



The Stupa at Sopara: Looking Beyond the Buddhist Remains

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Pia Brancaccio's paper explores the social and economic milieu that led to the longevity of the Buddhist stupa at Sopara in Konkan, Maharashtra. This major religious center, often overlooked in the scholarship, was allegedly established in the Maurya period and still thriving in the 11th century. In an effort to look beyond the Buddhist "monument" to embrace its cultural and socio-economic fabric, the remains at the site will be examined in light of a variety of textual, epigraphic, and visual sources from different parts of South Asia. An incredibly multifaceted cultural landscape will emerge, one that locates the area of Sopara and its Buddhist sacred space at the center of major long-distance exchange networks reaching far across the Indian Ocean to the northern Himalayan regions.