

As such the publication is divided into three parts. In Part 1 (Introduction), the author provides a helpful summary of chapter 4. Part 2 contains the English translations as explained above, and Part 3 offers a critical edition of the Mongolian version of chapter 4. The two appendixes respectively list the Sanskrit terms and the Sanskrit names of deities and persons occurring in the Mongolian version. This publication also provides a very comprehensive bibliography.

Viewed as a whole, this publication appertains to the top grade of scholarship and academic competence. The translation is accurate and elegant, and the annotations reflect the author's extensive research. It is a handsome contribution to the study of the Kālacakra system, although prospective readers must be warned that both chapter four and its commentary are not easy to comprehend. Just as the author suggests in her introduction, one needs to be acquainted with the outer and inner cycles of time before attempting to cope with the intricacies of this publication.

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PIA BRANCACCIO:

*The Buddhist Caves at Aurangabad: Transformations in Art and Religion.*

(Brill's Indological Library.) xxii, 332 pp. Leiden: Brill, 2011. €108.  
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This book is a detailed study of the Buddhist rock-cut monuments at Aurangābād, excavated into a rocky plateau on the western edge of the Deccan plateau in Maharashtra, India. The town of Aurangābād, immediately below the caves, is named after Aurangzeb and is best known for the Bībī-kā Maqbarā, the tomb of Aurangzeb's wife.

Brancaccio's book is primarily an art historical and architectural study that analyses the historical and religious phenomena that shaped the caves at this site during the first seven centuries AD. The book is richly illustrated with maps, plans and photographs, 160 in total. It begins with an introduction titled "Why Aurangabad?" (pp. 1–6). This frames the book's *raison d'être*: in essence, the author is attempting to place the site in the context of recent scholarship. Documentation was being published as early as the 1880s (most of the cave plans used in the book are those prepared by Burgess), but since that time, and especially over the last fifty years, a host of advances in the history of art, iconography, epigraphy and Buddhist studies have transformed our approach to Indian culture and its material remains. The author has set herself the ambitious task of taking stock of these developments and applying them to the Aurangābād caves. This leads her to place the site in the "larger cultural and artistic milieu in constant transformation through the centuries" (p. 1). So although the book deals primarily with iconography and chronology, it looks beyond Aurangābād to wider artistic and religious concerns in India. There are good reasons for looking at Aurangābād in this way. The primary one, not openly stated by the author, is that its size is manageable, i.e. it is smaller than Ajanṭā and therefore not overwhelming in its scale, complexity and wealth of material. It is also free of the difficult historiographical burden connected with Ajanṭā. As we know from archaeology, there are good reasons to focus on lesser sites: such places are likely

to retract more distinctly in periods of retrenchment and to show innovations more dramatically when new developments are introduced.

The six chapters of the book begin with “The caves” (pp. 7–24). This looks at the three clusters of caves that comprise the site and is mainly descriptive. Chapter 2 (pp. 25–70), “The beginnings at Aurangabad”, turns to chronology, in essence a history of the site up to around the fourth century. This deals with the issues surrounding cave chronology in the Deccan, the question of *stūpa*-s, the relationship of the site to others in the region, and matters of trade, patronage and agriculture. Chapters 3 and 4 (pp. 71–157) examine the “renaissance” of the site in the fifth century and Buddhist practice at Aurangābād in the sixth century. In these pages, the author’s interest in looking beyond Buddhism to Pāsupata and Kalacuri patronage is noteworthy. Chapter 5 (pp. 125–210) turns back to the eastern group of caves, analysing the icons of Avalokiteśvara, the Parinirvāṇa and, at the end, the ostensibly Hindu images of Gaṇeśa and the Mother Goddesses. After a brief conclusion and an impressive bibliography (pp. 216–28), the book closes with an index (pp. 229–33). The index is much too brief for a work of this complexity.

The strength of this book lies in the author’s treatment of the main issues that have informed the study of Buddhist art and architecture in western India and where the discussion of these issues stands at present. Brancaccio’s balanced summaries show a close reading of the literature, but she treads carefully and is no revolutionary. In some cases one might have hoped for a decisive move beyond the pitfalls that art historians have created for themselves. Aurangābād, like many sites in western India, has a long history with distinct periods, something scholars once described as the “Hīnayāna phase” and “Mahāyāna phase”. While Brancaccio dismisses this (p. 2), many parts of the book (see for example chapter 3.8) are concerned with how we might chart the arrival of Mahāyāna on the ground in physical and iconographic terms, and this is done using the sculptures that signal Mahāyāna ideas. The heart of the problem is one of first definition: a sharp divide between Mahāyāna and Theravāda, so clear to us today, comes only in the late medieval period. Moreover the divide, at least for those involved in it, tended to centre on matters of monastic discipline, not the veneration of images. The scholarly issue is that historians of religion and historians of art, despite efforts on both sides, still think of different things when they speak of Mahāyāna. Otherwise, the appearance of “Tantric” and “Hindu” elements at Aurangābād are dealt with in ways that follow traditional furrows; for an attempt to build a fresh paradigm, readers can refer to Abhishek Amar, “Buddhist responses to Brāhmaṇa challenges in medieval India: Bodhgayā and Gayā”, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 22, 2012, 155–85. The treatment of the word *tāntra* (not *tantra*) in the Gangdhar inscription (p. 206) needs to be read with my discussion in *The Archaeology of Hindu Ritual* (Cambridge, 2009), p. 179. Finally, despite a useful widening of horizons in geographical and disciplinary terms, Brancaccio does not integrate landscape archaeology into her methods, for which see Julia Shaw, *Buddhist Landscapes in Central India* (London, 2007). No attempt is made to explore the water system, or the ridge above the caves, where an old tank is located. It is, of course, impossible that “nothing” will be found above the caves, no matter how often local people tell us that “nothing is there”. The problem is summarized by the absence of a site map in this volume. This tells us where we need to go: with Brancaccio’s useful book in hand, the future is open to consider the immediate landscape and archaeological context of these important caves.

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