

## Indian Gallery: Case Guide

Suggested sources: <https://books.google.com/books> Indian Sculpture ca. 700-1800, vol. 2  
Pratapaditya Pal, Los Angeles County Museum of Art [also in the Library]

Pala Period Bronzes, 8<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> century



1. **Hindu God Vishnu with Lakshmi and Sarasvati**, 11th century  
Bengal, India

2. **Hindu Goddess Durga**, c.800  
Bangladesh

3. **Buddha Shakyamuni**, 11th century  
Orissa, India

4. **Bodhisattva Manjushri**, 8th – 9th century  
Bangladesh

【Below 4】  
**Three Mother Goddesses with Bhairava and Ganesha**, 11th century  
Bengal, India

5. **Ensemble with Jina Rishabhanatha and Acolytes**, 9th century  
Jharkhand or Bihar, India

6. **Hindu God Vishnu with Attendants**, 9th century  
Orissa

- Workshops produced work for all clients whether Hindu, Buddhist or Jain
- Stylistic consistency
- Artists generally unknown
- Sculptures inscribed w/ names of donors, not names of artists
- Traditionally hereditary profession, workshop system, with guilds, and long apprenticeships mostly men, although women not unknown
- Prior to 13<sup>th</sup> century artists had higher status, however, always artists of exalted status
- Commissioning and paying for a sculpture always brought religious benefit

## Buddhist Art

- Siddhartha Gautama (aka Shakyamuni), the historical Buddha (c. 5th c BCE).
- Born into a royal family, of divine conception and miraculous birth
- Sages predicted he would be a great ruler – political or religious?
- Renounced princely life; adopted extreme asceticism for 6 years, eventually adopted “Middle Way.”
- Attained enlightenment- freedom from suffering and the endless cycle of rebirth.
- Buddhism remained a strong religious force in India until the 13<sup>th</sup> c. It experienced a revival during the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

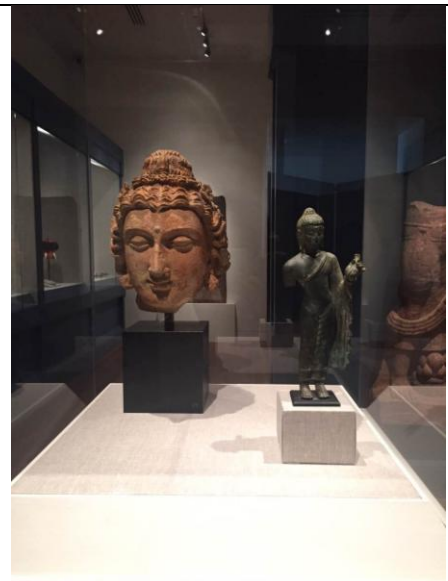
Additional Materials: <https://www.khanacademy.org/partner-content/asian-art-museum/aam-buddhism-topic/buddhism/a/introduction-to-buddhism>



**Partial Torso of the Buddha, 2<sup>nd</sup> century**  
India, Kushan Dynasty

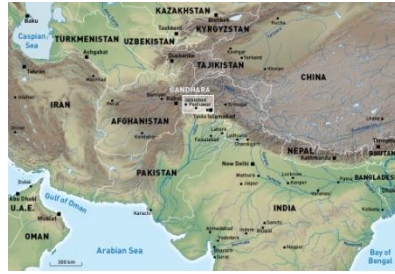


- For centuries, no depictions of Buddha in human form – only footprints, empty chair, et al
- Made at one of main centers of early Buddhist art – Mathura (south of Delhi)
- Mathura known for its mottled red sandstone
- Clinging robe, typical of this era & style
- Lotus bud between his feet



**Head of a Bodhisattva, 4<sup>th</sup> century**  
Pakistan, Gandhara

- From Gandhara, now northwest India and parts of Pakistan and Afghanistan
- Along with Mathura, one of main centers of early Buddhist art
- 330 CE Conquered by Alexander the Great. Hellenistic traditions part of the aesthetics of the area for over 700 years.
- 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> centuries CE region became a significant center of Buddhism- Buddhist art flourished.




***Buddha Shakyamuni***, 7<sup>th</sup>  
century  
Tamil Nadu




- ***Head of a Bodhisattva*** reveals lasting influence of Hellenism
- Bodhisattva, an enlightened being who has taken a vow to help others attain enlightenment. During the 3<sup>rd</sup> century increase in veneration of bodhisattvas
- Material is terra cotta, (stucco), a popular medium for sculpture during this period in this place.
- Shakyamuni: historical founder of Buddhism,
- Exaggerated, *tribhanga* (contrapposto) pose (body bends in 3 places)
- Left hand holds the gathered end of his garment.
- Facial features are strongly defined
- Elongated earlobes, indicate princely origins
- Prominent circle on the temple represents the auspicious tuft of hair- one of the supernatural signs of the Buddha (others include: cranial bump)


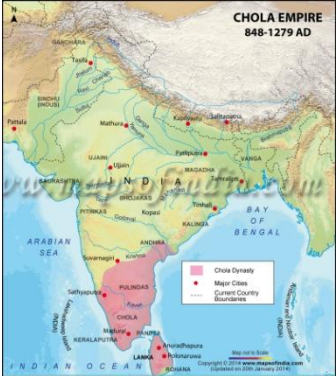


## Hindu Art:


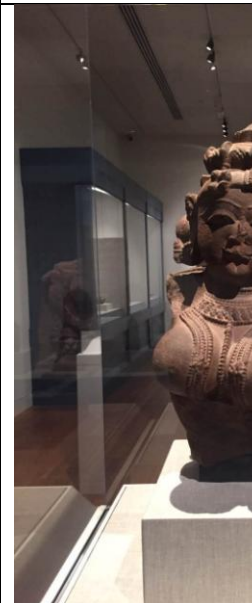
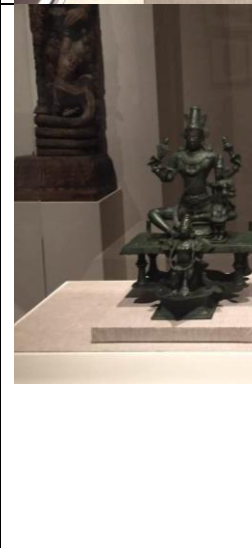
- Majority religion of India
- Origins over 4,000 years old
- No single founder, a decentralized religion with no hierarchy of clergy or supreme authority
- Expansive pantheon of gods
- By the 8<sup>th</sup> century Vishnu and Shiva had become the dominant Hindu deities. Third is Durga/Shakti, (the great goddess)
- Stone sculptures intended for exterior walls of temples or niches within larger temple complexes
- Bronzes intended for altars either within temples or in domestic settings

Additional Resources: <https://www.khanacademy.org/partner-content/asian-art-museum/aam-hinduism-topic/aam-hinduism/a/roots-of-hinduism>  
<https://www.khanacademy.org/partner-content/asian-art-museum/aam-hinduism-topic>

|   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
|  | <p><b>Vishnu</b>, mid 11<sup>th</sup> century<br/>India, Bengal</p> <p><b><u>Connections:</u></b><br/>-Similar stance as to Jain sculpture (in cases across gallery) and stone <b>Surya</b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Vishnu, Preserver of the Cosmic Order.</li><li>• As with most Hindu gods, Vishnu has many incarnations (avatars), most popular Krishna and Rama</li><li>• Shown with consorts, Lakshmi, goddess of wealth, and Sarasvati, goddess of knowledge and music.</li><li>• Four arms (indicating cosmic deity, and the four directions), holds: war discus, club, conch shell and lotus</li><li>• Stands upon lotus pedestal</li><li>• Kingly figure with high crown, adorned with jewelry and flower garland</li></ul> |
|---|---|--|

|   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
|    | <p><b>Matrika</b>, 8<sup>th</sup> century<br/>South India, Pallava Kingdom</p> <p><b>Connection:</b><br/>-small bronze <i>Three Mother Goddesses with Bhairava and Ganesha</i></p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One of the mother goddesses</li> <li>• In texts, mother goddess are often described as ferocious and threatening</li> <li>• Sculptural depictions generally benevolent</li> </ul>   |
|   | <p><b>Surya (Sun God)</b>, 12<sup>th</sup> century<br/>India, Chola period</p> <p><b>Connections:</b><br/>-Bronze <i>Surya</i><br/>Bronze <i>Parvati</i> and <i>Ganesh</i>, all created during the Chola period, one of the greatest empires of South India</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ancient solar deity</li> <li>• Like Vishnu, shown in kingly form, with high crown. (Only 2 arms)</li> <li>• Emblem is the lotus</li> <li>• Balance between form and ornamentation typical of the period</li> <li>• Freed from its background, but back left unfinished</li> </ul>   |
|  | <p><b>Sun God Sūrya with Acolytes</b></p> <p>Karnataka, Western Chālukya period, 11<sup>th</sup> century</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stands on a lotus, and the god holds a lotus flowers in his hands</li> <li>• Base serves as his chariot</li> <li>• 7 horses can be seen in the recesses of the pedestal; charioteer Aruna is directly above them.</li> <li>• The horses may represent the seven days of the week, or the seven colors of the rainbow, or the</li> </ul> |

|  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
|  | <p><b><u>Connections:</u></b><br/>Apollo</p> <p>Stone sculpture of <b><i>Surya</i></b> nearby</p>   | <p>seven chakras.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Surya is accompanied on top of the chariot by his wives, Samjna (Harmony) and Chhaya (Shadow).</li> <li>• Only Hindu god who rides a chariot instead of a single animal</li> </ul>  |
|    | <p><b><i>Standing Ganesha</i></b>, late 12<sup>th</sup>-early 13<sup>th</sup> century<br/>Chola Dynasty</p> <p><b><u>Connections:</u></b><br/><b><i>Parvati</i></b> and <b><i>Shiva</i></b></p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elephant-headed son of Shiva and Parvati</li> <li>• Remover of all obstacles</li> <li>• Universally venerated– by Hindus, Buddhists and Jains</li> <li>• Attributes: broken tusk, bowl of sweets, portly physique</li> <li>• Mount – usually a rat, sometimes a lion</li> </ul>                           |
|  | <p><b><i>Standing Parvati</i></b>, 10<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> century<br/>South India, Chola period</p>    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parvati, consort of Shiva (aka Gauri, Devi or Uma)</li> <li>• Chola period, a high point of bronze production; solid casting process</li> <li>• Bronzes used in processions</li> <li>• Bronzes “dressed;” only face visible</li> <li>• Worked in the round</li> <li>• Sensuality and restraint</li> </ul> |

|  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
|     | <p><b><i>Standing Shiva</i></b>, 16<sup>th</sup> century<br/>South India, Kerala</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One of primary gods of Hinduism</li> <li>• Creator and Destroyer</li> <li>• Attributes: trident, drum, rosary (symbolizing all time: past, present and future)</li> </ul>  |
|   | <p><b><i>Female Figure</i></b>, 11<sup>th</sup> century<br/>India, Khajuraho</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nearly carved in the round; back unfinished</li> <li>• Voluptuous figure indicative of blessings/ fertility</li> <li>• Pose derived from dance</li> <li>• Heavily ornamented without obscuring figure</li> </ul> |
|  | <p><b><i>Vishnu with Consort and Garuda</i></b>, 15<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> century<br/>India</p> <p><b><i>Temple Model</i></b>, c. 15<sup>th</sup> century<br/>India, Karnataka</p> <p><b><u>Connections:</u></b><br/>-stone Vishnu<br/>-Chola bronzes</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Garuda, 1/2 bird, 1/2 human “mount” for Vishnu</li> <li>• May have served as a collection box at a South Indian temple</li> <li>• Relationship of sculptural decoration in architecture</li> </ul>               |

## Jain Art



A minority religion in India that grew out of the teachings of 24 Jinas (“conquerors”), the most recent being Mahavira, a near contemporary of the Buddha Shakyamuni. At the heart of Jain teaching is the commitment to non-violence (*ahimsa*).

The creation of the Jina image is among the earliest recorded figurative representations in Indian art. Jinas are usually shown either standing erect, or seated in meditation. Only 2 Jinas are physically distinguishable: Rishabhanatha (the 1<sup>st</sup>) recognizable by his long, uncut hair, and parsvanatha (the 23<sup>rd</sup>), who is always represented with a cobra canopy.

For more information:

*The Peaceful Liberators: Jain Art from India [in library]*

Jainpedia.org


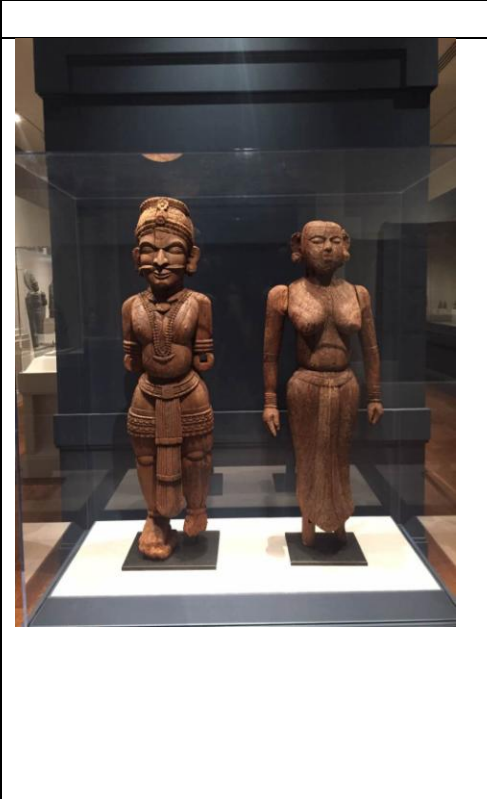

|  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
|   | <p>1. <b><i>Jina Rishabhanatha in a Mandala</i></b>, 8<sup>th</sup> century<br/>Jharkhand, Manbhum, India</p> <p><b><u>Connections:</u></b><br/><b>Surya</b> stone and bronze also in the gallery</p> <p>2. <b><i>Standing Digambara Jina in Kayotsarga Pose</i></b>, 11<sup>th</sup> century<br/>India, Madhya Pradesh or East Rajasthan</p> <p>3. <b><i>Seated Digambara Jina</i></b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stands on 2-tiered lotus</li> <li>• 10 small figures around the base: the Sun God <i>Surya</i> and the 9 planets.</li> <li>• Jina is the cosmic pillar in the planetary universe</li> <li>• Nakedness of figures associates them with the Digambara (“sky clad”) sect of Jainism</li> </ul> |
|  | <p>Left:<br/><b><i>Tirthankara Chandrabrabhu</i></b>, 12<sup>th</sup> century<br/>Northern India</p> <p>Right:<br/><b><i>Flywhisk-Bearing Celestial</i></b>, 11<sup>th</sup> century<br/>Rajasthan, India</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Part of an ensemble of sculpture for an altar</li> <li>• Symbols of divinity: lotus-shaped nimbus behind head, flywhisk</li> <li>• <i>Tribhanga</i> pose</li> </ul>   |



|   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
|    | <p><b>Jain manuscripts and painting</b></p> <p>This area will be used for rotations of Jain paintings. They are primarily paintings that accompany scriptural text and/or illustrate the complex Jain cosmology.</p> | <p>Human beings live in the Middle World, which is the smallest of the three worlds that make up world space – <b>loka-ākāśa</b>. In world space all the souls live in the different body-forms they take according to their rebirths, in the various worlds. Outside world space is the non-world space – <b>aloka-ākāśa</b> – which is endless. However, the Middle World is the most important area from the spiritual point of view because it is the only part where human beings can live</p> |
|  |  | <p>Photographs by Deen Dayal, India's most important photographer in the late 19<sup>th</sup> – early 20<sup>th</sup> century. This section will rotate every 4-6 months.</p>   |

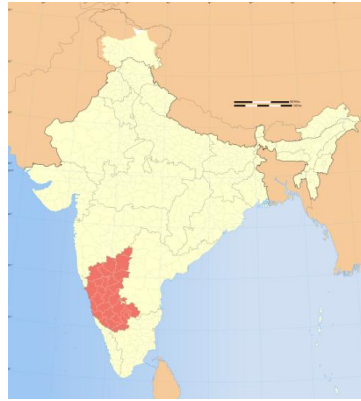
## Village and Tribal Art

For most people, most important component of daily worship are the local gods – most of whom are feminine. Some assimilated into major religions, but others co-exist and thrive in village and tribal settings.

|   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
|   | <p>Kanthas</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Household textiles, dating from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> to mid-20<sup>th</sup> centuries</li> <li>• Celebrate auspicious events such as weddings and births</li> <li>• Designs often centered on lotus, other common motifs include the flowering tree (tree of life)</li> </ul>  |
|  | <p><b><i>Standing Male Bhuta Figure</i></b><br/>South India, Malabar Coast</p> <p><b><i>Standing Female Bhuta Figure</i></b>, 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> century<br/>South India, Malabar Coast</p>  | <p>Bhutas, supernatural beings or divinized ancestor spirits, have been worshipped in parts of Karnataka, in southwestern India, since at least the fourteenth century. Wooden bhuta figures are found in shrines and temples. Originally painted, as in the photograph at right, without this bright, multi-color coating, these figures look dramatically different.</p> <p>They take on myriad forms; however boars, such as that seen here, buffalo and ferocious manifestations of the god Shiva are among the most commonly represented.</p> |



**Masks, Breastplate and Equestrian Figure**  
India, Karnataka



Masks were used by mediums in rituals intended to both propitiate and communicate with the bhuta. At all-night ceremonies an elaborately costumed medium-often accompanied by a similarly attired dancer- invites a specific bhuta into himself and wears the mask of that bhuta over his face or atop his head, or, at times, in his hands. The bhuta communicates through the medium, and often speaks through the mask. Bhutas dispense advice and counsel to the family sponsoring the ceremony, settle local disputes, as well as sing and tell stories.



1. Lithograph from Benjamin Simpson and George Wallich's ***Descriptive Ethnology of Bengal: Naga Chief***, 1872

2. **Basket with Money Skulls**, 19<sup>th</sup> century  
India, Nagaland

3. **Hat**, 19<sup>th</sup> century  
India, Nagaland

4. **Necklace**, 19<sup>th</sup> century  
Nagaland

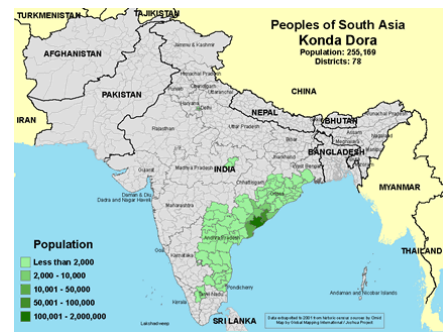
5. **Chief's Hat**, 19<sup>th</sup> century  
India, Nagaland

- Naga tribes who inhabit the mountainous regions of far northeast India.
- Hunters
- Traditionally engaged in head-hunting to demonstrate power and achieve manhood. Banned by the British in the 19<sup>th</sup> c.

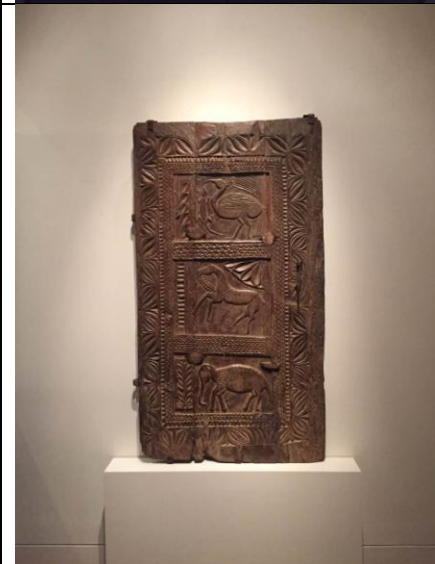




**Various Animals**  
India, Orissa



Khond



**Wooden Door**  
India, Orissa

- Khonds are a nearly indigenous people in India
- Agricultural way of life
- Bronzes/ brasses used in rituals
- Traditional religion based on animism/ shamanism; currently more Hindu
- Animal forms predominate