



# THREE BUDDHA SCULPTURES

by ROBERT L. BROWN

*Abstract* Three wood Buddhas from Burma in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art collection were analyzed to determine their possible dates. The discussion focuses on the art historical evidence for dating, which is contrasted with the radiocarbon testing of the objects. In each case, the art historical dates appear to be either significantly incorrect or subject to reinterpretation. Indeed, for one sculpture the radiocarbon testing points to the Pagan period (ca. twelfth–thirteenth centuries), a date for which we have no other example in this style, making the LACMA Buddha extraordinarily important. The second sculpture, in a very different style, can also be dated to the Pagan period, which is significant because scholars have placed this type of Buddha in a much later period. The third sculpture is also a surprise, although for the opposite reason: radiocarbon tests place it at a much later date than scholars have proposed. These three sculptures are an argument for rethinking the current developmental chronology of Burmese Buddhas.



Buddhism was of great importance in Burma and appeared there earlier than elsewhere in Southeast Asia, in the early centuries CE. Burma shares a border with India, a proximity that might help explain the religion's predominance, although the connection with India would have more probably arisen via ships, the Bay of Bengal, and rivers than over land. Oddly, Hinduism was of equal or greater importance in India, as it was in much of ancient Southeast Asia, yet it appears only rarely in the culture and art of Burma.

Burmese Buddhism was consistently of the Hinayana<sup>1</sup> schools, with texts in either Pali or Sanskrit. The surprise is that Pala Mahayana and Tantric Buddhism had little impact in Burma,<sup>2</sup> particularly considering that during the period of Pagan dominance (eleventh–thirteenth century), Buddhism in India was confined largely to the Pala dynastic areas of Bihar and Bengal, which were contiguous with Burma. Hinayana maintained a degree of dominance and consistency in Burma despite continuous access to Hinduism and to Mahayana and esoteric Buddhism.

### **Mediums Used for Burmese Buddhas**

Because of the dominance of Hinayana, with its emphasis on the historical Buddha Shakyamuni, representations of him were the most important and most common artistic icon. Based on the extant works, these figures were fabricated from clay, bronze, brick, and stone, then decorated with pigment. Stone was reserved mostly for reliefs rather than cut in the round, and was used most predominantly in the early phase of Pagan-period sculpture (late eleventh–early twelfth century). The often large sculptures in the many temples of Pagan were created from brick and stucco and then painted. The architecture of ancient Burma was mainly brick, with decoration in stucco, terracotta, and ceramic tiles; stone was used sparingly, usually to embellish specific areas of the brick temples. However, wood as the medium for both sculpture and architecture<sup>3</sup> was also probably of great importance. Indeed, according to Paul Strachan: “The medium in which the Pagan genius was perhaps once best expressed was wood.”<sup>4</sup> This assumption relies on expectation rather than on extant evidence. Burma's monsoon climate supposedly destroyed most wood sculpture, as well as most if not all wood architecture.<sup>5</sup> Though the existence of few wood Buddhas is therefore not unexpected, the actual number of extant works is still surprisingly low.

LACMA has a number of Burmese wood Buddhas, three of which are discussed here. Each is an important object of unusually high quality and representative of a Buddha image type. Wood can be tested for date using radiocarbon technology. Thus, unlike stone and most bronze images, for which technical approaches to dating are often unconvincing, the material used here would appear to produce dating that is relatively secure. All three of the LACMA objects, however, present dating problems. They also raise questions about their meaning and relationships to other Buddha sculptures (including among themselves) and artistic sources.

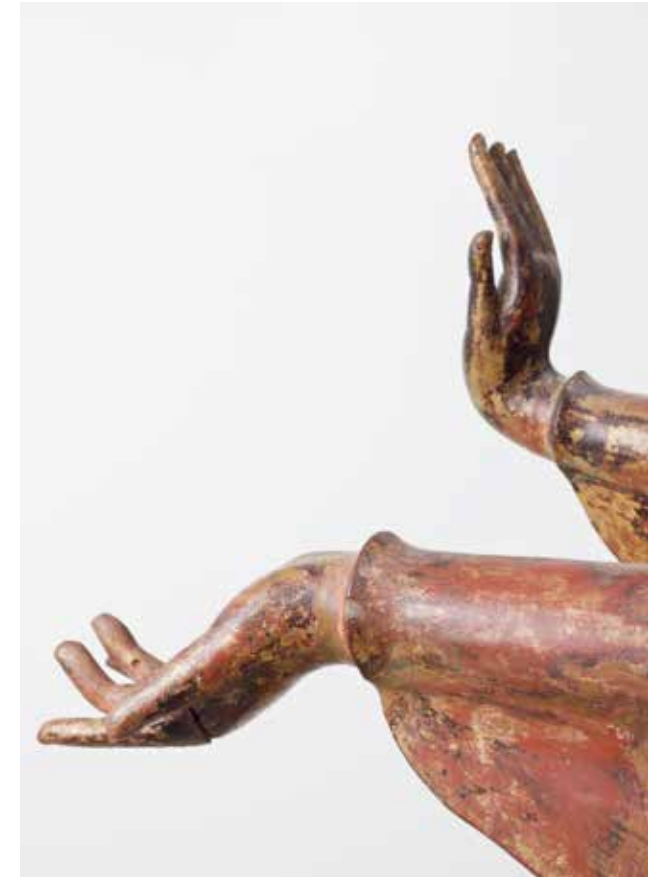


### **The First LACMA Burmese Wood Buddha (M.91.76)**

The first Buddha (fig. 1) is very large—it would have been more than 78.7 inches tall (200 cm) including the feet, were they not damaged; it is possibly lacquered. It is important because it is unique: although this style is seen in bronze sculptures, stone reliefs, and wall paintings, no examples in wood or three-dimensional stone, as far as I know, have yet been identified.

The Buddha stands without flexion, his robe flaring out on both sides in the covering mode in almost perfect symmetry. The robe clings to the body, revealing a narrow chest and slim waist but rounded legs with large thighs (figs. 2, 3). The underskirt is indicated with carved lines at the waist and with folds at the lower hem. He raises his right hand in the fear-not gesture (*abhaya mudra*), and the left arm is bent at the elbow with the palm turned upward (fig. 4). The head is shaped like an egg and has a narrow, pointed chin, pursed lips, sharp nose, and downward-gazing eyes (figs. 5, 6). The hair curls are small, and there is a toothlike form on top of the cranial bump (*ushnisha*).<sup>6</sup>

**Fig. 1**  
Buddha, Burma (Myanmar), ca. 12th–13th century,  
M.91.76  
The Buddha stands displaying the fear-not gesture  
(*abhaya mudra*) with his right hand.



left to right

**Fig. 2**

The Buddha wears his robe covering both shoulders.

**Fig. 3**

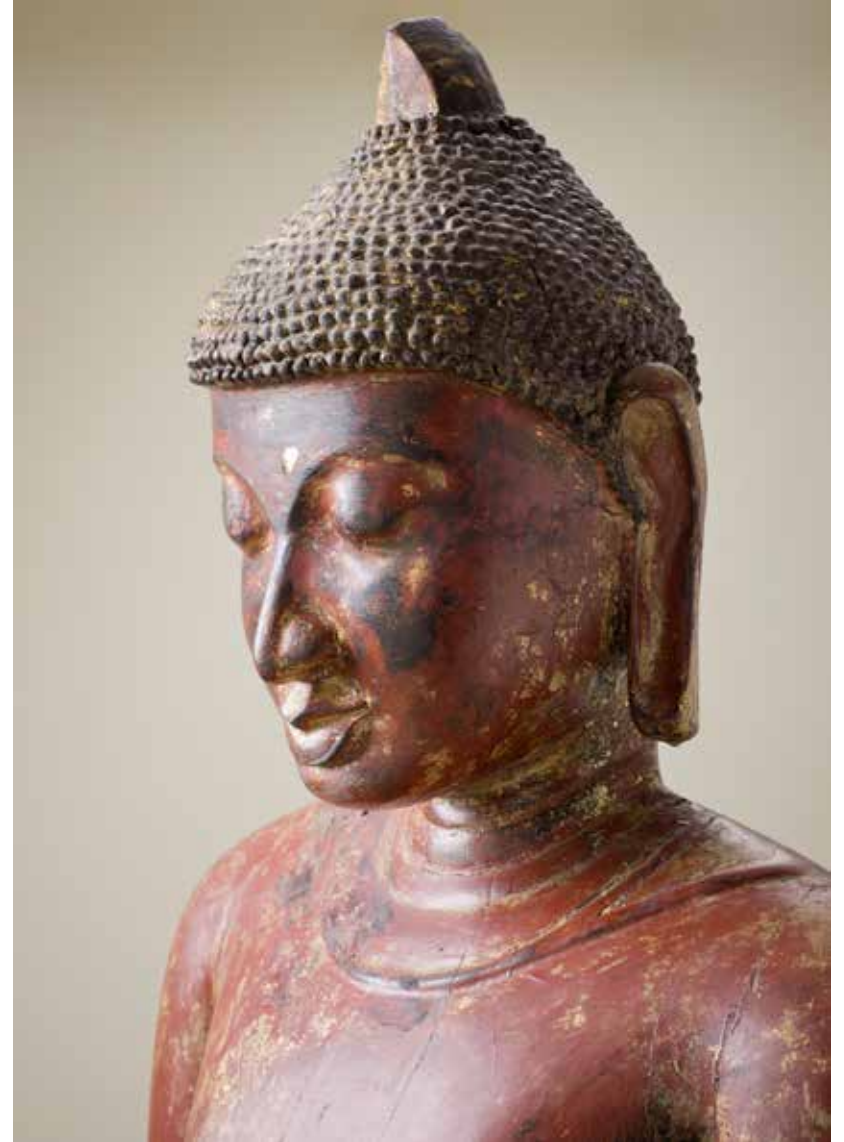
The hem of the underskirt can be seen across the ankles and above the hem of the robe, creating a series of folds in the robe as it falls beside the legs.

**Fig. 4**

Detail shows the eloquent disposition of the hands.



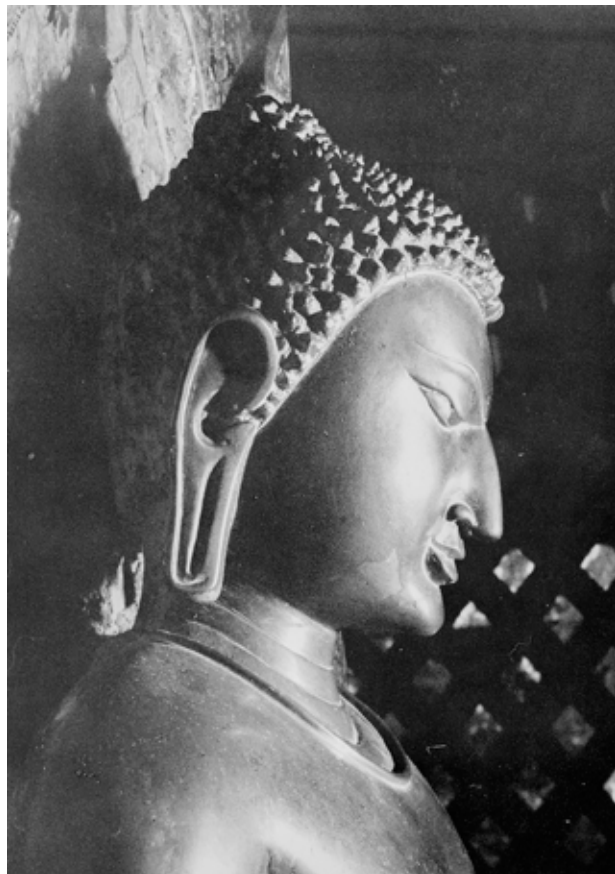
**Fig. 5**  
A three-quarter view of the face shows the lowered eyes, sharp nose, and pursed mouth.



**Fig. 6**  
A three-quarter view of the left side of the head.



**Fig. 7**  
The robe covers the Buddha's shoulders, revealing his body, flaring out between the arms, and creating rhythmic folds along the bottom hem. His right hand performs the fear-not gesture (*abhaya mudra*), and his left hand holds an end of the robe.



**Fig. 8**  
In this detail of the head of figure 7, the downward-cast eyes, sharp nose, and pursed lips are evident.

This Buddha can be compared to several bronze sculptures<sup>7</sup> dating to the Pagan period (eleventh–thirteenth century) (figs. 7, 8). One of the few differences between it and the bronze examples is that the upturned left hands of the bronzes hold the end of the cloth robe, while the left hand in the wood Buddha is empty. This variation may, however, be due to the wood hand being a later replacement. Technical examination shows that the LACMA sculpture was repaired in ancient times, which is not unexpected given wood's vulnerability in a monsoon climate.

Several scholars have noted the close stylistic similarities of the Burmese bronzes to those from India. Two Indian sources have been suggested: the Pala-period bronzes (eleventh–thirteenth century) produced in southern Magadha (modern Bihar); and bronzes being produced at the same time in South India.<sup>8</sup> But the development of Buddha images at Pagan was influenced by many sources and still needs to be fully researched and traced. The bronze Buddhas that can be closely related to LACMA's sculpture, however, can be best placed in the early development of the Pagan sculptures, specifically to the reign of Kyanzitha (1084–1113).<sup>9</sup> The question then becomes whether the LACMA Buddha could date from this same period or if it is a later copy of the early style. Strachan's position—he feels that there are no wood Buddhas that date to the Pagan period—underlines the importance of the sculpture's date. He argues that the Buddhas published by Gordon Luce, which Luce dates to the Pagan period, in fact date to the later First Ava period (fifteenth century).<sup>10</sup>

The evidence from the technical analysis of the LACMA Buddha is suggestive in this regard. Four samples were taken for radiocarbon analysis:<sup>11</sup> three from the head and one from the back of the body. One head sample came from the left ear and another came from the back of the head. Both of these samples intersect the calibrated radiocarbon plot over a period from 1650 to the present; that is, they can be anywhere from almost four hundred years old to modern. The conclusion is that these samples are part of a later repair. The third head sample produced an intersection between the conventional radiocarbon age and the calibrated radiocarbon curve, indicating a terminal date of 1026 to 1164 (one sigma interval). It is necessary to add

perhaps fifty to one hundred years to these dates, representing the sapwood (about twenty years) and a period of growth of the inside of the tree, resulting in likely dates of 1100 to 1250 for the head. The fourth sample, taken from the back of the body, came from a point very near the center of the tree's trunk. The result, using a dating range of two sigma (95% probability), is that the tree's early growth falls between 448 and 762. By adding two hundred years to these dates for continued tree growth, we get a probable date of 668 to 962 for the felling of the tree from which the body of the Buddha was carved.

X-ray analysis shows that the head is a separate piece attached to the body. The radiocarbon dates suggest that the wood used for the body is significantly older than that used for the head. The tree trunk used for the Buddha's body was very large and, judging by the style of the sculpture, was felled a century or more before its carving. The later date of the head, however, may suggest the date for the actual carving of the whole work, if we assume that the head is from a later piece of wood and that the sculpture was carved at the same time. This would give us a date of the twelfth or thirteenth century. There are, of course, other explanations for the technical analysis, but there is nothing that argues against a date corresponding to that of the bronze Buddhas with which it so closely compares. In addition, a much later date would mean that the wood was some four hundred years old, or First Ava period, which seems very unlikely. If the LACMA example is from the twelfth or thirteenth century, it would be one of the only known wood Buddha sculptures from the Pagan period, and the only example of this style.



### **The Second LACMA Burmese Wood Buddha (M.84.183)**

The second Buddha is very different in both style and iconography (fig. 9). The style is similar to a group of twelve wood Buddha sculptures found in a chamber in the Kyaukku Temple at Pagan and first noted by Dr. Emil Forchhammer in 1891.<sup>12</sup> When Luce wrote about the image type in the 1960s, he stated there were another fifteen sculptures in the Pagan Museum, noting that Forchhammer's group had by then disappeared.<sup>13</sup> According to Luce, the images have been found scattered among the various temples at Pagan, and the group at Kyaukku Temple had probably been amassed from sculptures collected from various locations, most likely in ancient times. The Forchhammer sculptures and those in the Pagan Museum total twenty-seven, but there are several more in museums around the world (including the LACMA Buddha) and others have appeared on the art market. Thus, although the total number of this sculpture type is not known, it is a sizable group.<sup>14</sup>

**Fig. 9**  
Buddha, Burma (Myanmar), ca. 12th–14th century,  
M.84.183  
The Buddha is crowned, wears jewelry, and places  
over his monk's robe an elaborately decorated collar.



left to right

**Fig. 10**

The Buddha holds his left hand, palm inward, against his chest. The rounded form that protrudes between his thumb and fingers has not been identified.

**Fig. 11**

The Buddha wears a crown of tall, vertical, leaflike designs. A stacked series of round forms rise from the top of his head, and to the sides are flying ribbons. An extremely elaborate design is placed behind his head as if rising from his shoulders.

**Fig. 12**

Detail of the right hand.

What characterizes these Buddhas is that they are crowned and bejeweled while wearing a monk's robe. The robe is worn symmetrically in the covering mode and clings tightly to the body. The lower right section of the robe on the LACMA Buddha (now missing) would have spread out below the lowered hand to match the left. Buddhas of this type wear earrings, and their mantle of beaded strings and leaflike ornaments is worn across their chests and over their shoulders (fig. 10). Their high crowns are topped with towering stacked rings that almost appear to be extensions of the heads (fig. 11). Intricate, carved foliage flares out on both sides of the head and extends to the shoulders. The crown, tower, and side designs of the LACMA sculpture are among the most complete and finest of any of the published examples. Finally, all the Buddhas have the right arm lowered along the side with the hand open, palm facing outward (fig. 12). The left arm is bent with the hand open, palm pressed against the chest. The hand appears to hold a small, rounded form, with the end protruding between the fingers and thumb (see fig. 10).

**Fig. 13**

Buddha, Burma (Myanmar), ca. 18th century,  
M.80.228.3

The seated Buddha holds a bowl in his lap with his left hand. He reaches down with his right hand, which holds a round object, probably a fruit.

The identification of this image type has never been made, although the scholarship on the importance, development, and meaning of the crowned and bejeweled Buddha is enormous and includes examples from both South and Southeast Asia.<sup>15</sup> There are studies specifically of the crown type and the role that the Pagan-period crown played in the overall development of this type of image.<sup>16</sup> The practice of crowning and decorating Buddhas began in India by at least the eighth century, and the crown here derives from the Indian model. The crowned Buddha was extremely popular in the art of India from the eleventh through the thirteenth century, as it was in the art of Cambodia and Thailand at the same time. It was not popular in Burma, however, and occurs rarely in both sculpture and mural paintings of this period.<sup>17</sup> The addition of the intricate decorations to the sides of the head is a Burmese contribution, thought to be an elaboration of the ribbon ends that fly out from the crowns of the Indian images.<sup>18</sup> Indeed, these still can be clearly seen on the crown of the LACMA example.

Forchhammer felt that the crowned Buddhas “represent Pagan kings who, when grown old, assumed the yellow robe and died here in the hope by such a meritorious deed to have attained the state of embryo-Buddhas.”<sup>19</sup> Luce believed Forchhammer was correct and that the sculptures “represent, in half-idealized portraiture, dead kings and princes of Pagan, now gods in Devaloka.”<sup>20</sup> We know that the crowned type, with the elaborate ear decorations, became very popular in the later art of Burma. Produced in bronze, these later Buddhas are seated, often performing the earth-touching gesture (*bhumisparsa mudra*) or shown reaching down with the right hand, which often holds a small, round fruit, while holding a bowl in his lap with the left.<sup>21</sup> LACMA has a spectacular example in its collection (figs. 13–15). These later bronzes are clearly not portrait images.

Strachan, as mentioned above, feels that the wood crowned Buddhas do not date to the Pagan period but occur only in the First Ava period (fifteenth century).<sup>22</sup> He says that although crowned Buddhas are found at Pagan, they are portable bronzes (perhaps imports from Arakan or India) and depictions on small stone tablets showing the Buddha’s life stories. They are very rare regardless.



**Fig. 14**  
The Buddha has a decorated garment around his shoulders, elaborate earrings, a tall crown, and flaring designs on each side of his head.



**Fig. 15**  
The Buddha's head and shoulders from the rear.

Radiocarbon dating of this sculpture (see fig. 9) indicates that Strachan could be incorrect about the date of the wood crowned Buddhas, or at least that a twelfth- or thirteenth-century date is possible. The conservative (two sigma, 95% probability) interval for the calibrated radiocarbon date of the LACMA sample is 1048 to 1280. Adding the number of growth rings present in the sculpture beyond those sampled (eighty years), plus twenty years of sapwood not preserved, yields an interval for the felling of the tree (tests show it is teak) between 1148 and 1380. Assuming there was an interval before the sculpting of the image, we might add twenty more years, placing the sculpture between 1168 and 1400. Thus, a thirteenth- or fourteenth-century date appears to fit the radiocarbon evidence the best, with even a twelfth-century date a possibility.

In addition, all of the wood crowned Buddhas are around 68 to 74 inches tall (172.7 to 187.9 cm). LACMA's sculpture is 60 inches (152.4 cm), but its feet are damaged. The other Buddhas also do not display any clear stylistic development or change, suggesting they were made at about the same time and as a group. For these reasons, the dating of the LACMA Buddha is likely to indicate the dating of the group as a whole.



### The Third LACMA Burmese Wood Buddha (M.78.129)

This seated Buddha performs the earth-touching gesture (*bhūmisparśha mudrā*) (figs. 16, 17). He is seated with one leg crossing the other (*padma asana*), and he looks down with a sweet smile. The robe is worn in the open mode (pulled under the right arm), revealing the right shoulder, with a ceremonial second robe folded over the left shoulder. His hair is in small bumps with a large jewel on top of his *ushnisha* (fig. 18). His throne is typical of many later Burmese seated Buddha sculptures in both wood and bronze (cf., for example, fig. 13).

Susan L. Huntington and John C. Huntington published this Buddha in their exhibition catalogue *Leaves from the Bodhi Tree: The Art of Pala India (8th–12th Centuries) and Its International Legacy*, stating: “Even in fairly late images, such as this splendid wooden example, the religious and artistic legacy of the Pala tradition persists.”<sup>23</sup> They place it in about the sixteenth century with a question mark, noting that “because of a lack of comparable, securely dated examples, it is difficult to be certain of the date of this sculpture.”<sup>24</sup> The Huntingtons note two important issues: the work is of unusual artistic quality, with a style that reflects that of Pala Indian sculpture (eleventh–twelfth centuries), and dating is problematic.

**Fig. 16**  
Buddha, Burma (Myanmar), 18th century or later,  
M.78.129  
The Buddha reaches down with his right hand to touch  
the earth, calling her to witness that he has  
accumulated sufficient merit to gain Enlightenment.

**Fig. 17**  
A three-quarter view of the right side.



**Fig. 18**

The Buddha's head displays a gentle facial expression, small tight hair curls, and a large gem on top of the cranial bump (*ushnisha*).

The results of the radiocarbon dating were again something of a surprise. Unlike the two LACMA sculptures discussed previously, in which their radiocarbon analysis suggested earlier dates than many scholars might expect, the testing of this example suggested a later date than expected. In this case, the radiocarbon test cannot distinguish between dates that extend from 1660 to 1950. If we add ten year-rings from the edge and twenty years of sapwood, the earliest date would be an additional thirty years, or 1690. The radiocarbon tests cannot be specific in dating the sculpture, but they can tell us that the date cannot be any earlier than the eighteenth century and that the nineteenth or even the twentieth century is a possibility. The sculpture's relationship, then, to Pala-period Indian sculpture involves a five-hundred-year (or more) interval, producing a very tenuous linkage.

### Conclusions

One conclusion of the research of these three Buddhas is that there is still much to learn about Burmese sculpture and its dating, meaning, and sources. It is difficult to know how broadly the radiocarbon dating of all three sculptures could be applied to the dating and organization of Burmese Buddhas in general. Yet each of the three represents a major image type. The first (see fig. 1) seems to be a rare wood representation of a style of Buddha that is well known from Pagan in metal and paint examples; as far as I know, it has not appeared in wood. The suggested radiocarbon date places it in the time of high art production in Pagan of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The LACMA Buddha becomes rare evidence for the theory that wood was of great importance for sculpture of that period.

The second sculpture (see fig. 9) is one of what appears to be a fairly large group of similar Buddha figures identified primarily by their crowns and jewelry. There is as yet no certain identification of these figures, although scholars have many suggestions. These sculptures appear to have been made or collected at some point in Pagan. The radiocarbon date of the LACMA example suggests a late Pagan (thirteenth or fourteenth century) time of manufacture. Many scholars have proposed a dating in this range for Buddhas of this type, but primarily because the sculptures are found at Pagan. Radiocarbon analysis of the sculpture, which appears to exclude the possibility of a later dating for this image type, as argued by some scholars, supplies the only concrete evidence so far for its date.

The seated figure (see fig. 16) is a style that is often related to Indian Buddhas from the Pala period (ninth–twelfth century). The Burmese images are typically given dates of the sixteenth to the seventeenth century. The radiocarbon dating, however, indicates the eighteenth century as the earliest the sculpture was carved, with the possibility that it could date from the nineteenth or even twentieth century. Thus, each sculpture allows us to speculate on shifts of the chronological development of image types that have been discussed in the scholarly literature, suggesting new ways to interpret and organize some of the key Burmese Buddhas.

1. There is no consensus on which term to use to identify the doctrinal school of Buddhism in Burma. Burmese Buddhism is often labeled Theravada Buddhism. Indeed, the “problem” of correct labels extends broadly to Buddhism, and this issue was created by modern scholars attempting to write a critical history of the religion and looking for terms to categorize what in reality is an endless array of Buddhisms. For helpful discussions of the role and identification of Theravada in Southeast Asia, see Skilling (1997, 2009).
2. Frasch 1998.
3. For a discussion of the use of wood in Burmese monasteries, see Pichard (2003) and Stadtner (2005, chapter on “Architecture”). Depictions of what the wood architecture probably looked like are found in some Pagan temple wall paintings; see, for example, Bautze-Picron (2003, plates 14, 23, 50, 64, etc.). There are also many depictions of wood architecture, although usually highly schematized, in stone reliefs, particularly those in the niches of the Nanda Temple; see the illustrations in Luce (1969–1970, vol. 3). For a discussion of the various materials used for the art and architecture at Pagan, see Stadtner (2005, pp. 46–53). Also see note 5 below.
4. Strachan 1989, p. 22.
5. Both Bautze-Picron (2010, p. 109) and Pichard (2001, p. 136) date the wood shrine today called Shwe-cha-cha-hpaya (ancient name To-thwe-gyi) to the Pagan period (that is, the twelfth century).
6. Strachan gives an English translation of a Burmese listing of characteristics of Buddha images that includes the form on the ushnisha: “The *hman-kin* or *ushnisha*, the mark of omniscient wisdom, is present. The *hman-kin* is flat and is placed a little behind the top of the head. It usually takes the form of the pipal leaf or a lotus bud, and it was a frequent practice to decorate it with jewels set in it” (1989, p. 25). He gives the author of the list as Tampawaddy U Win Maung, identified as a woodcarver, but he does not supply a date for him. Elizabeth Moore informs me that U Win Maung presented this material in a paper titled “Buddha Image Making in Myanmar,” at SEAMEO-Chat, Yangon, Myanmar, 2003.
7. Also see Luce 1969–1970, vol. 3, plates 429, 430, 432.
8. See Huntington and Huntington 1990, pp. 222–223.
9. For a discussion of the development of the Pagan Buddha image, see Strachan (1989, pp. 21–34).
10. Strachan 1989, p. 22.
11. Each of the three sculptures discussed here was analyzed using radiocarbon technology. Radiocarbon, or carbon-14, dating is used for testing organic material that was part of a plant or animal and thus has a carbon component. Upon death, the carbon (carbon-14) decays at a steady rate (radioactive decay) that can be calibrated and dated. A standard discussion is Sheridan Bowman, *Radiocarbon Dating: Interpreting the Past* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990). LACMA sculpture M.78.129 was tested by the University of Arizona in 1984; M.84.183 was tested by the University of Washington in 1993 and the University of California, Riverside, in 1996; and M.91.76 was tested by Rafter Radiocarbon Lab, New Zealand, in 2002. I want to thank John Hix and Pieter Meyers, scientists in LACMA’s Conservation Center, for helping me to interpret the radiocarbon test results.
12. Forchhammer 1891, pp. 14–15.
13. Luce 1969–1970, vol. 1, p. 291.
14. Bautze-Picron (2010, p. 114) provides a list of some of the published examples of the image type.
15. Among the first discussions of the crowned Buddha is Paul Mus’s 1928 essay. It remains one of the most intellectually seminal studies of the topic, but it has received considerable criticism over the years (such as Boisselier 1987). A recent study of crowned Buddhas in India and Burma is Bautze-Picron 2010.
16. Fickle 1997.
17. This judgment may have to be modified due to a recent surfacing of some two hundred and eighty small Buddhas, of which nearly eighty are crowned. Some of these images have been published by Bautze-Picron (2010, figs. 136–154), and they display several new and unique stylistic characteristics and new forms of dress and jewelry. Bautze-Picron writes: “A group of nearly 280 small images in pyrophyllite which surfaced in recent years introduces a new dimension in illustrating the late Pagan style from the end of the twelfth century on and the transition towards the later schools of the fourteenth centuries in Sukhotai and Ava. If most of the images in the group illustrate the Buddha in the garb of a monk, nearly eighty images show the Buddha wearing a crown and various pieces of jewelry” (2010, p. 116). Bautze-Picron is undertaking a careful study of these objects to judge their place in Burmese art.
18. Blurton 2002, p. 57. He writes: “The Burmese term for these highly developed appendages is *bha-gin*, or ear-ornament” (2002, p. 64, n. 22).
19. Forchhammer, quoted in Luce (1969–1970, vol. 1, p. 291).
20. Luce 1969–1970, vol. 1, p. 291; also see his comments on p. 143.
21. See Blurton 2002.
22. Strachan 1989, p. 32.
23. Huntington and Huntington 1990, p. 223.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 224.

**Illustrations****Fig. 1**

Buddha  
Burma (Myanmar), ca. 12th–13th century  
Wood, possibly with lacquer  
69 × 24 × 18 in. (175.3 × 61 × 45.7 cm)  
Art Museum Council Fund, M.91.76  
Photo © 2012 Museum Associates/LACMA

**Fig. 2**

M.91.76 (detail)

**Fig. 3**

M.91.76 (detail)

**Fig. 4**

M.91.76 (detail)

**Fig. 5**

M.91.76 (detail)

**Fig. 6**

M.91.76 (detail)

**Fig. 7**

Buddha  
Burma (Myanmar), Pagan, Ananda Kyaungkaik (northwest side), ca. 1100  
Bronze  
H: 44 in. (111.8 cm)  
Reproduced by permission from Artibus Asiae

**Fig. 8**

Reproduced by permission from Paul Strachan

**Fig. 9**

Buddha  
Burma (Myanmar), ca. 12th–14th century  
Wood  
60 × 12 × 5½ in. (152.4 × 30.5 × 14 cm)  
Purchased with Harry Lenart Memorial Funds, M.84.183  
Photo © 2012 Museum Associates/LACMA

**Fig. 10**

M.84.183 (detail)

**Fig. 11**

M.84.183 (detail)

**Fig. 12**

M.84.183 (detail)

**Fig. 13**

Buddha  
Burma (Myanmar), ca. 18th century  
Copper alloy  
10½ × 4¾ × 2¾ in. (26.7 × 12.1 × 7 cm)  
Gift of Michael Phillips, M.80.228.3  
Photo © 2012 Museum Associates/LACMA

**Fig. 14**

M.80.288.3 (detail)

**Fig. 15**

M.80.288.3 (detail)

**Fig. 16**

Buddha  
Burma (Myanmar), 18th century or later  
Wood  
19¾ × 10¼ × 5 in. (49.8 × 26 × 12.7 cm)  
Gift of James and Beverly Coburn, M.78.129  
Photo © 2012 Museum Associates/LACMA

**Fig. 17**

M.78.129 (detail)

**Fig. 18**

M.78.129 (detail)

**Provenance***Buddha (M.91.76)*

Jeff Novick, San Francisco, from at least 1990; sold through Frank Caro Gallery, New York, to LACMA, 1991

*Buddha (M.84.183)*

With Orientalische Kunst-Anstalt, Vaduz, Liechtenstein; sold through Beurdeley et Cie, Paris, to LACMA, 1984

**Publications***Buddha (M.91.76)*

Robert L. Brown, "Selections from the Southeast Asian Art Collection of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art," *Arts of Asia* 38, no. 3 (May–June 2008): 75–87, figs. 14, 15.

Janice Leoshko, "Selected Masterpiece: Burmese Standing Buddha," *At the Museum: The Magazine of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art* 30, no. 4 (April 1992): 12.

*Buddha (M.84.183)*

"Art of Asia Acquired by North American Museums," *Archives of Asian Art* 39 (1986): 75–88, fig. 24.

Robert L. Brown, "The Art of Southeast Asia," *Arts of Asia* 15, no. 6 (November–December 1985): 114–125, fig. 88.

Los Angeles County Museum of Art, "Recent Acquisitions," *Members' Calendar* 23, no. 2 (February 1985): 6.

Los Angeles County Museum of Art, "Indian and Southeast Asian Art and Ancient and West Asian Art," *Report: July 1, 1983–June 30, 1985* (Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1985), pp. 44–49.

Los Angeles County Museum of Art, *Masterpieces from the Los Angeles County Museum of Art* (Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1988), p. 102.

Los Angeles County Museum of Art, "Dr. Pratapaditya Pal and the Department of Indian and Southeast Asian Art," *At the Museum: The Members' Magazine of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art* (July/August 1995): 6–7.

Meher McArthur, *The Arts of Asia: Materials, Techniques, Styles* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2005), p. 211.

*Buddha (M.78.129)*

Susan L. Huntington and John C. Huntington, *Leaves from the Bodhi Tree: The Art of Pala India (8th–12th Centuries) and Its International Legacy* (Seattle: Dayton Art Institute in association with University of Washington Press, 1990), cat. 65.

Los Angeles County Museum of Art, "Indian and Islamic Art," *Report: July 1, 1977–June 30, 1979* (Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1980), pp. 32–35.

**Chronology**

1st millennium CE: Pyu and Mon ethnic groups in Burma  
 Ca. 9th century: Burmese ethnic group appears  
 Ca. 10th–13th century: Burmese create major kingdom at Pagan  
 11th–13th century: Some two thousand brick temples built (mostly Buddhist) at Pagan  
 Ca. 1105: Ananda Temple at Pagan  
 12th century: Pyu disappear from historical record  
 13th century to present: Buddhism predominates; frequent political changes  
 15th century: Mon form important kingdom

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