HARC0227: Indian Painting

01-Ancient India: Divine Bodies, Telling Tales in Early Buddhist Art
Little remains of early Indian art before 3rd c. BCE.
Fly-whisk bearer (attendant) from Patna, Bihar c. 50 B.C.E- 50 C.E

-this figure is one of the few examples of early sculpture in the round in ancient India
Aphrodite, Pan, and Eros,
Greece, c. 190 BCE
Early storytelling in India begins with the life of the Buddha.
Buddhism

• Guatama Siddhartha (Shakyamuni Buddha) ca. 563-483 B.C.E
• Kingdom of Magadha
• Kshatriya (warrior/kingly caste)
• Pipal or bodhi tree
• Samsara: rounds of rebirths undergone by a living being
• Karma: act, action, deed,
• Nirvana: “extinction” the parinirvana is the “complete” nirvana; final extinction of the historical Shakyamuni Buddha
• Dharma: Buddha’s Law or Doctrine; the 4 Noble Truths and the 8-Fold Path
• Theravada (Hinayana) Buddhism; “Path of the Elders;” “Lesser Vehicle”
Make effort to destroy it.
Enter into Buddhadharma.
Eliminate the Lord of Death
As an elephant destroys a grass hut.

The Wheel of Life
Buddhism

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Shunga Period (185-73 BCE)

• Growth of symbolic (“aniconic”) and narrative Buddhist art

• Symbols commemorating important moments of Buddhist biography: conception, wheel (chakra), bodhi tree, stupa, lotus, footprints, etc.

• Jataka tales (tales of Shakyamuni’s previous lives)

• The Great Departure
Stupa I (Great Stupa), Sanchi (Madhya Pradesh), c. 3rd c B.C.E-early 1st century C.E
East gate of great stupa
The Great Departure (East gate, exterior middle architrave)