

I worked as a Research Assistant for Dr. Rima Hooja (Author; Archeologist; PhD, University of Cambridge; President of International Council on Monuments and Sites), and will be credited in her upcoming book.

- I conducted scholarly research and documentation on Nāgas (semi-divine serpent beings in Indian mythology)
- This involved cataloguing 200+ sculptural depictions across time periods (pre-8th to 21st c.) using museum archives (e.g., MET, British Museum, Cambodian and Tibetan National Archives) and fieldwork (surveying local archives in Jaipur)
- I wrote briefs & prepared an annotated bibliography for 5 books and 17 articles which explored the sacred role of Nāgas in Indian art, healing rituals, and vernacular traditions

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#### Introductory Readings

HÄRTEL, HERBERT. "ASPECTS OF EARLY NĀGA CULT IN INDIA." *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts* 124, no. 5243 (1976): 663–83.  
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/41372392>.

In this lecture-article, Härtel (then Director of the Museum für Indische Kunst in Berlin) traces the evolution of Nāga worship in India from its Indus Valley roots through the Vedic period to the early historical era. Combining archaeological findings (especially from Mathura and Sonkh) with literary and iconographic analysis, he argues that Nāga worship | was not merely a folk practice but developed into a sophisticated and institutionalized cult with temples, rituals, and visual symbolism. He challenges the oversimplified view of Nāga cults as either purely animistic or aboriginal, emphasizing their integration into mainstream religious systems.