



Urban Decay in India (c. 300-c. 1000)

By R.S. Sharma

Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1987. Hardcover. Book Condition: New. 2 maps and 23 line drawings (illustrator). First. 16 X 24. The book focuses on the decline of the towns and their desertion in late ancient and early medieval India on the basis of archaeological evidence. The author has material remains to study crafts, commerce and coinage, and identifies and illustrates signs of growth and decay for more than 130 excavated sites. The strata with poor remains are taken to indicate decrease in construction, manufacturing and commercial activities, and are hence associated with de-urbanization. The reasons for the urban eclipse are sought not only in the fall of empires but also in social disorder and the loss of long-distance trade. The disintegration of the town life is seen not as social regression but as part of the social transformation which generated classical feudalism and promoted rural expansion. The book explores the link between urban decay and land grants to officials, priests, temples and monasteries. It shows how the landed elements collected surplus and services directly from the peasants, and remunerated artisan servicing castes through land grants and grain supply. The monograph should interest students of pre-modern urban history and those...



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