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Classical Art of the Indian Subcontinent

Maurya, Greco-Bactrian, Gupta Art



Mauryan Empire

- Empire that controlled India from 4th-2nd Century B.C.E.
 - Converted to Buddhism around 250 B.C.E.
- Artistic transition from wood to stone
 - Emphasis in pottery



Maurya Sculptures

- Artistic themes primarily revolved around Buddhism
 - Inspired by Vedic culture
 - Stone cut sculptures
 - Stone cutting techniques also used in temples and caves



Three Phases of Maurya Art

1. Continuation of Pre-Mauryan tradition of Vedic dieties
2. Court art of King Ashoka, especially columns with inscribed edicts
3. Brick and stone architecture, especially in the building of stupas

Entrance to the rock-cut Buddhist temple (vihara), Cave 12, at Bhaja, Maharashtra, 2nd-1st c. BCE



Pillar of Ashoka at Vaishali, c. 3rd Century B.C.E.



Pillar of Ashoka at Vaishali



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Sanchi Stupa, 3rd Century B.C.E.



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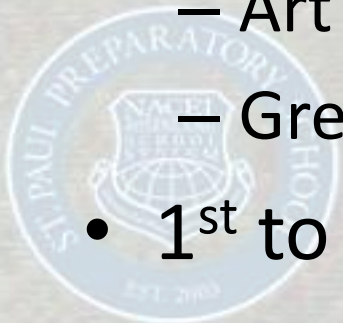
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Sanchi Stupa Torana



Greco-Bactrian Art

- Area of Greece conquered by Alexander the Great
 - Art is thematically Indian but Greek influenced
 - Greco-Buddhism Style
- 1st to 7th Century C.E.
- Mostly used stucco and terra-cotta



Greco-Bactrian Kingdom



Greco-Bactrian Sculptures

- Primarily of Buddhist deities, monks, or donors
 - Slightly unrealistic features
 - Faces as perfect ovals
 - Eyes half closed
 - As if representing Buddha and meditation

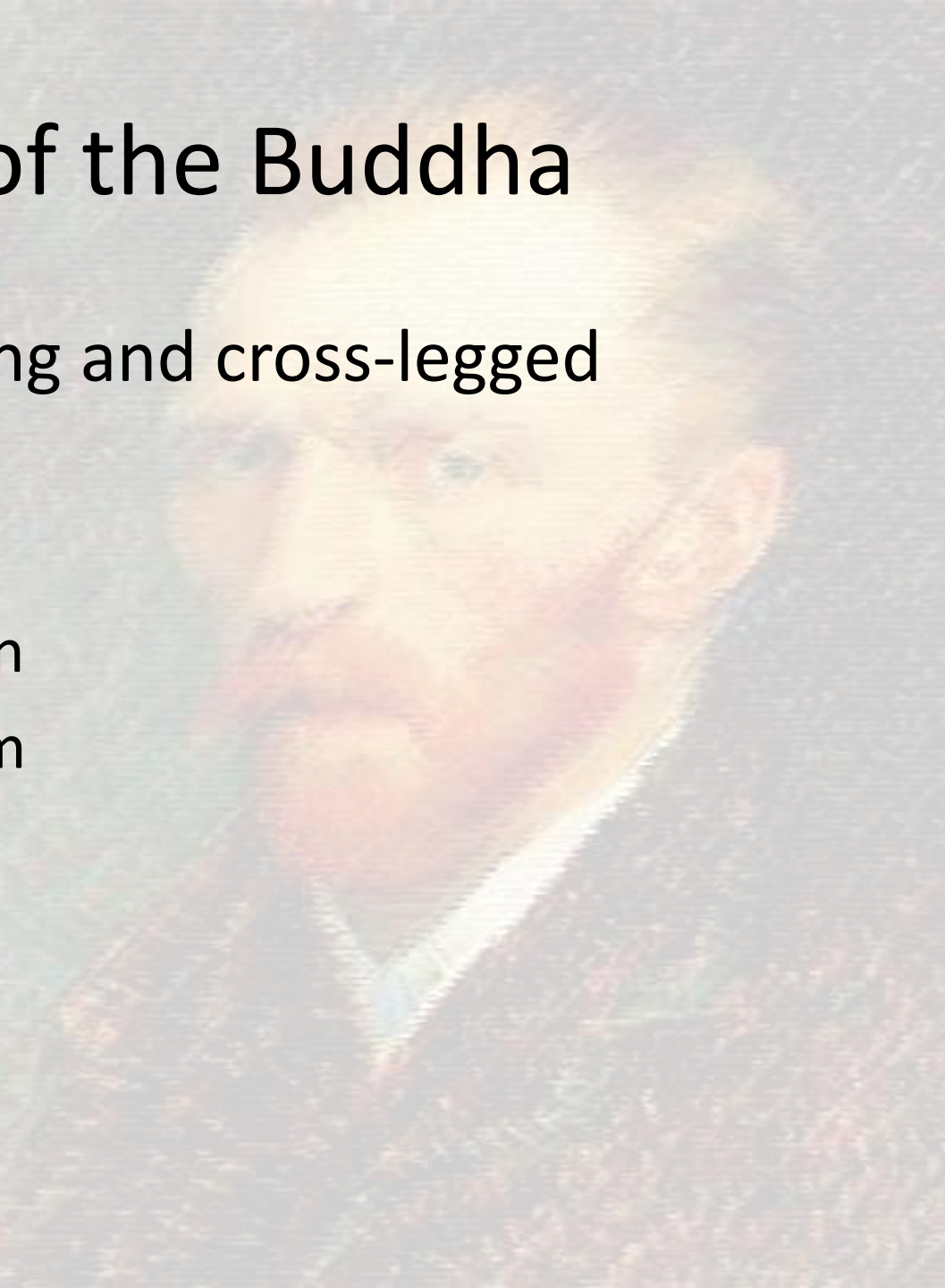


Statues of the Buddha

- Almost always sitting and cross-legged
 - Rarely standing
 - Skilled carving
 - Rich ornamentation
 - Complex symbolism



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Seated Buddha, Mathura India, 2nd Century C.E.

halo of enlightenment

ushnisha

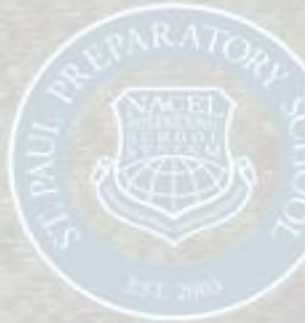
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elongated ears

mudra

chakra

prana



Art

Bodhisattva Gandhara Guimet



Standing Bodhisattva, 2nd-3rd Century C.E.



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Greco Inspired images of the Buddha, 2nd Century B.C.E.



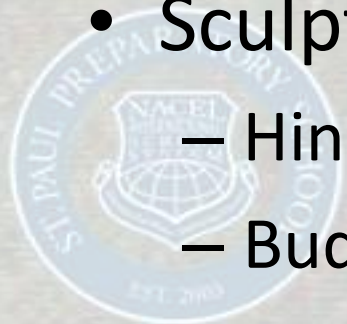
Gupta Art and Architecture

- Existed from 320-550 C.E.
- General peace allowed from Administrative and artistic reforms
- Golden Age of India
 - Developments in Education, Science, Art, and Hinduism
 - Centered in Mathura and Gandhara

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Hindu Art

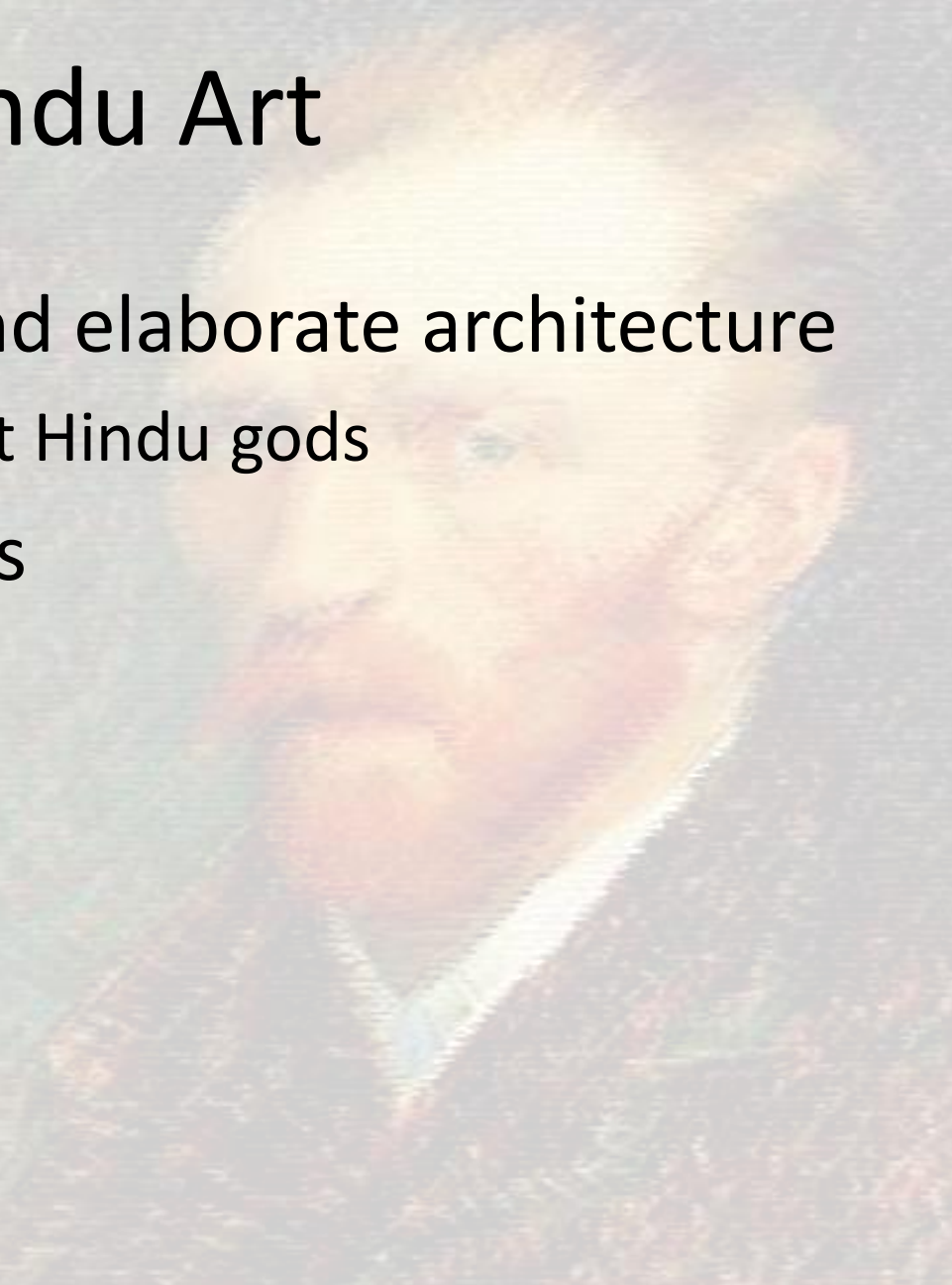
- New innovations and elaborate architecture
 - Temples to different Hindu gods
- Sculptures of deities
 - Hinduism
 - Buddhism
 - Jainism



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Art History

The Dashavatara Temple, c. 500 C.E.



Vishnu Scultupre at Dashavatara Temple



Entry at Dashavatara Temple



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