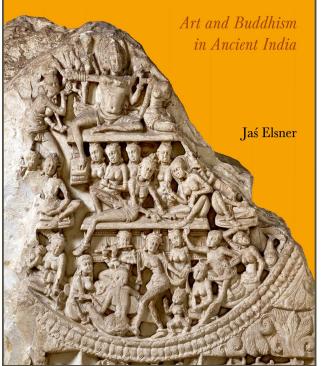




# Amarāvatī



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#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

### **Amarāvatī** Art and Buddhism in Ancient India

#### By Jaś Elsner

#### ABOUT THE BOOK

- Explores the extraordinary Buddhist stupa (reliquary mound) at Amarāvatī, showcasing its significance in Indian culture.
- Offers a fresh understanding of ancient South Asian visual culture and its connection to Buddhism.
- Features excellent new photographs, including objects from the British Museum, providing valuable insights for students and scholars.

This exploration of the exceptional Buddhist stupa (reliquary mound) at Amarāvatī, one of ancient India's most extraordinary monuments, presents a fresh perspective on the rich visual culture of ancient South Asia viewed through the lens of art history, connecting the stupa's artistic innovations with advancements in Buddhist philosophy and rituals. Jaś Elsner offers new insights into early Buddhist art in South India, as well as a new understanding of the relationship between early Buddhism and its material culture. The excellent newly taken photographs, particularly those featuring objects from the British Museum in London, show in detail how the stupa communicated Buddhist teachings and practices to its followers, making this book an invaluable resource for students and scholars alike.

#### Part IV: Icon and Replication

- 6: Buddhapāda: Symbolism, Visual Epitome and the Creation of Icons
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**Jaś Elsner** is Professor of Late Antique Art at the University of Oxford and a specialist in comparative art & archaeology. He is the author or editor of many books including *Roman Eyes: Visuality and Subjectivity in Art and Text* (2007).

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#### REVIEWS

'Jaś Elsner's Amarāvatī: Art and Buddhism in Late Ancient India marks a revolutionary approach to "visual Buddhology" that triangulates a hermeneutics of iconic objects with texts and practice traditions. In doing so, it breaks down disciplinary barriers, restores the Indian cultural element in Indian Buddhist studies and revises arguments about the rise of Mahayana in early India.'

## — Deven M. Patel, Associate Professor, University of Pennsylvania, and author of *Text to Tradition: The Naiṣadhīyacarita and Literary Community in South Asia*

'This precious book looks at the great stupa of Amarāvatī – one of the most important monuments in the ancient world – from seemingly inexhaustible perspectives. It leads the reader to see its monumental form and amazing reliefs, to read its intriguing inscriptions, and to think about its visual, cultural, and ideological connections with the long history of stupa construction, Buddhist mythology and ancient Indian narrative traditions, ritual function and cosmological vision, theatricality and the agency of dance, and philosophical questions evoked by the Buddha's multiple bodies and foot-prints, all embedded in the building's architectural and sculptural programs.'

> Wu Hung, Harrie A. Vanderstappen Distinguished Service Professor of Art History, University of Chicago

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