

Overall, this book is extremely disappointing. It is filled with easy assumptions, many of them dubious or just plain wrong, and exaggerated claims that are not supported by the sources that Professor Park cites. I began reading this book with the expectation of finding it enjoyable and absorbing. After just a few pages, it began to annoy me. I have to confess that, in the end, I never actually finished it. s.g.haw@wadh.oxon.org

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GANDHARAN BUDDHIST RELIQUARIES. By DAVID JONGEWARD, ELIZABETH ERRINGTON, RICHARD SALOMON, and STEFAN BAUMS. (*Gandharan Studies*, Volume 1). pp. 320. Seattle and London, Early Buddhist Manuscript Project, distributed by University of Washington Press, 2012.
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This book is the first volume of ‘Gandharan Studies’, a new series edited by Richard Salomon. It springs from Salomon’s long-standing Early Buddhist Manuscript Project (EBMP) and is conceived as an auxiliary to the publications of the EBMP. The new series will focus on the history and culture of Gandhāra and adjoining regions. Dedicating the first volume to Buddhist reliquaries is an auspicious beginning. This large-format book – an illustrated catalogue of 400 different reliquaries – is beautifully illustrated and sumptuously produced with many of its pictures in colour. The catalogue may be regarded as authoritative in that it includes virtually every known reliquary from Gandhāra preserved in Pakistan, Afghanistan, India, Japan, Australia, the USA, Canada and Europe. The catalogue covers public and private collections and also includes reliquaries that were published in the past but which are now untraced.

The book is organised into six chapters, each written by one of the contributors. David Jongeward covers the accounts of the Buddha’s last days in literature and art (Chapters 1 and 2), and gives a typological survey of the reliquaries (Chapter 3). Elizabeth Errington provides an account of reliquaries in the British Museum (Chapter 4); this represents the fruit of a research project of many years that endeavoured, among other things, to coordinate the extensive notes of Charles Masson (1800–53) with the collections he made. Richard Salomon gives a general overview of reliquary inscriptions (Chapter 5) and Stefan Baums offers revised texts and translations of the inscriptions (Chapter 6). Reliquaries are nowhere actually defined in the book, so Baums’s chapter deals with rather more than reliquaries and includes, for example, the Mathurā lion capital in the British Museum, not a reliquary in the ordinary sense of the word and not exactly from Gandhāra. The capital carries a confusing array of inscriptions recording that “outside the monastic boundary, a relic is established”. This record was studied in detail by Harry Falk in 2011 and Baums offers his own reading, suggesting that this enigmatic sculpture has yet to yield all its secrets. This and many other aspects of the book will occupy and fascinate the interested reader for hours. There is no doubt that *Gandharan Buddhist Reliquaries* is a landmark publication, full of new information and an essential book for any library attempting to cover South Asian art history and archaeology, Buddhist history and the development of Buddhist religious practice.

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