

Buddhist Art

Code: 106396
ECTS Credits: 6

2025/2026

Degree	Type	Year
Art History	OT	3
Art History	OT	4

Contact

Name: Nuria Ribas Valls

Email: nuria.ribas@uab.cat

Teachers

Nuria Ribas Valls

Teaching groups languages

You can view this information at the [end](#) of this document.

Prerequisites

No previous knowledge of Buddhism is required. However, it is advisable that students possess the ability to read and listen to English sources. Therefore, the vast majority of readings and videos will be provided in English.

Objectives and Contextualisation

- To gain knowledge about the artistic manifestations of Buddhism.
- To know the specific bibliographic resources of the discipline in order to be able to deepen in specific topics of Buddhist Art.
- To acquire a good command of the adequate historic-artistic vocabulary.

Competences

- Art History
 - Critically analysing from the acquired knowledge a work of art in its many facets: formal values, iconographic significance, artistic techniques and procedures, elaboration process and reception mechanisms.

- Interpreting a work of art in the context in which it was developed and relating it with other forms of cultural expression.
- Recognising the evolution of the artistic imagery from the antiquity to the contemporary visual culture.
- Students must be capable of applying their knowledge to their work or vocation in a professional way and they should have building arguments and problem resolution skills within their area of study.
- Students must be capable of communicating information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialised and non-specialised audiences.

Learning Outcomes

1. Accurately defining and explaining an artistic object with the specific language of art criticism.
2. Analysing ideas about an artistic phenomenon in a given cultural context.
3. Analysing the creators of an artistic phenomenon in a specific cultural context.
4. Analysing the recipients of an artistic phenomenon in a specific cultural context.
5. Applying the iconographic knowledge to the reading of artistic imagery.
6. Connecting an artistic imagery with other cultural phenomena within its period.
7. Distinguishing the elaboration techniques and processes of an artistic object.
8. Engaging in debates about historical facts respecting the other participants' opinions.
9. Examining an artistic imagery and distinguishing its formal, iconographic and symbolic values.
10. Explaining the reception mechanisms of a work of art.
11. Identifying the artistic imagery, placing it into its cultural context.
12. Reconstructing the artistic outlook of a particular cultural context.

Content

1. General Concepts. Siddharta Gautama and his legacy. Early Buddhism spread.
2. First Buddhist material remains in Indian territory.
3. Theravada Buddhism. Mahayana Buddhism and its expansion throughout Asia.
4. Orientalism, colonialism, and decolonization in Buddhist Art.
5. Contemporary Artistic Manifestations.

Activities and Methodology

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Type: Directed			
Theoretical and practical classes	45	1.8	3, 4, 2, 11, 5, 9, 10, 8, 12, 6
Type: Supervised			
Methodological and bibliographical orientation	5	0.2	11, 9, 12, 6
Type: Autonomous			
Study and preparation	80	3.2	3, 4, 2, 11, 5, 9, 10, 12, 6

This course combines theoretical and practical sessions, as well as occasional debates or seminar sessions, service-based learning activities (SBL), and flipped lessons. At the same time, students are required to complete a series of complementary readings to follow the sessions. If time permits, field trips will be made.

Annotation: Within the schedule set by the centre or degree programme, 15 minutes of one class will be reserved for students to evaluate their lecturers and their courses or modules through questionnaires.

Assessment

Continuous Assessment Activities

Title	Weighting	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Exercise 1	35	1	0.04	11, 1, 9, 10, 12, 6
Exercise 2	35	1	0.04	11, 1, 9, 10, 12, 6
Seminar	30	18	0.72	3, 4, 2, 11, 5, 1, 7, 9, 10, 8, 12, 6

Continuous assessment:

- Individual written exercise: 35%
- Written test: 35%
- Activity: 30%

The final grade is determined by adding the grades obtained in all activities. To pass the course, students must get at least 3.5 out of 10 in each activity.

Suppose the student has only done some of the compulsory exercises (activities 1, 2, or 3) and he/she has passed them. In that case, he/she will get a "not assessable" when the general addition does not reach the pass or a superior mark.

On the contrary, the student will receive the mark they have obtained. At the time of each evaluative activity, the teacher will inform the students (via Virtual Campus) of the procedure and the date of the marking revision. Only students who have not passed and have completed the four compulsory activities (1, 2, and 3) are eligible for reassessment, which the Faculty's Academic Management sets. The maximum grade of this reassessment is 5.

Unique assessment:

The exam-based evaluation consists of 2 tests:

- Individual project: 40% of the final grade.
- Written test: 60% of the final grade.

Single assessment re-sit process:

Students must have enrolled in all scheduled unique assessment activities to receive a second chance. The makeup process is only available to students with an average grade of 3.5.

Plagiarism

In the event of a student committing any irregularity that may lead to a significant variation in the grade awarded to an assessment activity, the student will be given a zero for this activity, regardless of any disciplinary process that may take place. In the event of multiple irregularities in the assessment activities of the same subject, the student will receive a zero as the final grade for this subject.

If tests or exams cannot be taken onsite, they will be adapted to an online format made available through the UAB's virtual tools (original weighting will be maintained). Homework, activities, and class participation will be done through forums, wikis, and/or discussions on Teams. Lecturers will ensure that students can access these virtual tools or will offer them feasible alternatives.

Use of AI

This subject entirely prohibits the use of AI technologies in all of its activities. Any submitted work that contains content generated using AI will be considered academic dishonesty; the corresponding grade will be awarded a zero, without the possibility of reassessment. In cases of greater infringement, more serious action may be taken.

Bibliography

This is a primary bibliography for this course. More references will be provided for specific subjects during the sessions.

Reference manuals

CORNU, Philippe. 2001. *Dictionnaire encyclopédique du bouddhisme*. Paris: Éditions Seuil [Spanish Edition by Akal, 2004].

GOMBRICH, Richard. 2013. *What the Buddha Thought*. Sheffield: Equinox.

McARTHUR, Meher. 2004 [2002]. *Reading Buddhist Art. An Illustrated Guide to Buddhist Signs & Symbols*. Londres: Thames & Hudson.

ROONEY, Dawn F. 2008. *Ancient Sukhothai: Thailand's Cultural Heritage*. Bangkok: River Books.

SILK, Jonathan A. (ed.) 2015. *Brill's encyclopedia of Buddhism*. Leiden; Boston: Brill.

VÉLEZ DE CEA, Abraham. 2000. *El Buddhismo*. Madrid: Ediciones del Orto.

Basic bibliography

Behrendt, Kurt A. 2024. *Mandalas: Mapping the Buddhist Art of the Tibet*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Chen, Kai-Jun. 2023. *Porcelain for the Emperor: manufacture and Technocracy in Qing China*. Washington: University of Washington Press.

Ching, Dora C.Y. 2021. *Visualizing Dunhuang: Seeing, Studying, and Conserving the Caves*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Chitgopekar, Nilima. 2022. *Shakti, the exploration of the Divine Feminine*. DK Publishing.

English, Elizabeth. 2002. *Vajrayogini: Her Visualisations, Rituals, and Forms*. Boston: Wisdom Publications.

Fieni, Luigi; Parker, Kenneth. 2023. *Tibetan Mustang: A Cultural Renaissance*. Munich: Hirmer.

Greiff, Susan; Schiavone, Romina; Zhang, Jianlin (Eds.). 2014. *The Tomb of Li Chui. Interdisciplinary Studies into a Tang Period Finds Assemblage*. Mainz: Verlag des Römisch-Germanischen Zentralmuseums.

Harrison-Hall, Jessica; Lovell, Julia(eds.). 2023. *China's hidden century: 1796-1912*. London: *The British Museum*.

Henss, Michael. 2020. *Buddhist Ritual Art of Tibet: A Handbook on Ceremonial Objects and Ritual Furnishings in the Tibetan Temple*. Stuttgart: Arnoldsche.

Kroll, Paul W. 2019. *Critical Reading on Tang China*. 4 vols. Leiden: Brill.

Levenberg, Lynn. 2025. *Tibetan Women's Jewelry*. Stuttgart: Arnoldsche.

Liu, Xinru; Brancaccio, Pia. 2023. *The world of the ancient Silk Road*. London: Routledge Press.

Mitter, Partha. 2007. *The Triumph of Modernism. India's Artists and the Avant-garde, 1922-47*. Oxford and London: Oxford University Press.

Whitfield, Susan (ed). 2019. *Pueblos, culturas y paisajes. Las Rutas de la Seda*. Barcelona: Blume.

Wu, Hung. 2022. *Chinese Art and Dynastic Time*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Software

Nothing to say.

Groups and Languages

Please note that this information is provisional until 30 November 2025. You can check it through this [link](#). To consult the language you will need to enter the CODE of the subject.

Name	Group	Language	Semester	Turn
(PAUL) Classroom practices	1	Catalan	second semester	morning-mixed
(TE) Theory	1	Catalan	second semester	morning-mixed