Ray has written a volume introducing the critical questions that orient modern research on ancient South Asian Buddhism while also covering key archaeological sites with detail and nuance. Ray also provides extensive citations and references to further readings that allow anyone so inclined to explore the subject far more deeply. That she has done all of this in less than 50,000 words is remarkable. The one hesitation I have is that I am not sure if *Archaeology and Buddhism in South Asia* could be easily understood by readers with no prior knowledge of South Asian history and geography. This book seems to be written with a South Asian audience in mind, that is, readers who learned the outlines of Indian history as a regular part of their schooling. For non-South Asian readers without prior knowledge of South Asia, the book will be more difficult and will likely require the occasional internet search on the name of a South Asian dynasty or region. Given its length and clarity, Ray's *Archaeology and Buddhism in South Asia* would make an excellent supplemental text in undergraduate courses in South Asian history and religions.

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Now listed as a UNESCO World Heritage site, the Buddhist complex at Yungang (Cloud Pass) near present-day Datong in Shanxi Province remains one of the three most well-known and visited cave-temple sites in China. The other two are the Mogao caves near the city of Dunhuang in Gansu and those at Longmen outside Luoyang in Henan Province. Established around A.D. 460 under the patronage of the powerful Northern Wei dynasty (A.D. 386–534), Yungang consists of 45 major caves, not all of which are completely preserved, and approximately 1000 small niches. Many of the caves and niches contain sculptures that were at one time painted. The human-constructed cave-temples at this site have been the focus of Chinese, Japanese, and Western scholarship since the first decades of the twentieth century, yet the dating of the grottoes and the identification of their patrons remain somewhat controversial.

Both topics, as well as a reexamination of Yungang's politico-social and liturgical functions, are the focus of the recent interesting monograph by Joy Lidu Yi. Yi begins with a useful overview of previous studies, in varying languages and from art historical, epigraphic, historical, and archaeological perspectives. She subsequently discusses the impact of recent excavations at the site, focusing on the discovery of a monastery and residence halls above the caves which served as a center for translation and practice. Yi also incorporates new finds from tombs and other sites in Datong (formerly Pingcheng) and the Northern Wei capital from A.D. 386 to 494.

Her suggestions regarding similarities between funerary sculptures of figures from tombs in the capital and representations of donors in the secondary imagery at Yungang are useful, but the analysis is marred by a discussion of these people and their clothing as typifying foreigners (*hu ren*). The clothing

and the physiognomies reflect those of the Xianbei, a formerly nomadic people who established the Northern Wei dynasty. The clothing thus represents court and local styles rather reflecting that of the many foreigners, including Sogdians, who lived in the capital.

Both historical records and archaeological finds inform Yi's discussions of the chronology of Yungang. She begins with a set of five caves (currently numbered 16–20) that had been constructed at the suggestion and under the supervision of the influential cleric Tanyao; these are the most studied caves at the site. After having been named the superintendent of monks in A.D. 453 after a disastrous persecution of Buddhism the previous year, Tanyao was charged with reconstructing monasteries and other Buddhist centers, deepening the knowledge and practice of Buddhism, and supervising translations of newly acquired texts from the vast Buddhist corpus.

Each of the five caves houses a colossal Buddha and each Buddha is understood to represent a specific Northern Wei emperor in the guise of an incarnate buddha (*tathagata*) who is also a universal ruler (*chakravartin*). Discussions about which Northern Wei ruler should be matched with which cave or which buddha have continued for at least half a century. Yi's suggestion that the five caves in question were organized according to the *zhao mu* system, traditionally used for family shrines, is fascinating (pp. 65–67). According to this system, cave 19, the largest of the five, was the earliest to be opened and is associated with Emperor Daowu (A.D. 386–409), the founder of the dynasty. Caves 20 and 18 (on the left and right of cave 19) should then be associated with the subsequent emperors Mingyuan (A.D. 409–423) and Taiwu (A.D. 424–452). The smallest two caves (caves 16 and 17 located in the far west) were dedicated to Wencheng (A.D. 452–465), the fourth emperor and first patron of the site, and Crown Prince Jingmu. The son of Taiwu, Jingmu never ruled but was posthumously honored as emperor.

Yi's discussion of the religious and political imagery of the caves would benefit from an identification, or at least an attempt to identify, each of the five buddhas in these caves. For example, the crossed legs of the seated Buddha in cave 17 are signifiers of Maitreya, the teaching Buddha of the Future. Moreover, by the late sixth century, the small figures represented in the clothing of the giant statues, such as the buddhas on the standing colossus in cave 18, were associated with the cosmic Buddha Vairocana. It would be worth examining whether the earlier evidence for figural imagery in clothing provides any understanding of the later tradition. Yi's discussions would also have benefited from a deeper exploration of the ties between the iconography at Yungang and the complex at Binglingsi in Gansu Province, which provides a precedent for a group of five buddhas in niche 16 in cave 169, thought to date around A.D. 420. While Tanyao is the most famous, he was most likely one of many clerics, practitioners, and artisans who moved (at times forcibly) to Datong after the Northern Wei conquest of the northwest.

Her suggestion that the unusual elliptical shape of the five caves at Yungang (the shape does not appear in other Chinese Buddhist cave-temples) was based on the shapes of the tents of the formerly nomadic Xianbei is intriguing. The rationale for this suggestion is the discovery of a small clay funerary sculpture of a tent among the works found during the excavation of the Yanbei Shiyuan tombs and another representation of tents in a mural at the Shaling tombs. While this is plausible, the discussion would have benefited from further information regarding this small clay piece, including citations to the initial excavation, the existence of any comparable pieces in addition to the mural, and discussions of the role tents played in Xianbei court culture. The lack of sources for the illustrations in this volume, particularly for comparative pieces such as the charming little tent (fig. 3.3) and the Shaling mural (plate 21) and lack of citations to excavation reports is problematic.

Yi also makes several interesting suggestions regarding the chronology of the caves dating to the second period of construction at Yungang (A.D. 467–494). She bases her work on an in-depth stylistic analysis of two caves (currently numbered 11 and 13) from this period. As she discusses, cave 13 is the only other cave at Yungang that both has an

elliptical shape and holds a colossal buddha. Yi reasonably suggests that these two features help to date the cave to the beginning of the construction of the phase 2 caves. She also points out that cave 11 has the greatest number of inscriptions found at Yungang; the three most legible inscriptions range in date from A.D. 483 to 494. She makes a strong case that cave 12, one of the more dramatically embellished at the site, was added around A.D. 483 when work resumed on cave 11 and asserts that both 11 and 13 were initially opened during the reign of the fifth Northern Wei ruler, Emperor Xiaowen (A.D. 471–499).

Analysis of the prevalence of paired caves (i.e., 7 and 8; 9 and 10) as a reflection of the power of "two sages" (*er sheng*), including the sixth ruler Xiaowen (A.D. 471–499) and the equally powerful Dowager Empress Wenming (A.D. 442–490), is useful for understanding court patronage during this second phase of construction. As Yi points out, an expanding iconography, including *jatakas* or tales of the past lives of the Historical Buddha Shakyamuni, other narratives, bodhisattvas, and a range of guardian figures and musicians, is an important characteristic of this period. Yi discusses possible ties between the development of some of this iconography and the translation work undertaken (often under the supervision of Tanyao) at the site and at the court. It is plausible that works such as the apocryphal *Sutra of Trapusa and Bhallika* (*Tiwei Boli Jing*) were composed there and served as the source for specific scenes in the second phase caves. It is also worth noting, however, that the life story of the Historical Buddha Shakyamuni as a paradigm, including themes such as the three Buddhas of the Past, Present, and Future and the role or value of lay-practice, were part of broader Buddhist concerns in the late fifth and sixth centuries and were referenced in many of the texts in circulation at the time.

Discussion of the liturgical function of the 12 second-phase caves serves as a useful counterweight to the emphasis on meditation found in much current scholarship. As Yi points out, the synoptic nature of much of the narrative imagery at Yungang, particularly the scenes in the elaborate cave 12, suggests that most viewers could not easily identify or read any given story line. Lectures and oral and musical performances presumably took place in the chapels (some of which were embellished with representations of musicians) at Yungang as they did in other centers in China and Central Asia. However, given the intimate scale of the caves, and the continuing royal and elite patronage at the site, questions remain about the size and nature of any potential audience. While evidence exists for activity by lay Buddhist associations (*yi yi*) at Yungang, the social status of individuals in those groups remains unclear. The ability to participate in projects undertaken by members of such groups suggests a level of social prominence, a certain degree of literacy, and presumably familiarity with important or influential texts or well-known Buddhist narratives. Yi's discussion of practice at Yungang adds an important dimension to work on this site, although greater precision in using the terms "folk" and "lay" might lead to further clarification.

Examination of the long-overlooked phase-three caves, most of which were opened after the A.D. 494 transfer of the Northern Wei court to Luoyang in Henan Province, is a valuable addition to the study of Yungang and Chinese Buddhism. Yi introduces the compositions, iconographies, and styles of all of the extant caves as the basis for dating construction of the last phase at Yungang into four periods: A.D. 494–504 (13 caves), just after the court had moved to Luoyang; A.D. 504–515 (4 caves); ca. A.D. 515, when two small caves were opened; and A.D. 515–524 (18 caves), the final period of construction. Her discussion of the changing styles of clothing worn by the Buddhas in the phase 2 and phase 3 caves, as well as the evolution of figural types and ties between the changes found at Yungang with the development of a new court style at Longmen, is solid and important. It helps to fill a lacuna in the understanding of the development of religious imagery in north China during the seminal period between the late fifth and the early sixth centuries, which saw not only the construction of the Yungang and other caves, including small satellite centers in Shanxi, but also the flowering of the imported religion of Buddhism under the patronage of the Xianbei and other rulers.