

Spring 2022 Arts of Asia Lecture Series  
Gifts of Rivers and Resources: Art and Power in Ancient Asia  
Sponsored by the *Society for Asian Art*

**Goddess, Serpent, and River:  
The Ganges in South Asian Art and History**  
Robert DeCaroli  
George Mason University  
February 18, 2022

**Key Locations**

Gomukh  
Gangotri  
Devprayag  
Mahabalipuram (Mamallapuram)  
Patna (Pataliputra)  
Kumrahar  
Varanasi (Benares, Kashi)  
Sarnath  
Prayagraj (Allahabad)  
Farakka  
Kolkata (Calcutta)

**Names and Terminology**

Ganges River (Ganga)  
The six headstreams: Alaknanda, Dhauliganga, Nandakini, Pindar, Mandakini and Bhagirathi  
Himalayas  
Harappan Civilization  
Bhagiratha  
Pallava Dynasty (5th-8th c.)  
Shiva  
Naga/Nagini  
Nataraja  
Bhairava  
Mahajanapada  
Mauryan Empire (mid-4th to early 2nd c. BCE)  
King Ashoka  
Ashokan Edicts  
Ghats  
Kashi Vishvanath Temple

Jyotirlinga  
Buddha  
“Turning the Wheel of the Law” (Dharmachakra)  
Yamuna River  
Kumbh Mela  
Sadhu  
Bhagirathi-Hooghly River  
Padma River  
Kalighat  
Adi Ganga Canal

### **Further Reading**

Darian, Steven. “The Ganges in Indian Art”. *East and West*. Istituto Italiano per l’Africa e l’Oriente (IsIAO). Vol. 23, No. 3/4 (1973) pp.307-325

Dehejia, Vidya. *Indian Art*. Art and Ideas Series. London: Phaidon Press, 1997.

Eck, Diana L. *Banaras: City of Light*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1999.

Jain, Jyotindra. "Genesis of Kalighat Painting" in *Kalighat Painting: Images from a Changing World*. Kolkata: Grantha Corporation (2006) pp. 9-15 and additional selections.

Kaimal, Padma. “Shiva Nataraja: Shifting Meanings of an Icon.” *The Art Bulletin*. Vol. 81 No. 3. (1999) pp. 390-419.

Rabe, Michael D. *The Great Penance at Mamallapuram: Deciphering a Visual Text*. Chennai, India: Institute of Asian Studies, 2001.