

College of Visual Arts and Design, University of North Texas



Fall 2019  
AEAH 4824: Topics in Asian Art

Cave Temples of India  
MWF 12-12:50pm

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Office Hours: MW 1-2



**Course description:** From the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BCE to the 15<sup>th</sup> century CE, rock-cut temples and ascetic residences were carved into the sides of mountains across the Indian subcontinent. Commonly known as ‘cave temples,’ these sculpted spaces exhibit a variety of architectural forms that facilitate different worship practices and ascetic uses. This course will highlight select cave temples across three religious traditions in India: Jainism, Buddhism, and Hinduism. Questions that we will attempt to answer include: 1) why carve into rock when you can build a structure? 2) what are the relationships between architecture and ritual in India? and 3) how does carved imagery and space shape devotional practices? Throughout the course, we will engage in scholarship that addresses both the art historical evidence of India’s cave temples and the performative and social dimensions of devotional practice.

**Course content & objectives:** This course is designed to familiarize students with select rock-cut monuments across India. By the end of this course the student will be able to identify these monuments through their religious, regional and/or socio-cultural affiliations and be able to associate these works within their historical contexts. By engaging in the visual cultures of India, students can cultivate a thorough knowledge of this important specialization within the discipline of art history, and, at the same time, foster the essential skills of critical looking, reading, and writing about art.

Goals of the course include:

- (1) to enhance critical reading skills
- (2) to refine writing skills
- (3) to conduct effective preliminary research tasks
- (4) to recognize a variety of approaches and paradigms employed in the study of art

**There is no assigned textbook for this course.** All required readings are available on Canvas.

**Required readings on Canvas:**

**Introduction to the course**

Michael W. Meister, “Asceticism and Monasticism as Reflected in Indian Art,” in Austin B. Creel and Vasudha Narayanan, eds., *Monastic Life in the Christian and Hindu Traditions: A Comparative Study*, Lewiston, [N.Y.]: Edwin Mellen Press, 1990, 219-244.

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

### **Section 1: India's Jain rock-cut monuments**

- Lisa N. Owen, "Rock-Cut Caves," in Knut A. Jacobsen, John E. Cort, Paul Dundas, and Kristi L. Wiley, eds., *Encyclopedia of Jainism* vol. 1, Leiden: Brill, 2019, 1-9.
- R. Champakalakshmi, "South India," in A. Ghosh, ed., *Jaina Art and Architecture*, vol. 1, New Delhi: Bharatiya Jnanpith, 1974, 92-103.
- Lisa N. Owen, "Local Bhakti or Monastic Advertising? The Functions of Medieval Jain Rock-Reliefs in Tamil Nadu," in Emmanuel Francis and Charlotte Schmid, eds., *The Archaeology of Bhakti II: Royal Bhakti, Local Bhakti*, Pondicherry: École française d'Extrême-Orient, 2016, 423-442.
- Janice Leoshko, "Artfully Carved: Udayagiri/Khandagiri in Orissa," *Artibus Asiae* 70/1 (2010): 7-24.
- Lisa N. Owen, "Carving Sacred Space," in Lisa N. Owen, *Carving Devotion in the Jain Caves at Ellora*, Leiden: Brill, 2012, 165-188.
- Lisa N. Owen, "Relationships between Art, Architecture, and Devotional Practices at Ellora," in Pia Brancaccio, ed. *Living Rock: Buddhist, Hindu, and Jain Cave Temples in the Western Deccan*. Mumbai: Marg Publications, 2013, 126-137.

### **Section 2: India's Buddhist rock-cut monuments**

- Vidya Dehejia, "Into the Mountainside," in Vidya Dehejia, *Indian Art*, London: Phaidon, 1997, 103-124.
- Vidya Dehejia and Peter Rockwell, "Carving Buddhist Chaityas in Deccan Trap," in Vidya Dehejia and Peter Rockwell, *The Unfinished: Stone Carvers at Work on the Indian Subcontinent*. New Delhi: Roli Books, 2016, 130-147.
- Walter M. Spink, "The Archaeology of Ajañtā," *Ars Orientalis* 21 (1991): 67-94.
- Lisa N. Owen, "Constructing Another Perspective for Ajanta's Fifth-Century Excavations," *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 24.1 (2001): 27-59.
- Robert DeCaroli, "'The Abode of the Nāga King': Questions of Art, Audience, and Local Deities at the Ajañtā Caves," *Ars Orientalis* 40 (2011): 142-161.
- Geri Hockfield Malandra, "Ellora: The 'Archaeology' of a Mañḍala," *Ars Orientalis* 15 (1985): 67-94.

### **Section 3: India's Hindu rock-cut monuments**

- Lisa N. Owen, "Mountain and Cave: Hindu Rock-Cut Architecture and its Symbolisms," in Julia Hegewald, ed., *Studies in Asian Art and Culture*, Bonn: University of Bonn, in press.
- Michael Willis, "The Archaeology and Politics of Time at Udayagiri," in Michael Willis, *The Archaeology of Hindu Ritual: Temples and the Establishment of the Gods*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009, 10-30.
- Vidya Dehejia, "Into the Mountainside," in Vidya Dehejia, *Indian Art*, London: Phaidon, 1997, 124-134.
- Vidya Dehejia, "Riddle in Stone: Pallava Mamallapuram," in Vidya Dehejia, *Indian Art*, London: Phaidon, 1997, 184-204.
- Walter Smith, "Architectural and Mythic Space at Ellora," *Oriental Art* 42/2 (1996): 13-21.
- Partha Mitter, "Section ii. The Sublime, the Picturesque, and Indian Architecture," in Partha Mitter, *Much Maligned Monsters: A History of European Reactions to Indian Art*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1992, 120-140.

**Course structure:** This is a lecture course that meets three times a week for fifty minutes. Reading assignments for the course are listed below in the lecture schedule. In order to fully prepare for lecture, the student should complete the reading assignment *before* the scheduled class.

#### **Course requirements and grading criteria:**

Exams (2 in-class; @ 25% each).....	50%
Cave ID Assignment.....	5%
Annotated Bibliography.....	15%

Project Description.....	20%
Attendance.....	10%

**In-Class Exams 1 and 2:** There will be a total of 2 in-class essay exams. Dates for these exams are highlighted in bold in the lecture schedule. At least one week prior to each in-class exam, 20-25 images will be available on Canvas for review. For the in-class exam, I will select 6-8 images. On the exam, I will provide the relevant information of each artwork (title, location, date), but you will need to answer specific questions relating to the images (either as a pair or individually). You will have approximately 10 minutes to write a response to each of the questions. It is imperative that you arrive to class on time, as I will not re-show the images once the exam is in progress.

In addition, *there will be no make-ups for the in-class exams*. If you miss an exam, you will receive a **zero** on that test unless you provide proper documentation for a University-sanctioned absence (e.g., documented illness, team event, family emergency, etc.). You must contact me within 24 hours of the missed exam. If, after reviewing your documentation, I agree to schedule a make-up exam with you, it must be taken within one week of the missed test.

**Cave ID assignment:** Towards the beginning of the semester, students will be asked to turn in a 1-page assignment that identifies the rock-cut monument and/or site that will serve as your main object of focus for the annotated bibliography and project description (see below). The site and/or monument that you select must be from the **List of rock-cut sites** (on Canvas). Instructions on what to include on the assignment will be distributed and discussed in class at the appropriate time.

**Annotated bibliography:** The annotated bibliography requires a minimum of 10 scholarly sources (books and articles) that relate to your chosen site and/or monument. The 10 scholarly sources may *not* duplicate any of the assigned readings for class. Examples of an annotated bibliography and what constitutes an annotation will be distributed and discussed in class at the appropriate time.

**Project description:** This assignment (4.5 to 5 pages of text + 1 page cited sources) allows students to articulate the goals and objectives of a proposed research project on their chosen site/monument. It should clearly identify the problem(s)/research question(s) to be addressed as well as the approaches that will be employed. The description should also explain how the proposed project builds from and/or challenges existing scholarship on the subject. An example of a 5-page project description (and cited source page) will be distributed and discussed in class at the appropriate time.

**Late work:** Late work is not accepted unless there is a documented emergency. As with the exams, the student must notify me about the emergency within 24 hours of the due date of the assignment. If I agree to accept a late assignment, it will be marked down 10 points per *day* (not class) that it is late.

**Posting of grades:** Grades will be posted on Canvas approximately one day after exams or assignments are handed back. It is your responsibility to verify that the posted grade corresponds with the grade recorded on the assignment/exam. If you are not satisfied with the grade you earned, you can come and see me for a re-grading. However, you must realize that a re-grading can either raise or lower your original score. Once the assignment or exam is passed back, you have a window of two weeks to talk to me about your grade. In other words, at the end of the semester, I will not look over past material for you. I would also suggest that you hold onto all of your graded work until you receive the final grade for the class.

**Attendance policy:** Attendance will be taken via a sign-up sheet that is passed around during each class. It is up to you to make sure that you have signed the roster. You are allowed two absences without penalty. After that, your attendance grade (which is initially recorded as 100% A) will be lowered by half a letter grade (5 points) for each absence over the allotted two. It is also important for you to attend class as the exams are based on lectures and the visual material presented. In some cases, I do not completely agree with the information provided in the readings and so I will offer alternative interpretations of selected artworks and include supplemental visual comparisons during lecture. Since you will be responsible for this material when preparing for and taking exams, it is imperative that you come to class and participate fully if you wish to do well. Should you miss a class lecture, it is up to you to get notes from a classmate. I do not respond to emails asking “what did I miss” nor do I repeat entire lectures during my office hours.

**Extra credit:** Opportunities for extra credit will be available throughout the semester. Typically, these include attending lectures sponsored by CVAD. After attending the lecture, please turn in a computer-generated, 1-page summary of the material presented. Students can submit 2 summaries for a total of 5 extra credit points that will be added to the lowest exam score.

**Student behavior in the classroom:** Student behavior that interferes with an instructor’s ability to conduct a class or other students’ opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The university’s expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at <https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct>

**Academic integrity standards and consequences:** According to UNT Policy 18.1.16, Student Academic Integrity, academic dishonesty occurs when students engage in behaviors including, but not limited to cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, forgery, plagiarism, and sabotage. A finding of academic dishonesty may result in a range of academic penalties or sanctions ranging from admonition to expulsion from the university.

**Plagiarism:** Plagiarism necessitates that I file an incident report to the appropriate authorities and this may result in your failing the assignment, failing the course, or being expelled from the University. Please consult the University’s Code of Student Conduct or ask me if you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism and how you should give proper acknowledgement to your sources in your written work.

**Sexual discrimination, harassment, and assault:** UNT is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. If you (or someone you know) has experienced or experiences any of these acts of aggression, please know that you are not alone. The federal Title IX law makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses. UNT has staff members trained to support you in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and more.

**ADA accommodation statement:** UNT makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide a

student with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding one's specific course needs. Students may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the ODA website at <https://disability.unt.edu/>

**Course risk factor:** According to University Policy, this course is classified as a category 1 course. Students enrolled in this course will not be exposed to any significant hazards and are not likely to suffer any bodily injury. Students in this class will be informed of any potential health hazards or potential bodily injury connected with the use of any materials and/or processes and will be instructed how to proceed without danger to themselves or others.

**Emergency notification and procedures:** UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify students with critical information in the event of an emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). In the event of a university closure, please refer to Canvas for contingency plans for covering course materials.

**Please note:** The professor reserves the right to alter this syllabus and schedule if necessary.  
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### Schedule

Aug 26 (M): Introduction to the course; why caves?

Aug 28 (W): Caves and asceticism in India—(Meister)

Aug 30 (F): Why unfinished?—(Dehejia\_Rockwell)

**Sept 02 (M): Labor Day—No Class**

### Section 1: India's Jain rock-cut monuments

Sept 04 (W): Jain caves: An introduction—(Owen\_Rock-Cut\_Caves)

**Sept 06 (F): Jain caves: Southern India (Madurai district)—(Champakalakshmi);  
Cave ID assignment distributed and discussed**

Sept 09 (M): Jain caves: Southern India (Madurai district)—(Owen\_Local\_Bhakti)

Sept 11 (W): Jain caves: Eastern India (Khandagiri-Udayagiri)—(Leoshko)

Sept 13 (F): Jain caves: Eastern India (Khandagiri-Udayagiri)

Sept 16 (M): Jain caves: Deccan India (Ellora)—(Owen\_Sacred\_Space)

**Sept 18 (W): Jain caves at Ellora; Cave ID assignment due in class**

Sept 20 (F): Jain caves at Ellora—(Owen\_Connections)

**Sept 23 (M):** Jain caves at Ellora; **instructions for annotated bibliography distributed and discussed**

Sept 25 (W): Monumental Jain rock-cut sculpture: Southern India (Shravanabelagola)

Sept 27 (F): Monumental Jain rock-cut sculpture: Western India (Gwalior)

**Sept 30 (M): Exam 1**

### **Section 2: India's Buddhist rock-cut monuments**

Oct 02 (W): Early Buddhist caves: An Introduction—(Dehejia\_Ch5: 103-112)

Oct 04 (F): Early Buddhist caves: Deccan India—(Dehejia\_Chaitya)

**Oct 07 (M):** No class—**Independent work on annotated bibliography**

**Oct 09 (W):** No class—**Independent work on annotated bibliography**

**Oct 11 (F):** No class—**Independent work on annotated bibliography**

Oct 14 (M): Early Buddhist caves: Deccan India

Oct 16 (W): Buddhist caves at Ajanta—(Dehejia\_Ch5: 112-124)

Oct 18 (F): Buddhist caves at Ajanta (Spink)

Oct 21 (M): Buddhist caves at Ajanta—(Owen\_Ajanta)

Oct 23 (W): Buddhist caves at Ajanta—(DeCaroli)

**Oct 25 (F):** Buddhist caves at Ajanta; **annotated bibliography due in class**

Oct 28 (M): Buddhist caves at Ajanta

Oct 30 (W): Buddhist caves at Ellora—(Malandra)

Nov 01 (F): Buddhist caves at Ellora

**Nov 04 (M): Exam 2**

### **Section 3: India's Hindu rock-cut monuments**

Nov 06 (W): Hindu caves: An Introduction—(Owen\_Symbolism)

Nov 08 (F): Early Hindu caves: Northcentral India (Udayagiri)—(Willis)

Nov 11 (M): Early Hindu caves: Deccan India (Elephanta)—(Dehejia\_Ch5: 124-129)

Nov 13 (W): Early Hindu caves: Deccan India (Elephanta)

Nov 15 (F): Early Hindu caves: South India (Mamallapuram)—(Dehejia\_Ch8: 184-204)

**Nov 18 (M): Early Hindu caves: South India (Mamallapuram); instructions for project description distributed and discussed**

Nov 20 (W): Early Hindu caves: South India (Mamallapuram)

Nov 22 (F): The Kailasanatha temple at Ellora—(Dehejia\_Ch5: 129-134)

Nov 25 (M): The Kailasanatha temple at Ellora—(Smith)

Nov 27 (W): Caves: Colonial encounters—(Mitter)

**Nov 29 (F): Thanksgiving Holiday—No Class**

Dec 02 (M): Caves: Colonial encounters

Dec 04 (W): Caves: Colonial encounters—Last Class

**Dec 06 (F): Reading Day—No Class**

**Dec 11 (W): Project description due in classroom (ART 280) during our scheduled final exam period, 10:30-12:30**

### **Grading Criteria for Written Work:**

**A** = An 'A' on a written assignment means that there were little to no errors in grammar and/or spelling and that all instructions (or parts of the assignment) were followed as closely as possible. An 'A' also indicates that the student executed the assignment with rigor and clarity.

**B** = Such a grade indicates that the student was able to execute the assignment with diligence and forethought, though some instructions (or parts of the assignment) were not followed as thoroughly as possible. A grade of 'B' also usually indicates that there were limited structural, spelling, or grammatical problems.

**C** = This is similar to the 'B' description, but the number of problems is more extensive. These may include significant grammatical or structural problems, adding irrelevant material or new material inappropriately, too many generalities, and/or not following the instructions of the assignment.

**D** = A grade of 'D' indicates that the student did a poor job in demonstrating that s/he paid close attention to the assignment's instructions. Further, grammatical/structural problems make a 'D' essay quite difficult to follow. There are usually far too many generalities and a lack of analysis.

**F** = This either indicates that the assignment was not done or what was done was simply unacceptable for any number of reasons. This includes any indication of plagiarism, which may entail further academic penalty. See the section on plagiarism in this syllabus.