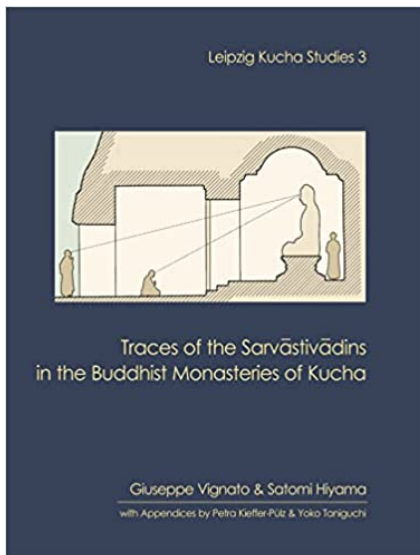


Traces of the Sarvastivadins in the Buddhist Monasteries of Kucha (Leipzig Kucha Studies 3)



Author: Giuseppe Vignato, Satomi Hiyama, with appendices by Petra Kieffer-Pulz and Yoko Taniguchi

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About the Book

The innovative approach to the study of Kuchean Buddhism presented in this book examines the material remains in order to identify the type of Buddhism practiced in the region, which left its traces in the rock- and surface monasteries. In addition to drawing upon as yet unpublished data from in situ fieldwork, this study also undertakes a detailed reading of the records and photographs of early 20th century international expeditions, and the artefacts which were taken from the caves and are now held in museums around the world.

The interdisciplinary collaboration of the two main authors has permitted the identification of four successive phases of the Kuchean Sarvastivada tradition based on the archaeological and art-historical analysis of the sites, districts, cave groups, cave types, layouts of the décor, the narrative contents and iconography therein, and the source texts. The results of this study are supported and further extended upon by the contributions of two guest scholars. The appendixes focus on the Vinaya texts unearthed in the Kucha region and on the materials and techniques of the wall paintings, respectively.

Our study focuses specifically on a single phase of the Kuchean Sarvastivada tradition, which is herein referred to by the unbiased term 'Tradition A'. This tradition can be clearly distinguished from other traditions present in the caves of Kucha. Part One offers a comprehensive catalogue of 'Tradition A' caves, while Part Two presents a typological analysis based on the 'sense of place' of each of the caves, as well as a study of the features of their primary and secondary décor, before moving to the contextualization of the spatial context of these caves within the monasteries. Based on these data 'Tradition A' emerges as an early phase of Kuchean Sarvastivada Buddhism which may be closely related to the Shisonglu. This phase was then followed by 'Tradition B', another Sarvastivada tradition which contains more elements related to the Mulasarvastivada-vinaya.

About the Author

Giuseppe Vignato, Professor of Archaeology, Peking University, has been involved with the study of the Buddhist sites of Kucha for over 20 years.

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