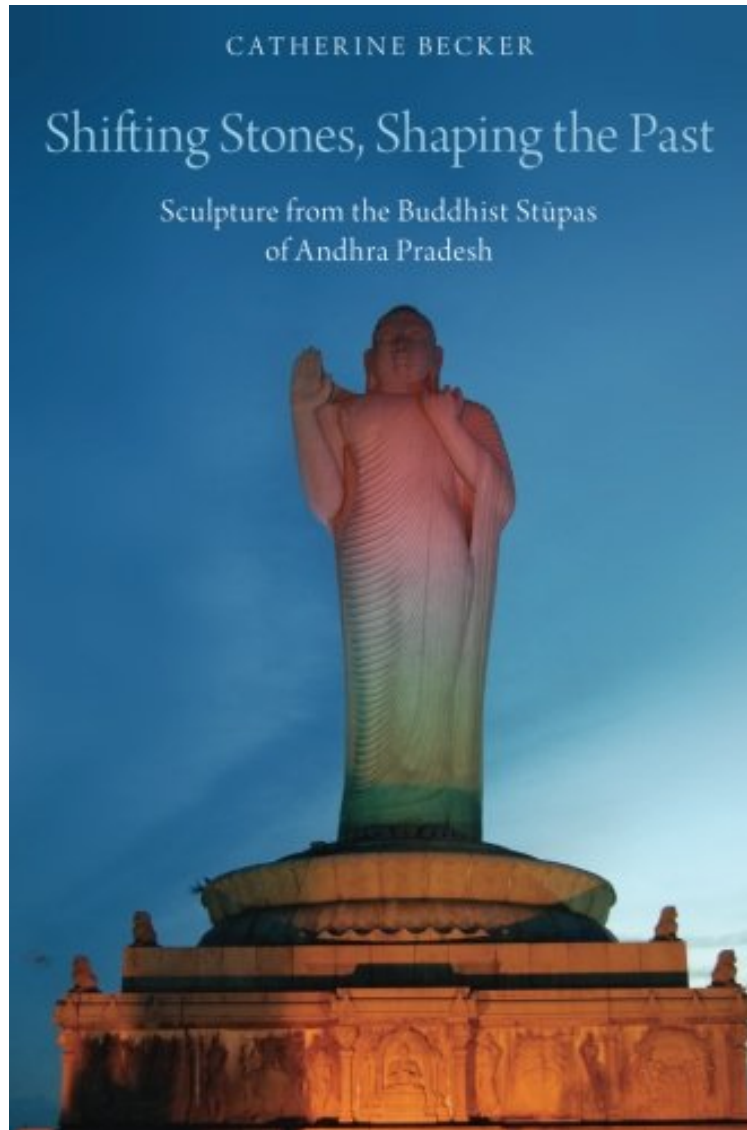


(Mobile book) Shifting Stones, Shaping the Past: Sculpture from the Buddhist Stupas of Andhra Pradesh

Shifting Stones, Shaping the Past: Sculpture from the Buddhist Stupas of Andhra Pradesh

Catherine Becker

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2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Early Buddhist Art of India in fresh perspective By JKA must read for anyone interested in early Buddhist art of India and its ramification for contemporary India. Based on extensive field research and clearly written, it provides an insightful and readable analysis of many surviving examples of Buddhist sculpture from stupa sites in Andhra Pradesh and locates them in larger historical and religious contexts across temporal boundaries.

In this wide-ranging exploration of the creation and use of Buddhist art in Andhra Pradesh, India, Catherine Becker examines how material remains and visual experiences shape and reveal essential human concerns. *Shifting Stones, Shaping the Past* addresses the fundamental Buddhist question of how humanity progresses centuries after the passing of its teacher, the Buddha Sakyamuni. How might the Buddha's distant teachings be made immediate and accessible? Beginning with an analysis of the spectacular relief sculptures that once adorned the stupas. Over a period of almost two millennia, many of these stupas have fallen into disrepair. While it is tempting to view these monuments as ruins, they are by no means "dead." Turning to the 20th and 21st centuries, Becker analyzes examples of new Buddhist imagery, recent state-sponsored tourism campaigns, and new devotional activities at the sites in order to demonstrate that the stupas of Andhra Pradesh and their sculptural adornments continue to engage the human imagination and are even ascribed innate power and agency. *Shifting Stones, Shaping the Past* reveals intriguing parallels between ancient uses of imagery and the new social, political, and religious functions of these objects and spaces.

"There is much to learn in this fine study focusing on the Buddhist art of Andhra, not the least of which is the importance for Buddhist studies of combining a broad range of material and disciplinary perspectives with good art historical methodology. Eschewing an attempt to reassemble the now scattered remains of this region's most famous monuments, Becker has nonetheless constructed a better sense of how and why they matter than has ever been achieved." --Janice Leoshko, Associate Professor of Asian art, University of Texas at Austin "This is a superb book that offers important contributions to many of the most compelling conversations in the field of South Asian studies and of art history more broadly." --H-Asia, H-Net s About the Author Catherine Becker is Assistant Professor of Art History at the University of Illinois at Chicago.