CHAPTER III

A NOTE ON CATALOGUE ENTRIES AND RELATED MATTERS.

Classification of works of art is a task always attended with problems, some of which are listed below, in the present catalogue, sculptures have been grouped together under different categories according to theme and subject matter. Broadly it is the following groups into which sculptures are arranged:

1. Panels depicting Jātakas or earlier lives of the Buddha.
2. Panels treating of single episodes from the life of Gautama, the Buddha.
3. Panels treating of more than one episode from Gautama's life.
4. Standing and Seated figures, as also busts and heads of the Buddha.
5. Standing and seated figures, as also busts and heads of the Bodhisattva.
6. Reliefs depicting the worship of the Buddha. In this category, the Buddha is shown with the dhvāna or ahūva mudrā and there are figures of devotees by his side.
8. Themes such as Atlantes, figures within arches, the garland-bearers, animals and birds, architectural motifs and the like.

Each category is briefly introduced, the intention being to point out the salient features of each group and to
draw attention to the theme treated. At places even sub-categories have been separately introduced so that among the headings figure such entries as 'Dipankara Jataka', the 'Birth of Gautama', 'Adoration of the Buddha', 'Architectural Fragments'.

Different alternatives were considered for presenting and organizing the material contained in the catalogue. Thus, one could have proceeded by Museum Accession Numbers, but this would have resulted in disrupting whatever thematic unity it was possible to see in the works. Groups could not be formed according to styles because the styles tend to get mixed sometimes even within the same panel. The major problem with the styles, the difficulty in identifying them in terms of regions or provenance, a problem already discussed in Chapter I, continues to remain. Again, a chronological sequence within the sculptures could not be established with any ease. Only one possibility left was classification according to themes even though it is not a satisfactory solution, this is what has been done for it gave rise to least number of problems. In some way this approach also has, however, an advantage for it allows us the opportunity to view the same subject matter as treated in different regions, periods or styles, a view that would be hard to get in any other way.

Under each catalogue entry, the information is arranged in the following order:
Serial Number, Accession Number
Theme/Title
Provenance

Data/Period

Material

Dimensions

As has been seen first comes the catalogue Serial No. (ours); this is followed by the Museum Accession Number. The theme comes next. Most of the themes in this collection it has been possible to identify without much difficulty. Problems arose only, when the sculptures were badly defaced or they were very small fragments of obviously larger episodes. A handful of themes were 'new' being generally found in Gandhāra. In these cases an effort has been made to suggest an identification, each case being briefly argued.

While making each catalogue entry the question of provenance was carefully considered. The assigning of provenance of sculptures is not, however, an easy task. No definite information about provenance is available in the records of the Chandigarh Museum. About eighty sculptures are on display in the Museum at present; the Museum labels give only the wide area 'N.W.F.P.' as indication of Provenance. Some labels bear the legend 'Peshawar' and some mention 'Taxila' or 'Per- haps Taxila'. But the records do not specify the source on which the information is based even when the provenance given is specific.

In the present catalogue provenance has been ascribed to some sculptures on different considerations. In some cases the provenance given by us is based on the firm indication of markings on sculptures. There are 31 sculptures from this
collection which bear an unmistakable initial, like the letter 'J'. The 'J' mark on a sculpture almost conclusively indicates that it came from Jamālgarhi. For there is an explicit recommendation by Cunningham that a chisel mark with the first letter of the name of the place from where a sculpture was excavated should be made on it. This is an important indicator hitherto virtually unnoticed and the relevant passage from Cunningham is worth citing: all the sculptures that are worth preserving, General Cunningham writes, "should be marked at once by masons' chisel with an initial letter of the place where they were found. Thus P might be cut on the side or top or back of all sculptures found at Peukelootie. At my suggestion the Jamālgarhi sculptures were all marked with the letter 'J' by Lt. Crompton; and they are now almost the only Indo-Greythian sculptures of which the find spot is absolutely known".

There are other chisel marks indicative of provenance, even though they are not as many in number. Thus 'K' probably stands for 'Karāmar Hill', 'L' for 'Loriyan Tāngai' and 'S' for one of the four sites 'Sikri', 'Sāhri Bahlol', 'Sanghār' and 'Swat'. The information is not conclusive in some cases, because more than one place name begin with the same letter, but the reason why there is more likelihood of the initials standing for the above places is serious because other sources indicate that these sites are represented by sculptures in this collection.

It might be mentioned that the chisel marks, wherever they appear, are indicated at the back, at the side or below

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the base. Only in one case (No. 649) a mark appears boldly on the front of the sculpture.

Another important and reliable source of information for provenance is the records maintained in the form of large-sized photograph albums preserved in the Archaeological Survey of India, New Delhi. Some Gandhāra sculptures figure in these albums; of these most are in Indian collections, including some now in the Chandigarh Museum. The sites from which these sculptures were excavated are mentioned against the photographs and the years range from 1901 to 1930. However, a Chandigarh sculpture figured in these albums, the ascription of provenance has become easy. Unfortunately, however, it is only a handful of sculptures that can be thus identified. Apart from the two major sources of provenance just indicated, we have one sculpture (No. 235) on which there is information clearly recorded in the Accession Register at Moti Bāgh Palace Museum, Patiala. This register is believed to have come with the lot of Gandhāra sculpture when they were handed over by the Pakistan Govt. to Indian authorities in 1949. Ascription of two other sculptures 155,184 is based on an extract from Cunningham's Descriptive List given by Lotif in his book, Lahore: Its History, Architectural Remains and Antiquities (pp.371-376). This information apart, some attempt has been made to ascribe probable provenance to some works. Since the stylistic characteristics of works from the same site are not necessarily the same, and since works with similar characteristics come, on the other hand, from different sites, it is extremely difficult to arrive at clear conclusions. All the same, attempts have been made to compare the
style of some sculptures in the Chandigarh Museum with that of works elsewhere the provenance of which is known and recorded. With a measure of speculation, thus, sculptures have been assigned a 'tentative' provenance. In these cases a footnote in each catalogue entry specifies the ground on which this tentative provenance has been suggested. Reliance has been placed on information gathered from the photograph albums in the Archaeological Survey of India, Archaeological Survey Reports and other excavation records, as also on works of other authors wherever provenance is clearly indicated. But still it has not been possible to ascribe provenance to each one of the sculptures even tentatively. There are many entries, therefore, of which the provenance is mentioned as "unknown" in this catalogue, it is because this alternative has been preferred to making wild guesses or offering suggestions on slight grounds.

Like provenance the dating of sculptures presented major problems. The matter has been briefly discussed in chapter I and it is following the classification of phases proposed there, that the date/pseudo period is given in the catalogue entries.

The material of the sculptures is indicated under each entry. The vast majority of the works are in schist, only a few being in stucco. The exact kind of schist carbonaceous or micaceous, has not been indicated but its colour has been described under each category.

Under dimensions, which are given in centimeters, height precedes width. The measurements are also available in the Museum records but they were checked once again before the
catalogue entries were made. Only minor rectifications in the Museum measurements have had to be made.

Next, under each category, is a description of the sculpture followed by brief account wherever relevant, on matters concerned with style. While describing reliefs with more than one scene in horizontal tiers, we move from right to left, for this probably is how one was supposed to 'read' the scenes, if thematic content is any indication. The stories generally proceed from right to left. In the catalogue descriptions, it should be mentioned, 'right' and 'left' indicate the 'right' and 'left' of the viewer unless otherwise specified. While describing reliefs depicting more than one scene in vertical order, we have proceeded from top to bottom.

While arranging the order of sculptures under each group an effort has been made to begin with the better preserved works. Damaged and fragmentary works then follow.

A word about some terms that recur in the descriptions: the term 'Indian' is used perhaps in the context of describing dress, facial type or general physiognomical that are broadly known as more Indian than alien. Again, keeping in mind the difficulty of distinguishing between 'pillar' and 'pilaster' in sculptures in relief, the former term has been employed to describe round shaped member; 'pilaster' indicates in this catalogue, of rectangular shape.

Whenever possible individual pieces have been compared with others of the same type available elsewhere; indication to this effect is provided in a note towards the end of each catalogue entry. It is here, finally, that details of previous
With a view to present each work visually as well as verbally a contact print has been pasted along each entry. This has led to an increase in the volume of the work which, in turn, has necessitated the splitting up of the work into two volumes, the first ending with page 447. The size of each contact print varies because of the variation in the format of the sculpture and the size of the negative but at least a fair idea of the work can be formed from the photograph. In addition to small prints, it might be mentioned, enlargement of some selected works have been added and included in the second volume. Whenever a piece is illustrated with an enlargement, in addition to the usual contact print, indication has been provided in the form of a coloured dot by the side of the number of the catalogue entry.

Keeping in view the difficulty the scholars might face in locating sculptures in the Museum and collating them with catalogue entries, a two-part concordance table has been provided at the end of the catalogue, first part giving the concordance from catalogue numbers to Museum Numbers, and the second from Museum Numbers to Catalogue Numbers.

Two maps, the first showing the Gandhāra region, and the second pointing to the sites represented in this collection have been included.