

Donations to the Buddhist Establishments in South Konkan with special reference to Kuda, Mahad and Kol

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Abstract: Ashoka's patronage to Buddhism resulted into the expansion of Buddhism practically all over India. After the Pataliputra Council, Buddhism spread extensively in different parts of India and by 200 B.C., the Buddhist communities began to use excavated dwellings in western India. Between B.C. 200- A.D.350, the Buddhist missionaries seem to have been active and during this period a number of cave dwellings were excavated throughout the Western Ghats. They received a generous patronage and people from all walks of life came forward. Interestingly, many details of the Buddhist Fraternity, their patrons, nature of the patronage and occasionally the activities of the monks here are recorded in form of the inscriptions. There were several Buddhist settlements were in South Konkan . These were at Kuda and Dabhol along the coast and at Mahad, Chiplun, Kol and Nadsur in the interior. Kuda lies on the shore of the creek of Rajapur. They are 26 in number- 5 chaityagrihas and 21 Viharas. Mahad has 28 excavations but the caves at Kol Chiplun and Dabhol are few and in dilapidated condition. The Settlement at Nadsur has 19 excavations [one chaitya and rest Viharas]. All these were excavated between 1st-2nd Centuries A. D. and belong to the Hinayana phase of excavations. Some of them were reoccupied by the Mahayanists in the 5th 6th Centuries A. D. The present paper aims to throw light on the Buddhist establishments in South Konkan with special reference to the establishments at Kuda, Mahad, Kol, Nadsur, its patrons and Patterns of donation. The paper is primarily based on the epigraphic records from these sites.