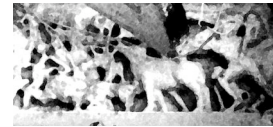


preliminary syllabus 8/07



ARTH 711/SAST 711: Seminar in Indian Art
“Methods of Meaning: Sculpture and Architecture”
Professor Michael W. Meister, Jaffe 308

fall 2007
Jaffe 201
W 3 –5

Indian art presents a remarkable case study in the creation of a visual vocabulary, grammar, and language of meaning. What and how significance has been embodied by India’s visual cultures have not adequately been addressed, nor a comparison of artistic versus textual traditions been widely carried out. This workshop is a preliminary step to define questions and to review some available case studies.

Students will be asked to read and to prepare notes and questions on readings; to bring them to each class in order to join in discussions that will be the main content of the course; and to visit the South Asian collections at Penn and nearby museums. Students also should choose an area from those covered in readings within which to prepare a final essay and presentation for the class.

You may wish to refer to a general history of Indian visual culture. Two modern scholarly reference surveys, available in Penn’s library, are:

J. C. Harle, *The Art and Architecture of the Indian Subcontinent*, Penguin Books, 1986.
Susan Huntington, *Art of Ancient India: Buddhist, Hindu, Jain*, Weatherhill, 1985.

A classic pioneering scholarly exploration of India’s iconographic conventions is:

Jitendra Nath Banerjea, *The Development of Hindu Iconography*, 2d ed., rev. and enl., University of Calcutta, 1956.

Online image sources include:

Penn’s Image Collection: <http://imagesvr.library.upenn.edu/i/image/all/>

Digital South Asia Library, AIIS Collection: <http://dsal.uchicago.edu/images/>

Bi-weekly readings (subject to revision):

I. Royal beginnings

Doris Meth Srinivasan, "The Mauryan Gaṇikā from Dīdārgaṅj (Pāṭalīputra)," *East and West* 55.1–4 (2005): 345–362.

compare: F. Asher and W. Spink, "Maurya Figural Sculpture Reconsidered," *Ars Orientalis* 19 (1989).

cross-reference: A. K. Coomaraswamy, *Yakṣas*, Smithsonian, 1929 & 32 (and later reprints).

II. Buddhist narrative

Vidya Dehejia, "On Modes of Visual Narration in Early Buddhist Art," *The Art Bulletin* 72.3 (1990): 374–392.

compare: M. W. Meister, "Early Architecture and its Transformations: New Evidence for Vernacular Origins for the Indian Temple" (SAA05 in press).

cross-references: John Irwin, "'Aśokan' Pillars," series of four articles in *Burlington Magazine*, 1973–76 [available through JSTOR]; or "The True Chronology of Aśokan Pillars," *Artibus Asiae*, 1983 [available through JSTOR]. Sir John Marshall and Alfred Foucher, *The Monuments of Sanchi*, 3 vols., 1940 [kept in Penn's Rare Books Room]

III. Multiplicity conventions

Doris Meth Srinivasan, "The Religious Significance of Divine Multiple Body Parts in the Atharva Veda," *Numen*, 1978 [available through JSTOR].

Compare: M. W. Meister, "Image Iconopraxis and Iconoplasty in South Asia." *Res: Anthropology and Aesthetics*, 51 (2007): 13–32.

cross-reference: D. M. Srinivasan, *Many Heads, Arms and Eyes: Origin, Meaning and Form of Multiplicity in Indian Art*, Leiden: Brill, 1997.

IV. Iconography, Museum exercise, PMA

M. W. Meister, "Regional Variations in Mātrkā Conventions," *Artibus Asiae* 47 (1986): 233–62; "Man and Man-Lion: The Philadelphia Narasimha," *Artibus Asiae* 56: 291–301 [available through JSTOR].

cross-reference: Jitendra Nath Banerjea, *The Development of Hindu Iconography*

V.

Padma Kaimal, "Shiva Nataraja: Shifting Meanings of an Icon," *The Art Bulletin*, 81.3 (1999): 390–419 [available through JSTOR];

M. W. Meister, "Gaurīśikhara: Temple as an Ocean of Story," *Artibus Asiae* [in press]

cross-reference: M. W. Meister, "De- and Re-constructing the Indian Temple," *Art Journal* 49 (New 1990): 395–400 [available through JSTOR].