

discourse (and the new construction of heritage malls and such carried out in its spirit). Indeed, here it would have been profitable to discuss how this dissonance is not at all unique to the heritage sphere, but ubiquitous in China because of the repressive political system and its revanchist-nationalist ideology.

In terms of heritage, this system seems trapped in a certain narrow nationalism from which it is very difficult, at present, to emerge. Thus, in China, “World Heritage” comes to be captured, incorporated, and framed within a national context (p. 194), even successfully entering the minds of the masses.

As Yan points out, the hopeful “cosmopolitan” approach, which some have hoped would emerge globally victorious, runs into a very serious obstacle here. This is despite the many achievements of recognition and preservation of heritage sites in China that also can and should be celebrated.

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Archaeology and Buddhism in South Asia. Himanshu Prabha Ray. New Delhi: Routledge India, 2018. 140 pp., 12 figures, bibliography, index. Hardback £95, US \$150, ISBN 978-1-138-30489-5; eBook £36, US \$49, ISBN: 978-0-203-72854-3.

Reviewed by Lars FOGELIN, *School of Anthropology, University of Arizona*

With *Archaeology and Buddhism in South Asia*, Himanshu Prabha Ray has produced the first modern introduction to the field intended for an audience of non-specialists. Coming in at a brief 140 pages, Ray has provided an excellent primer for anyone who is seeking to gain an understanding of the basic outlines of Buddhist archaeology in South Asia. To accomplish this, Ray jettisoned the traditional ways of presenting Buddhism that have dominated scholarship for the last century. Where earlier works would almost invariably begin with the biography of the Buddha, the archaeological sites he is believed to have visited, and a survey of the role of Buddhism in the development of urbanism from mid- to late first millennium B.C.E., Ray centers her book on the lived practice of Buddhists in

the first millennium C.E.—the first period in which abundant archaeological remains are available to understand the growth, transformation, and eventual decline of Buddhism in South Asia.

It is difficult to think of a better scholar to write this concise introduction to South Asian Buddhism. Since the publication of *Monastery and Guild: Commerce under the Satavahanas* (1986), Ray has been among the most important and prolific scholars working in ancient Indian history and archaeology. Through her work at Jawaharlal Nehru University and as Chair of the National Monuments Authority, she has helped shift the focus on Buddhist history and archaeology from one that concentrated on Buddhist theology and philosophy, primarily through close readings of

Buddhist texts, to a perspective on the daily lived practices of Buddhist monks and nuns (collectively known as the *sangha*) and the elite and non-elite lay people who supported them. This new perspective, one that Ray helped create, permeates the whole of *Archaeology and Buddhism in South Asia*.

Perhaps the most important aspect of *Archaeology and Buddhism in South Asia* is its emphasis on the diversity of Buddhist practices, whether speaking of the *sangha* or the laity. More so, rather than present the *sangha* and the laity as wholly separate, Ray carefully demonstrates the ways that their religious practices and beliefs both diverged and overlapped over time. Ray tracks these issues in five chapters, each focusing on a different theme. In the first two chapters, she examines the spread of Buddhism throughout South Asia, primarily in terms of how specific Buddhist sects competitively expanded into new areas while simultaneously developing the core concepts of the Buddhist *dhamma* (a difficult term to define, but sometimes glossed as “law” or “teachings”). Rather than a unified, generic form of *dhamma*, Ray stresses the differences between the 16 sects of Buddhism and the importance of inscriptions for understanding the lived practices, both ritual and otherwise, of the *sangha*. Overall, Ray credits Buddhist *sangha* with the spread of Buddhism from its heartland in the Gangetic Plain of North India.

In chapters 3 and 4, Ray turns her attention to Buddhist relics, icons, and associated ritual practices and pilgrimages centered on the relics and icons. In a critical move, Ray argues (p. 3),

The physical manifestations of the *dhamma* appeared in the archaeological record as religious architecture at least 200–300 years after the Buddha had preached his *dhamma* across north India, and especially important are the inscriptions, *stupas*, images, and other objects of veneration.

The key insight here is that the material expressions of Buddhism are no less expressions of the *dhamma* than the canonical texts that have long been the focus of research.

In terms of relics, Ray argues for the centrality of relic veneration in the ritual lives of both the *sangha* and lay-Buddhists. More so, she sees the frequent disinterment, division, and reinterment of relics in new regions as central to the spread of Buddhism across South Asia. Within this context, the Buddha’s relics were viewed as the living presence of the Buddha, and devotees sought to have their own remains interred within his presence. When Buddhist first began to carve images of the Buddha in the beginning of the first millennium C.E., Buddhists ascribed his images with much the same sorts of sacred power as relics had long exhibited.

Pilgrimage is also central to Ray’s understanding of Buddhism in the first millennium C.E. Ray views pilgrimage as a force that linked monasteries from distant regions into networks that promoted particular versions of Buddhism. That is, in addition to the major pilgrimage routes centered on important locations in the life of the Buddha, Buddhists participated in regional pilgrimages, connecting monasteries at the peripheries with each other and the core of Buddhism in the Gangetic Plain. With the constant movement of the *sangha* and other devotees between monasteries through pilgrimage, Buddhist identities were maintained despite the ever-increasing expansion of Buddhism across Asia.

In the final chapter of *Archaeology and Buddhism in South Asia*, Ray turns to the issue of religious pluralism in South Asia. Buddhism was only one of several different and competing religions simultaneously practiced in South Asia in the first millennium C.E. In contrast to the prevailing view that sees clear divisions between Buddhism, Jainism, Brahmanism, Hinduism, and Islam, Ray argues for complex relationships between religious traditions, with both borrowing and competition between them. Ray argues for a greater emphasis on religious pluralism by carefully examining the diversity of religious institutions at important religious centers like Mathura, Ellora, and Nagapattinam. In each of these, she identifies what she calls a “multireligious sacred geography” (p. 114).

Overall, I can think of no better introduction to the subject than *Archaeology and Buddhism in South Asia*. Himanshu Prabha

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