began to change for the better when the early Nationalists showed a commitment to higher ideals but, in the end, only the People’s Liberation Army learned to love the masses.

What Dr. Lary has attempted to do (rather courageously given the paucity of materials) is to see warlord China from the bottom up: to trace the origins and recruitment of common soldiers, to present life in the ranks and document the brutality of the period at the human level. It was a worthy endeavour and she succeeds to a point. But this rather thin book, hardly deserving of board covers, will probably disappoint specialist readers. The work is overly-impressionistic and just not the systematic sociocultural analysis the military scholars have been hoping for. Its thesis that life in warlord armies was itself brutalizing does not adequately explain the violence so prevalent in modern Chinese history. In a tragic paradox, Sun Yatsen and his successors set out to reunite the country and end fratricide through military means. But before the Northern Expedition was completed, new social and political divisions had emerged and, although demobilization was promised, even greater militarization resulted. Nominal unification did little to stop the bloodshed.

Like the events it sets out to describe, C. Martin Wilbur’s *The Nationalist Revolution in China, 1923-1928* is also a big disappointment. Mostly a narrative account of political and military affairs, it eschews analysis of socio-economic issues or the consequences of civil war and generally leaves the people out. First published as a chapter in the multi-volume *Cambridge History of China*, the work stands naked without the greater context.

Granted that economic and intellectual considerations as well as what was happening in warlord China were originally left—together with the rise of the Chinese Communist Party—to other contributors, Wilbur’s two-hundred page essay still gives short shrift to many important matters. Finance and party organization are only sketched while the ideological developments, so critical to the course of events, are just as badly neglected. But the most conspicuous weakness is the book’s encyclopedic style which makes it possible to include a gigantic cast of characters yet leave out all the “revolutionary” passion. Although the author occasionally notes where primary sources contradict, the matter-of-fact presentation hides the extent of scholarly debate over what is surely the most controversial period in modern Chinese history.


Carmel Berkson’s text, extensively illustrated with her own photographs, provides the first monograph on the ten caves, nine Buddhist and one Brahmanical, two miles west of the city of Aurangabad in Maharashtra State. These are well-known to Indian art historians, despite the previous neglect of their full publication. The interest they deserve has been overshadowed by their neighbors, the major Hindu, Buddhist, and Jain cave sites of Ajanta and Ellora.

This unfootnoted publication is aimed at a serious, general readership. It includes contributions by Mulk Raj Anand of an introductory poem on the spirit of early Buddhism, and of Tantric Buddhist iconographical identifications by Dipak C. Bhat-
tacharya, Chairman of the Department of Fine Arts at Punjab University, Chandigarh. These complement Berkson's text with chapters on "Roots", an essay on the fundamental characteristics pervading and binding the traditional cultural milieu of India and its spiritual art; "History"; and a chapter on "Buddhism" explaining the nature of the various Buddhist sects that were active there—Theravada, Madhyamika-Mahayana, and Tantra Vajrayana. These chapters provide the caves' context and evoke the life, the spirit, and the use of the site, which is then fully described cave by cave and illustrated with the author's exceptional photographs and with plans drawn for the publication by Arthur Duff. An illustrated and pithy glossary and a bibliography complete the volume.

While the author resists a monodimensional study of the site by providing the reader an introductory background to all aspects relevant to the caves, she also insists on the multidimensionality of the experience of the visitor to the caves, where one's senses react to the total environment. This note is in fact the special quality pervading Berkson's descriptions of the individual caves which form the majority of the text: "The visitor responds to the grand totality of all the elements within each cave, to the relationship of the caves to one another and to the surrounding environment of mountain, sky and plain, the flight of birds and changing hues of atmosphere." (p. 36)

While "... chronology of the caves is not within the scope of this book..." (p. 43) an order is proposed (4 and 5, then 1, 3, 7, 2, 8, 9) and dates are mentioned: the earliest chaitya 4 and vihara 5 are 2nd century B.C., while the rest of the viharas of the small monastic settlement were built in the 5th and 6th centuries, probably within a seventy to one-hundred-year period. There is no inscription which verifies the ruling dynasty at the time of excavation of the later group of monolithic caves, but the sculpture style identifies it as related to that of the Gupta period though the specific area was not under that dynasty's power. "It may be safely assumed that the rulers of the principalities of Rishika, Vidarbha, Asmaka, Trikutaka and Akola in the neighborhood and Basim branch of the Vakatakas in the 5th century and later the Chalukyas may have participated in endowments to some extent, although there is no sound proof that either of these latter great empires had indeed established a permanent rule in Maharashtra at this time." (p. 18) In the cave descriptions, there is no concern with identification of dynastic styles, but instead there is a rich evocation of the qualities and interactions of the images, architecture and spaces.

Certain sculpted figural groups found in these richly-adorned caves are among the finest artistic creations of ancient Indian sculpture, making the seven hundred foot ascent to the caves quite rewarding from an aesthetic point of view. Several of these are depictions of Bodhisaktis, female counterparts of the Bodhisattvas. Their presence here gives evidence of the emergence of Tantric imagery at this time. "In Cave 7 some of the figures are perfectly modelled." (p. 37) The flat architectural planes are given life by the "... warmth of energy in the contained but potentially eruptive female figures." Within the cultural milieu the author suggests that these sensuous females are expressions of "repressed longings for the ancient worship of mother goddesses, ..." so that to Indian Buddhists they subconsciously "excited fear, awe, submissiveness, and reverence."(p. 39) These soft, sensuous female goddesses, richly adorned and subtly posed, are countered by huge, and massive geometric Buddhas within the shrines. Cave 7 is a "climatic achievement" at the site. Eight diagrams are provided to elucidate the dynamics of the Dancing Tara panel, surely a brilliant composition.

The caves are described not only for their parts and details but for their life and action, for the interconnections of parts that can only be experienced and cannot be