig. 6 which represents deities).

The fact is that the iconography of the Parivrājakas—confirmed by the literary tradition collected by Olivelle—provides us with proof that their appearance in art is rooted in real life. The tripods are illustrated in old art. As an attribute of Subhadra, the tripod can be traced back to at least the 1<sup>st</sup> century BCE. This is demonstrated by one old relief from Mathura (Fig. 9).<sup>32</sup> The relief dates back to the time of aniconical representations. It is not only the Buddha who was not represented in older art, but also the monks—who were probably too similar to him. This must also have been true of the monastic-like appearance of Subhadra, as he was not shown in person. Instead, we see his attribute, the tripod, standing to the side. Unlike

<sup>30</sup> Olivelle (2011: 239).

<sup>31</sup> Fig. 8: detail of a relief on a pillar from Amaravati, British Museum, no. 4, illus. e.g. in: Barrett (1954: pl. 21b, 25); Stern & Bénisti (1961: pl. 22a); Knox (1992: no. 6, p. 51); Dehejia (1997: fig. 132); drawing by the present author.

<sup>32</sup> Fig. 9: Mathura, New Delhi, National Museum, illus. in Asthana (1985–86: fig. 8.1); Sharma (1995: fig. 180); Schlingloff (2000/2013: vol. 2: 11 (drawing)); Gupta & Zin (2016: fig. 2); drawing by the present author.



the monks, there is a wandering ascetic in one still older relief from Bharhut (Fig. 10).<sup>33</sup> The relief illustrates the *Mahābodhi-jātaka*<sup>34</sup> and shows the ascetic (called *brāhmaṇa* in the text) with even more attributes; here he is carrying a tripod with a water bottle, a parasol, and sandals. His hair is short, and the *śikhā* on the top of his head is clearly visible. Interestingly, the relief shows the tripod, apparently as an understandable attribute of the wandering ascetic, while the text talks about a staff (*daṇḍa*).<sup>35</sup>

The representations of Subhadra with the tripod in the reliefs must be understood as a clearly readable characteristic of a Parivrājaka. The iconography continues onwards in India to a later time. We find this object very well represented in Ajanta, Cave XXVI (Fig. 11).<sup>36</sup> Subhadra sits with his face towards the Buddha, clad as a usual monk. His head is shaven, and the hair wisp is not discernible. The tripod is still present; however, its legs are bent. The strange form of the object—the three legs are elegantly curved and are certainly not the bamboo sticks from the texts—seems to signalize that the tripod was still repeated in the *parinirvāṇa* representations in Ajanta of the late 5<sup>th</sup> century, but rather only to be a representation of the attribute of Subhadra and not as the typical attribute of a wandering Brahmanical mendicant.

In the paintings of Kucha, the representations of the *parinirvāṇa* do not repeat all the details of Subhadra's iconography. Either the tripod or the lock of hair is depicted. Subhadra is shown cloaked in a robe of white colour which leaves only his face uncovered—the iconography is clear, as Buddhist monks were not depicted in white with covered heads. Subhadra seems to be always oriented towards the Buddha, but keeps his face turned in such

<sup>33</sup> Fig. 10: detail of a relief from Bharhut, Kolkata, Indian Museum, illus. e.g.: Coomaraswamy (1956: pl. 41, fig. 137); Schlingloff (1981: fig. 26 (drawing)); Dehejia (1997: fig. 6 (drawing)); drawing by the present author.

<sup>34</sup> *Jātaka* no. 528, ed. vol. 5, pp. 227–246; tr. vol. 5, pp. 116–126; the relief was identified by Hultzsch (1912: 399).

<sup>35</sup> Cf. foregoing fn.: *kiṃ nu daṇḍaṃ kimajinaṃ kiṃ chattaṃ kimupāhanaṃ kimankusaṇca pattaṇca saṅghāṭiṇcāpi brāhmaṇa taramānarūpohāsi kiṃ nu patthayase disaṃ* translation by Francis: 'What mean these things, umbrella, shoes, skin-robe and staff in hand? What of this cloak and bowl and hook? I fain would understand/ Why in hot haste thou wouldst depart and to what far-off land.' The 'hook' (*aṅkusa*) in this context is not understandable to the present author.

<sup>36</sup> Fig. 11: Ajanta, Cave XXVI, left side wall, illus. e.g. in: Yazdani (1930–55: vol. 4, pl. 80); Takata (2000: vol. 3, pl. C.26–4); drawing by the present author.

a way that his profile is observable (Figs. 12–14);<sup>37)</sup> the iconography seems to be a creation of the Kuchean artists.

In the *parinirvāṇa* narrative, the conversion of Subhadra composes an entire episode.<sup>38)</sup> It begins with his conversation with Ānanda, who refused three times to allow him to approach the Buddha, explaining that the Buddha was tired and should not be bothered. It was the Buddha himself who advised Ānanda to permit Subhadra to come near. The Buddha answers Subhadra's questions, resulting in Subhadra's conversion and ordination. Subhadra sits down to meditate, reaches enlightenment, and decides to die while still before the Buddha. The dialogue between Subhadra and Ānanda is represented several times in the reliefs (Fig. 15).<sup>39)</sup> The conflated mode of depiction in the Gandharan reliefs can show Subhadra arguing with Ānanda even though the Buddha is already dead (Fig. 16)<sup>40)</sup> or even lying in his coffin (Fig. 17).<sup>41)</sup> Here, it is not the total lack of logic in the representation of the events which one should consider, but rather the importance of the dialogue between Subhadra with Ānanda which the artist wanted to present. Subhadra takes the place of

<sup>37)</sup> Subhadra is represented in Caves 38, 98, 110, 163, 179, 205, 224 in Kizil, in Caves 30 and 44 in Simsim and Cave 15 in Tograk-eken.

Fig. 12: Kizil, fragment of a painting from Cave 205 (Māyāhöhle der 2. Anlage), fragment of the painting in the left corridor, right wall; the painting was taken to Berlin, IB 8437, war loss, cf. Dreyer, Sander & Weis (2002: 144); illus. e.g. in: Grünwedel (1912: figs. 383–384); published also in Le Coq (1925: fig. 157), Ebert (1985: fig. 19), and Ghose (2004 and 2005: fig. 5); Grünwedel (1920: pls. 42–43); Waldschmidt (1925: pl. 42); Ma, Qin (2007: 280–281); *Mural Paintings in Xinjiang* (2008: pl. 73, p. 84); *Mural Paintings in Xinjiang* (2009: vol. 2, pls. 122–123, pp. 133–135); drawing by Grünwedel; Fig. 13: Kizil, fragment of a painting in Cave 38 (Höhle mit dem Musikerchor), rear wall, illus.: *Kizil Grottoes*, vol. 1, pl. 144; *Mural Paintings in Xinjiang* (2008: pl. 17, p. 23); *Mural Paintings in Xinjiang* (2009: vol. 1, pl. 126, p. 142); Li, Chongfeng (2012: fig. 11b); drawing by the present author; Fig. 14: Simsim, fragment of a painting in Cave 30, rear wall, illus.: *Mural Paintings in Xinjiang* (2008: pl. 249, p. 277); *Mural Paintings in Xinjiang* (2009: vol. 5, pl. 32, p. 33); drawing by the present author.

<sup>38)</sup> For the references to the literary tradition cf. Waldschmidt (1944–48: 224–238).

<sup>39)</sup> Fig. 15: fragment of a relief from Gandhara, private collection in Japan, illus. in Kurita (2003: vol. 1, fig. 500); drawing by the present author.

<sup>40)</sup> Fig. 16: fragment of a relief from Gandhara, Berlin, Asian Art Museum, no. I 80; illus.: Ebert (1985: pl. 8, fig. 12); Yaldiz (et al.) (2000: no. 51); Kurita (2003: vol. 1, fig. 496.)

<sup>41)</sup> Fig. 17: relief from Sanghao in Gandhara, Lahore Museum, no. 111, illus. in: Ebert (1985: pl. 15, fig. 26b); Kurita (2003: vol. 1, fig. 503); drawing by the present author.

Kāśyapa in approaching the coffin. In the secondary literature, the figure is usually misunderstood as Kāśyapa.

Except for an unusual case where the dialogue between Subhadra and Ānanda has a symmetrical counterpart in the other side of the relief which depicts the dialogue between Kāśyapa and the naked ascetic (Fig. 18),<sup>42)</sup> the representations of the *parinirvāṇa* in Gandhara usually show just one of the monk-and-ascetic pairs. In most of these cases it is Kāśyapa and the naked ascetic. In the narrative, the episode and the person of Kāśyapa are of great importance, perhaps because of his role in the narrative following the *parinirvāṇa*, as he subsequently convenes the first council to establish the *Tripitaka*.<sup>43)</sup> The literary tradition allows us to sense a tension between Kāśyapa and Ānanda, who as Buddha's attendant had the greatest knowledge of his sermons but was still not-yet-enlightened, and who was initially not admitted by Kāśyapa to the first council.<sup>44)</sup> It may well be that the Gandharan artists, creating their reliefs according to the rules of conflating representations, had the rivalry of the two monks in mind. In any case, the dialogue between Ānanda and Subhadra—which is in fact of no importance for the *parinirvāṇa* narrative, or perhaps is only important as it illustrates Ānanda's devotion to the Buddha—is represented several times in the reliefs, as if it is a substitute for the dialogue between Kāśyapa and the naked ascetic. What we observe appears to be a deliberately used twofold understanding of the represented element, the phenomenon which Gail designates with the ancient Indian poetic term *śleṣa* (the double-entendre).<sup>45)</sup>

Kāśyapa's appearance in the reliefs of Gandhara is that of a usual monk (Fig. 19),<sup>46)</sup> and he is only rarely (cf. Fig. 1) shown as an old man. Sometimes he carries a *khakkharaka*. He converses with a man who is shaven and com-

<sup>42)</sup> Fig. 18: relief from Gandhara, Taxila Museum, illus. in Kurita (2003: vol. 1, fig. 484); drawing by the present author.

<sup>43)</sup> Przyluski (1926–28); for the representations of the first council in Kizil, literary tradition and references to the research: Zin (forthcoming b).

<sup>44)</sup> For the tensions between Kāśyapa and Ānanda Przyluski (1926–28: 296–305); Kumoi (1953); Tsukamoto (1963).

<sup>45)</sup> Gail (2016).

<sup>46)</sup> Fig. 19: fragment of a relief from Loriyan-Tangai in Gandhara, Kolkata, Indian Museum, illus. e.g. in Ebert (1985: pl. 12, fig. 20); Kurita (2003: vol. 1, fig. 481); drawing by the present author.

pletely naked, who is carrying a small piece of fabric in one hand and a flower in the other (cf. Figs. 1, 3, 18, 19).

All versions of the *parinirvāṇa* narrative state that Kāśyapa (Mahākāśyapa) was not present in Kuśinagara when the Buddha died. Most of the versions tell us that he was informed about the Buddha's death by a wandering ascetic, a Brahmin, an Ājīvika or a Nirgrantha, i.e. a Jaina mendicant.<sup>47)</sup> Most of the versions, with Pali<sup>48)</sup> and the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra* of the Mūlasarvāstivāda tradition<sup>49)</sup> which have been preserved in the Sanskrit manuscripts found on the northern Silk Road, speak about an Ājīvika. The report about the first council in the *vinaya* of the Sarvāstivādins and Mūlasarvāstivādins<sup>50)</sup> mentions a Brahmin. The tradition of the school of the Dharmaguptakas, the report about the first council,<sup>51)</sup> and the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra* preserved today in Chinese translations, talk about a *nirgranthaputra*.<sup>52)</sup> As a common motif, the *Mahāparinibbānasuttanta*, the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra* of the Sarvāstivādins and of the Dharmaguptakas, as well as several other versions recount that the wandering ascetic is holding a heavenly *mandāraka* flower—he picked it up at the location of the *parinirvāṇa* where heavenly flowers were sprinkled down by the gods.

It is difficult to establish which version was followed by the Gandharan reliefs. This is possible only by means of the appearance of the ascetic. He is certainly not a Brahmin, but is he a Nirgrantha or an Ājīvika?

The descriptions of Ājīvikas in literature are inconsistent; sometimes they are completely naked, and sometimes they are not.<sup>53)</sup> The differentiation is difficult given the fact that ancient Buddhists also confused Ājīvikas and Jainas, and that not only their doctrines but also their figures were muddled together—e.g. Pūraṇa, who is known from sources as a famous Ājīvika leader,<sup>54)</sup>

<sup>47)</sup> For the references to the literary tradition: Waldschmidt (1944–48: 285–288).

<sup>48)</sup> *Dīghanikāya* XVI.6.19, ed. vol. 2, pp. 162–263; tr. vol. 2, pp. 183–184.

<sup>49)</sup> *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*, ed. Waldschmidt, Vorgang 48, pp. 420–425,

<sup>50)</sup> T 1435, ed. vol. 23, p. 445c; T 1451, ed. vol. 24, p. 401a; I wish to express my gratitude to Mrs. Fang Wang, the PhD candidate of the Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität in Munich, for providing me with Chinese references.

<sup>51)</sup> T 1428, ed. vol. 22, p. 966b.

<sup>52)</sup> T 1, ed. vol. 1, p. 28c; German tr. by Weller (1940: 195).

<sup>53)</sup> Basham (1951: e.g.: 107, 110, 135); Balcerowicz (2016: 20f).

<sup>54)</sup> Basham (1951: 80–90).

was taken for a Jaina. This is the case in the narrative of Śrīgupta<sup>55)</sup> and also in the narrative of the great miracle of Śrāvastī.<sup>56)</sup> For the purpose of this paper, it would seem reasonable to concentrate on the depictions, as the appearance of the ascetics mirrors the common imagery of the time and area. The reliefs depict bold and completely naked men, often slightly heavier, whose only attribute is a piece of cloth held in the left hand.

The above-mentioned narrative about the conversion of Śrīgupta, a lay-supporter of the heretics, is represented several times in Gandharan reliefs. The heretics (Fig. 20)<sup>57)</sup> are depicted with the exact same appearance as the ascetic in the representations of the *parinirvāṇa*. In the Śrīgupta narrative they are called *nirgrantha*, and in one later version (*Bodhisattvāvadānakalpalatā* VIII) *ñātīputra kṣapāṇaka*—i.e. Jaina ascetics. In the narrative, the teacher Pūraṇa plays a role. It was apparently not known that was in fact a leader of the Ājīvikas.

The iconography of the naked ascetic in the *parinirvāṇa* scene as a Jaina monk has been recognised by means of the comparison with the representations in Mathura.<sup>58)</sup> The naked men, depicted with a piece of cloth draped above the left forearm, are often shown in a context which is clearly Jaina, frequently flying—i.e. they are enlightened Jaina monks (Fig. 21).<sup>59)</sup> Later literature refers to a special type of Jaina monk denoted as *ardha-phālakas*, and describes them as carrying a single piece of a textile named *colapaṭṭa*.<sup>60)</sup> Buddhist sources refer to Jaina monks as *ekasāṭaka* (of one garment) which might also refer to the same textile.<sup>61)</sup> The descriptions correspond well with representations, as such *ardha-phālakas* appear several times in the art of Mathura and at that, in early times; according to Quintanilla, as early as the

<sup>55)</sup> Zin (2006b: 124–135).

<sup>56)</sup> Schlingloff (2000/2013: nos. 88–92, vol. 1: 488–515, vol. 2: 100–105).

<sup>57)</sup> Fig. 20: detail from a relief from Gandhara, London, Victoria and Albert Museum, no. I.S. 78–1948, illus.: Accermann (1975: pl. 3); Kurita (2003: vol. 1, fig. 374); Zin (2006b: 130, fig. 4, and 135 (drawing)); drawing by the present author.

<sup>58)</sup> Gail (1994).

<sup>59)</sup> Fig. 21: detail from a relief from Mathura, State Museum Lucknow, no. J. 105, illus.: Quintanilla (2007: fig. 112); drawing by the present author.

<sup>60)</sup> Jaini (1995); for the possibilities of identifications cf. Quintanilla (2001 and Quintanilla 2007: 44, 251).

<sup>61)</sup> *Ibid.*, cf. Schlingloff (1994: 71, fn. 9).

1<sup>st</sup> c. BCE as well as later, contemporary with Gandhara.<sup>62)</sup> The Gandharan iconography of the naked ascetics, who are always shown carrying a piece of cloth in the left hand, is so similar that their interpretation as Jaina mendicants should be accepted.<sup>63)</sup>

In the Gandharan representations of the *parinirvāṇa*, Kāśyapa meets an acolyte of the Jainas, as described in texts of the Dharmaguptakas. This provides us with an important reference as regards the question of the area's school affiliation. As pointed out by Chongfeng Li<sup>64)</sup> there are other details in the Gandharan representations of the *parinirvāṇa* cycle linking them with the Dharmaguptaka tradition, such as the episode where the body of the Buddha stretched its feet from its coffin so that Kāśyapa could worship them,<sup>65)</sup> which is indeed represented in the reliefs (Fig. 22)<sup>66)</sup> and is not included in the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra* of the Mūlasarvāstivādins preserved in Sanskrit. Knowledge of the Dharmaguptaka tradition of the *parinirvāṇa* narrative in Gandhara is demonstrable in another example: the episode of Āmrapālī donating the mango grove to the Buddha. The representations in Gandhara follow once again the Dharmaguptaka version.<sup>67)</sup> The popularity of the tradition becomes comprehensible if one is aware of the Kharoṣṭhī manuscript fragments of the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra* in Gāndhārī,<sup>68)</sup> which most likely belonged to the Dharmaguptaka school. Even if only as a single folio, the testimony of the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra* of the Dharmaguptakas exists in the Buddhist Sanskrit; the manuscript was discovered in Murtuq, in Turfan.<sup>69)</sup>

<sup>62)</sup> Quintanilla (2007, figs. 112, 168–170, 177, 221).

<sup>63)</sup> Quintanilla (2007: 80, fn. 59), and after her, Balcerowicz (2016: 282, fn. 557) do not accept Gail's (cf. fn. 58) explanation and understand the naked ascetic in the *parinirvāṇa* scenes to be Ājīvika.

<sup>64)</sup> Li, Chongfeng (2012).

<sup>65)</sup> For references to the literary tradition cf. Waldschmidt (1944–48: 301–302); except of the Dharmaguptaka tradition T 1 (ed. vol. 1, pp. 28c-29a; German tr. in Weller (1940: 197)) and in the *vinaya* T 1428 (ed. vol. 22, p. 966b-c), the episode appears also in T 5 (ed. vol. 1, p. 174a-b), T 6 (ed. vol. 1, pp. 189b-190a) T 7 (ed. vol. 1, pp. 206c-207a), and T 1425 (Mahāsaṃghika, ed. vol. 22, p. 490a).

<sup>66)</sup> Fig. 22: relief from Gandhara, Berlin Museum für Asiatische Kunst, no. I 5971, illus.: Kurita (2003, vol. 1, fig. 506); drawing by the present author.

<sup>67)</sup> Tanabe, Tadashi (2013).

<sup>68)</sup> Cf. Allon & Salomon 2000; cf. Li, Chongfeng (2012: 75f).

<sup>69)</sup> Fragment of a manuscript from the 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> century, M 377 (T III M 42), cf. Waldschmidt (1968: 3–16 (232–245)).

As for the Gandharan representations of the *parinirvāṇa*, there is basically nothing which would constitute a bar to understanding the naked ascetic who informed Kāśyapa about Buddha's death to be a *nirgrantha*, a Jaina mendicant, as the Dharmaguptaka texts have it. (Here I must only add that we also encounter representations in Gandhara of the *parinirvāṇa* episode which certainly come from the tradition of the Mūlasarvāstivādins.)<sup>70)</sup>

The situation in Central Asia seems, however, to be different.

The Kizil painting showing the meeting between Kāśyapa and the naked ascetic was recognized by Waldschmidt.<sup>71)</sup> The painting (Fig. 23)<sup>72)</sup> was located in Cave 198 C (Teufelshöhle), in the rear part of the cave, the so-called 'parinirvāṇa space', the circumambulation corridor behind the cult image. In Kucha, this space usually contains depictions of different episodes from the cycle.<sup>73)</sup> We see Kāśyapa (the upper part of his body has not been preserved), who in Kucha is nearly always characterized by his patchwork robe (*pāṃśukūla*). He is standing in front of a vividly gesticulating male person of a very peculiar iconography. The complexion of the man is of an intense dark blue colour. He is naked except for a shawl which is visible on the sides and around his right arm; his penis is pierced by quite a large ring.

The iconography would remain without a decisive explanation if the person Kāśyapa is speaking to were an Ājīvika or a Jaina if we did not have comparative material from another cave in Kucha. In Kizil, we encounter an

<sup>70)</sup> Cf. Zin (2006) for the representations of the episode of the 'stone of Mallas', which textual basis makes the 'Sanskrit Sondertext II' in the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*, cf. Waldschmidt (1944–48: 171–186); ed. Waldschmidt (1948); German tr. Weber (1999: 186–202); for representation of the episode in Kucha cf. Odani (2012) and Zin (2016); cf. Zin (forthcoming a, Occurrence 5)

<sup>71)</sup> Waldschmidt in: Le Coq & Waldschmidt (1933: 48).

<sup>72)</sup> Fig. 23: reconstructing drawing of a painting in Kizil by the present author, Cave 198 C (Teufelshöhle C), rear chamber, wall opposite of the rear wall, right side; partially *in situ*; the fragment with Ājīvika was taken to Berlin, no. I B8374, war loss, cf. Dreyer, Sander & Weis (2002: 134), today in St. Petersburg, Hermitage VD 680 (02.03.1426216); illus.: Le Coq (1924: pl. 4); Waldschmidt (1925: pl. 45b); Ebert (1985: pl. 35.55b); *Mural Paintings in Xinjiang* (2009: vol. 3, pl. 205, p. 228); for the drawing of the entire wall cf. Zin (forthcoming b).

<sup>73)</sup> For representations of the *parinirvāṇa* cycle in Kucha cf. Zhu, Yingrong (1982); Ebert (1985: 164–267); Miyaji (1992); Ghose (2004 and 2005); Li, Chongfeng (2012); for the analysis of the *parinirvāṇa* cycle in the entire area of Kucha cf. Zin (forthcoming a).

analogous-looking man in Cave 110 (Fig. 24).<sup>74</sup> The skin of the man is once again an intense shade of blue. He is gesticulating wildly and there is a ring through his penis; the shawl is not represented. The blue man here is standing in front of the Buddha; thanks to the inscription preserved in the strip above the image we can be certain of who he is. It is the Ājīvika named Upaga.<sup>75</sup> The scene shows an episode from the early days of the Buddha. He has reached enlightenment only recently and is on the way to Sarnāth to deliver his first sermon (which is represented in the subsequent scene in the painting). The episode with the Ājīvika—who was so ignorant that he did not even want to hear the Buddha’s teaching and replied to his friendly invitation with the irritated response ‘I have no time’—is rendered in many texts,<sup>76</sup> presumably because it reflected very badly on the rivalling religion. Aside from Cave 110 in Kizil, the episode is represented in Ajanta XVI<sup>77</sup> and in Borobudur.<sup>78</sup> The iconography of Ājīvika as a naked ascetic is not repeated there and Upaga appears clad, similar to the Brahmins.

As for Kizil, the representation of Upaga delivers secure evidence for the iconography of the Ājīvikas. It seems to signalise that in far-away Kucha—where certainly nobody had ever seen an Ājīvika—there was still an imagery linked to them of extreme ascetics; the dark blue colour might perhaps signalise that they were understood to be dark-skinned—i.e. from South India. It is not necessary to point out that the imagery could have nothing to do with reality.

Both representations of the blue-skinned Ājīvikas in Kizil lack heads, so that nothing can be said about their hair or whether they were bald. There is, however, one more representation in Kucha. This representation has not been recognized as the meeting between Kāśyapa and Ājīvika as yet. The painting

<sup>74</sup> Fig. 24: detail of a painting in Kizil, Cave 110 (Treppenhöhle), right side wall, illus.: Le Coq (1924: pl. 7); Yaldiz (1987: pl. 49); Schlingloff (1994: fig. 2 (drawing)); Nakagawara (1997: fig. 34 (drawing)); Santoro (2003: pl. 5); drawing by the present author.

<sup>75</sup> For the inscription and further references cf. Schmidt (2010: 853).

<sup>76</sup> For the references cf. Schlingloff (2000/2013: no. 64(31), vol. 1, p. 373).

<sup>77</sup> Ajanta, Cave XVI, right side wall, illus. in: Griffiths (1896–97: vol. 1, pl. 50 (copy)); Schlingloff (1994: fig. 1 (drawing)); Schlingloff (2000/2013: no. 64(31), vol. 1, p. 373 (drawing)); Takata (2000: vol. 3, pl. C.16–17h (upper right corner)).

<sup>78</sup> Borobudur, 1 gallery, illus.: Krom & van Erp (1927–31: vol. 3, series I a, pl. 110); Basham (1951: pl. 2).



of the *parinirvāṇa* is placed on the rear wall of Cave 44 in Simsim (Fig. 25).<sup>79</sup> Kāśyapa's *pāṃśukūla*, which in Simsim 44 takes the form of a chequerboard in gaudy colours, is actually easy to recognize. The smaller person looking at Kāśyapa must be the Ājīvika. His skin is light but clearly bluish, and his hair is dark; it is still the hairstyle of the Brahmins but is a different, with two hair wisps to the sides (compare the head of the god Brahma which is immediately to the right). The literature does not help us here, as the references concerning Ājīvikas' hair are contradictory; they sometimes refer to the ritual pulling out of the hair, and sometimes to piled matted locks—i.e. they give the Ājīvikas the appearance of the Brahmanical *jaṭilas*.<sup>80</sup>

The Ājīvika in Simsim 44 wears jewellery, bracelets, and necklaces but except for monks all figures in the painting display such ornaments, so that no importance should be given to this fact. In front of his chest he is clutching a shawl, and in the right hand there is what might possibly be a flower, which he seems to direct towards Kāśyapa.

Grünwedel has recognized the scene with Kāśyapa and a fierce looking Ājīvika holding the flower out towards him in one *parinirvāṇa* painting in Bezeklik (Fig. 26).<sup>81</sup> Grünwedel did not acknowledge the scene immediately: while the caption refers to Kāśyapa and Ājīvika, Grünwedel writes in the text of the book about a monk with a quiet face towards whom a small Brahmin with fur calf-warmers and a mischievous facial expression is holding a flower.<sup>82</sup> Ājīvika's appearance is indeed that of the Brahmins—i.e. how the Brahmins were shown in the Turfan area—with jewellery, shawls, and characteristic calf-warmers made out of the pelts of animals. The painting has not been preserved<sup>83</sup> so that the colour of Ājīvika's complexion can not be proven. What is most peculiar is his hair-dress which takes the form of three rings.

<sup>79</sup> Fig. 25: left side of the painting of *parinirvāṇa*, Simsim, Cave 44, rear wall, illus.: *Mural Paintings* (2008: pl. 280, p. 309); *Mural Paintings in Xinjiang of China* (2009: vol. 5, pl. 109, p. 115); drawing by the present author.

<sup>80</sup> Basham (1951: 106, 165–66); cf. also Schlingloff (1994: 72 and fn. 11).

<sup>81</sup> Fig. 26: Bezeklik, temple 31 (Halle 19, right side wall), Grünwedel (1912: fig. 561).

<sup>82</sup> Grünwedel (1912: 272): 'Im Vordergrund der Gruppe ein großer stehender Mönch mit ruhigem Gesichtsausdruck, dem ein kleiner Brāhmaṇa mit Fellwadenstrümpfen und mit boshaftem Gesichtsausdruck eine Blume halt'.

<sup>83</sup> The part of the painting with the scene was removed from the wall but the present depository is not recorded.

One might think that the three rings are an addition to the late Turfan painting in the time of Chinese-influenced images, but this does not appear to be the case. The lunette above the main image in Cave 97 in Kizil provides a piece of evidence that this particular hair-dress was already familiar to the Kuchean painters (Fig. 27).<sup>84</sup> The picture, which was interpreted as the Miracle of Śrāvastī according to *The Wise and the Foolish*,<sup>85</sup> shows the group of furious ascetics. Four of them display an iconography typical for Kucha, of the Brahmins with beards, long hair piled high, animal hide across the left shoulder, and conventional jewellery on their arms and legs. Two ascetics on the right edge look different. The upper one has a dark brown complexion—jewellery is not visible on his skin, probably because of this dark colour—his long hair is loose, and he is wearing huge round earrings. Since he has no beard he might perhaps be taken for a young Brahmanic ascetic (compare a young Brahmin in Fig. 28). The skin of the ascetic below is light blue and at the top of his hair three rings appear which very similar to those on the head of the Ājīvika in Bezeklik (Fig. 26). The rings are of a reddish-brown colour, exactly like his hair.

Some of the ascetics in the painting demonstrate their anger by gesticulating at the Buddha, while others show their anxiety before the approaching Vajrapāṇi. The painting is apparently to be understood as the defeat of the heretics. The number six is of significance as literary sources such as the *Sāmaññaphalasutta* list six ascetics; their names correspond with the famous teachers of the Jaina and Ājīvika religions.<sup>86</sup> In the painting, no effort was undertaken to represent the Jainas.<sup>87</sup> The ascetics were given the typical appearance of the Brahmanical ascetics. Their attributes, a flask, a stick,

<sup>84</sup> Fig. 27: painting in Cave 97 in Kizil, lunette above the cult niche, illus. in: *Kizil Grottoes* (1983–85: vol. 2, pl. 80); *Mural Paintings in Xinjiang of China* (2009: vol. 3, pls. 30–31, pp. 36–37); drawing by the present author.

<sup>85</sup> Zhao, Li (1995, 2006, and 2008).

<sup>86</sup> *Dīghanikāya* II, for the textual references and their analysis in comparison with the Jaina and Ājīvika doctrine, cf. Basham (1951: 10–26).

<sup>87</sup> It is not certain, but possible, that the artists tried to establish the iconography of Jainas in two paintings in Kucha: Hiyama (2016: IV-1-2-2 and 2017: 372–77) explained two Brahmin-like figures with white shawls bent in a peculiar way around their chests, above whom Vajrapāṇi is holding the *vajra* as Sātyaki Nirgranthīputra according to *Cūlasaccakasutta* (*Majjhimanikāya* 35), *Samyuktāgama* (T 99), no. 110, and the *Ekottarikāgama* (T 125) no. 43.6. If the identification is correct, the iconography was not repeated to make other Jainas comprehensible to the viewer.

and a shawl held above the head are apparently added in order to make the picture vivid rather than to signify a special iconography. The peculiar three rings on the head of one of the figures seem to signalize the presence of some knowledge (even if this knowledge is incorrect) regarding the appearance of the heretics.

The comparative depiction in in Cave 80 (Höllentopfhöhle) in Kizil (Fig. 28)<sup>88</sup> permits an explanation regarding the different-looking ascetic. Five of the heretics have here the appearance of Brahmanical ascetics, even though one of them is young, without a beard, and is wearing his hair curly and decorated with flowers and a sort of tiny bun with pearls around it—the head-dress used to characterise a Brahmanical minister, Varṣākāra.<sup>89</sup>

Here, it is once again only one of the heretics who is represented differently than the others; he is depicted to the (viewer's) right of Vajrapāṇi. This seems to be the Ājīvika. His skin is an intense blue and he is the only one in the group who is not wearing an animal hide across the chest. It seems as though he is meant to be nude except for the shawl which he is holding above his head. The conventional jewellery ornamenting the bodies of the other five men is not painted upon his skin. However, he is wearing a large round earring. His face has unfortunately been destroyed, but it is still possible to discern that he had no beard, and that his reddish hair was arranged high on the top of his head—it is possible but not certain that these were once again rings.

It is not possible to ascertain where from the strange iconography might have come in the present state of research; it might have been any sort of nonsensical confusion with no logical explanation—so much so that e.g. the word *trairāśikas* (followers of the three-category logic)<sup>90</sup> was changed into *trayaśikha*: 'with three tops'—it might perhaps even have been done in order

<sup>88</sup> Fig. 28: painting in Cave 80 in Kizil, lunette above the cult niche, illus. in: *Kizil Grottoes* (1983–1985: vol. 2, pl. 46; Ma, Qin (2007: 273–275); *Mural Paintings in Xinjiang of China* (2009: vol. 2, pl. 225–228, pp. 253–257); drawing by the present author.

<sup>89</sup> Compare e.g. Varṣākāra showing a painted scroll to King Ajātaśatru in Cave 205, references in fn. 37 to our Fig. 12.

<sup>90</sup> The term denoted members of a Jaina sect often confused with Ājīvikas, cf. Basham (1951: 174–81); Balcerowicz (2016: 186–204).

to create the iconography. Unlike in India, the Gandharva Pañcaśikha was depicted with five (or sometimes four) tops on his head in Kucha.<sup>91)</sup>

The imagery of the Ājīvikas was apparently more strongly established in Kucha than the imagery of Nirgranthas, possibly because of the existing iconography of the Ājīvika Upaga and the Ājīvika meeting Kāśyapa. The bizarre imagery with the ring through the penis, the peculiar head-dress of three rings, and the blue complexion allow for Ājīvikas to be recognizable. What is most astonishing is the fact that their iconography existed at all in Kucha.

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<sup>91)</sup> A beautiful example is to be found in Cave 80, underneath our Fig. 28, for references to publications cf. fn. 88.

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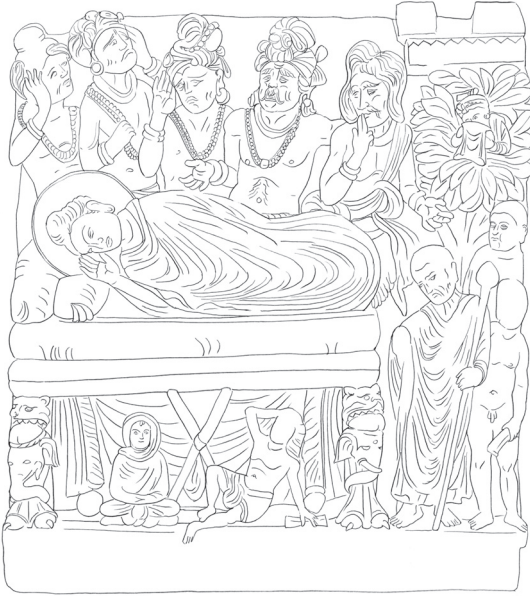


Fig. 1: relief from Gandhara, London, Victoria and Albert Museum, no. I.M. 247-1927 drawing by the author after published photographs (cf. fn. 11).



Fig. 2: detail of a painting in the barrel vault, Kizil, Cave 118 (Hippokampenöhle), coloured drawing by Grünwedel (cf. fn. 15).

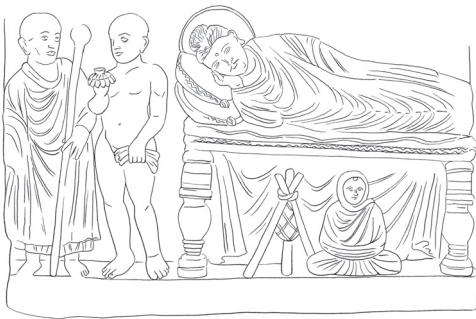


Fig. 3: relief from Gandhara, Washington, Freer Gallery of Art, no. 49.9, drawing by the author after published photographs (cf. fn. 19).



Fig. 4: detail of a relief from Gandhara, Victoria & Albert Museum, no. IS 7-1948, drawing by the author after published photographs (cf. fn. 20).



Fig. 5: stucco figurine from Hadda, Gandhara, Paris, Musée Guimet, no. 17.131, drawing by the author after published photographs (cf. fn. 21).



Fig. 6: detail of a relief from Gandhara, Zar Dheri, Mansehra, Peshawar, Directorate of Archaeology and Museums of Khayber Pakhtun Khwah, drawing by the author after published photographs (cf. fn. 25).

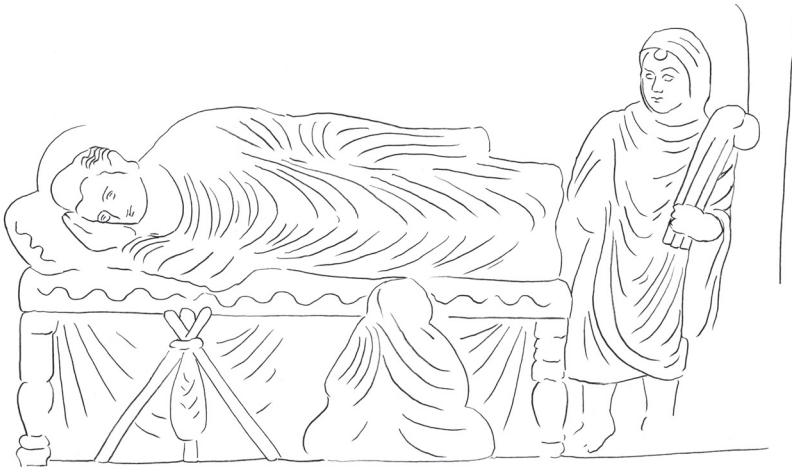


Fig. 7: detail of a relief from Gandhara, Kolkata, Indian Museum, no. A2323, drawing by the author after published photographs (cf. fn. 27).



Fig. 8: detail of a relief on a pillar from Amaravati, British Museum, no. 4, drawing by the author after published photographs (cf. fn. 31).



Fig. 9: Mathura, New Delhi, National Museum, drawing by the author after published photographs (cf. fn. 32).



Fig. 10: detail of a relief from Bharhut, Kolkata, Indian Museum, drawing by the author after published photographs (cf. fn. 33).



Fig. 11: Ajanta, Cave XXVI, left side wall, drawing by the author after published photographs (cf. fn. 36).



Fig. 12: Kizil, fragment of a painting from Cave 205 (Māyāhöhle der 2. Anlage), left corridor, right wall, Berlin, IB 8437, war loss, drawing by Grünwedel (cf. fn. 37).

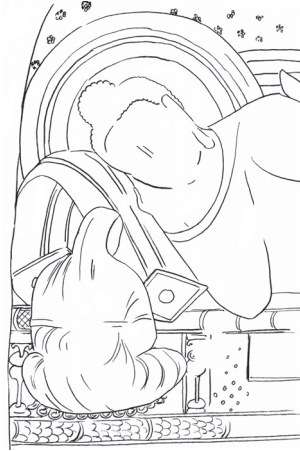


Fig. 13: Kizil, fragment of a painting in Cave 38 (Höhle mit dem Musikerchor), rear wall, drawing by the author after published photographs (cf. fn. 37).



Fig. 14: Simsim, fragment of a painting in Cave 30, rear wall, drawing by the author after published photographs (cf. fn. 37).

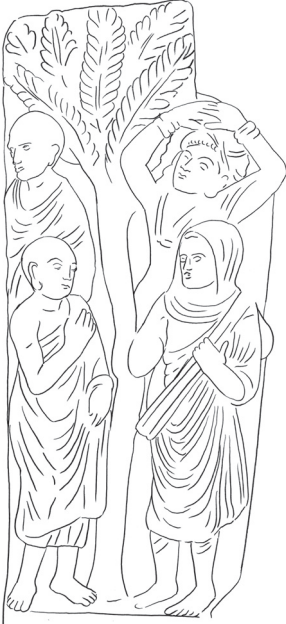


Fig. 15: fragment of a relief from Gandhara, private collection in Japan, drawing by the author after published photographs (cf. fn. 39).



Fig. 16: fragment of a relief from Gandhara, Berlin, Asian Art Museum, no. I 80 drawing by the author after published photographs (cf. fn. 40).



Fig. 17: relief from Sanghao in Gandhara, Lahore Museum, no. 111, drawing by the author after published photographs (cf. fn. 41).

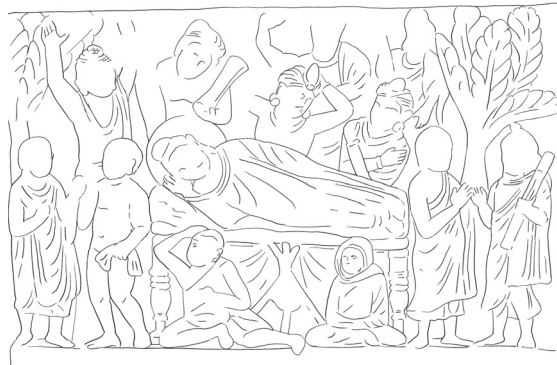


Fig. 18: relief from Gandhara, Taxila Museum drawing by the author after published photographs (cf. fn. 42).

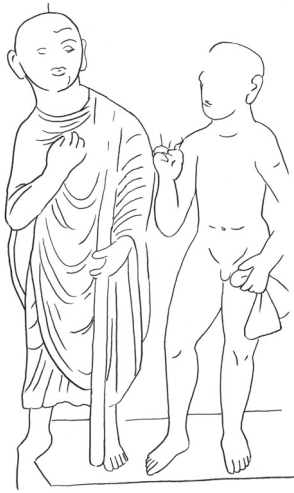


Fig. 19: fragment of a relief from Loriyan-Tangai in Gandhara, Kolkata, Indian Museum, drawing by the author after published photographs (cf. fn. 46).



Fig. 20: detail from a relief from Gandhara, London, Victoria and Albert Museum, no. I.S. 78-1948 drawing by the author after published photographs (cf. fn. 57).



Fig. 21: detail from a relief from Mathura, State Museum Lucknow, no. J.105, drawing by the author after published photographs (cf. fn. 59).

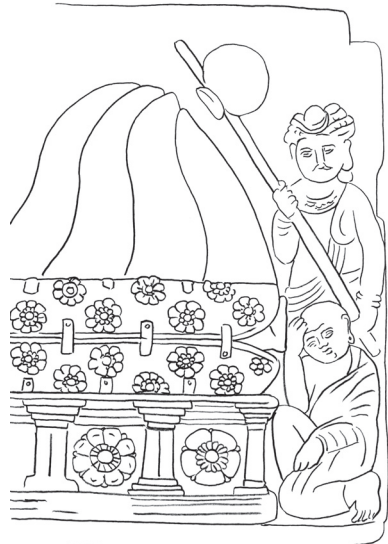


Fig. 22: relief from Gandhara, private collection in London drawing by the author after published photographs (cf. fn. 66).





Fig. 23: reconstruction of a painting in Kizil, Cave 198 C (Teufelhöhle C), rear chamber, wall opposite of the rear wall, right side, drawing by the author after published photographs (cf. fn. 72).



Fig. 24: detail of a painting in Kizil, Cave 110 (Treppenhöhle), right side wall, drawing by the author after published photographs (cf. fn. 74).



Fig. 25: right side of the painting of parinirvāna, Simsim, Cave 44, rear wall, drawing by the author after published photographs (cf. fn. 79).

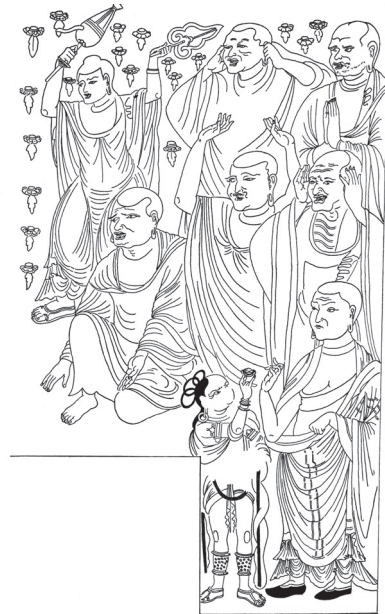


Fig. 26: Bezeklik, temple 31 (Halle 19), right side wall, drawing by Grünwedel (cf. fn. 81).



Fig. 27: Kizil, part of a painting in Cave 97, lunette above the cult niche, drawing by the author after published photographs (cf. fn. 84).



Fig. 28: painting in Cave 80 in Kizil, lunette above the cult niche, drawing by the author after published photographs (cf. fn. 88).