



JOHN SIUDMAK
ASIAN ART

INTRODUCTION

This is the second part of my on-line catalogue

Ancient Indian terracotta sculpture from the Mauryan through the Sunga and Kushan periods was produced in a number of centres in north India, such as Taxila, Sugh in Haryana, Mathura, Kaushambi, near Allahabad, Ahichchhatra, near Bareilly, Rajghat in Benares and Chandraketugarh in Bengal to mention a few. Many observers have commented on the utilitarian function of the art form, being small and portable, and cheap to produce.

The most important subject is the representation of the goddess in her various forms revered in South and West Asiatic culture, who carries symbols of fertility mostly involving the lotus.

They are greatly varied in technique and quality, and a basic distinction must be made between work that is hand modelled, usually in the round, and that which is pressed from a mould. In some examples both techniques go together.

This is the case with the first four sculptures from Buxar, dating from the Mauryan period. They are distinguished by their bold individual treatment with applied massive coiffure consisting of two bunches of hair either as cross-bands or one on top the other, overlaid by an angled or transverse fillet. The ear-rings and necklace and breasts are in turn equally over-sized. However, the distinctive facial features are par for this school, notably the prominent nose, while the rest of the face appears eroded as if covered by a wet cloth or a clinging veil. The heavy modelling is inherently unstable with narrow waist and neck, which is why the head or bust have become separated from their bodies, the other reason being the fragile nature of the medium. All of the Buxar terracotta sculptures in this catalogue probably incorporated stool with their normal legs, Cf. Shere's catalogue (1961) Terracotta Figurines in Patna Museum, plates nos. 1 and 2, which preserves most of their original form, and allows them to stand independently. However, none of the Buxar examples survives intact. In the late 1980s a great number of terracotta plaques, mostly fragmentary, came on the international art market. They are notable for their fine quality and wide range of design and correspondence in style to those discovered during excavations by the Archaeological Survey of India in the 24 Parganas district of Bengal, especially Chandraketugarh, and by numerous surface finds in the district. Many are displayed in the Ashutosh Museum, Kolkata, and many are in the possession of the State Archaeological Department of Bengal. Produced from moulds, they have a crisp biscuit-like quality. The finest example in the medium is the famous yakshi in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, that was found in neighbouring Tamluk, ancient Tamralipti. Other high-quality fragments are displayed in the small museum there. Most of the terracotta sculptures shown in this catalogue are produced in relief from flat moulds, and vary in fineness.

The market for terracotta plaques was sadly undermined by the appearance of fake examples that began to come on the market from the early 1990's. They typically consist of large brick-like tiles, which contain improbable scenes. The fake plaques are densely populated with single or group scenes that have no function, but to avoid interaction. Many give the impression of having been carved with a bladed instrument. This technique is employed by the fake makers in the production of small vessels which have an overall design and a thin wall. A genuine example from Chandraketugarh only has a thick collar of design around the shoulder, with a repeating vegetal and figural design.

John Siudmak
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Viewing by appointment only
JOHN SIUDMAK
Flat 3, 3 Sydney Street
London SW3 6PU
tel. +44 (0) 20 7349 9316
mob. +44 (0) 7918 730 936
email. john@johnsiudmak.com
www.johnsiudmak.com

1

FRAGMENTARY
HEAD OF MOTHER
GODDESS

CA. THIRD CENTURY, BC,
BUXAR, BIHAR,
NORTH-EAST INDIA

HEIGHT: 7.5CM

Fragmentary head of a mother goddess with
voluminous head-dress with broad flower-head fillet.

Published: Siudmak, J. 2016, *Indian and Himalayan
Sculpture*, lot no. 3.

Literature: Shere S.A. 1961, *Terracotta Figurines in
Patna Museum*

Exhibited: 2016, C.G. Boerner Gallery, New York.

£850



FRAGMENTARY BUST OF
MOTHER GODDESS

THIRD CENTURY B.C
HIGH STYLE
BUXAR, BIHAR,
NORTH INDIA
HEIGHT: 7.5CM

Fragmentary bust of a mother goddess in the round, her hair with voluminous head-dress, broken off below the breast.

Published: J. 2016, *Indian and Himalayan Sculpture*, lot no. 4, Calcutta

Literature: Shere, 196, *ibid.*

Exhibited: 2016, C.G. Boerner Gallery, New York.

£850



FRAGMENTARY BUST
OF MOTHER GODDESS

CA. THIRD CENTURY, BC,
BUXAR, LOW STYLE
BIHAR, NORTH-EAST
INDIA
HEIGHT: 15CM

Fragmentary mother goddess in the round with voluminous head-dress and broad torque above protruding breasts, the arms and lower legs deficient, originally supported by a stool behind allowing the figure to stand by itself, a feature of the Buxar style used extensively.

£250



4

FRAGMENTARY
BUST OF MOTHER
GODDESS

CA. THIRD CENTURY, BC,
BUXAR, LOW STYLE
BIHAR, NORTH-EAST
INDIA

HEIGHT: 10CM

Fragmentary bust of a mother goddess with
flattened bun and large ear-rings and torque.

£250



5

FRAGMENTARY PLAQUE WITH
WINGED YAKSHI

CA. 100 B.C
CHANDRAKETUGARH
NORTH-EAST INDIA

HEIGHT: 27.7CM

Grey terracotta fragmentary plaque with a winged yakshi, broken-off at the knees, standing in *contrapposto* in a densely decorated field of stylized lotuses and and pairs of voluted wings. The design of the lotus is somewhat fanciful bearing a motif resembling a fir cone as a blossom, and multiple staggered rows of petals with beading. There is a wide border of crosses. Her hair is dressed in a double bun, and she wears extensive beaded jewellery.



5

FRAGMENTARY PLAQUE
WITH WINGED YAKSHI

CA. 100 B.C
CHANDRAKETUGARH
NORTH-EAST INDIA

WIDTH: 7.5CM

Grey terracotta fragmentary plaque with bust of richly decorated Yakshi broken off at the waist, preserving a voluted wing and multi-petalled budding stylized lotus on the right side.

Note: The design of the field and elements of the decoration of the figure are miniaturised versions of no. 6, though the stance is strictly frontal.

£2,000



6

FRAGMENTARY
PLAQUE OF YAKSHI

CA. 100 B.C
CHANDRAKETUGARH
NORTH-EAST INDIA

Similar to previous item, a terracotta plaque broken off at the
thighs preserving the girdle but lacking the field elements.

HEIGHT: 7.5CM
£ 1,500



7

FRAGMENTARY HEAD OF A
RAKSHASA

CA. 100 B.C
CHANDRAKETUGARH
NORTH-EAST INDIA

HEIGHT: 7CM

Fragmentary head of a rakshasa, his grimacing face with wide-slitted mouth, his hair gathered into a small bun.

Exhibited: 2016, C.G. Boerner Gallery, New York.

Published: Siudmak, J. 2016, *Indian and Himalayan Sculpture*, lot no.12.

£1,250



RATTLE WITH POT-BELLIED
YAKSHA

CA. 100 BC.
KAUSHAMBI, NORTH INDIA

Terracotta rattle with pot-bellied yaksha with grimacing features,
produced from a double mould.

HEIGHT: 7CM

Exhibited: 2016, C.G. Boerner Gallery, New York.
Published: Siudmak, J. 2016, *Indian and Himalayan Sculpture*, lot no.12.

£500



TERRACOTTA RATTLE IN
FORM OF A YAKSHA

CA. 100 B.C
CHANDRAKETUGARH
NORTH-EAST INDIA

HEIGHT: 10CM

Terracotta rattle in the form of a crouching, pot-bellied yaksha,
produced from a double mould.

Literature: Cf. Haque, 2001, *Chandraketugarh*, C624, for an almost
identical example.

Exhibited: 2016, C.G. Boerner Gallery, New York.

Published: Siudmak, J. 2016, *Indian and Himalayan Sculpture*, lot
no.11.

£2,000



10

FRAGMENTARY YAKSHI

CA. 100 B.C
CHANDRAKETUGARH
NORTH-EAST INDIA

HEIGHT: 18CM

Fragmentary yakshi wearing extensive jewellery standing in a frontal pose broken-off at the ankles. Her narrow waist with chains falling from midriff. She holds her girdle with both lowered hands.

Literature: Cf. Haque, 2001, plates C.365,C.366,C.375

£4,000



13

FRAGMENTARY YAKSHI

CA. 100 B.C
CHANDRAKETUGARH
NORTH-EAST INDIA

HEIGHT: 17.5CM

Another similar fragmentary yakshi wearing extensive jewellery standing in a frontal pose broken-off at the ankles. These two plaques appear to be from the same mould.

Literature: Cf. Haque, 2001, plates C.365,C.366,C.375

£4,000



14

STANDING YAKSHI

MAURYAN PERIOD Wearing a garment that covers the whole figurine, finely ribbed up to the waist where the ribs become wider.

HEIGHT: 15.5CM The girdle is concealed by the folds of the garment. The hands are in the usual position, but here only the outline can be seen through the clothes. Painted with red slip.

SOLD



15

PLAQUE OF A
STANDING YAKSHI

CA. 100 B.C
MATHURA
Plaque of a standing yakshi holding a pair of fish
in her lowered right hand, the tripartite
head-dress arranged with floral spheres, waving
fronds and hairpins. Painted with red slip.

HEIGHT: 22CM

£1,200



16

PLAQUE DEPICTING PROFUSELY
DECORATED
SRI LAKSHMI

CA. 100 B.C
CHANDRAKETUGARH
NORTH-EAST INDIA

HEIGHT: 18CM

Standing on a large storage jar and dispensing coins to a diminutive supplicant below, a yoke with two pots and two sheaves of corn around the base. Her coiffure has projecting pins at either side, a central beaded bun and streamers falling to her shoulders, the entire field covered with cast copper coins.

Exhibited: C. G. Boerner Gallery, New York
Literature: Bautze, 1995, plate 13 for a similar example.
Published: Siudmak, J. 2016, Indian and Himalayan Art, No.10
£12,500



FRAGMENTARY BUST OF A
YAKSHI

CA. 100 BC.
KAUSHAMBI, NORTH INDIA

HEIGHT: 6.8CM

Terracotta fragmentary bust of a yakshi, broken-off at the waist, she holds the stem of a large flower-head medallion comprising a central flower framed by a ring of ten rosettes, her head-dress is formed of six waving fronds.

cf. Kala, S.C., 1980, pl.31, for a complete example.

£600



18

FRAGMENTARY BUST
OF YAKSHI

CA. 100 B.C SUGH Fragmentary bust of a yakshi, broken off above
the waist, wearing head-dress of trailing fronds.
Finely detailed necklace and ear-rings.

HEIGHT: 5.2CM

£450



19

FRAGMENTARY PLAQUE OF A
YAKSHI

CA. 100 BC. KAUSHAMBI,
NORTH INDIA
HEIGHT: 7CM

Fragmentary plaque with bust of a yakshi wearing extensive jewellery and elaborate coiffure, beneath a wide umbrella with five hairpins and broken-off head of a male attendant.

£2,500



20

FRAGMENTARY BUST

CA. 100 B.C
AHICHCHHATRA

HEIGHT: 7.2CM

Fragmentary bust, broken-off at the waist. Tripartite head-dress, large central sphere of flower heads, long streamers running to the shoulders. The garment covering the shoulders has similar striations.

Literature: Agrawala V.S, 1948, *The Terracottas of Ahichchhatra* plate 27 for a very similar example.

£850



FRAGMENTARY PLAQUE
OF YAKSHI

CA. 100 B.C
CHANDRAKETUGARH
NORTH-EAST INDIA

Finely detailed yakshi with pair of pointed wings, the hair in large bun, wears large circular ear-rings, torque and necklace with large beads

HEIGHT: 5.2CM

£1,200



FRAGMENTARY TERRACOTTA
OF A POT-BELLIED DWARF

CA. 100 B.C
HARYANA, SUGH
NORTH INDIA

Fragmentary pot-bellied dwarf attendant holding up a tray of food in his left hand, his right hand holding a fan above keeping away flying insects. Red slip painted with details in black.

HEIGHT: 8CM

Note: a similar complete example is found in the Allahabad Museum, see Kala 1980, fig 1443, mistakenly attributed to Ahichchhatra

Literature: Siudmak J, 2016, Indian and Himalayan Sculpture

£850



**FRAGMENTARY PLAQUE
DEPICTING UDAYANA**

CA. 100 B.C
CHANDRAKETUGARH
NORTH-EAST INDIA

HEIGHT: 8.5CM

Fragmentary plaque depicting Udayana eloping on an elephant with Vasavadatta, daughter of King Mahasena of Avanti.

Note: the Candraketugarh version of the scene is more animated and lyrical than the Kaushambi version which is very formulaic. Here the prince stands on the rearing elephant and embraces Vasavadatta, an attendant behind holding chaurie and chattra, another attendant holding up a standard.

Exhibited: C. G. Boerner Gallery, New York
Published: Siudmak, J. 2016, Indian and Himalayan Art, No.9.

£5,000



24

FRAGMENTARY PLAQUE
OF WINGED LION

CA. 100 BC. KAUSHAMBI,
NORTH INDIA

HEIGHT: 9CM

Fragmentary plaque depicting a winged lion pouncing on an elephant. This is part of a double scene, the right has a warrior confronting a rampant lion.

Cf Kala, op. cit. 152, 155 and 156.

£2,500



25

**TERRACOTTA SERPENT
GODDESS**

CA. 100 BC.
KAUSHAMBI, NORTH INDIA

Terracotta serpent goddess standing on
four stump feet.

HEIGHT: 11CM
Cf.Kala, op. cit. pl.171

£650



PLAQUE OF
UDAYANA ELOPING
ON AN ELEPHANT

CA. 100 BC.
KAUSHAMBI, NORTH
INDIA

HEIGHT: 8.5CM

Plaque depicting Udayana eloping on an elephant with Vasavadatta, daughter of King Mahasena of Avanti. Behind the couple a chancellor throws coins to slow down the pursuers.

£650



**MONKEY SEATED
ON A CROCODILE**

CA. 100 BC. Fragmentary plaque of monkey seated on a crocodile
KAUSHAMBI, using its tail as a rudder, whilst holding up the
NORTH INDIA crocodile's tail for balance.

HEIGHT: 6.9CM

Note: Refers to a story in the Panchatantra.

Literature: Cf. Haque, 2001, plates C.332

£850



**FEMALE
ATTENDANT
HOLDING A MIRROR**

CA. 100 B.C
CHANDRAKETUGARH
NORTH-EAST INDIA

HEIGHT: 5.3CM

Female attendant wearing a rooster hat, holding up a mirror.

Literature: Cf. Haque, 2001, plates B110 for an almost identical example in reverse.

£500



FRAGMENT OF
RECLINING BUST OF
DEITY

CA. 100 B.C
CHANDRAKETUGARH
NORTH-EAST INDIA

Fragmentary plaque of reclining bust of deity with elaborate coiffure. Torque and earring with beaded chains. Very finely ornamented.

HEIGHT: 5CM

£1,000



FRAGMENTARY PLAQUE
WITH FOREPART OF AN
ELEPHANT

CA. 100 B.C
CHANDRAKETUGARH
NORTH-EAST INDIA

HEIGHT: 6CM

Finely executed fragmentary plaque with the forepart of an elephant beneath a palm tree, with a bust of standing attendant. The broken-off figure holds a lyre. This appears to be amongst one of the finest examples to have come to light.

£850



PLAQUE OF AN
ELEPHANT

CA. 100 B.C
CHANDRAKETUGARH
NORTH-EAST INDIA

Plaque of an elephant standing on a multi-petalled
lotus disc. With vase raised, probably of a lustration of a Sri
Lakshmi scene.

HEIGHT: 5.7 CM

£250



PLAQUE DEPICTING A
MULE DRIVER

CA. 100 B.C
CHANDRAKETUGARH
NORTH-EAST INDIA

WIDTH: 6.5CM

Plaque depicting a mule driver holding halter of mule
with raised tail.

£500



ADULTRESS WITH
PARROT

CA. 100 B.C
CHANDRAKETUGARH

Illustrates a common theme in early literature.

HEIGHT: 7CM

£ 500



PLAQUE OF RHINO

CA. 100 B.C
CHANDRAKETUGARH
NORTH-EAST INDIA

Plaque of rhino facing left, extremely well observed.
Note: in remarkably good condition

Literature: Bautze, 1985, plate no. 45b

HEIGHT: 6.1CM

£3,500



FRAGMENTARY
TOY IN FORM OF A
YAKSHA

CA. 100 B.C Fragmentary toy in form of the forepart of a
 yaksha with hands joined. Wearing a turban
 with leaf-pattern fillet, multi-ringed ear
 ornaments, torque and armbands.

HEIGHT: 8.5CM

£ 450



FRAGMENTARY PLAQUE
OF A YAKSHASA

CA. 100 B.C Fragmentary plaque of a yakshasa
absconding with a female, whose broken-off
KAUSHAMBI hands raised above his left shoulder.

HEIGHT: 7CM Literature: S.C. Kala, 1980, plate 145

£ 250



WINGED ELEPHANT TOY
CART

CA. 100 B.C
CHANDRAKETUGARH
NORTH-EAST INDIA

Grey terracotta toy cart with winged elephant crouching with his feet in a row on a cylinder drilled for the once axle and wheels, and a hole in the back to fit the driving stick.

HEIGHT: 12.5 CM

£1,500



38

USHKUR
FRAGMENTARY
FACE

7TH CENTURY
KASHMIR

This fragment Cf. *The Arts of Kashmir* Pal, P.
plates 53, 56.

HEIGHT: 6.4 CM

£350



**ANIMAL-HEADED
HEAD OF MOTHER
GODDESS**

CA. 600.AD
KHOTANESE SCHOOL

HEIGHT: 19.5CM

CLAY FRAGMENTARY BUST OF ANIMAL-HEADED MOTHER GODDESS

Bust of two-armed deity, modelled in the round, the left arm broken off, the raised right arm broken off at the wrist. The head has a long muzzle, the mouth open, revealing a ferocious set of teeth. Her high projecting brow with third eye over-hanging her normal eyes. Her hair is arranged in a small bun with meandering locks falling to her shoulders. She has a pair of annular ear-rings, and a triple leaf diadem, the central circular leaf with tiny interlacing volutes, originally with two smaller flower-heads, that on the proper right lost. Painted in a red slip with heavy traces of white gesso and details of the hair in black pigment.

Literature: Although no other examples in sculpture have yet come to light, two versions are known from mural painting, both four-armed, but otherwise clearly the same deity as ours. One of these, now in the British Museum, a nimbate female excavated by Stein at the site of Tarishlak (Serindia, pl.12, Ta.008).has been variously identified as a wolf, a rat and a boar. The other example forms part one of two triads at the site of Dandan Uiliq, which Stein also excavated, finding evidence of Brahmanical deities, which he took to be "sacred personages of Buddhist mythology or little scenes which may have some bearing on local Buddhist traditions" (1900, Report on Archaeological and Topographical Exploration of Chinese Turkistan, p.36). His friend, Andrews, brought to his attention a wood tablet with the "sacred figure with the head of a rat" amongst the twenty or so wood tablets with animal heads that Stein excavated at the site. He recalled the legend noted by Xuanzang of the rat deity that saved Khotan from the invasion by the Hephthalite army by chewing the leather fitting of their armour.

The second example of a mural painting depicting the deity was only recently excavated at Dandan Uiliq by a Sino-Japanese expedition, which is in one of two triads containing Maheshvara, Skanda, and Hariti. She has identical facial feature to our figure including the large helix and annular ear-ring, which describe the letters 8, a double-corded fillet to the diadem and the projecting circular leaf. The presence of a third eye excludes the possibility of identification as Varaha, avatar of Vishnu. The identity of the deity awaits clarification. The reader is directed to an article by Ciro Lo Muzio (2017), Skanda and the Mothers in Khotanese Buddhist Painting.

PRICE ON APPLICATION





Wall painting of animal-headed deity in the collection of the British Museum.
Object number 2004,0510,0.1



Dandan Uiliq, temple D13, painting on the western wall (after Baumer 2000: fig 70).