

Cave Temples of Asia ARTH 482/599

Prof. Robert DeCaroli
Room IN 336

Wednesday 4:30-7:10pm

Course Description/Objectives:

The rock-cut architecture at world-famous sites like Ajanta, Ellora, Elephanta, Bamiyan, Dunhuang, Longmen and many others have captured the imaginations of visitors and devotees for centuries. These structures are not built with bricks or timber, rather they have been carved into the sides of mountains. The sites are notable not just for their antiquity and religious significance, but also for the ingenious and sophisticated techniques used to create them. Somewhere between works of architecture and massive sculptures, these monasteries and temples has survived centuries of use and abandonment. Because of their enduring nature, these primarily Buddhist and Hindu sites provide rare opportunities for understanding Asia's past. Each week this seminar will explore a different site and will begin by exploring the origins of the rock-cut architectural form in the third century BCE India. Subsequent classes will introduce some of the most important examples created in later periods and different regions in South and East Asia. We will examine what we know about these sites' histories, how they were made, and what was required to maintain them in antiquity—as well as how they are being protected from threats today.

Office Hours: Horizon Hall 3139, Monday and Wednesday and by appointment.

Email: rdecarol@gmu.edu

Course Requirements:	Class Participation	10%
	Weekly Reading Response Papers (10)	20%
	Research Question Proposal	10%
	Research Paper	50%
	ARTH 482 (7-10 pages)	
	ARTH 599 (15-20 pages)	
	Class Presentation	10%

The class meetings will consist of seminar-style discussions on specific topics. These meetings will form the core of the course material so it is strongly advised that you attend class consistently. ALL students are expected to participate in class discussions.

All students will need to turn in Research Question Proposal, in which the subject of the research paper is presented and bibliographic information is provided.

The Research Paper will involve independent research. All students have the option to turn in a rough draft of the paper if done so at least a week before the final draft is due. More information on all of these assignments will be provided during the term.

Each week students will be expected to turn in a 1 to 2-page Reading Response paper. You must turn in 10 over the course of the semester. If you turn in more, the lowest grade will be dropped.

Grading Policies:

A	100-93%	C+	79-77%
A-	92-90%	C	76-70%
B+	89-87%	D	69-60%
B	86-83%	F	59% and lower
B-	82-80%		

Attendance is necessary; much of the material will only be presented in class discussions. You are responsible for keeping up with the material and for getting notes for missed classes.

This class is a seminar centered on the discussion of assigned texts. A student's class participation grade will be evaluated not only according to the amount of talking that student does, but also according to whether that student contributes thoughtfully and constructively, based on a careful consideration of the class readings. Obviously, students cannot contribute to class discussion if they are absent; consequently, repeated unexcused absences will be reflected in their participation grade.

Extensions will be given ONLY in cases of emergencies or illnesses with proper documentation (doctor's note etc.) In all other cases (family obligations, religious holidays, disabilities etc.), extensions may be granted if I am informed well BEFORE the deadline.

Reading Assignments and Research Papers must be submitted to Blackboard before class on the day specified in the schedule. Late papers will be marked down five points (half a grade) for every day they are late. Papers will be graded and returned with comments on Blackboard.

Please refrain from using phones for talking or texting while in class. If it is important please exit the classroom first.

Adherence to codes of academic honesty is expected on all assignments and in all testing situations. I take the Honor Code (as stipulated in the university undergraduate catalog) very seriously. This code is a simple expression of respect for the course, your classmates and yourself. Cheating and Plagiarism are forbidden (obviously).

For those who do not know what Plagiarism is, it can be defined as: presenting as one's own the words, work or opinions of someone else without giving them proper acknowledgment. Plagiarism can also refer to borrowing the sequence of ideas, arrangement of material, or pattern of thought of someone else without giving them proper credit. Plagiarism can be avoided by proper use of footnotes.

Texts:

All readings will be available on JSTOR, on Blackboard (MyMason) under the Course Content Folder, or available free through other online sources.

Week 1: Aug 24 Chronology: Basics of Cave Temples

Burgess and Fergusson. Cave Temples of India (1880-1886)

Keep in mind the age of the text. Its commentary reflects imperialist British values of the period. The maps are still considered reliable. For better or worse the academic tradition builds from this foundation. No need to read it all, just skim portions and look at the maps and ground plans.

<https://archive.org/details/cavetemplesofind00ferguoft/page/n677/mode/2up>

Vidya Dehejia. "Early Buddhist Caves at Junnar" *Artibus Asiae*. 1969, 31. 2/3. 1969. 147-166.

Week 2: Aug 31 Architecture, Inscription, and Iconography (Bhaja, Bedsa, Karle)

Abhijit Dandekar, Shrikant Ganvir, and Gopal Joge. "An Unpublished Inscription from the Karle Caitya Cave" *Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute*, Vol. 94 (2013), pp. 147-151.

Robert DeCaroli. "Reading Bhājā: A Non-Narrative Interpretation of the Vihāra 19 Reliefs" *East and West*, December 2000, Vol. 50, No. 1/4 (December 2000), pp. 259-280.

Gregory Schopen. "The Buddhist 'Monastery' and the Indian Garden: Aesthetics, Assimilations, and the Siting of Monastic Establishments" *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, Oct. - Dec., 2006, Vol. 126, No. 4 (Oct. - Dec., 2006), pp. 487-505

Week 3: Sept 7 Painting and Patronage (Ajanta)

Walter Spink. "The Archaeology of Ajanta." *Ars Orientalis*. vol. 21. 67-94.

Richard Cohen. *Setting the Three Jewels: The Complex Culture of Buddhism at the Ajanta Caves*. Dissertation. University of Michigan. UMI, 1995. Read the translated Inscriptions pgs. 327-383.

Monika Zin. "Pictures of Paradise for Good Luck and Prosperity." in *Mani-Sushma: Archaeology and Heritage*. V. Kumar and B. Rawat eds. Delhi" B.R. publishing, 2015. 125-147.

Week 4: Sept 14 Intro to Hindu Caves (Udayagiri, Elephanta) Research Question Due

Michael Willis. "Varaha – sections 1.6 and 1.7" in *The Archaeology of Hindu Ritual: Temples and the Establishment of the Gods*. Cambridge UP, 2009. 41-55

Joanna Williams. "The Eponymous Elephant of Elephanta." *Ars Orientalis*, 2000, 30, 1. Chāchājī: Professor Walter M. Spink Felicitation Volume. 2000. 51-58

Week 5: Sept 21 Trade Networks and Donation (Kanheri)

-- Online Interview with Dr. Brancaccio (?)

Instead of a reading response, please prepare questions for Dr. Brancaccio

Pia Brancaccio. "The Silk Road and the Cotton Road: Buddhist Art and Practice Between Central Asia and the Western Deccan" in *Vie della Seta: Percorsi, Immagini e Cultura Materiale*. Eds. B. Genito and L. Caterina (Scienza e Lettera Editore: Rome) 2018. Pp 59-73.

Pia Brancaccio. "Views from the Black Mountain: The Rock-Cut *Mahāvihāra* at Kānheri/Kṛṣṇagiri in Konkan" in *On the Regional Development of Early Medieval Buddhist Monasteries in South Asia*. A. Shimada, A. Amar, N. Morrissey eds. RINDAS Series 34 Ryukoku University, Japan, 2021. 73-87.

Optional:

Shobhana Gokhale. *Kanheri Inscriptions*. Pune: Deccan College Post Graduate and Research Institute, 1991. – read Introduction and the translated inscriptions pgs. 45-152.

Week 6: Sept 28 Completion, Repair, and Renovation (Pitalkhora, Junnar, Naneghat)

Robert DeCaroli. "Snakes and Gutters: *Nāga* Imagery, Water Management, and Buddhist Rainmaking Rituals in Early South Asia." *Archives of Asian Art*. 69. 1. 2019. 1-18.

Vidya Dehejia and Peter Rockwell. "A Flexible Concept of Finish: Rock-Cut Shrines in Premodern India," *Archives of Asian Art*, 61, 2011. 61-89.

Optional

Akira Shimada. "Trajectories of Buddhist Monasteries after the Gupta Era: An Archaeological Survey" in *On the Regional Development of Early Medieval Buddhist Monasteries in South Asia*. A. Shimada, A. Amar, N. Morrissey eds. RINDAS Series 34 Ryukoku University, Japan, 2021. 41-71.

Week 7: Oct 5 Shared Site: Buddhist, Hindu, Jain (Ellora)

Lisa Owen. "Kings or Ascetics? Evidence of Patronage in Ellora's Jain Caves" *Artibus Asiae*. 70: 2 2010, 181-225.

Stephen Markel. "The "Rāmāyaṇa" Cycle on the Kailāsanātha Temple at Ellora" *Ars Orientalis*, Vol. 30:1. Chāchājī: Professor Walter M. Spink Felicitation Volume. 2000. 59-71

Week 8: Oct 12 Regional Differences: Southern India (Badami, Mahabalipuram)

Michael D. Rabe. "The Māmallapuram Praśasti: A Panegyric in Figures" *Artibus Asiae*, 57: 3/4, 1997, 189-241.

Vidya Dehejia and Richard Davis. "Addition, Erasure, and Adaptation: Interventions in the Rock-Cut Monuments of Māmallapuram" *Archives of Asian Art*, 60, 2010, 1-18.

Week 9: Oct 19 Sri Lanka: Living Traditions (Colossal Sculpture Part 1)

Osmund Bopearachchi “‘The Well-Farer of the world is not easily led away’ Revisiting the Paintings of the Mahārājaleṇa of the Dambulla Raja Mahāvihāra (Sri Lanka)” in *Connecting the Art, Literature, and Religion of South and Central Asia Studies in Honour of Monika Zin*. I. Konczak-Nagel, S. Hiyama, and A. Klein eds. New Delhi: DEV Publishers & Distributors, 2022. 37-50.

L. Prematilleke. “The Identity and Significance of the Standing Figure at the Gal-vihāra, Polonnaruva, Ceylon” *Artibus Asiae*, 28:1, 1966, 61-66.

Week 10: Oct 26 **Afghanistan: Preservation and Destruction (Colossal Sculpture Part 2)**

Xuanzang. *The Great Tang Dynasty Record of the Western Regions (Taishō Volume 51, Number 2087)*
Li Rongxi trans. BDK America, Inc., 1996. 37-38.

Deborah Klimburg-Salter. “Bāmiyān: Recent Research” *East and West*, 38: 1/4 1988, 305-312.

Shoshin Kuwayama. “Chinese Records on Bamiyan: Translation and Commentary.” *East and West*, 55:1/4, 2005, 139-161.

Optional:

Finbar Barry Flood, "Between Cult and Culture: Bamiyan, Islamic Iconoclasm, and the Museum," *Art Bulletin*. 84, 2002. 641-659.

Week 11: Nov 2 **Trade Networks / Central Asia (Kizil, Kucha, Bezeklik etc.)**

Monika Zin. “The Case of the “Repainted Cave” (Kizil, Cave 117)” *Indo-Asiatische Zeitschrift Mitteilungen der Gesellschaft für indo-asiatische Kunst*. 19. 2015. 19-27.

Angela F. Howard, “On ‘Art in the Dark’ and Meditation in Central Asian Buddhist Caves” *The Eastern Buddhist*, 46: 2, 2015. 19-40.

Week 12: Nov 9 **Trade Networks / China (Dunhuang/Mogao and Yungang)**

Michelle C. Wang. “Early Chinese Buddhist Sculptures as Animate Bodies and Living Presences” *Ars Orientalis*. 46. 2016, 13-38.

Video: Eugene Wang SOAS Lecture “How to Experience Buddhist Caves as Virtual Reality”
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GXW33k1XVpM>

Optional:

Michelle C. Wang. “The Thousand-armed Manjusri at Dunhuang and Paired Images in Buddhist Visual Culture.” *Archives of Asian Art*. 66:1, 2016, 81-105.

Week 13: Nov 16 **Imperial Sponsorship (Longmen and Dazu/Mt. Baoding)**

Amy McNair. “Chapter Six: Rouge and Powder Money” in *Donors of Longmen: Faith, Politics, and Patronage in Medieval Chinese Buddhist Sculptures*. University of Hawaii Press. 2006.

Henrik H. Sørensen, "The Didactic Use of Animal Images in Southern Song Buddhism: The Case of Mount Baoding in Dazu, Sichuan" in *The Zoomorphic Imagination in Chinese Art and Culture Book J*. Silbergeld and E. Wang eds, University of Hawaii. 2016, 137-170.

Week 14: Nov 23

Thanksgiving --- no class this week

Week 15: Nov 30

Final Papers Due

Student Presentations (20 min)

Week 16: Dec 7

Finals week – potential class meeting