

South asian art



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

South Asian Art Introduction: Southeast Asian art encompasses the works originating from the Indian subcontinent which includes the countries of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, and Bhutan. The art in South Asia is mainly focused on the three religions that emerged in India which are Jainism, Buddhism, and Hinduism. It is notable that this region's works of art are capable of telling stories through the use of gesture, iconography, and narrative style among others.

This paper will look at two South Asian sculptures specifically The Head of Buddha and Queen Sembiyan Mahadevi as goddess Parvati.

The Head of Buddha

The Head of Buddha is a sculpture created in the 3rd century in Pakistan.

This measures 27.5 cm inches in height and is made of schist, a form of metamorphic rock containing lamellar minerals.

The Head of Buddha uses narrative style not only to enhance the image but also symbolizes his qualities, capabilities, and powers. As with other figures of Buddha, The Head of Buddha features lakshanas to portray that he is the Enlightened One. The Buddha's bulge on his head signifies his "transcendent knowledge" and excellent mental capacity. It should also be noted that Buddha has long empty ears as he formerly wore big, heavy gold earrings as a prince. However, as he accepted pain and suffering, he took off his power and riches including his royal garment and earrings to be freed from material wealth (Kossak and Watts 27).

The Head of Buddha's gesture also shows one important quality of Buddha. We can see that the eyes of Buddha are half-closed signifying that he is very peaceful and quiet. The artist used this gesture to depict this deep contentment in life.

Queen Sembiyan Mahadevi as goddess Parvati

Compared to the Head of Buddha, the image of Queen Sembiyan as goddess Parvati was sculpted earlier at around 998 circa. This work of art originated from India. The image was made from 92.1 cm bronze.

The figure shows the image of another reincarnation of the Great Goddess Devi. In Hindu mythology, Parvati is the reincarnation of Sita who killed herself "because of an insult to her husband" (Kossak & Watts 30). Parvati's image in the sculpture, both in shape and in gesture, symbolizes what she came here for-"lure the mourning Shiva to other marriage" (Kossak & Watts 30). Parvati is depicted as very alluring with huge breasts and small waist. Parvati, thus, became a symbol for "fertility, marital felicity, devotion to spouse, asceticism, and power" (Parvati 2). However, as opposed to The Head of Buddha, the artist failed to integrate these characteristics in his work.

Conclusion

The South Asian art is truly capable of saying a lot of things about its origin, especially the gods and goddesses of its major religions. Thus, in order to truly appreciate their works of art, one must commit to knowing more of their beliefs.

Works Cited

Kossak, Steven and E. Watts. "The Art of South and Southeast Asia." The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. 2001. 25 July 2006 "Parvati." Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia. 21 July 2006. 25 July 2006 Appendix 1. The Head of Buddha

Appendix 2. Queen Sembiyan Mahadevi as goddess Parvati