

Excavation, Exploration And Other Archaeological Activities In Tilaurakot: 1972-73

by Babu Krishna Rijal

General

The Archaeological works, discussed here, comprising Exploration, Excavation and Conservation carried out in the Kapilavastu region during the season 1972-73, were planned by Mr. R.J. Thapa, the Director of Archaeology, HMG, Nepal.

The region of Kapilavastu covered by Tilaura Kot and the district of Taulihawa has been explored and excavated by different scholars since the last decade of the 19th century. The list of the ancient sites and the photographic records of these, however, were lacking in the Department. Therefore, with the object of making a pictorial index Catalogue of the archaeological sites of Kapilavastu region detailed photographic documentation and explorations were carried out of more than thirty sites around Tilaura Kot by a team consisting of the writer as project in-charge, Mrs. Shova Devi Shrestha, Pottery-cum-Antiquity Officer, Mr. Shankar Prasad Shrestha, Administrative Assistant and Mr. Tej Ratna Tamrakar, Field Photographer.

Excavation work has been carried out in the peripheral area of Tilaura Kot with twofold

aims, viz. (1) to know the cultural sequence of the surrounding area of Tilaura Kot, and (2) to trace the structural remains of the monastic settlements of ancient Kapilavastu as mentioned by the Chinese travellers, Fa-hien and Hiuen-Tsang in their travel accounts and discussed by P.C. Mukherji in his report. Mr. Hari Man Amatya, the Senior Surveyor of the Department assisted in excavation work along with Mr. Iswar Man Shrestha, Khudai Inspector.

After excavation the work of conservation was executed to two ancient Stupas which were exposed by the Department, earlier, at a distance of about 500 yards north of Tilaura Kot. The conservation work was carried out, as per advice of Shri Krishna Deva, Archaeological Adviser to H.M.G. The estimate and drawings of conservation work were prepared by Mr. Dev Ratna Ranjitkar, Senior Draftsman of the Department. The actual repairs were carried out by Mr. Shankar Prasad Shrestha and photographs were taken by Mr. Sanu Raj Shakya, under the supervision of the writer.

The writer in the capacity of project in-charge would like to express his deep gratitude to all the participants for their valuable help and cooperation. The writer is particularly indebted

to Mrs. Shova Shrestha and Iswar Man Shrestha for their help in classifying antiquities, Mr. Puspa Man Chitrakar for publication photography, Mr. Hari Man Amatya for survey and drawings and Mr. Hanuman Lal Shrivastava for providing information and showing us round the different sites.

Cuttings

Trenches have been laid out in three places towards the north and in two places towards the west of Tilaura Kot where the gateway complex, monastic remains and other important buildings of ancient Kapllavastu were already exposed. About 50 ft. north of the fortified area of Tilaura Kot, there is a roughly triangular mound where the habitational deposits appear in contours running to the maximum height of 12' 2" from the north-western corner of the moat of Tilaura Kot. The scattered pottery and the structural remains in this mound are quite conspicuous along its western and southern arms and are absent along the eastern arm where the natural soil was struck through-out. Three areas where the potsherds and brick-bats abound in the western sector measure 50' x 50' in the southern extremity, 60' x 20' in the centre and 120' x 20' towards the north. In the southern sector the area covered by habitational deposit measured 15' x 15' in the centre and 225' x 13' towards the east.

The names for different excavated areas were given as TLK North, md-1, md-2 and md-3. In TLK North, md-1 the trenches were laid out in an area of 80' x 100' where two quadrants, each measuring 10' x 10', were exposed. The important features of these trenches are an undisturbed stratigraphy, and the discovery of a type of sokage jars (pl. I A), hitherto unknown in this region.

In TLK North, md-2 the trenches were laid out in an area of 80' x 80' and the actual opera-

tions were carried out in two cuttings, each measuring 30' x 20'. The structure exposed in these cuttings comprises a brick pavement of one course, assignable to the Sunga age covering an area of 8' 4" east-west by 6' 3" north-south (pl. IB). The bricks used are of 13½" x 8" x 2" size having conspicuous frog-marks on the reverse.

In TLK North, md-3 the trenches were laid out in an area of 20' x 20', but as the section did not show any traces of habitation, only one quadrant of the trench measuring 10' x 10' was exposed.

The maximum contours of the excavated sector mentioned above are as follows:— 11' 6" in md-1 and 12' 2" in md-2.

About 200 ft. northwest of the Western Gateway complex of Tilaura Kot there is an extensive ancient habitational site popularly known as Shivagarh. P. C. Mukherji, in his report, has indicated the possibility of this area forming a monastic settlement. This mound is thickly strewn with pottery and also shows terracotta ring-wells and structural remains extending almost to the Deruwa village in the south and the Banganga river in the north.

Beads, coins, and other antiquities of the pre-Christian age are collected from the surface even today by the local people during the rainy season. The present Shivagarh village is situated right on the ancient ruins and thus the modern habitation and cultivation are quickly encroaching on the ancient mound every year. Towards the northern ridge of the mound, trenches were laid out in area of 80' x 40' east-west exposing three cuttings, each measuring 10' x 10'. These cuttings showed clear stratification and yielded a hoard of thirtyone silver punch-marked coins and an extensive deposit of iron-slag measuring about one foot thick, running north-south (pl. II A).

Chronology and Stratification

A. Fortified area of Tilaura Kot

The chronology and stratification of Tilaura Kot within the fortified area is divided into four periods with ten layers of human deposition.

Period-I

Layers 9-10 yielding P. G. ware and the associated red ware are attributable to period I. The P. G. ware of Tilaura Kot differs from the P. G. ware of Hastinapura period II only in the scheme and design of paintings. Therefore, the beginning of the occupation at the site may go back to circa 8th-7th century B. C.

Period-II

Layers 7-8 are assignable to this period. N. B. P. ware and the associated red wares come from its earlier phase as in Hastinapura period III. Its date may thus go back to circa 6th-5th century B. C.

Period-III

This period, comprising layers 5-6, yielded mainly red wares associated with the N. B. P. ware and a thick variety of grey ware. This is tentatively assignable to the Mauryan age.

Period-IV

This period begins with the Sunga age and ends after the Kushana times. The layers assignable to this period are 1-4 and the pottery comprises mainly red wares and the black slipped grey ware of a coarse variety.

B. Peripheral area of Tilaura Kot (pl. II B)

The chronology and stratification of the northern and western peripheral sites of the fortified area of Tilaura Kot, however, do not seem to go beyond the last phase of the Mauryan period as revealed by our present excavation

of 1972-73. The deposits here were mainly found of only one period with a good number of antiquities of the Sunga age as illustrated by photographs in the end. The habitational deposit in the northern mound is 10' thick and divided into 6 layers which are grouped into three different periods.

Period I

Of the Late Mauryan period, layers 5-6 show yellow earth resembling the natural soil, and have yielded mainly red wares of fine variety mixed occasionally with N. B. P. ware and thick grey wares.

Period II

Of the Sunga period, layers 3-4 comprise greenish yellow soil mixed with charcoal and charred rice and contain pottery bearing mat impressions with red or buff slip.

Period III

Of the early and late Kushana period, layers 1-2, showing blackish brown soil with brick bats have yielded thick variety of red wares.

The sequence and chronology of the western periphery of Tilaura Kot also do not take us prior to the Mauryan period. The natural soil is reached here at a depth of 5'6" and the habitational deposit here comprises of 4 layers beginning from the late Mauryan period and ending after the Kushana period.

Explorations

Explorations were carried out on more than thirty sites in the Kapilavastu region with adequate photographic documentation. Four hitherto unnoticed stupas have been located in the villages of HARDEWA, BANSKHOR, PIPRA and BELUHAWA. The stupas of Pipra and Beluhawa have been identified by the writer in course of exploration, but for the stupas of Hardewa and Banskhor the information was supplied

ed by Prof. Zuiryu Nakamura. An illustrated description of the four stupas and brief notes on the other explored sites are given below:—

Hardewa Stupa (pl. III A)

About 3 miles south of Taulihawa there is a village called Hardewa (Lat. 27° 30' 30" N. Long. 83° 2' 40" E.). In between Basantapur Bagia and the village Hardewa, there is a low mound which is circular in shape, with a diameter of 35 feet and a height of about 5 feet. Three successive courses of burnt bricks are visible towards its northern ridge and for the rest the mound is covered by mud and grass and utilised by the villagers for drying up cowdung cakes. The local people call this mound as Dhusuwa.

About 500 yards west of the stupa and on the south corner of Hardewa village there is a large ruined structure with fifteen exposed courses of ancient bricks, measuring 10½' x 7½' 2¼". From the size and type of bricks used, the structure appears to be of the late Sunga or Kushana period. Roughly quadrangular in shape, the structure is locally called Kotahi Devi. Immediately to the west of the structure there is also an ancient tank which is very deep and now dried up.

From the presence of the large ancient structure and the tank in the close proximity of the mound resembling a stupa, it is not unlikely that this place marked the ancient site of "SARAKUPA", the fountain of water which was caused by the arrow of Siddhartha when he defeated his class-mates in the archery contest. The distance and bearing of Sarakupa mentioned in Buddhist literature in relation to Kapilavastu and Lumbini are not inconsistent with this proposed identification.

Banskhori (pl. III B)

About 6 miles southwest of Taulihawa there is a village called Banskhori (Lat. 27° 00' N.,

Long. 82° 59' 30" E.). About half a mile west of the village near the eastern bank of the Banganga there is a small circular mound measuring 41 feet x 42 feet in diameter. This mound, like the stupa of Hardewa, is composed of layers of brickbats, now covered with mud and grass.

Pipra Stupa (pl. IV A)

About 10 miles southeast of Taulihawa there is a village called Pipra (Lat. 27° 28' 10" N. Long. 83° 7' 5" E.). About 300 yards north of the village there is a roughly circular mound with paved bricks on top resembling a huge stupa. The mound measures 72' x 55' and is flanked by two big trees of *Sihur* on the east. The bricks used in this mound measure 16½" x 12" x 3¼" and are comparable to the bricks used in the stupas at Tilaurakot.

Beluhawa Stupa (pl. IV B)

About 8 miles southeast of Taulihawa there is a village called Beluhawa (Lat. 27° 29' N. Long. 83° 5' 15" E.). About 200 yards north of the village, there is a circular mound with eleven concentric rings of burnt brick-courses. Towards the top of this circular mound is seen a modern brick-built low octagonal plinth which according to the local people was put up by one Subba Vedhnidhi about 10 years back when he tried to construct a Shiva temple marked by a 2 feet long stone Shiva Linga which is still visible at its top. The mound measures 52 feet in diameter and about 3 feet high from the ground.

Dohani

About 3 miles east of Taulihawa, there is a village called Dohani. It is an extensive habitational site with mainly redware pottery, comparable to the pottery of Lamtiyakot. On the southern fringe of the site is seen an elevated land measuring 170 feet east-west x 150 feet north-south consisting of some important ancient structure.

Khas-Bijwa

About 8 miles southeast of Taulihawa there is a village called Khas—Bijwa. At the south end of the village there is a small modern shrine of a deity called Vijayasani. About 100 yards further south of the temple there is a small structural mound at the centre of which stands a Shiva Linga, measuring 4 feet in diameter and 1 foot in height, which was found by a villager in course of cultivation. The Shiva Linga can be compared to that of Kudan in antiquity. The structural ruins extend over an area, 100 feet long x 80 feet wide, having two ancient wells. About 100 yards east of the ruins bearing the Shiva Linga there is a habitational mound locally called Jamunikot, strewn with redware pottery of the post-Christian period.

Babhanikot

About 3 miles south of Taulihawa to the right of Shohratgarh—Taulihawa main road, is a village called Babhani. To the west of the village there is a low flattish mound rising to a height of about 5 feet. The area is extensive with abundant remains of ancient structures. About 100 yards south of the village there is an ancient well which is now dried up. The pottery here is mostly redware of the early medieval period, comparable to that of Kudan.

Sisaniakot

About 8 miles southeast of Taulihawa there is an extensive habitational site called Sisaniakot. The site is almost rectangular in shape. The elevated area is about 6 ft. high and extends for about 500 feet north-south and 300 feet east-west. The whole site is strewn with potsherds of redware and brickbats. The structural remains can be located in the centre and the northwest corner. Some of the pottery types found here like the lipped basin, the thick variety of grey ware and the redware with incised decorations are definitely of the pre-Christian period. Towards the east of the Kot there is a small structural site independent of the Kot,

also having plenty of redware. A circular stupa like mound of low elevation, composed of successive courses of bricks is seen towards the northeastern corner of the rectangular site.

Pipari

About 3 miles southwest of Taulihawa there is a village called Pipari. About 200 yards south of the village, there is an extensive habitational site which is under active cultivation. The site is roughly rectangular with a maximum height of 5 feet. The surface indicates the existence of some important brick structures underneath. The pottery comprises mainly greyware and the N. B. P. ware. This site is identified by P. C. Mukherji as the natal town of Krakuchchhanda Buddha as mentioned by Fa-hien and Hsuen—Tsang in their travel accounts. This is supported by the location of the site about one mile north of Gotihawa, where the Asokan pillar stands in situ.

Amauli

About 10 miles north of Taulihawa, there is a village called Amauli. About one furlong east of the village there are two habitational mounds and a well which is popularly known as Sisakuwa. The well is $5\frac{1}{2}$ feet in diameter and the bricks used measure 8" x 4" x 2". About 25 yards northwest of the well there are two structural ruins, one of which is roughly circular in shape and extends over an area of about 60 x 50 feet. The bricks in the ruins measure 10" x 7" x 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ ". As the pottery is absent from the site, the ruins appear to be more structural than habitational. By the size and the texture of the bricks the ruins may be assigned to the Kushana period.

Karzahawa

About 8 miles south of Taulihawa, there is a village called Karzahawa. Immediately to the east of the village there is a habitational site which is largely occupied by modern houses.

The mound gradually rises towards the east of the village and extends over an area of about 300 feet north-south and 200 feet east-west. At the northern edge of the mound there is a big pipal tree where the sylvan deity called Samai Mai is worshipped in the form of two miniature clay lumps. The surrounding area is full of brickbats and the pottery of the late Kushana period. Though no brick structures are exposed at present on the surface, the existence of structures can be guessed by piles of brickbats unearthed in the past by the villagers in course of ploughing. The surface pottery is primarily redware, mixed with occasional sherds of thick grey ware and black-slipped ware.

The villagers also came across some ancient wells during the tilling operation along with a few pieces of Kushana coins.

Lamtiakot

Little more than one mile south of Taulihawa, there is a village called Lamtia. In between the villages Lamtia and Maheria there is an elevated portion of land measuring about 300 × 200 feet east-west and 200 × 150 feet north-south. This place is known to the villagers as Lamtiakot or Maheriakot where the sylvan deity Samai Mai is worshipped under a plum tree on a pedestal of brick-and-mud with the offerings of terracotta elephants, horses, goats, pigs, etc. The site is comparable to Dohani in pottery where major part of the mound is strewn with redware of the late Kushana period.

Bikuli

About 8 miles northeast of Taulihawa, there is a village called Bikuli. About 2000 yards northwest of the village, there are structural ruins covering an area of about 150 × 100 feet. The bricks found here are comparable to those of Kudan and Paisia where the temples belong to the mediaeval period, as exposed by excavation. The find of carved architectural pieces

and stone sculptures of a bull and another deity proves the existence at the site of an elaborate Shiva temple during the early mediaeval times. A carved ancient architectural stone measuring 2' 5" in length, 9" in breadth and 1' 2" in height, is now worshipped as a deity by the villagers. In the cultivated fields in the outskirts of the village, pottery of late Kushana period was found along with glass beads and bangles, terracotta inkpot-lid, spout and crude figurines.

Jahadi

About 7 miles north of Taulihawa, there is a village called Jahadi. The ancient habitational site covers two flattish mounds on the southern side of the village which is completely under cultivation. The pottery and brickbats from this site resemble those of the Sunga-Kushana periods. A sylvan deity worshipped as Rakcha Baba is enshrined under a tree about half a mile south of the village, where two ancient brick-lined wells are still visible. The exploration of this important site lying between Nighawa Sagar and Araurakot may help in revealing the original place of Niglisagar Asokan pillar which is not in situ.

Beloha

About 6 miles northeast of Taulihawa, there is a village called Beloha. The ancient habitational site lies in between Sagrahawa and the village Beloha which is also called Srinagra. The pottery found here is mainly redware and the elevation of the mound is about 3 feet in height.

Chatradehi

About 3 miles north of Taulihawa, there is a village called Chatradehi situated on the right bank of the Banganga river. Towards a furlong west of the village the habitational ruins extend in the form of a large triangular mound. The pottery and antiquities found here are mostly

of the Sunga—Kushana period, while the remains of the structures may be as late as the early medieval times.

Sagrahawa

About 7 miles north of Taulihawa, there is a forest area called Sagrahawa. In the midst of the forest there is a huge rectangular tank which is popularly known to the villagers as Lambu Sagar, i.e. long tank. The ancient ruins which were excavated and identified by Dr. Fuhrer as the 'Place of massacre of the Sakyas' in 1895 can still be located on the west and south banks of the Sagar.

Araurakot

About 6 miles northeast of Taulihawa, there is a rectangular fortified area which is popularly known as Araurakot after the village Araura, which is situated about one furlong south. This fortified area is identified by P. C. Mukherji as the natal town of Kanaka Muni Buddha. Remains of ancient moat and brick fortification around the Kot can be still located clearly. The fortified area measures about 750 x 600 feet. The central part of the Kot is flat and depressed. A brick-lined well is seen to the south and an elevated mound towards the northwest corner. The pottery here is mostly redware but some pieces of N. B. P. Ware can be picked up from time to time.

Niglihawa

About 5 miles northwest of Taulihawa, there is a quadrangular tank surrounded by bushes, which is known as Niglisagar. On the western bank of the tank there are two broken pieces of an Asokan pillar, the longer one lying flat and the shorter one stuck into the ground obliquely, about five feet away to the west. The longer one measures 15 feet in length and 7' 5" in circumference at the broadest, and bears towards the top a design of 2 peacocks and a Devanagari inscription, reading ॐ मणि पद्मे सुभिक्षु महलस्य चौरजयते—१२३४. The shorter

portion of the pillar which is partly buried in the ground measures 9 feet in length and 7' 5" in circumference and bears 4 lines of Asokan inscription in the Brahmi script which reads as देवानं पियेन पियदसिन लाजिन चोदस वसाभिसितेन बुधस कोनाक मनस थुभे दुतियं बढिते (बीसतिव) साभिसितेन च अतन आगाच महीयिते (सिला थभे च उस) पापिते ।

Kudan

About a mile southwest of Taulihawa, on the left side of the Shohratgarh-Taulihawa road stands the village Kudan having a huge structural ruin with a cluster of four mounds and a tank. The mounds were excavated in 1962 by D. Mitra who exposed large brick temples of circa 8th century on the south and west banks of the ancient tank.

Gotihawa

About 3 miles southwest of Taulihawa, there is a village called Gotihawa. Almost in the centre of the village there is an Asokan pillar standing in situ. The upper portion of the pillar is broken and lost, and only the lower portion of the pillar (10 ft. high) is intact and in situ. The circumference of the pillar is 8'6" at the extant top portion. Mauryan polish is visible in its exposed upper part. Adjoining the pillar towards its northeast, there is a huge stupa with successive rings of wedge-shaped Mauryan bricks. This stupa is now overbuilt by three tiled and three thatched houses. About 200 yards north of the pillar, there is a structural ruin which is used as a barn by the villagers,

Besides the above mentioned sites, other places of archaeological interest like Dharnihawa stupa, Itahikot, Murchahawa, Derua and Sandwa were also explored along with two sites in India, viz. Piprahawa and Paltadevi. The sites proposed to be explored next year are Changhat, Behara Kot, Sonagar, Darbari Danda and Kotahi Devi towards the north of

Taulihawa, and sites like Bedmai, Patna, Kharenpur and Aurahawa to the west.

Findings

Pottery forms the main bulk of the finds from the late Maurya, Sunga and Kushana cultural deposits exposed in this season. The other finds largely belong to one period, viz. Sunga and are classified and briefly noticed below:—

Terracotta figurines

Altogether twenty-two terracotta figurines, both human and animal, were found in the excavation. Some of the finds are fragmentary in nature. Of these, six are human and the remaining sixteen pieces are animal figurines. Of the human figurines, one piece, of well-burnt red fabric, represents a mutilated female foot wearing an anklet, indicated by an applied strip, while another, of black-slipped grey fabric, shows a hand-modelled flat female torso of the ageless primitive type. The remaining four human figures, being better preserved and more interesting, are illustrated and described below.

Of the sixteen animal figurines representing elephant, bull, ram, and horse, three interesting pieces are illustrated and described below,

The published terracottas give an idea not only of the artistic skill of their authors but also throw light on the religious beliefs, culture and fashion of the times in respect of dress, coiffure and jewellery.

A. Human figurines (pl. V A)

1. Figurine of Mother Goddess with a beautiful oval face and elaborate trefoil type of headdress consisting of a central floral boss at the top and double veil-like streaming bands on the two sides. Above each side of the head are depicted four symbols, those on the left com-

prising ears of corn, representing the Annapurna (fertility) aspect, and those on the right representing four weapons, symbolising the Sakti aspect. The figure wears heavy ear ornaments and is roughly comparable to the Mother Goddess Type 25 from Ahichchhatra (*Ancient India*, No. 4, 118, pl. XXXIII B). Cast in a mould, the figurine is of well-burnt buff fabric. It is devoid of slip and is somewhat worn out, lacking sharpness of details.

2. Female figurine feeding a parrot, head and portion below the thighs missing. This moulded female figurine stands facing with her right hand in *kati* and left hand holding a fruit which is pressed against her left breast. The fruit is being pecked at by a parrot perched on her left arm. The figure has prominent breasts, thin waist and a broad hip adorned by a *mekhala* of three strands of pearls. She also wears a torque, heavy bracelets (double *katakas*) and an *udarabandha* from which are suspended two pairs of tassels fanning out and reaching below the *mekhala*. The figure represents a well-known type of fertility goddess appearing as a *nayika*. This was a favourite theme of the classical writers and early sculptors of Mathura and is comparable with a terracotta figurine from Hastinapura period 111 (*Ancient India*, Nos. 10-11, p. 83, pl. xxxvi, 2).

3. Cast female figurine standing facing, the hands and portion below the waist broken off. She has prominent breasts and wears a conspicuous *pagri*-like headdress of two broad rolls, heavy ear ornaments dangling on the shoulders, and a torque, the details of which have been worn out. Well-burnt buff fabric with deep red slip.

4. Worn out torso of a cast figurine representing a boy with nudity exposed, with the right hand in *kati* and the left hand holding probably the knot of the scarf. The figurine wears wristlets, a waist band and a scarf tied round

the waist with its two ends hanging down along the sides. The figurine, standing in the *sambhanga* pose, may represent Manmatha and is comparable with a better preserved and slightly more ornate figure of the god shown as Type 49 from Ahichchhatra (*Ancient India*, No. 4, p. 118, pl. XXXV, B). Light red well-burnt fabric.

B. Animal figurines (pl. V B)

1. Horse figurine, excellently modelled, wearing head-stall, neck-strap and bridle bits executed in applique. The eyes are indicated by punched lozenges, the nostrils by perforations, the mouth by a slit, and ears by applied strips, now damaged, with a perforation. The manes are indicated by parallel incised lines. Bold rosettes are punched all over the body, while the neck-strap reinforced by three circular clasps is decorated with minute punched circlets. A transverse perforation runs through the muzzle and a hole is bored on the top of the crown, obviously meant for the insertion of stick-and-thread for pulling the figure about. Well baked fabric with red slip.

2. Front portion of an elephant figurine. The eyes are indicated by punched lozenges with circular holes. A broad leaf design is stamped centrally on the temple, while a smaller leaf design and a rosette are stamped on each side below the crown. The ears are indicated by applied strips, the right one now missing. The neck ornament is shown by roughly executed strip. On the top of the crown are bored two holes, meant for inserting stick-and-thread for pulling the figure as a toy. Well-baked red fabric showing greyish core in portions, with traces of red slip.

3. A quadruped animal figure with the head, tail and feet missing. The figure wears a neck ornament incised with a design of scallops. The

whole body is decorated with various incised designs, like scallops and festoons. A circular spoked design is incised on the right hind haunch of the figure. Well-burnt red fabric with red slip,

Coins

Forty-six coins in all have been obtained from the excavations. Out of these, thirty-two are of silver and the rest are of copper. The silver coins are all punch-marked and all but one belong to a hoard (pl. VI A).

The copper coins which belong to the cast or die-struck types, are mostly in a poor state of preservation. Two large and thick coins which are in good preservation, belong to the Kushana period. One of these is an issue of Kanishka (pl. VI B) and shows on the obverse king standing facing left, offering oblations in the fire-altar and on the reverse a two-armed standing deity. The other is a coin of Huvishka (pl. VI B) showing the king riding elephant on the obverse and a two-armed standing deity on the reverse. Of the remaining copper coins, six show the symbol of the four-spoked wheel. These are found from layers 1-4, assignable to the Sunga-Kushana periods.

The most notable discovery is a hoard of thirty-one silver punch-marked coins¹, found in a trench at Sivagarh situated in the western periphery of Tilaura Kot. These coins are all well-preserved and bear a variety of popular punch-marked symbols like the sun, six-armed symbols, crescent-on-hill, hare-on-hill, bull, elephant, caduceus, etc. Eight coins are thin, large and rectangular in fabric and appear to be of pre-Mauryan date (pl. VIIA), while fifteen coins are square or rectangular in shape and dumpy and thick in fabric and relatively fresh. These coins bear Mauryan symbols like the

1. These coins have been chemically treated in H.M.G.'s Central Conservation Laboratory, Kathmandu.

creseent-on-hill and the triple gate symbols. (pl. VII A). The remaining eight coins are of medium fabric and circular shape, prepared out of globules and appear to be of the late Mauryan date. A stray punch-marked coin from the excavation (pl. VIII B), attributable to the Mauryan period, however, is rectangular in shape and of thin to medium fabric.

The presence of various coins in the successive cultural deposits show a comfortable urban life with sound economic base marked by organized trade and commerce.

Conservation (pl. IX A-B)

Repairs were carried out to two Buddhist stupas excavated by the Department in 1968-69. These twin stupas, located at a place now called Dhamnihawa at a distance of about 500 yards north of Tilaurakot, may mark an important spot connected with the life of the Buddha and are traditionally believed to have been built to commemorate Suddhodana and Mayadevi, the parents of the Master. The larger stupa, attributed to Suddhodana, is 52 feet in diameter, its bricks measuring $16\frac{1}{2}$ " x 12" and 9" x $3\frac{1}{4}$ ". The smaller stupa, attributed to Mayadevi, measures 26 feet in diameter and employed bricks of three sizes viz. $16\frac{1}{2}$ " x $10\frac{1}{2}$ " and $7\frac{1}{2}$ " x 3" on the top, $16\frac{1}{2}$ " x 12" and 9" x $3\frac{1}{4}$ " in the middle courses and 17" x 13" and

11" x $3\frac{1}{4}$ " in the lower courses.

Both the stupas were affected by weather and rains as they remained exposed in the tropical climate of the Tarai. As a result the courses started disintegrating and most of the bricks became fragile.

The larger stupa developed a deep depression over an area of about eight feet diameter, in the centre through which rain water percolated profusely inside the core of the stupa. Many of the bricks got dislodged and became loose and friable, due to percolation of water through the holes and crevices in the fabric of the stupa and seepage all around.

In course of conservation the central depression was filled up with bricks in lime mortar and finished at the top with matching brick courses. The affected brick courses of the entire stupa were reset and strengthened, retaining the original shape and size. Further a cement concrete apron (5 ft. wide) was built all around to prevent seepage of water from the ground and covered with earth.

The smaller stupa, which has suffered greater damage, has been for the present covered up with earth by constructing a five feet high circular retaining wall all around. It is proposed to be taken up for repairs next year.

The End

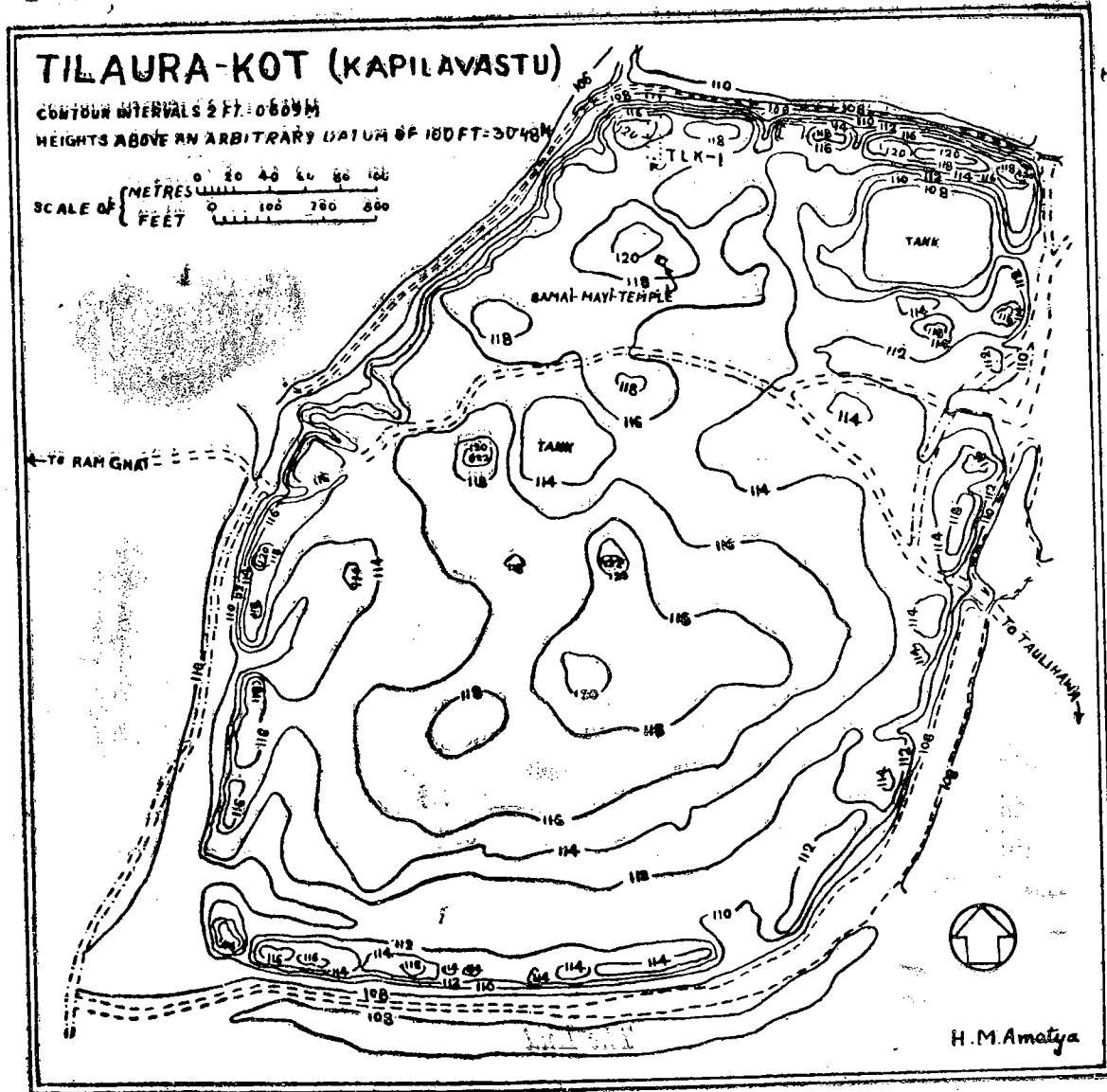


Fig. 1 See p. 62.

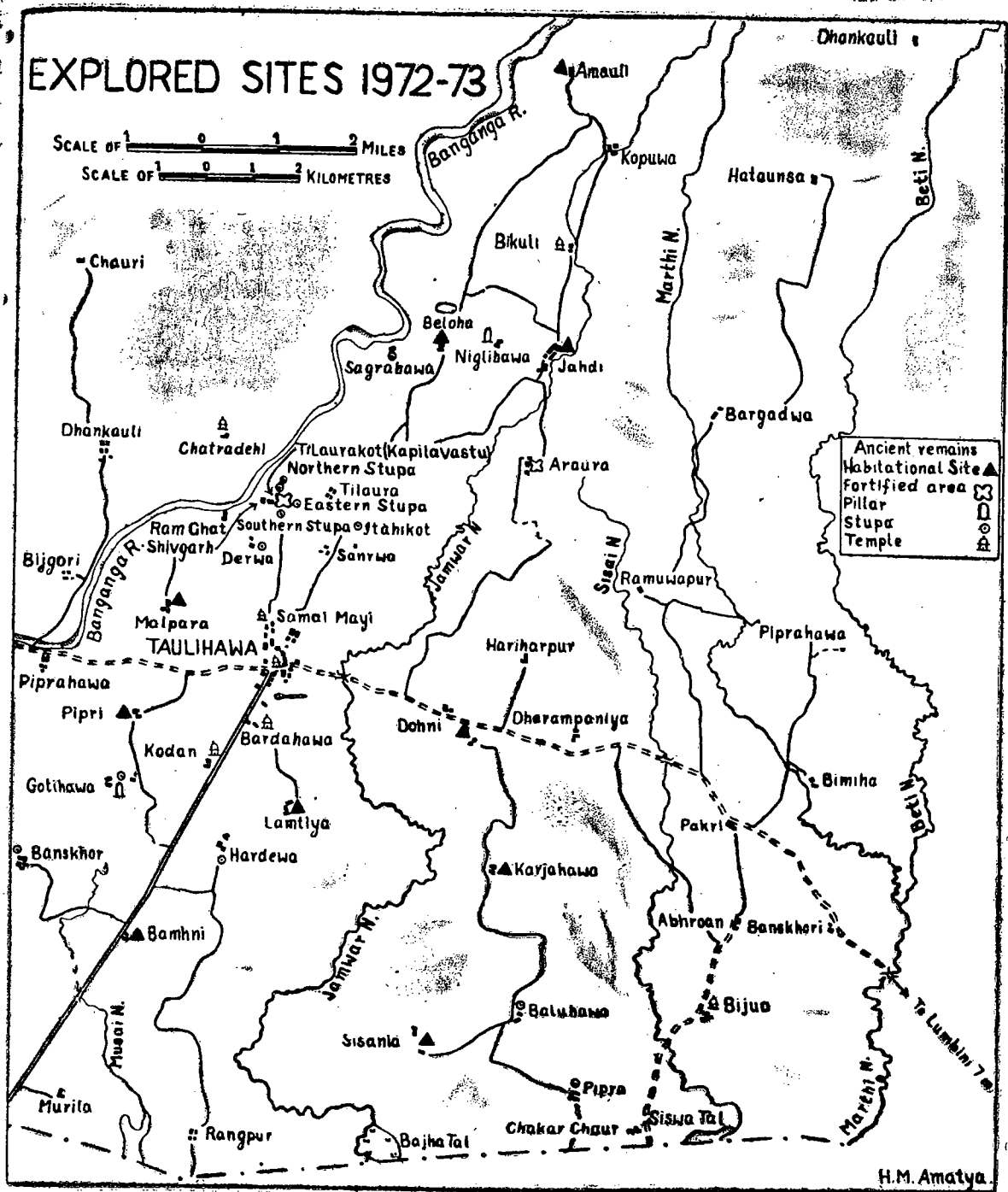
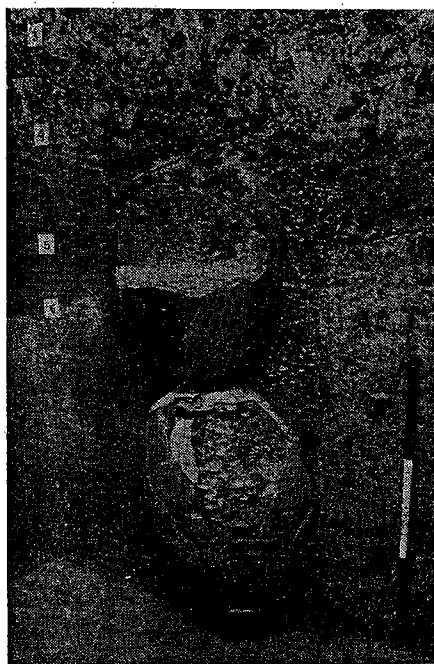


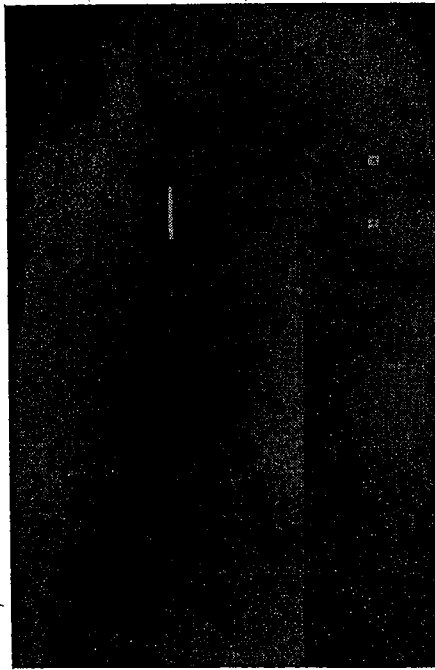
Fig. 2 See pp. 62-66.



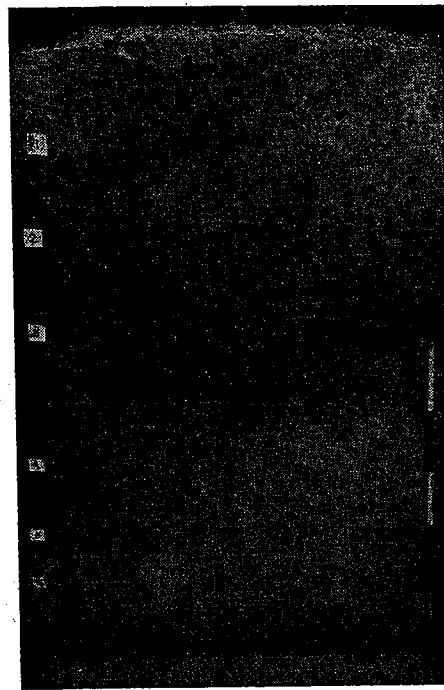
A. Soakage jars. See p. 61



B. Brick pavement. See p. 61



A. Section showing iron slag deposit. See p. 61



B. Stratigraphy of TLK north. See p. 62



A. Stupa mound, Hardewa. See p. 63



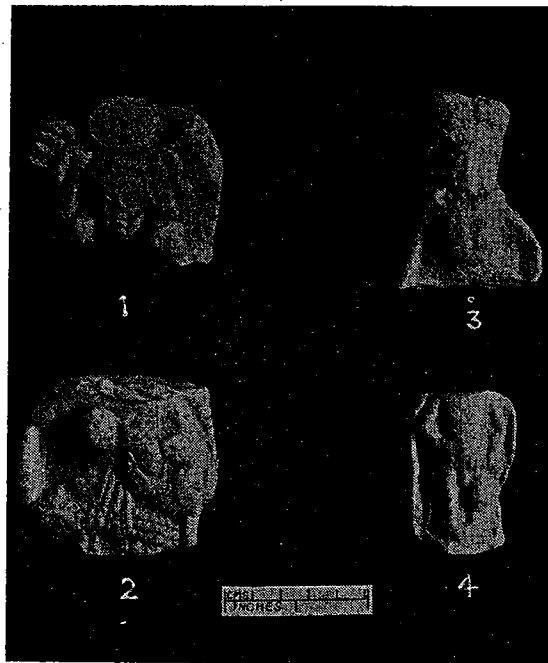
B. Stupa mound, Banskhor. See p. 63



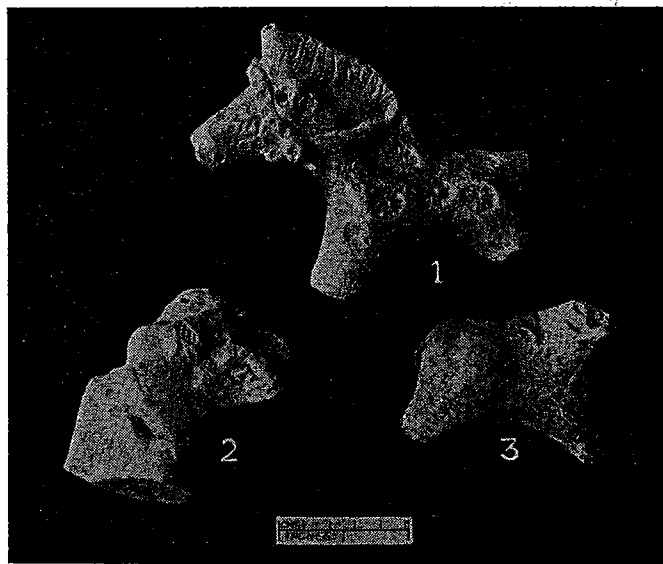
A. Stupa mound, Pipra. See p. 63



B. Stupa at Bahuhwa. See p. 63



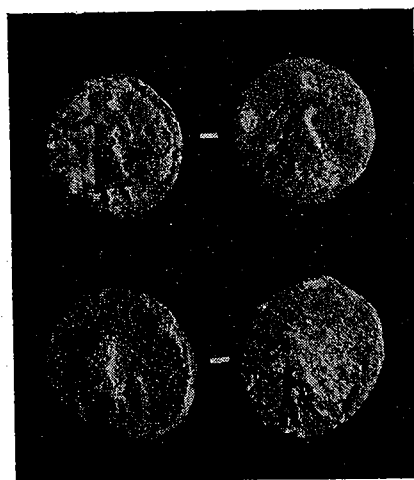
A. Terracotta human figurines. See p. 67



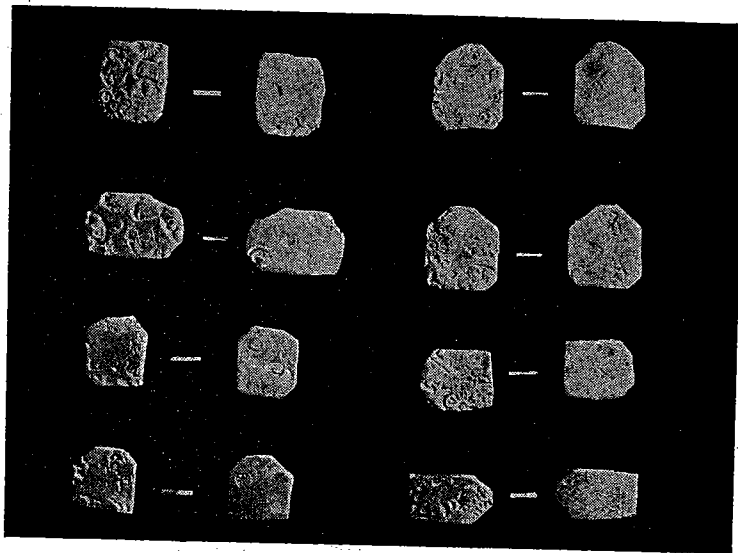
B. Terracotta animal figurines. See p. 68



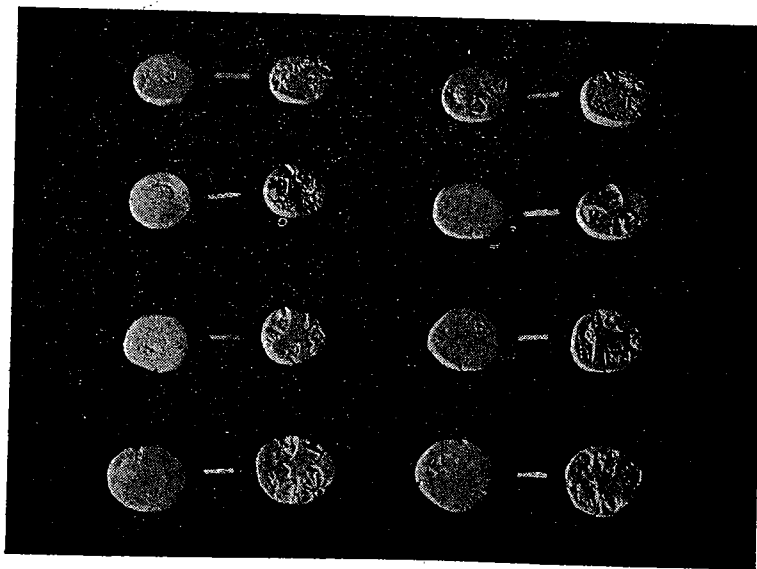
*A. Hoard of Silver punch-marked coins
as excavated. See p. 68*



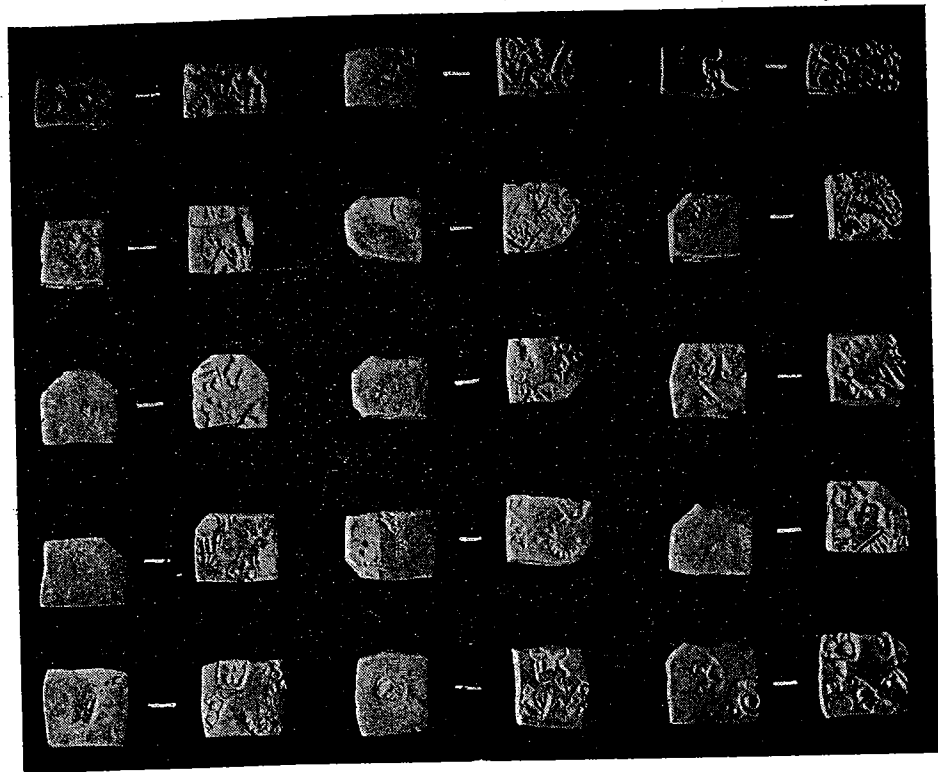
*B. Kushana coins from
excavation. See p. 68*



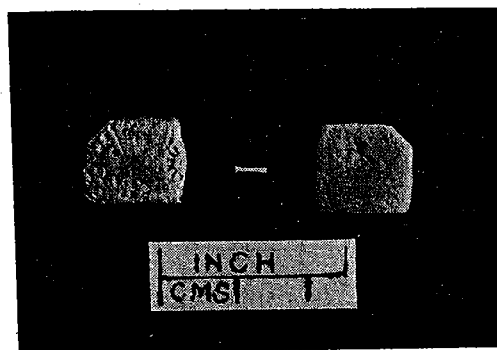
*A. Pre-Mauryan types in the hoard of
Punch-marked coins See p. 69*



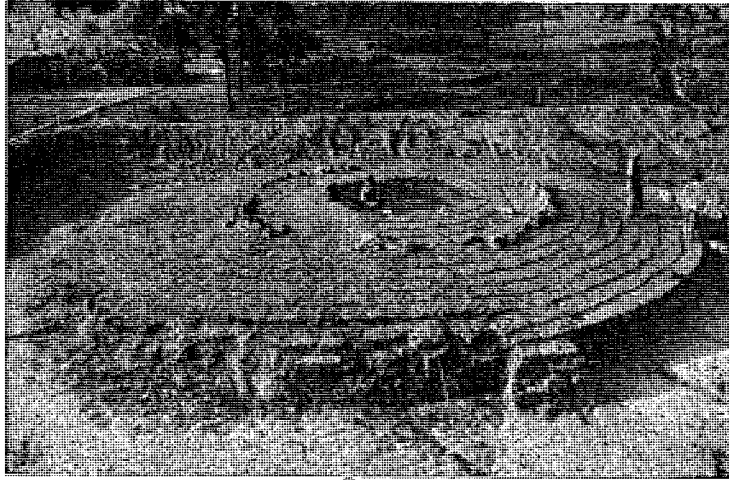
*B. Late Mauryan types in the hoard of Punch-
marked coins. See p. 69*



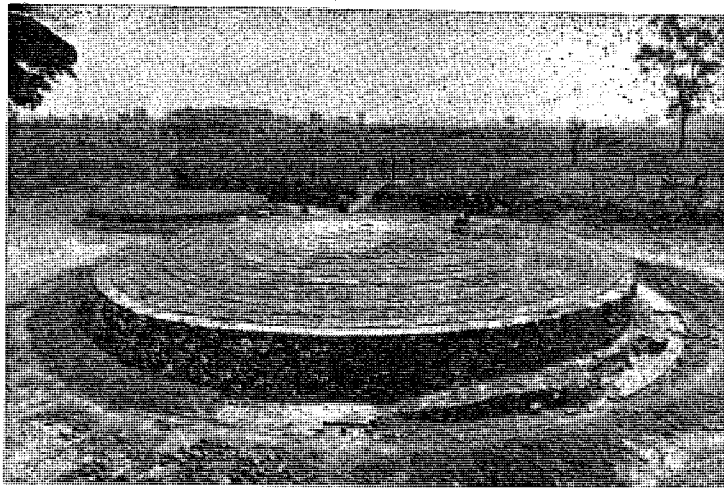
A. Mauryan types in the hoard of punched-marked coins. See p. 69



B. A stray Silver punch-marked coins from excavation. See p. 69



A. Larger excavated Stupa before repairs. See p. 69



B. Larger excavated Stupa after repairs with smaller Stupa in the background. See p. 69