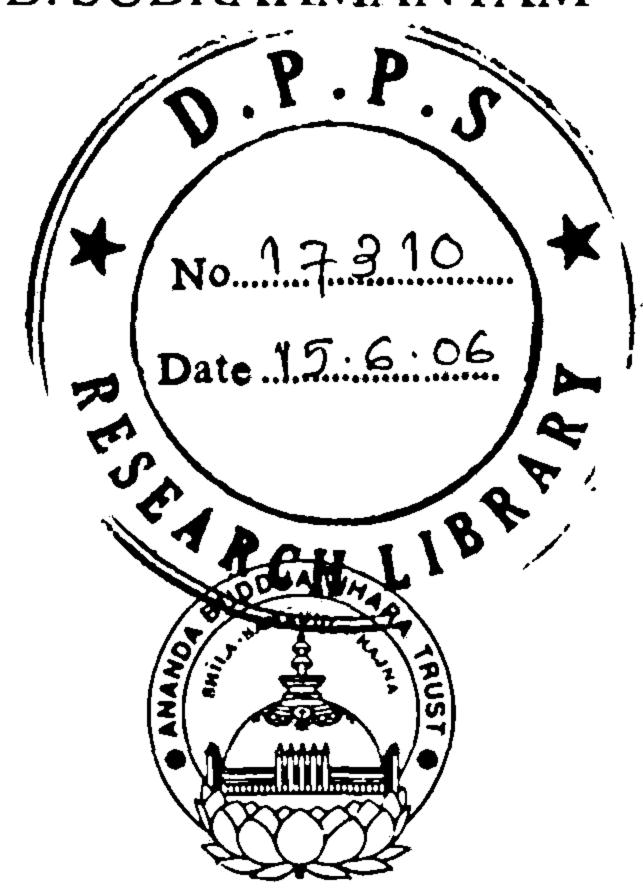
Buddhist Relic Caskets in Andhradesa



B.SUBRAHMANYAM

Buddhist Relic Caskets in Andhradesa

B. SUBRAHMANYAM



Ananda Buddha Vihara Trust

Buddhanagar, Tukaram Gate, North Lallaguda, Secunderabad - 500 017, A.P., INDIA Ph: 040 7732421, Fax - 040 7733160

Buddhist Relic Caskets in Andhradesa by Dr. B. Subrahmanyam.

© Ananda Buddha Vihara Trust's 17th Publication

Copies: 1000

2543 Buddha Jayanti - 1999.

Price: Rs.150/-

Cover page: Stone Reliquary, Bavikonda

Courtesy: Department of Archaeology & Museums

Government of Andhra Pradesh

Hyderabad.

Back Cover : Relic Casket, Kottur

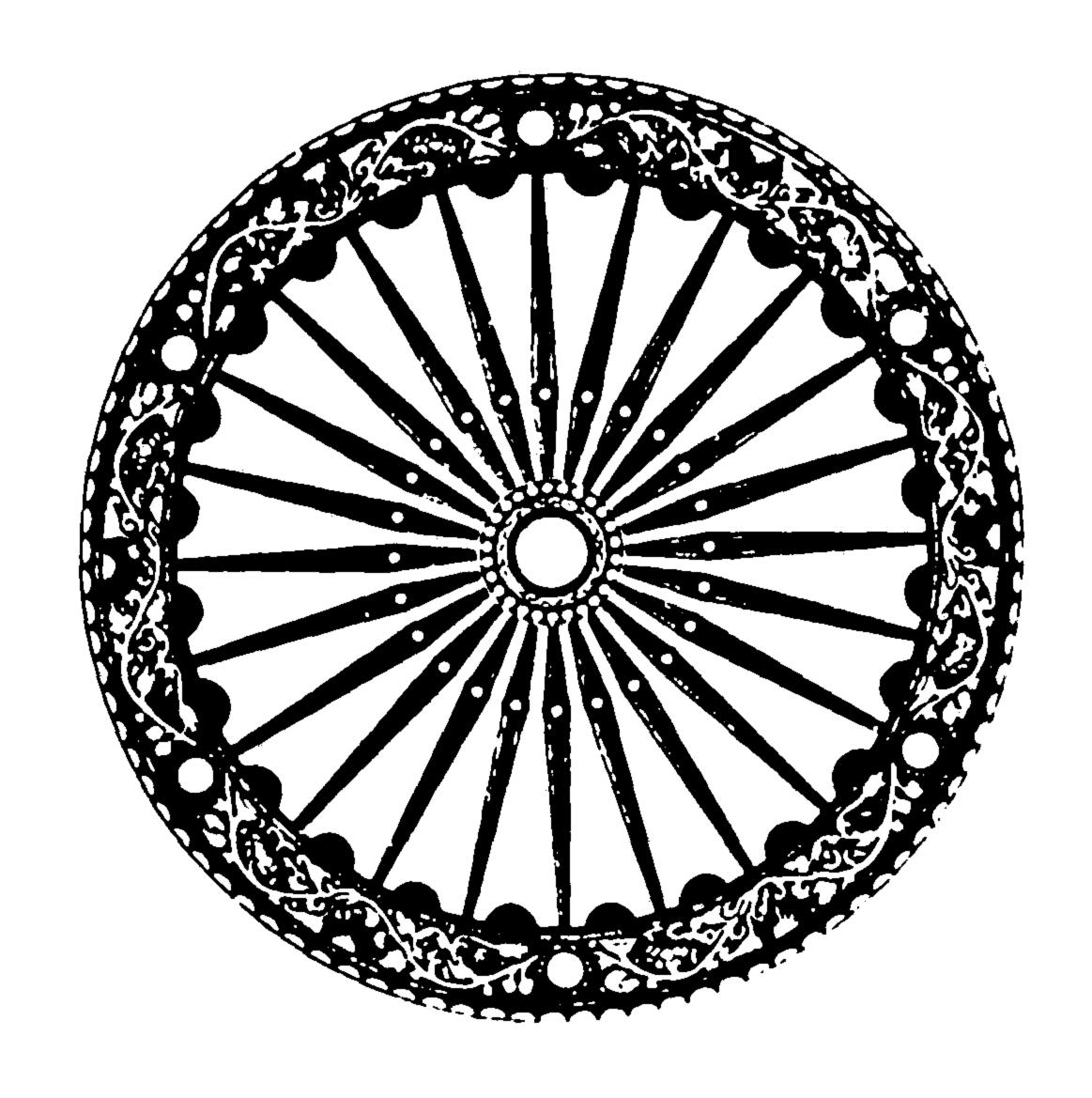
Courtesy: Archaeological Survey of India.

Cover Design by: Anand ABVS, Artist

Typeset by: M/s. Aditya Graphics, Hyderabad.

Printed by: Kalajyoti Process Limited, Hyderabad.

namo tassa bhagavato arahato samma sambuddhassa



We gratefully acknowledge the help and support extended to us in bringing out this publication by Dr. L.V. Subba Reddy, Shri M. Narayana Reddy, Dr. N. Venkata Reddy of Virchow Laboratories (P) Limited, Jeedimetla, Hyderabad.

CONTENTS

Message		
Preface		
List of Maps	and Figures	
List of Plates		
Abbreviation	ns	
Chapter I	INTRODUCTION	1
Chapter II	MAHAPARINIRVANA: IN LITERATURE AND ART	15
Chapter III	TOOTH RELIC OF DANTAPURAM	25
Chapter IV	SITES AND RELICS	35
Chapter V	RELIC CASKETS: MATERIALS AND METHODS OF CONSECRATION	85
Chapter VI	RELIC FESTIVAL	96
Bibliography		99

Ananda Buddha Vihara Trust Secunderabad-17

MESSAGE

From the text of Suttanipata, it is clear that Buddhism came to the Andhra country during the life time of the Buddha itself and flourished for over 1000 years right from 6th century B.C. as a major religion of Andhra Desa. There are innumerable Buddhist sites with *stupas* and monasteries in the State and some have yielded holy reliquaries. Many Relic caskets found in Andhradesa however, escaped the attention of both

archaeologists and those engaged in Buddhist studies.

It is, therefore, good augury that a young scholar, Dr. B.Subrahmanyam chose to study the subject in all its aspects based on original data i.e., archaeological findings and Buddhist texts. The result is the present work which not only enumerates the sites that yeilded relic caskets in Andhradesa, but also critically analyses them.

Dr. B. Subrahmanyam deserves to be congratulated for his excellent presentation of data and logical interpretations. I am sure the book would be useful to scholars and help further research in this field.

Hyderabad

Dated: 30-04-1999

Simbolica

(SANGHARAKSHITA MAHATHERA) Chairman

PREFACE

The discovery of several relic caskets from the *stupas* by the western scholars in various parts of India, aroused curiosity and interest among Indian scholars who took care to preserve such relics for posterity. This led scholars to record in detail various aspects such as their exact locus and contents with all details i.e. drawings, photographs etc.

Though the excavated data has been studied well in proper context, much emphasis has not been given to study the reliquaries unearthed from the *stupas*. In pre-Independence times, erudite scholars like Col. Mackenzie, Alexander Rea, Boswell, A.H.Longhurst, Burgess, Walter Elliot etc., came across a good number of reliquaries from the *stupas* and even saved them from vandalism of the local people and Zamindars. This process of discovering relic caskets continued even in post-Independence times. Eminent scholars like T.N.Ramachandran, R.Subrahmanyam, K.Krishna Murthy, I.K.Sarma etc., have recovered such holy relics from the *stupas* and also underneath the images and icons. Thanks to all the Western and Indian scholars for their meticulous and careful digs and the precision in furnishing the valuable data in detail in various annual reports, Indian Antiquary etc.

But, unfortunately these scholars have studied these chance finds in isolation and no systematic effort was made to examine the true significance of these reliquaries i.e. the various methods of consecration, the different kinds of materials used for preparing the caskets and lastly whether the relics actually belonged to the Master or any other personage of high hierarchy in the monastery.

For the first time, Dr. I.K. Sarma, took up the study of the inscribed reliquaries from Bhattiprolu *stupa* and has explained the ritualistic consecrational rites, adopted by the people while enshrining them. Though many more such holy relics have been recently reported from Amaravati, Bavikonda, Kottur etc., in Andhra Pradesh, no comprehensive study has been done by scholars to explain the method of enshrining the holy relics of

the Master at various times in different parts of South India.

Of all the discoveries so far made in India, the discovery of an urn of medium size, filled with large quantity of corporeal remains comprising charcoal pieces, fragment of a bone, metal caskets, beads etc., from the anda or dome of the Maha chaitya at Bavikonda in Visakhapatnam district (mid Kalinga) in Andhra Pradesh, deserves special attention and study, for, here for the first time comes to notice such a large quantity of corporeal remains, especially from South-Indian Buddhist sites. This discovery had prompted me to take up the task of studying the relic caskets obtained from various sites in South India in detail, right from the earliest times, with a view to findout to whom these relics belonged? How and by whom these relics were distributed to South India, and when they were enshrined in the stupas?

Keeping these problems in mind, I made a humble attempt to study the relic caskets so far reported from Andhradesa and tried to answer the few problems posed to the extent possible.

I sincerely place on record my profound thanks to Shri V. Sarma Rao, IAS, Commissioner, Archaeology & Museums Department, Govt. of Andhra Pradesh for kindly permitting me to publish the book.,

In this endeavour, many scholars and friends have come forward to help me and bring out the present publication to whom I am deeply beholden. Among them, I should firstly mention Sri C. Anjaneya Reddy, IPS, and Sri S. Veeranarayana Reddy, IPS, for their kind and generous encouragement and valuable suggestions from time to time. In fact they are responsible for my working on this problem and bringing out the monograph in Telugu for the first time on this subject. At the same time, I should also express my gratitude to the members of the Ananda Buddha Vihara Trust, Hyderabad for extending their valuable co-operation.

I will be failing in my duty if I do not duly acknowledge the support and scholarly suggestions received from Dr. V.V. Krishna Sastry (Former Director, Archaeology & Museums, Hyderabad) and Dr. I.K.Sarma (Ex-Director, Salar Jung Museum) and M. Radha Krishna Sarma (Retired Professor, Osmania University, Hyderabad).

I am thankful to the authorities of the Archaeological Survey of India, Birla Archaeological & Cultural Research Institute, Hyderabad and Dept. of Archaeology &

Museums, Hyderabad for permitting me to take copies of the photographs, sketches and drawings from their publications.

Personally, I also take this opportunity to thank Dr. N.S. Ramachandra Murthy, Assistant Director, for his valuable guidance and suggestions while writing this work and correcting the draft chapters. My thanks are also due to Smt. B.Indumathi Devi and R. Anjanamani, Publication Assistants for carrying out the proof correction work with diligence and care.

My thanks are also due to Sri P. Vengala Reddy, and D. Pattabhi Reddy, Technical Assistants for their constant help in arranging the chapters and offering valuable suggestions. I am deeply indebted to SarvaSri S. Koteswaran and also B. Narayana, Conservation Assistants, Dr. E. Siva Nagi Reddy, Sri S.Brahmanandam and Sri K.Venkata Reddy, Sthapatis and also Sri A.V.B.S. Anand (Artist) who took great care in preparing neat drawings and maps. It is my pleasant duty to record my special thanks to Sri J. Sainath and Sri G. Narasimha Rao, photographers.

I would like to place on record my sincere thanks to Smt. B. Damayanti (chanti) my wife, for her help and support and also relieving me from household botherations. I also thank Shri M.S.R.K. Prasad and Shri P.S.K. Raju for their friendly co-operation in bringing out this work. In the end, I express my gratitude to Smt. M.Varalakshmi, Librarian for her kind and excellent help in extending library facilities whenever I bothered her. My thanks are due to Mrs. P. Sarada Devi, Aditya Graphics, New Mirzalguda, Hyderabad for doing the type-setting work neatly and also to M/s. Kala Jyothi Process Limited, RTC X Roads, Hyderabad for readily undertaking the printing of this work.

Hyderabad

Dates: 30-04-1999

Dr. B. Subrahmanyam Research & Training Officer, Dept. of Archaeology and Museums, Govt. of A.P., Hyderabad.

LIST OF MAPS AND FIGURES

Maps

Fig. XXI

Map I	Buddhist sites in Andhra Pradesh
Map II	Find spots of Relic Caskets in Andhra Pradesh
Figures	
Fig. I	Tope at Amaravati (Col. Colin Mackenzie)
Fig. II	Position of Relic Caskets in Mahachaitya, Amaravati
Fig. III	Casket unearthed by local zamindar
Fig. IV	Clay receptacle and crystal casket from the western side of the
	Mahachaitya, Amaravati.
Fig. V	General lay out of the excavated monastic complex, Bavikonda
Fig. VI	Location of relic caskets in Mahachaitya, Bavikonda,
Fig. VII	Sketch of Lanjadibba (Baswell 1870), Bhattiprolu
Fig. VIII	Location of Relic caskets in Mahachaitya, Bhattiprolu
Fig. IX	Stone Relic Casket No.3.
Fig. X	Principal relics from Crystal Casket No.3, Bhattiprolu.
Fig. XI	Relics from Casket No.3, Bhattiprolu.
Fig. XII	Stone Relic Casket No.4.
Fig. XIII	Stone Relic Casket No.5.
Fig. XIV	Relics from Casket Nos.4 & 5
Fig.XV	Mahastupa, Ghantasala
Fig. XVI	Relic Caskets, Ghantasala
Fig. XVII	Stupas and Monasteries at Nagarjunakonda
Fig. XVIII	Plan of Mahachaitya, Nagarjunakonda
Fig. XIX	Mahachaitya with stone Reliquaries, Salihundam
Fig. XX	Cylindrical Terracotta relic caskets from votive stupa, Salihundam

Stone, crystal relic caskets, bones & beads, Timmavaram

LIST OF PLATES

- Pl. 1 Mahaparinirvana panel Gandhara Sculpture, 2nd century A.D.
- Pl. 2 Buddha's Coffin, Gandhara Sculpture, 2nd century A.D.
- Pl. 3 Distribution of Buddha's Relics by Dona, Gandhara Sculpture, 2nd c. A.D.
- Pl. 4 Distribution and Carrying away the Relics of Buddha, Amaravati panel,
- Pl. 5 Mud fort at Dantapura, 4th-3rd century B.C.
- Pl. 6 Remains of Brick stupa at Dantapura, 3rd century B.C.
- Pl. 7 Gold reliquary and gold flowers, Amaravati.
- Pl. 8A. Crystal caskets, (Southern side of Mahachaitya), Amaravati.
- Pl. 8B. Details of crystal caskets and Relics (Gold flowers, pearls etc.), Amaravati
- Pl. 9. Crystal casket and Relics, (Western side), Amaravati
- Pl. 10. Crystal Caskets and beads (Eastern side), Amaravati
- Pl. 11. Fragments of Ivory casket (Northern side), Amaravati
- Pl. 12. Silver and Gold caskets with beads, Eastern side of Mahachaitya, Bavikonda.
- Pl. 13. Clay Receptacle with gold and silver caskets (western side), Bavikonda.
- Pl. 14. Clay Receptacle Gold and silver caskets (northern side), Bavikonda.
- Pl. 15. Stone Receptacle showing silver, gold caskets and coral bead (south side), Bavikonda
- Pl. 16. Urn pot containing corporeal relics (Southern side), Bavikonda.
- Pl. 17. Urn containing gold and silver caskets along with bone relic, Bavikonda.
- Pl. 18. Silver and gold caskets with beads, Bavikonda.
- Pl. 19. Inscribed stone Reliquary, Bhattiprolu.
- Pl. 20. Gold Beads, Gummdidurru.
- Pl. 21. Stone reliquary showing crystal phial and beads, Kottur.
- Pl. 22. Mahachaitya showing the Find spot of Relic Casket, Nagarjunakonda.
- Pl. 23. Broken pot containing relics (Mahachaitya), Nagarjunakonda.
- Pl. 24. Silver Relic Casket showing crystal beads, Mahastupa, Nagarjunakonda.
- Pl. 25A. Relic Caskets, gold leaves, pearls and coral beads, stupa No.3, Nagarjunakonda.

- Pl. 25B. Details of the Relics, stupa No.3, Nagarjunakonda.
- Pl. 26. Relic caskets showing glass beads, pearls and coral beads, stupa No.4 Nagarjunakonda.
- Pl. 27A. Silver and gold caskets with relics and coins, Stupa No.6, Nagarjunakonda.
- Pl. 27B. Details of coins used as Medallions, Stupa No.6, Nagarjunakonda.
- Pl. 28. Stone and copper caskets, Stupa No.8, Nagarjunakonda.
- Pl. 29 Globular pots and bowls filled with animal bones, stupa No.9, Nagarjunakonda.
- Pl. 30A. Buddha chaitya, site No.6, Nagarjunakonda.
- Pl. 30B. Pedestal of Buddha Image, Site No.6, Nagarjunakonda.
- Pl. 30C. Gold capsule, ashes and relics, site No.6, Nagarjunakonda.
- Pl. 31. Purnaghta shaped stone Reliquary, site No.6, Monastery B, Nagarjunakonda.
- Pl. 32A. Stupa showing stone reliquaries at the centre of the dome, Salihundam.
- Pl. 32B. Crystal Caskets, Salihundam.
- Pl. 32C. Stone Reliquary, Salihundam.
- Pl. 33A. Terracotta receptacle, Salihundam.
- Pl. 33B. Cylindrical clay receptacles with silver caskets, beads and gold flowers, Salihundam.
- Pl. 34. Inscribed pot reliquary, Nanduru.
- Pl. 35A. Stone reliquary, Erravaram.
- Pl. 35B. Stone reliquary showing lower and upper portions, Erravaram.
- Pl. 36. Copper and silver caskets, Nagarjunakonda.
- Pl. 37. Crystal caskets, Bhattiprolu.
- Pl. 38. Clay and Stone Caskets, Bavikonda.
- Pl. 39. Stone Reliquary, Nagarjunakonda.
- Pl. 40. Gold Caskets, Bavikonda.
- Pl. 41. Inscribed stone reliquary, Bhattiprolu.
- Pl. 42. Procession of Relic Festival, Nagarjunakonda.
- Pl. 43. Relic worship, Amaravati.
- Pl. 44. Relic worship, Nagarjunadkonda.

ABBREVIATIONS

AAR Annual Administrative Report, Department of Archaeology &

Museums, Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh

AI Ancient India – Bulletin of Archaeological Survey of India.

APJA The Andhra Pradesh Journal of Archaeology.

ARADN Annual Report of the Archaeological Department of H.E.H. the Nizam's

Dominions.

ARASI Annual Report of the Archaeological Survey of India, Southern circle,

Madras.

BACRI Birla Archaeological & Cultural Research Institure, Hyderabad.

El Epigraphia Indica.

IA Indian Antiquary.

IAR Indian Archaeology – A Review.

JAHRS Journal of Andhra Historical Research Society.

JBORS Journal of Bihar and Orissa Research Society.

JBBRAS Journal of Bombay Branch Royal Asiatic Society.

JESI Journal of the Epigraphical Society of India.

JOI Journal of Oriental Institute.

JRAS Journal of Royal Asiatic Society.

MASI Memoirs of Archaeological Survey of India.

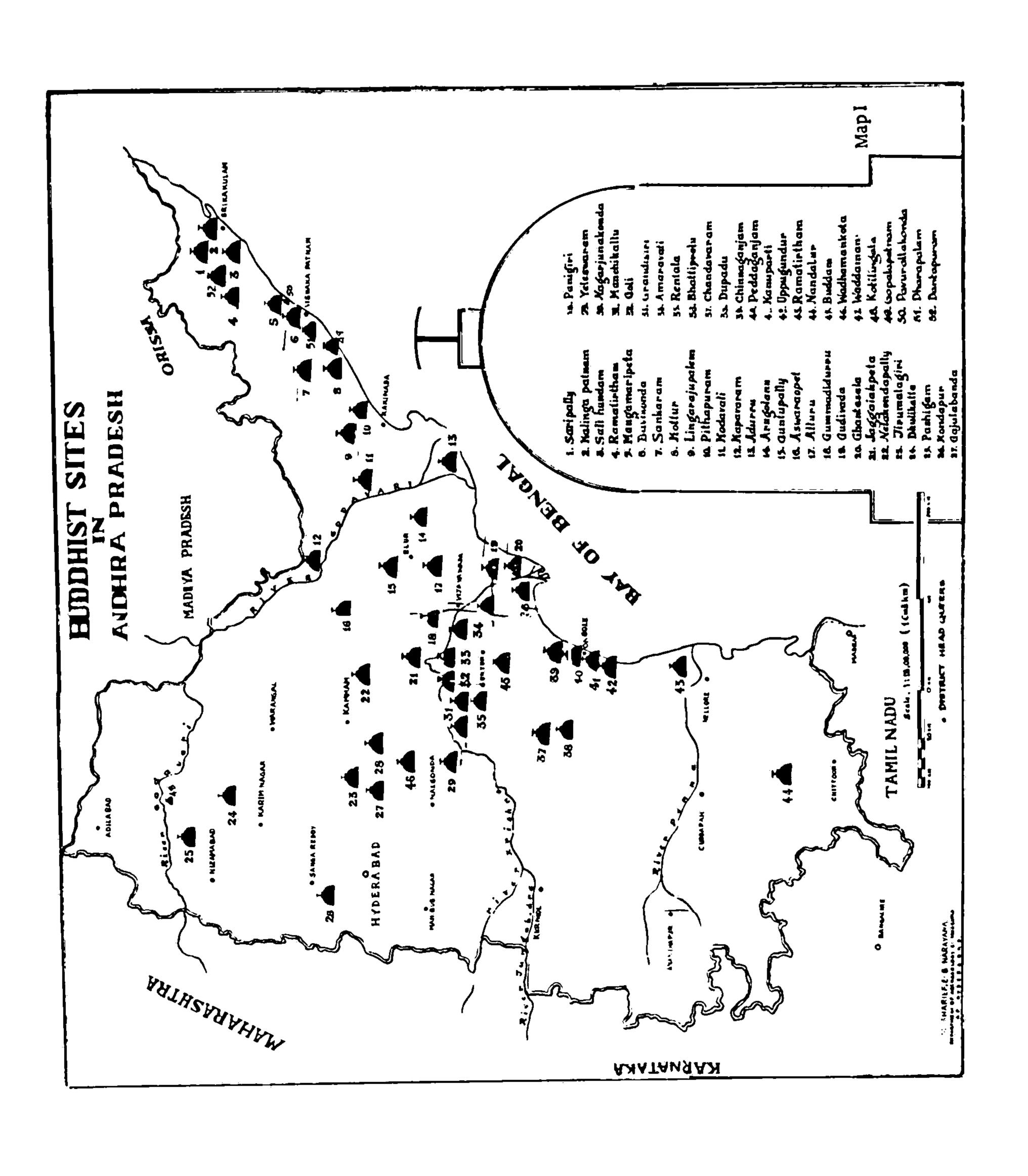
MSI Mythic Society of India.

NRSA National Remote Sensing Agency

QJMS Quarterly Journal of the Mythic Society

QRHS Quarterly Research in Historical Studies.

RSRC Rayaprolu Subrahmanyam Memorial Research Centre, Guntur.



Chapter-I

INTRODUCTION

The fertile river valley basins of Godavari, Krishna, Vamsadhara, Gosthani, Tandava, Bahuda and the flat hill-tops running along the east-coast of Andhradëśa are dotted with innumerable Buddhist settlements, ranging in date from pre- Asõkan times (4th-3rd c. B.C.) to the Vishnukundins (5th-6th c. A.D.). The concentration of these settlements, can be seen more, in the coastal Andhra and Telingana regions, whereas these are conspicuously absent in Rayalaseema except for few Buddhist settlements namely Pushpagiri and Nandalur¹ in Cuddapah district and Sasanikota in Anantapur district². The main reason for this, seems to be its geographical isolation, far away from the coast, besides the absence of perennial river systems which resulted in the non-prevalence of trade relations with neighbouring urban centres, for, Buddhism was spread mainly by the trading community i.e. Sarthavahas along the high ways.

In Andhradëśa, Buddhism spread over a vast area beginning with Neelavathi in the north to Nandalur in the south-west, Ghantasala and Kanuparthy on the east to Kotalingala and Kondapur on the north-west (Map.1). It appears that the early Theravada (Hīnayāna) Buddhism was prevalent more in north-coastal Andhra, whereas Mahāyānism was predominant in mid coastal Andhra, especially in the fertile tract lying between the rivers Godavari and Krishna.

Till recently, scholars held the opinion that it was only due to the untiring efforts and missionary zeal of the great Mauryan emperor Asõka, that Buddhism entered Andhradëśa and grew into a State religion. Obviously, Asõka was instrumental in propagating the religion on a large scale, as a part of religious expedition (dhamma vijaya), after the conquest of Kalinga, which subsequently became a mass religion in the sub-continent. Afterwards, Buddhism became more popular during the Sātavāhana period in Āndhradēśa.

In early Buddhist chronicles, there is no reference to the Andhras which, though mention, territories like Assaka (Asmaka), a Janapada in Andhaka region, which was one among the sixteen Maha Janapadas³. Similarly, the non-mention of the Andhakas in the first Buddhist Council obviously suggests that there was no important Buddhist Centre worth the name in Andhradëśa⁴.

Contrary to this, there is the well-known episode of the Brahmana sage Bavari of Kosala, who lived at a place located on the banks of the river Godavari, near Assaka region in Dakshiṇāpatha and in the peripheral areas of Mulaka in Andhradëśa, and sent his pupils to Rājagṛiha, to meet Buddha and learn from his teachings. According to Lalita Vistara⁶, an actor from Dakshiṇāpatha, performed a drama relating to the story of Lord Buddha, along with other artists, in the presence of a king named Bimbisara Mahipati, who was a contemporary of the Great Master. According to Vimanavatthu⁷, Mahakatyayana, the chief disciple of Lord Buddha, preached Buddha Dharma to a king of Assaka.

The Suttanipata also states that the Janapadas of Assaka and Mulaka were located in Dakshinapatha. Assaka includes the present districts of Karimnagar, Nizamabad and Warangal in Andhra Pradesh with its capital at Potali i.e. modern Bodhan in Nizamabad district. Recent survey in this region resulted in the discovery of an ancient city locally known as 'Kõtalingāla', on the left bank of the river Godavari in Karimnagar district, where excavations unearthed a well fortified township, in addition to monastic and non-monastic dwelling structures and a wide range of early historic antiquities such as coins, beads, iron implements, glass bangles and terracotta figurines, besides a large quantity of ceramic wares such as black and red, red slipped, red polished, grey and black polished. This probably was the place where the hermitage of the sage Bavari stood, for, it was situated in Kavitavana on the banks of the river Godavari. The word Kavita in Telgu language means `Velaga` (name of a fruit-wood apple) and the existence of a village named `Velagatur` or Yelkatur in close vicinity to Kõtalingāla township lends credence to the above view. Further, interestingly enough, from this place, a good number of coins belonging to local kings (pre Sātavāhana times) like Gobhada, Kamvāyasiri, Samagopa, Nārana and Silver punch marked coins of Mauryan times were reported in clear stratigraphical context8.

In Mahāparinibbāṇa sutta, there is a reference to the Janapadas of South India. In Sutta Pīṭaka, it is recorded that, after the cremation, the left canine tooth of the Master was taken from the ashes by an Arhat named 'Khëma Thëra ' who presented it to Brahmadatta, king of Kalinga, for enshrinement and worship in a stūpa. Subsequently, the place where the stūpa was built, came to be known as Dantapuram⁹. This fact is also attested by a Ceylonese work, Danta Dhātu Vamisa¹⁰ (Dalada Vamisa composed in 310 A.D.) A similar account, with few changes, was recorded in a Siamese Buddhist work¹¹. This Dantapuram can be safely identified with the fortified city of Dantavaktrunikota in Srikakulam district, situated in North-coasal Andhra i.e. ancient mid Kalinga region¹². From this, it becomes evident that the existence of Janapadas and distribution of the relics of the Master to the janapadas located in south India.

The existence of Janapadas is also further attested by the occurrence, though limited, of N.B.P. ware, especially at Amarāvati¹³, Vaḍḍamānu¹⁴ and Gōpālapaṭnam¹⁵. and polished black knobbed ware at Jami¹⁶, Gōpalapaṭnam¹⁷, Dantapuram¹⁸ and Sisupalgarh¹⁹ in Orissa along with N.B.P. ware, which clearly bespeak the prevalence of cultural or trade contacts among these Janapadas and also with the Janapadas of Northern India. Furthermore, it is evident from the accounts of Megasthanese, that there existed 30 fortified towns, equipped with elaborate military organization, during 3rd c.B.C. in Andhra, especially in the region of Asmaka, Mulaka,Kōsala, Vidarbha and Mahisaka. Therefore, it is quite reasonable to assign the beginnings and early phases of these urban centres to at least a century or a couple of centuries before the visit of Megasthanese²⁰ i.e. 5th-4th c.B.C. Thus, it is beyond doubt, that the Andhradëśa possessed well established Janapadas (Republics) which patronized Buddhism since almost its inception, like the janapadas of Northern India. But it is difficult to explain how and why the early Buddhist chronicles failed to mention the very existence of such prominent Janapadas in the Deccan?

Recent archaeological discoveries from various parts of Andhra Pradesh have thrown fresh light on various aspects of Buddhism, especially its patronization by the local kings or chieftains in Āndhradëśa, even before the propagation of Buddhism by Asõka. The period i.e. after Asõka and before the rise of the Sătavāhanas in the Deccan, Āndhradēśa was divided into several petty States or minor principalities, ruled by local

cheiftains or Rajas. During this period, it was these kings, who mainly patronized and propagated Buddhism even to the outlying or far flung areas of their territories, as evidenced by the existence of numerous Buddhist sites along the coast and on the banks of major rivers.

Among them, mention may be made first, of the kings assignable to the pre-Sātavāhana times. They are Rāno Gobhada, Rāno Kamavāyāsiri, Rāno Nārana and Rāno Samagopa, who ruled over the tract lying between the rivers Godavari and Maneru in northern Telingana region. Numerous inscribed coins of the above kings, along with punch marked coins were found, in association with fine black and red ware, red slipped ware, tan ware, terracotta figurines, iron objects, beads and bangles in the habitation complex at Kõtalingāla (in ancient Asmaka region), on the right bank of the river Godavari. Also a Buddhist monastic complex lying near Pashigaon, outside the fortified city of Kõtalingāla, contained an apsidal chaityagriha and stūpas, belonging to the Theravada sect of Buddhism of 3rd c. B.C.²¹ Almost similar monastic and non-monastic structures within a fortified city, have been brought to light at Dhulikatta, datable to 3rd century B.C.²² The next local king that we know of is Rāja Kubëraka²³, who ruled over the tract along the south-east coast of Andhra, with Bhattiprolu, as its capital city. He, according to the Bhattiprõlu relic casket inscription, was responsible for constructing the Maha Chaitya, enshrining in it the corporeal relics of the Buddha. The inscriptions engraved on the relic caskets are of special significance and of fundamental value, for, they indicate the vernacular notation of Brahmi script in Āndhradëśa, which were, on the basis of palaeography, dated to pre-Asokan times.

Other local kings that we find are Sõmaka mentioned in an inscription at Vaḍḍamānu²⁴ near Amaravati and Rāja Kumariyya Sammliya, from Amaravati (A.R.I.E, 1953, No.57, p.3) where vestiges of an ancient Buddhist settlement, along with a number of punch-marked coins were brought to light. All these structures and the wide array of antiquities, such as N.B.P. ware, black and red ware, and Brahmi label epigraphs are datable to the period ranging between 4th-3rd centuries B.C. and 1st-2nd centuries A.D. Another ruling family which exercised authority over the region between the rivers Godavari and Krishna, was that of the Sadas, known through the occurrence of their coins and Brahmi label inscriptions noticed at Guntupalle, a famous Buddhist site in

West Godavari District, ranging in date from 3rd-2nd centuries B.C. to 8th-9th centuries A.D.²⁵ Further, the discovery of a fragmentary Asokan pillar edict in association with N.B.P. ware and other early historic cultural material at Amaravati,²⁶ obviously suggests that the mature phase of Buddhism began at least since Asokan times in Andhradëśa.

The Mauryan hegemony over this region can be seen only in the peripheral areas of the south-western parts of Āṅdhradëśa, which is attested by the discovery of minor rock edicts of Asōka at Jonnagiri or Eṛṛaguḍi²¹ and Rājula Maṅdagiri²³ in Kurnool district. The non-occurrence of Asōkan edicts in coastal Āṅdhradëśa, except for a solitary fragment of Asōkan inscription at Amaravati and in Telingana and some parts of Rayalaseema areas, clearly suggests that these fertile and prosperous tracts were ruled by the local rajas or chieftains.

The Mahavagga mentions an Andhakavinda at Rājagriha, near Magadha and Andhakavana near Sravasti. These may be monasteries or rest houses, exclusively built for the use of the pious monks from Andhradëśa. ²⁹ The occurrence of the names of various schools of Andhaka monks clearly suggests that Buddhism as a religion was already in existence in Andhradëśa and it gained momentum in Mauryan hegemony.

After the downfall of the Mauryan empire, all the subordinate kings declared themselves as autonomous rulers of various territories. In Āridhradēša, the period of Sātavāhana rule (B.C. 200 to 200 A.D.) witnessed the growth and development of Buddhism and Buddhist art, besides maritime trade. Under their rule, the religious tenets set forth by the kings were scrupulously followed by all the sections of the society, which helped the spread of Buddhism to every segment of the State. Buddhist institutions received munificent grants and it was well supported by the royalty. The Sātavāhana kings made valuable gifts to the Buddhist monks and monasteries. Several caves and religious structures were built during this period. The king Gautamīputra Sātakarņi made a gift of land measuring 200 nivartanas to the monks living on the 'Tokrasi hill'. 30 His mother presented a cave at Nasik and gifted a field in the village of 'Kakhadi'31, to the Buddhist monks. Pulumāvi II, also donated the village 'Karajaka' to the monks living in the village of 'Karla'. 32 Tradition says that the railing around the Mahāchaitya at Dhānyakaṭaka was erected at the instance of Bōdhisattva Nāgārjuna, a friend and contemporary of Sātavāhana king Śrī Yajnā. 33

The label inscriptions from Amaravati are of special importance, for, they mention a number of laymen and royal officers such as army commanders (sënagopa)34 royal scribes (rāja lekhaka),35 superintendent of water-houses (pāniya-gharika-),36 caravanleaders (chitta Sthanika),37 treasure and bankers (heranika),38 overseers of renovation works (mahā navakammika and nava kammika), artisans,39 foreman of artisans (avesanin),40 stone workers (pāshanika),41 perfumers (gandhika),42 scribes (lëkhaka),43 cow-herds (mahāgopālaka),44 cobblers (charmakāra),45 and traders and merchants,46 who contributed, voluntarily their services and mite, to the growth of the Buddhist establishments. An inscription at Amaravati refers to a monastery exclusively meant for the Magadhan monks from Pātalīputra. 47 Thus, Dhānyakataka flourished as a prominent Buddhist centre under the Mahāsānghikas. The prolific occurrence of N.B.P. ware at Amaravati again confirms cultural and trade contacts between North and South and vice versa. During the Sātavāhana period, the Buddhist settlements at Amaravati, Jaggyyapeta, Salihundam, Guntupalle, Ramathirdam, Ghantasala, Bavikonda, Thotlakonda etc., became renowned pilgrimage centres and some of these sites continued to flourish even during the medieval times.

After the Sātavāhans, Buddhism continued to receive patronage by their successors, viz., Ikshvāku, Śālańkāyana, Vishņukuṇḍin and other minor dynasties, who, however, were staunch adherents of Brahmanical religion. The famous Buddhist centre at Vijayapuri i.e. modern Nagarjunakonda became the cradle of Mahāyāna Buddhism under Ikshvāku rulers and it attracted the attention of kings and missionaries from different far off regions like Ceylon, Kāshmir, Gāndhara, China, Chilate, Tosali, Aparanta, Vanga, Vanavāsi, Yavana and Draviḍa etc., as attested by the label inscriptions found at the site. The Mayidavolu charters of Pallava Śivaskańdavarman (300 A.D.)⁴⁹ mention Dhānyakaṭaka as the headquarters of Āndhrāpatha, which shows that it was also under the control of the Ikshvāku rulers for quite some time. It was confirmed by the recently discovered Kallacheruvu copper plates of the king Ehavala Chāntamula (discovered in 1998 Preserved in State Museum, Hyderabad).

The rule of Ikshvākus in Āndhradëśa during 3rd c. A.D. marks a glorious epoch in the history of Buddhism. Basically, the kings of this dynasty were Brahmanical Hindus, while their women folk in the harem, i.e. queens, daughters and female members,

patronized Buddhism and they were extremely liberal in making donations. The second king of the line Vīrapurisadatta, forsook Brahmanism and became a Buddhist. Vijayapuri, presently known as Nagarjunakonda, reached its pinnacle as a seat of Buddhist learning and in a very short time, it attracted the monks and nuns even from distant land. Scholars are of the opinion that though the art of Nagarjunakonda was an offshoot of Amaravati school, yet it had its own identity, especially, in the style of depiction of elaborate Buddhist themes and also in delineating human and animal figures, in standardised forms. The inscription of an upāsika Bõdhisiri⁵⁰ provides us a graphic account of the architectural activity that took place during the period, at Nagarjunakonda and other Buddhist centres, such as a chaitya-ghāra within Kulahavihāra, a prāsāda for Bodhi tree within the Sihala vihāra (for Ceylonese monks), a cell on Mahādhammagiri, a mandapa pillar in the mahāvihāra at Nagarjunakonda and a hall of religious practice at Dëvagiri, a tank, a verandah and mandapa at Pūrvasaila, a stone mandapa at the eastern gate of the Mahāchaitya at Kamtakosala (Ghantasala), three cells at Herumuthuva, seven cells at Papila, a stone mandapa at Pubhagiri (Pushpagiri) and a stone mandapa in the vihāra of monastery etc.

During the post-Ikshvāku times, with the revival of Brahmanical faith, the patronage for Buddhism declined to a low ebb. The royal support which was its mainstay witnessed a downward trend. However, its survival as a religion, in some parts of Āndhradëśa continued even upto late medieval times. The Śālańkāyanas, Ānańdagõtrins, Vishnukundins and other minor dynasties that ruled over different parts of Āndhradëśa during 4-5th centuries A.D., after the downfall of the Ikshvākus also played a no less important role in the spread of Buddhism to different parts of India and South-East Asian countries.

The Śālańkāyanas (400-300 A.D.) of Vëngi, who were staunch followers of Vaishnavism, also made some liberal donations to the Buddhist monasteries. The king, Vijaya Nandivarman II, though held the title *Paramabhāgavata*, made some gifts to the *Mahāvihāra*, as noticed in a stone epigraph at Guntupalle. Excavations at Vëngīpura or Peddavēgi, brought to light vihāras, stūpas and stone pillared manḍapas, built by certain sects like *Aparaśaila* and *Aparamāhā Vinayasëliyas*⁵². According to tradition, the Sālańkāyanas were mainly responsible for the spread of Buddhism to Kanchipuram and

also to the South-East Asian countries as far as Burma. The Ānandagōtrins of Kandārapura (435-460 A.D.) also paid some attention towards Buddhism. The Mattepadu grant of Dāmōdaravarman issued from Kandārapura describes him as a Buddhist (Samyakasambudhasya padānudhyātah) 53.

The Vishnukundins were also powerful rulers after the Ikshvākus, in Āndhradëśa. The extensive Buddhist site at Nelakondapalle in Khammam district (Ikshvāku-Vishnukundin times) is a classic example of this period, which speaks for the meritorious services rendered by the Vishnukundins to Buddhism during 4th-5th c. A.D. Here, excavations brought to light a number of huge free standing statues of Buddha carved in limestone, a bronze image of standing Buddha, innumerable Vishnukundin coins, besides a row of brick built water troughs at different levels, meant probably for the treatment of sculptured panels in limestone, vihāras, a Mahāchaitya, votive stūpas, terracotta figurines, and other early historic cultural material, which suggest the heyday of Buddhism under Vishnukundin rulers. The occurrence of limestone blocks and flakes in association with the troughs clearly indicate that it was a manufacturing centre of Buddhist sculptures and panels⁵⁴. The Chaitanyapuri inscription near Hyderabad and two copper plate grants⁵⁵ from Tummalagudem in Nalgonda district, of Vishnukundin times, mention some gifts made by the kings and queens for the maintenance of Buddhist monasteries. It is interesting to note that the term stupa occurs for the first time in these copper plate grants⁵⁵.

The Hyderabad Prakrit inscription of Gővińdavarman (405-445 A.D.) found at Chaitanyapuri⁵⁶ records the construction of a stone residential cell, attached to Gővińdarāja vihāra, for the use of persons incharge of incense and clothes. A stone cell is also stated to have been set up for those who carry water for the Bhikkhus of the vihāra. The two Tummalagudem copper plate charters credit Gővińdarāja with the erection of several stūpas and vihāras all over the Deccan. Further, the Tummalagudem copper plate Set-I issued by Gővińdavarman, son of Mādhavavarman, records the grant of two villages namely Enamadala and Prenkapura, for the maintenance of a Buddhist vihāra at Indrapura, by his chief queen Parama Mahadevi, on the occasion of Vaiśākha Pūrņima (Buddha-Purnima) with all the benefits of 'Nidhi, Upanidhi, daṅḍakara-Vishṭisvõchhi-shṭa-bhāga-bhōga' and free from all impediments⁵⁷.

The second set issued by Vikramëndravarman, ⁵⁸ son of Indrabhaṭṭāraka Varman, also registers the grant of the village Irundoru, for the enjoyment of the Bhikkhu-Sangha, staying in the Mahāvihāra, established by Parama Bhaṭṭārika Mahādëvi, the chief queen of Govindarāja. Vikramëndravarman-I is also described as a Parama Saugati (a staunch follower of Buddhism).

Prithvīśrīmūlarāja (5th-6th c. A.D.), who succeeded the Vishnukundins, in coastal region also patronized Buddhism. The three recently discovered copper plate grants of Prithvīsrīmūlarāja from Kondavīdu, 59 record various benefits extended to the Buddhist Sanghas. The first grant⁶⁰ records gifts to the Bhikhus who belonged to the Arya Bhikkhu Sangha, residing in the Mahāvihāra of Vardhamāna, (present Vaddamanu near Amaravati) for their daily rituals like meditation (dhyāna) and recitation. The second grant⁶¹ refers to the establishment of a Mahāvihāra in Tādikonda by the same king. It mentions the existence of various sects of Buddhist Sangha, like Sakya Bhikkhu Sangha and Arya Bhikkhu Sangha, flourishing in Andhra during 6th century A.D. It also records the appointment of an officer called Navakammika (Superintendent of Renovations), who resided at Aparasaila, i.e. Nagarjunakonda, to attend to the renovation works at Mahāvihāra near Gunapāśapura. The above evidence suggests that the Buddhist centre at Nagarjunakonda continued to flourish even upto 5th-6th c. A.D. The third grant⁶² refers to the monks of eighteen fold Bhikkhu Sangha, residing in the well known monastery established by himself, in the eastern part and in the outskirts of the hill of Gunapasapura, in East Godavari District. The grant further refers to the gift of certain villages to this Maha vihāra, for meeting the daily requirements of food, beds, seats and medicines.

After the Vishnukundis, Buddhism lost its ground, mainly due to the lack of royal support and hence many settlements were deserted. This fact is also confirmed by the accounts of foreign traveller, Hieun Tsang⁶³ who visited Āndhradëśa during 6th-7th centuries A.D. and mentions that though Dhānyakaṭaka was found to be full of Buddhist monasteries, about only twenty, fit for living, were occupied by nearly one thousand monks, belonging to the Mahāsaṅghika school. According to him, there were one hundred dëva temples, worshipped by various sects. Similarly, he also furnished a vivid account of the religious conditions prevailing in Kalinga and Vēngi regions, where in a

monastery, only five hundred students of the Mahāyānists were worshipping the various Buddhist Idols⁶⁴

Scholars are of the opinion that out of the total number of 18 sects of Buddhism, at least 9 sects had their base in Andhradëśa. They are Mahāsanghiyas or Āryasanghiya (Nagarjunakonda), Pūrvasëliya (Amaravati & Alluru), Aparasëliya (Nagarjunakonda, Vengi and Ghantasala), Rājagirika (Amaravati), Caityaka (Amaravati), Bahuśrutiya (Nagarjunakonda), Mahiśāsaka (Nagarjunakonda), Uttarasëliya (Kalinga or North coastal Andhra), Saiddhāntikas and also other minor sects like Ārya Bhikkhu sangha and śākya Bhikkhu sangha. The Kathāvattu states that the sects of Rajāgirka, Siaddhāntika, the Pubbaseliya and Aparasëliya belonged to the Andhaka region. It is interesting to note that during 5th-6th centuries A.D., all the 18 sects flourished in Andhradëśa as can be seen from the grant issued by Prithvi Śrī Mula Maharaja. The third grant of the king issued from Kondavidu specifically mentions that the 18 fold Bhikkhu Sangha resided in the universally famous Mahāvihāra "Śrī Lōkavikhyāta Mahāvihāra nivāsinan" at Gunapasapura in East Godavari district. 65

The subsequent rulers who ruled Āndhradēša were strong supporters of Brahmanical religion. Further more, the infiltration of Vajrayāna, with great emphasis on the female element and large scale practice of Tantric Buddhism, led to laxity in discipline and moral fervour. The Mattavilāsa prahasana of Pallava Mahēndravarman describes in detail the detestable lives led by the contemporary Buddhists. Further, there was pronounced tendency towards the creation of Saktis or consorts to the Bōdhisattvas. This resulted in the creation of a mystic sex symbolism and objectionable and immoral practices. For the above reasons, most of the institutions have lost their importance, particularly in the direction of sanctity and that is why the people of later times called these deserted settlements as Lanja-Dibbalu (harlot mounds), particularly in Andhra Pradesh.

Yet, some important sites like Dhānyakaṭaka, Salihundam and Gummadidurru continued to flourish even upto the medieval times, under the patronage of minor local dynasties like Kōṭa chiefs of Dharaṇikōṭa. The Bekkallu grant of Chalukya Tribhuvanamalla deva dated 1100 A.D. refers to the construction of temples for Siva, Vishnu, Jaina and Buddha at Bekkallu in Jangaon taluk of Warangal district. The Korni plates of

Anantavarma Choda Ganga deva⁷⁰ (12 century A.D.) describe the Buddhist site at Salihundam ('mundu marru') as a famous place of Mundiya monks (clean shaven monks). The Gadaladeniya, inscription of Srilanka⁷¹ refers to certain renovation works attended to by Dhammakirti, a Thëra from Srilanka, at Dhānyakataka. The occurrence of clay tablets at Gummadidurru, ⁷² bearing Nagari script, datable to medieval period, suggest the survival of Buddhism upto 14th-15th century A.D. in Andhra Pradesh. Interestingly a good number of relic caskets have been unearthed from the stupas, chaityas and underneath the images and icons from the regions. Thus Buddhism in Andhradësa flourished for over 2000 years as one of the important religions, right from 5th-4th century B.C.to 14th-15th century A.D., as attested by literary, epigraphical and archaeological accounts.

REFERENCES

- N.S. Ramachandra Murthy, "Excavations at Nandalur a Buddhist site in Cuddapah district" 1. 1979-80, (unpublished report).
- B. Subrahmanyam, "Explorations at Sasanikota", a brief survey note submitted to the 2. Department of Archaeology and Museums, Hyderabad and also see AAR (1993-94) A&M, Hyderabad.
- 3. H.C. Rayachaudhari, Political History of Ancient India, 1983, p.95.
- A.M. Sastry, "Some aspects of Buddhism in Andhra Pradesh" in RSRC Memoir No.1, 1983, 4. pp.28-29.
- S. Dutt, Buddhist Monks and Monasteries in India, 1960, p.120 and also N. Dutt, Early 5. Monastic Buddhism, 1941, pp.193-95 and Suttanipata (Verse 1019).
- T. Ramachandra & B. Venkataramanayya, Lalitha Vistharam, (Telugu, Trans), 1969,p.9-10. 6.
- 7. Ibid., p.9.
- N.S. Ramachandra Murthy, "Excavations at Kõtalingāla in Karimanagar district, A.P." 8. (Unpublished report), and see an article on "Kotilingala, an early Historic site" in APHC, 1992, pp.33-34.
- W. Geiger, Mahavamsa, 1980, p.241 and also M. Somasekhara Sarma, "The epic story of 9. the Lord's Tooth" in Buddha Jayanthi Souvenir, 1956, pp.144-52.
- 10. P.V. Bapat (ed.), 2500 years of Buddhism, 1987.p.246 & Dathavamsa, p.284,286,287,295-99.
- 11. I.A. Vol. XVI, p.4 & J.R.A.S., 1906, p.665 & M. Somasekhara Sarma, Op.Cit., 1956, p.149-50.

- 12. B. Subrahmanyam, "Dantapuram A pre- Asõkan Buddhist site, North-Coastal Andhra" in 2540th Buddha Jayanti Utsav, 1996.
- 13. K. Raghavachary, 'Dharanikõta' and its Western contacts" Q.R.H.S., XII, No.3, 1973, p.167.
- 14. T.V.G. Sastry (ed.) "Vaddamanu Excavations and Explorations in Krishna valley", BACRI, 1983, pp.4-5.
- 15. B. Subrahmanyam, "Excavations at Gopalapatnam, Visakhapatnam District", Andhra Pradesh, (unpublished report), See cyclostyled AAR, A&M, Hyd. 1992-94.
- O. Ramachandraiah, 'Jami 1971, A summary of Excavations results, JAHRS, 1976, Vol.35, p.374.
- 17. B. Subrahmanyam, "Excavations at Gopalapatnam, Visakhapatnam District, AAR, A&M, Hyd. 1993 (cyclostyled).
- 18. B. Subrahmanyam, "Excavations at Dantapuram, Andhra Pradesh, Śrīkakulam District" in AAR, A&M, Hyd. 1994 (cyclostyled).
- 19. I.A. Vol.II, pp.337-39.
- 20. N.S. Ramachandra Murthy, Op.Cit., 1992, pp.33-35.
- 21. D.L.N. Sastry, "Excavations at Pashigaon, Karimnagar District", see AAR, A&M, Hyderabad (1988-89) Cyclostyled.
- 22. V.V. Krishna Sastry, Excavations at Dhulikatta, Karimnagar district, see AAR, A&M, Hyderabad, 1978-79, Cyclostyled.
- 23. E.I., Vol. II, p.328.
- 24. T.V.G. Sastry, Op.Cit., 1988, pp.4-5.
- 25. I.K. Sarma, Op. Cit., 1988, p.68.
- 26. I.K. Sarma, Some more inscriptions from Amaravati excavations and the chronology of the Mahastupa" JESI, Vol.I, 1974, pp.60-74.
- 27. D.C. Sarcar, Select Inscriptions, 1965, pp.50-52.
- 28. E.I., XXXV, pp. 211-218.
- 29. I.K. Sarma, Op.Cit., 1987, pp.15-16.
- 30. Nasik Cave Inscription, No.4, Luders list No.1125, & E.I. Vol. VIII, p.71 ff.
- 31. Nasik Cave Inscription, No.5, Luders list No.1126, & E.I. Vol. VIII. p.73 ff.
- 32. Karla Inscription, No.14, Luder list No.1105, & E.I. Vol. VII, p.64 ff.
- 33. M. Rama Rao, "Buddhism and Buddhist Monuments in Andhra desa" in Buddha Jayanti Souvenir, 1956, p.8.

- 34. C. Sivarama Murthy, Amaravati Sculptures in the Madras Govt. Museum, 1942, No.18 and Luders List No.1266.
- Ibid. 26.
- 36. Ibid., 72.
- 37. Ibid., 72.
- Ibid., Nos.86 & 97 & Luders List No.1297.
- 39. C.Sivarama Murthy, s., 1942, No.119.
- Luders List No.1298.
- 41. C. Sivarama Murthy, Op. Cit., 1942.No.119.
- Ibid No.124 & Luders List No.1210.
- 43. Luders List No.1291.
- 44. C. Sivarama Murthy, Op. Cit., 1942, No.91.
- 45. *Ibid.*, No.41.
- 46. Ibid., Nos.97, 101, 108, 111, 114, 121, 124 etc.
- 47. E.I., VI.XV, No.3.
- 48. E.I., XX, pp.22-23.
- 49. E.I., VI, pp.84-89.
- 50. E.I., XX, pp.22-23.
- 51. IAR, 1997-98, p.62, No.17 and also I.K. Sarma, Op. Cit., 1998, pp.77-80.
- 52. E.I., XXX, p.201, p.11.
- 53. K. Gopala Chary, Early History of the Andhra Country, 1976, p.201 and also E.I., Vol.XVII, pp.327-30.
- 54. D.L.N. Sastry, "Excavations at Nelakondapalle, Khammam District" (Unpublished report), see AAR, A&M, Hyd. 1986 & 1992-94.
- 55. P.V.P. Sastry, Inscriptions of Andhra Pradesh, Nalgonda District, Vol.I, Hyderabad 1992, p.XIX.
- 56. P.V.P. Sastry, "Hyderabad Prakrit Inscription of Govindarāja vihāra " in JESI., Vol.XI, 1984, pp.95-100.
- 57. P.V.P. Sastry, Op.Cit., 1992, p.1.
- 58. *Ibid.*, pp.1-2.
- V.V. Krishna Sastry, Three grants of Prithivi Śrī Mūlarāja from Kondavidu, 1992, pp2-3.

- 60. Ibid., pp.1-5.
- 61. Ibid., pp.12-13
- 62. Ibid., pp.20-22.
- 63. I.W. Rhys Davids, Op.Cit., 1961, p.214.
- 64. Ibid., p.198.
- 65. V.V. Krishna Sastry, Op.Cit., 1992, p.21.
- 66. M. Rama Rao, Op.Cit., 1956, pp.7-10.
- 67. Referred by M. Rama Rao "Buddhism and Buddhist monuments in Andhra Pradesh" in Buddha Jayanti Souvenir, 1956, p.10.
- 68. E.I., VI, p.155.
- 69. N. Venkataramanayya, Inscriptions of Andhra Pradesh, Warangal district, 1974, pp.45-50.
- 70. JAHRS, Vol.XXIX (Part 3&4), p.24.
- 71. Epigraphia Zeylanica, IV, 1943, pp.90 ff.
- 72. ARAD, 1926-27, pp.155-56.

Chapter-II

MAHAPARINIRVANA: IN LITERATURE AND ART

The various events in the Life of Buddha and his preachings were recorded in Buddhist literature viz., the three <code>Piṭakas</code>, the chronicles and <code>Jātaka tales</code>. For a Buddhist, the most important and memorable day is <code>Pūrṇima</code> or full moon day in the month of <code>Vaiśākha</code>, for, it is connected with the three main events in the life of Buddha, viz., the <code>Birth</code>, <code>Enlightenment</code> and <code>Parinirvāṇa</code>. Among the three, the last mentioned is of great value. The various preachings and discourses given by the Buddha at the time of his <code>Parinirvāṇa</code> to his disciples and monks, contain the very essence and right meaning of human life. Though there are divergent opinions among scholars about the exact dates of his birth and <code>Nirvāṇa</code>, there is consensus among them that Lord Buddha lived for nearly eighty years. According to the Theravada Buddhism, the <code>Nirvāṇa</code> occurred in 544 B.C., whereas some texts say that at the age of eighty i.e. in 480 B.C., Buddha attained <code>Nirvāṇa</code>.

The Mahāparinibbāṇa sutta furnishes a graphic and vivid account of the last journey of the Master of Kuśinagar and also about the incidents that took place before his death, during mourning and after. According to the text, Buddha left Vaiśāli, casting his last look at it. He crossed Bhandagāma, Hatigāmma and Jambhugamma and reached Bhōganagara, where he directed his disciples to give special attention to the observance of moral precepts (Sla), meditation (Samādhi), acquisition of knowledge (Paṇṇa) and attainment of emancipation (Vimukti). He gave instructions for checking up the authenticity of Buddha-vachana. He moved from Bhōganagara to Pāva, on the way he stayed for sometime at Beluvana and dispersed all his disciples who accompanied him; from there he proceeded to Vaiśāli and there he addressed the gathering, "monks, it is four fold vigilence, the four-fold right effort, the four fold holy strength, the five organs,

the five powers, the seven members of knowledge, which I have attained, and declared unto you". He further addressed, "O monks, I say unto: all earthly things are transitory: strive on without ceasing; in short time the perfect one will attain *Nirvāṇa*: three months hence will the perfect one enter *Nirvāṇa*".

The next day, the Master who was squeamish and almost nearing mortality, proceeded to Pāva and stayed at the mango groove of Chunda, the son of a blacksmith and took food. There he suffered from excruciating pain. He then took his bath in Kakutha river and went to Sālavana of the Mallas.² On reaching the Sālagroove in Kuśinagar, on the bank of river Hiraṇavati, he asked Ānaṅda to prepare a couch for him in between two thin sāla trees.

In the evening the Mallas and nobles of Kuśinagar, visited the Buddha to pay their respects. Just before his nirvāṇa, Buddha returned towards Ānaṅda and said, "It may be Ānaṅda that you shall say, the world has lost its Master, we have master no more, you must not think thus. The law and ordinance which I have taught and preached unto you, these are your Master when I am gone hence". (Haṅda daāi taikkhave amaṅtayāmi võ: vayadhamma Sankhara, appamaṅdena Sampadëthati).

Buddha also told Ānaṅda to inform the Mallas of Kuśinagara to prepare for his last rites. He said to his disciples, "O disciples, I charge ye: Decay is inherent in all component things; work out your salvation with diligence". These were his last words. He ordained one Subhadra and finally gave his last sermon.

The Sutta states that on hearing the news of Mahāparinirvāṇa of Buddha, the venerable Mahākassyapa left for Kuśinagar,⁵ where the Buddha's body was kept in a couch between two sāla trees.⁶ The text provides a vivid account of the visit of various other celestial beings and tree spirits who visited Buddha to pay their last homage.⁷ Among the other persons who paid homage to the Buddha were the four Malla chieftains and also Śakra or Indra who came from the celestial world. The saint Subhadra, a moving mendicant holding a tripod of three sticks and pouch like water bowl was the last disciple who met the Buddha before his last breath, was also present, near the couch.⁸ The Dëvas also came through the air, bearing exquisite celestial flowers and chanting praises. Hieun Tsang⁹ mentions the story of Mahāmāya who came down from the Paradise

to weep over her dead son, the Buddha. He says that he studied it in 'Mahāmāya-Ching' and other treatises, but such a story is not found in other works relating to nirvana, such as 'Mahāparinibbāṇa sutta', the 'Ta-pannie-pan-ching and the "Fo-pan-ni-hican-ching". 10

The Sutta¹¹ further mentions that the dead body of the Master was wrapped in nearly five hundred alternative layers of cotton and covered with wool, before interring the corpse in an iron box filled with oil upto the brim level and finally, it was covered with an iron lid, whereas Hieun Tsang¹² mentions that the Buddha's coffin was made of seven precious substances, his body was wrapped in thousand folds of cotton with incense and flowers and banners and sun-shades provided over the coffin by the Mallas. Using fragrant oil and scented wood they set fire to the pyre.

In the light of this literary evidence, if we see at a glance the sculptured panels which represent the Mahāparinirvāna of the Buddha, we can imagine how scrupulously the artist followed the textual descriptions while depicting the narrative panels. The most well depicted textual theme of Mahāparinirvāna in sculputre forms a gamut in the art history of north Indian schools during 1st-2nd centuries A.D. This popular theme was artistically well-executed in the Gandhara School of Art in detail rather than in Mathura. The sculptured panels in Lahore Museum¹³ and Indian Museum¹⁴ belong to the Gandhara school of Art which represent more or less similar themes described in the Sutta but differ slightly in the manner of depicting Subhadra with a tripod on his shoulder and the depiction of tripod without human figure. The sculptural representations showing Indra, Subhadra, the four Mallas, the coffin containing the corpse of the Lord Buddha etc., conform to the textual descriptions contained in the Sutta.

The sculptured panel from Gandhara (2nd century A.D.) in Victoria Albert Museum, London¹⁵ represents the Mahāparinirvāna scene very elegantly and imposingly (Pl.I). In it is shown a couch with pillows and legs of the Master with lion motifs. Vajrapāņi lies on the ground, whereas the monks and lay worshippers in grief are shown around the couch. Buddha's last convert Subhadra is shown sitting near a water bag, hung from crossed sticks. The depiction of Mallas with a variety of emotional feelings, a tree spirit on the top right side corner of the panel and two monks, one with a staff beside the couch, exhibits skillful delineation of the scene, corresponding to the textual description.

1 🎗

Another sculptured panel from Gandhara (3rd century A.D.) shows the Mahāparinirvāṇa scene very thematically. It depicts a rectangular coffin having a lid on a high Pedestal in between two sāla trees. A person having beared and moustache holding a Vajra in his right hand may be of a divine person Indra shown in the middle of trees. Subhadra is shown holding three sticks on the left side of the coffin and on the right is a man in princely dress, probably a king from the Kusinagar. The two monks who were in grief are shown very suggestively. This panel stands as a classic example of the Gandhara school of art (Pl.2).

Recently, another mutilated but meticulously carved panel was displayed in the National Museum, datable to 1st-2nd century A.D. also belonging to the Gandhara School depicting the theme of *Mahāparinirvāṇa* in a graceful and more realistic manner. ¹⁶ It shows a long rectuanguar coffīn, covered by a cloth with patterned design. To its right is shown an object with two strings of a heavy garland and behind it is a male, wearing a boat-shaped turban, flanked by a pair of male figures. The figures, depicted with princely headgears, seem to represent the Mallas of Kuśinagar. Behind this scene, is a dense foliage of trees with two celestial nymphs emerging out, holding a basketful of flowers and garlands. Interestingly, a ladder is represented by the side of a tripod. Probably, it symbolises the event of the Great Descent of Buddha at Sańkissa from Tushita heaven, where he has gone to preach his mother. It is also likely that the ladder represents the descent of Mahāmāya i.e. Māyādëvi from the heaven to see her dead son as mentioned in Mahāmāyaching cited by Hieun Tsang.¹⁷

The representation of the theme of *MahāParinirvāṇa* at Barhut, Sanchi, Ajanta, Kusinagar, Saranath, Nagarjunakonda, Ceylon etc., not only shows the meticulous care and impeccable technique displayed in the delineation of the figures but also its conformity to the graphic account given in the text. Hence it is appropriate to rely upon the details furnished by the *Mahāparinibbāṇa sutta* with regard to the incidents that took place at the time of *Mahāparinirvāṇa*, rather than on other literary accounts. Generally, the details represented in the sculptured panels from northern India are the Buddha lying in between two *sāla* trees, and a coffin containing the corpse laid on a couch. The latter representation is very common in the Gandhara school of Art. Interestingly at Nagarjunakonda, a panel which narrates the important events in the life

of the Master shows the Mahaparinirvana symbolically through stupa at the end of the panel.

The Sutta¹⁸ narrates that Mahākāssyapa who was present at the spot, paid his respects by touching the feet of the Master and set fire to the corpse, which was placed before the city gates of Kusinagar. In the Tibetan texts, the site of cremation of Buddha's dead body is described variously, as, outside the eastern gate, outside the western gate and a spot namely, Malla's Makutabandhanachaitya and according to some, at the temple of God 'U-cha', which perhaps was on the western side of the Kusinagar city.

According to Sumangali Vilāsini,20 Mahākāssyapa who was instrumental in organisizing the funeral ceremony, collected all the relics and ashes in an iron box and deposited them in an underground chamber inscribed with a label reading 'the relics of Buddha', with a view to take the bulk of relics for enshrining in a stūpa, in his capital Rājagriha, leaving only a meagre portion for distribution among the kings.²¹ Afterwards, this was learnt by Asõka, who, with the help of a Thëra, divided the relics into 84,000 parts and built an equal number of stupas enshrining these holy relics, all over his dominion. Divyavādana²² mentions that after his conversion, he undertook to construct 84,000 stūpas.

According to Thupavamsa 23, the elder Kassapa after knowing the danger to the relics deposited in stupas approached the king Ajātasatru with a request to collect and deposit at one place for their safety. Accordingly, the relics were collected from seven stūpas except from Ramagrama, and deposited in the South-West quarter of Rājagriha. The text further narrates the method of deposition of relics followed by Kassapa is as follows:

"The place was dug eighty cubits, he had an Iron floor spread below and there in the toped monastery, he had a room of bronze built as big as a shrine, and he also had caskets of yellow sandal and the like made, as well as topes eight each".

"Then he put the relics of the Blessed One into a casket of yellow sandal, and that casket of yellow sandal into another casket of yellow sandal and that also into another. Thus he put together eight caskets of yellow sandal. In this way, he placed the eight caskets in eight topes of yellow sandal, the eight topes of yellow sandal in eight caskets

of red sandal, the eight caskets of red sandal into eight topes of deep red sandal, the eight topes of deep red sandal into eight caskets of ivory, the eight caskets of ivory into eight topes of ivory, the eight topes of ivory intereight caskets of all-jewels, the eight caskets of all-jewels into eight topes of all-jewels, the eight topes of all-jewels into eight caskets of gold, the eight caskets of gold into eight topies of gold, the eight topes of gold into eight caskets of silver, the eight caskets of siver into eight topes of silver, the eight topes of silver into eight caskets of gems, the eight caskets of gems into eight topes of gems, the eight topes of gems into eight caskets of rubies, the eight caskets of rubies into eight topes of rubies, the eight topes of rubies into eight caskets of cat's eyes, the eight caskets of cat's eyes into eight topes of cats's eyes, the eight topes of cat's eyes into eight caskets of crystal, the eight caskets of crystal into eight topes of crystal. The topmost shrine of crystal was as big as the shrine of the toped monastery. Above it, he had a room built of all varieties of jewels. And over that he had (another) room built of gold, and over that one of silver and over that one of bronze. There he sprinkled quartzes of all varieties of jewels, and strewed thousands of flowers, born in water and land. The five hundred and fifty Birth-stories, the eighty great Elders, the queen Mahāmāya of king Suddhodana, and the individuals born at the same time, all these he had constructed even of gold. He had vessels full of gold and silver arranged, five hundred each, and also five hundred golden banners. He had five hundred golden lamps made and filled with scented oil and provided with fine jute wicks. Then the Venerable Kassapa the Great resolved: 'Let the garlands be not withered, the perfumes not destroyed, and the lamps not extinguished', and on a golden plate he had letters incised (as follows): 'In the future, a prince named Piyadāsa, unfolding the royal canopy, will become a righteous king, Asoka by name. He will make these relics widespread".

"The king honoured them with all kinds of ornaments, and as he closed the doors, beginning with the first, he came out. Shutting the bronze door, he tied a seal ring and a key to the pulling-rope. There he placed a great mass of gems, and had letters incised (as follows): 'Let needy kings in future honour the relics with this gem.' Sakka, the king of devas, sent Vissakamma, addressing him thus: 'Dear! the relics have been deposited by Ajatasattu, please keep guard there."

According to the Saddharma-Pundarika, the share of the Buddha's relics of the king Ajātasatru were keptan a box, made of precious metals, along with a copy of the above Sūtra, which was written in gold and deposited in a trench, dug outside Rājagriha and built a tope over it. After a lapse of 100 years, the king Asõka came to Rājagriha, dug out the box and took the relics and constructed 84,000 topes. But tradition says that after the conquest of Kalinga only, Asoka caused the digging of the seven stupas out of eight, for recovering the holy relics and divided them into 84,000 parts and distributed them among various regions for enshrining them in the stupas.

Contrary to the above text, the Mahāparinirvāņa sutta of Dīgha Nikāya²⁵ says that after hearing the news of Mahāparinirvāna from Ānahda, the Mallas of Kuśinagar greatly lamented and gathered together, with music and dance and with garlands and perfumes for performing the cremation ceremony. The ceremonies lasted for a week. After the body was burnt, the Mallas of Kuśinagar kept the relics of the Buddha in their council hall, encircled by a lattice symbol work of spears and rampart of bows and for seven days they honoured them with music and dance, garlands and perfume.

The text further says that there was a quarrel among the kings, over the acquisition of the corporeal remains of the Master. The Mallas of Kusinagar claimed their right over the relics, as the Master died in their dominion. At this junction, a Brahmin by name Drona, who was a wise peacemaker, whom the quarrelling warrior tribes respected as a leader, divided the relics into eight equal parts and distributed them to Ajātaśatru, the king of Magadha, the Lichchavis of Veśāli, the Sākiyas of Kapilavastu, the Bulis of Allakappa, the Koliyas of the Rāmagrāma, Brahmin of Vedadīpa, Mallas of Kuśinagar and the Mallas of Pāva, while retaining his own share of the relics. At that time, the Moriyas of Pipphalavana also staked claim for a share of the relics but since it was too late, they had to contend themselves with the ember.26 Thus the holy relics and the ashes were divided into ten portions and enshrined in the stūpas.

Hieun Tsang²⁷ mentions a Brahmin by name 'Chih-hsing', variously known as Drõna, Dhūpa, Dhūma and Mao-Kue, an envoy of Ajātasatru, who may be identified with a Dronasamma, mentioned in other literary accounts. According to him, the Brahmin tried to steal one of the Buddha's canine tooth and ashes, for which, he smeared

honey inside the vase or molasses in a clandestine manner and thereby he obtained a quantity of relics, which he was not entitled to. According to *Thupavamśa²⁸*, at the time of distribution of the relics, knowing the carelessness of the kings, the Brahmin Drona took the tooth relic of the Master and kept it with in his turban and the remaining were distributed. Sakka, the king of *devas* thinking that the Brahmin may not do honour worthy of the relic, took it from his turban and placed in a golden casket and brought it to the *deva*-world and constructed a tope of the jewelled crest.

The above narrative account of apportioning the relics is delineated artistically both in the Amaravati school of art (Pl.3) and in the Gandhara art (Pl.4). In the former, on a coping stone of railing, the division of the relics of the Buddha by a Brahmin Drona, was meticulously carved²⁹. In this, on the right, in the lower part, are depicted the funeral ceremonies and worship of the Buddha's relics, with dance and music, whereas the upper one shows the Mallas disagreeing to spare the relics to the kings. A seated person with his hand in an attitude of persuation was probably the Brahmin Drona. The next panel shows the division of the relics into eight equal parts by Drona in which the kings, seated around a rectangular table, were represented very artistically. The next scene on the left represents a row of elephants with riders holding relic caskets and a chowry-bearer honouring it. The scene of elephants passing through the decorated gateway of Kusinagar carrying the relic caskets is depicted very gracefully and suggestively in general standardised forms. Another sculptured panel from Gandhara also shows the division and distribution of the relics by Drona under strict vigilance.30 The above sculptural representations reflect strict conformity to the descriptive accounts contained in the Sutta and therefore, it appears reasonable to accept the incidents that were codified before and after the parinirvana as mentioned in the Mahaparinirvana sutta.

It appears, from the dialogues that were exchanged between the Master and his disciple Ānanda, that stūpas were to be raised for a Tathāgata, Arhat, Buddha and Chakravartin. According to the Thupavamėsa 31, the blessed one resolved clearly on the scattering of his relics, "I am to live not for long but to pass away entirely and my teaching has not yet been spread everywhere. So when I pass away entirely let the multitude take my relics, even of the size of a mustard seed and make a shrine each in his own dwelling place and worshipping them, let them aim at the attainment of heaven".

Thus, there was a clear discussion about the distribution of the relics. And further there is a tradition in Buddhist lineage about the scattering of relics. The Buddhist text Thupavamsa 32 mentions the names of the enlightened ones like Revata, Sabhita, Suddhatta, Tissa, Vispassin, Sikkin, Vessabhu, Kakusandha, Konagama, Kassapa whose relics were distributed to different parts of Jambhudvipa for worship. Perhaps, the Brahmin Drona - a learned scholar, knowing the tradition and also to meet the religious exigency that arose after the cremation of the dead body of the Master that the corporeal remains were divided into eight parts. After some time, these relics were once again collected from the stupas and redistributed into 84,000 parts by the Mauryan king Asoka, perhaps to show his religious endeavour in patronizing and propagating Buddhism.

Tradition holds that Asoka caused the erection of several stupas, for depositing the original relics of the Master, recovered from the seven stūpas. Unfortunately, historical facts have not been recorded either to support the hypothesis of constructing the stupas or the consecration of relics by the Mauryan king Asoka. However, if this were to be believed, then there is no reference to the stupa in which the Brahmin Drona enshrined the relics. There is difference of opinion among scholars regarding the identification of these places and also their association with Buddhism. Interestingly Daladavamsa³³ refers exclusively to the story of 'tooth relic', enshrined in a stupa at Dantapuram in Kalinga region which can be identified with the place locally known as 'Dantavaktrunikõta', situated near Śrīkakulam in Andhra Pradesh.

REFERENCES

- Dīgha Nikāya II, p.198 ff.
- Mahāparinibbāna Sutta, sections 175-195 2.
- Ibid., 201-204 3.
- Ibid., 205-235
- Ibid., VI, 36-39.
- Ibid:,3-4 6.
- Ibid., V. 10-14. 7.
- 8. Ibid., VI, 16.
- Thomas Watters, on Yuan Chawng's Travels in India (629-645 A.D.), Vol.II, 1961, p.39 9.

- 10. *Ibid.*, p.39.
- 11. JRAS, Vol.29 (Part 3 & 4).
- 12. Thomas Watters, Op. Cit., 1961, p.40.
- 13. H.Ingholt, Gandharan Art in Pakistan, New York, Catalogue No.143, 1957, pp. 94-95.
- 14. N.G. Majumdar, A guide to the sculptures in the Indian Museum, Pt.II, p.73, Pl.XIa.
- W.Zwalf (ed.), Buddhism Art and Faith, 1985, London, p.38.
- 16. Shashi Asthana, "A Mahāparinirvāna panel in the National Museum Collection" puratattava No.16, p.36.
- 17. Thomas Watters, Op.Cit., 1961, p.40.
- 18. Dīgha Nikāya, pp.179-191.
- Thomas Watters, *Op.Cit.*, 1961, p.40.
- Sumangali Vilāsini, 611-15 and the Mahāparinibbāna Sutta, p.61.
- 21. W.Geiger, Mahāvamśa, 1980, p.211.
- Divyavādana mentions that after conversion of Asõka, he undertook to construct 84,000 stūpas and also see J. Fergusson, History of Indian and Eastern Architecture, Vol.I, p.67.
- 23. Bemala Churan Law, The Legend of the Topes (Thupavamsa), 1986, pp. 32-34.
- 24. Thomas Watters, *Op.Cit.*, 1961, p.159.
- 25. Dīgha Nikāya, II, pp. 179-191.
- Rhys David, Buddhist Suttas, S.B.E., Vol.XI, pp. 131-32 & Kern, Manual of Buddhism p.46. 26.
- 27. Thomas Watters, *Op.Cit.*, 1961, p.39.
- 28. Bemala Churan Law (Tr), Op.Cit., 1986 p.30.
- 29. Ludwig Bachhofer, Early Indian Sculpture, (Madras Museum), Vol.II, 1929, Pl.123.
- 30. W.Zwalf (ed.) Op.Cit., 1985, p.38.
- 31. Bemala Churan Law (Tr), Op.Cit., 1986 p.25.
- 32. *Ibid.*, p.30.
- 33. Datta Vaméa, 284, 297, 295, 296, (composed in 310 A.D. and translated in 1200 A.D.)

Chapter-III

TOOTH RELIC OF DANTAPURAM

'Dantapuram' is a place of hoary antiquity in ancient Madhyama–Kalinga region, which came into prominence only after the conquest of Kalinga by Asõka in 261 B.C., followed by Khāravela, the illustrious Chëdi king of Kalinga. Prior to it, Kalinga region, with its capital at Dantapuram might have flourished as a Janapada or republic state, along the east coast, equipped with all the urban traits like inter and intra maritime trade and the existence of monastic and non-monastic establishments, like the Janapadas of North India.

According to Sylvan Levi,¹ Dantapuram was a famous emporium of Kalinga, through which, it maintained maritime relations with the East and West of the Peninsula, as far as China and Persia even before 6th century B.C. This is well-attested to by a Ceylonese chronicle, according to which Vijayasimha, a prince of Kalinga, sailed with his wife to Ceylon and conquered and colonised it in early 5th century B.C.². From this, it becomes clear that the Buddhist chronicles and other literary texts documented certain historical facts fairly well, particularly the role played by the mid Kalinga region in the early centuries of pre-Christian era.

References to Dantapuram as the capital city of Kalinga, occur in Brāhmanical, Jaina and Buddhist literature. The epics also furnish information about the geographical situation of the Kalinga region. The *Udyōgaparva* of *Mahābhārata*³ mentions Dantapuram or Dantavaktruni kota in Kalinga region, which lies between the Cëdi and Magadha territories, ruled probably by a king named Karusa. *Raghuvamsa* refers to the King of Kalinga as the 'Lord of the Sea'. 'Jaina works like *Uttarādhyāyana Sūtra*' and *Sūtrakṛtānga*, refer to the place Dantapuram as the capital city of Kalinga and its king Dantavaktra, who was the best among the Kshatriyas. 'Mahā Gōvinda Suttānta' of *Dīgha Nikāya*' states that Dantapuram was one among the six famous cities of contemporary India,

ruled by a Kalinga king named Sattabhu, contemporarty of Dattaratta of Kāśī. The Mahāyāna Buddhist text, Ārya Manjūsrī Mūlakalpa described the Bay of Bengal as Kalingan Sea.8 According to Jātakas, the city of Dantapuram was the capital of Kalinga during the period before Buddha, where the king Dantavaktra was ruling. The Dattavamśa mentions that the city continued to be the capital upto the time of Buddha.9 The Chulla Jātaka states that Dantapuram, the capital city of Kalinga, was linked with many other kingdoms by well laid roadways. The Kurudhamma Jātaka 11 says that Dantapuram was the place of residence of the king of Kalinga. In Kumbhakāra Jātaka, there is a reference to a Kalinga king by name Karandu, who was a contemporary of Nagnajit of Gāndhāra and Bhīma of Vidarbha. The Kalinga Jātaka, 13 mentions a king by name Kalinga, ruling from Dantapuram who had two sons namely MahāKalinga and Culla Kalinga.

According to Mahāparinibbāṇa Sutta, after the death of Buddha, his left canine tooth was collected and presented to Brahmadatta, the king of Kalinga, by an Arhat named Khëma- Thëra'. ¹⁴ The king raised a stūpa over it at Dantapuram for worship of the tooth relic and subsequently the place came to be known as Dantapuram. The above fact is well recorded in Datta Dhātu Vamsa (Dalada Vamsa composed in 310 A.D.), a Pali work of Ceylon. ¹⁵

According to the text, the legend goes as follows: After cremation of the body of the Master, except pieces of bone, skull, teeth and small quantity of ashes, all corporeal remains were washed away due to heavy rain. Except, the left canine-tooth and small quantity of ashes, the remaining corporeal remains were distributed by a Brahmin Droṇa among eight kings. The left canine-tooth was sent to Brahmadatta, the ruling king of Kalinga through Khëma Thëra. The king prepared a relic box with a view to enshrine it in a stūpa for worship at Dantapuram. Ghuhasiva, probably the successor who basically was an ardent Jaina, knowing the importance of the relic, converted himself to Buddhism and began to worship the relic. After some time, the king of Jambūdveepādhipati Pānḍu sent his subordinate Chitthayāna to Kalinga, with a specific instruction to bring Ghuhasiva along with the relic to Pāṭalīputra. Accordingly, Ghuhasiva carried the relic of Lord Buddha Jambūdveepādhipati Pānḍu requested Ghuhasiva to keep the relic for some more time in his kingdom. Meanwhile the importance of the relic spread to all corners of the territory. Knowing the fact, Kheeradhara Narendra invaded Pāṭalīputra with a view to

acquire the relic. The battle was won by Jambudveepādhipati. He thought that he had won the battle only with the blessings of Lord Buddha. Hence as a token of gratitude, Jambūdveepādhipati Pāndu allowed Ghuhasiva to take the relic of the Master to Kalinga for regular worship. Later on Dantakumāra, the king of Ujjain visited Kalinga with a view to worship the relic. Knowing the good qualities of the prince, Ghuhasiva decided to enter into marriage alliance with the king, by offering his daughter Hëmamāla. After some time, the sons and relatives of Kheeradhara Narendra, invaded Kalinga once again to take possession of the relice. Knowing fully well about his weak military strength, Ghuhasiva asked his son-in-law to carry and handover the relic to Mahāsëna, the king of Ceylon for its safety. In the battle, Ghuhasiva lost his life. After knowing the sad news, Dantakumāra carried the relic and travelled towards south, after crossing the flooded river on his way. After the shipwreck, Dantakumāra reached diamond sands and stayed there for some time. From the diamond sands, he continued his journey. At this juncture, the relic box was stolen away and swallowed by a Nāgarāja. Dantakumāra prayed the Thëra, who helped the king earlier and got back the relic casket and boarded the ship at Tambalithi and travelled to Ceylon."

There are certain problems, especially in the identification of places mentioned in the text. At one place, it was mentioned that Dantakumāra boarded the ship at Tambalithi. Scholars identified this Tambalithi with Tamralipti (Tamluk) located on the coast towards north of Kalinga. In the text, there is a clear mention that the king travelled towards south. After the ship-wreck, he reached the diamond sands. Scholars identified the diamond bearing sands with those on the banks of the river Krishna near Amaravati. Hence, Tambalithi cannot be Tamralipti as suggested earlier. On the other hand, the former may be located on the east-coast, near the confluence of the river with the sea, in the south, as mentioned in the text.

George Turner, noted that Tambalithi was Thalamitha. Somasekhara Sarma identified Thalamitha with Thalagada dīvi. 16 'Dīvi' means 'island'. There are several such islands namely Thalagada Dīvi, Hamsaladīvi, Nāgāyalanka (Island of Nagas), Dīvi etc., located in Dīvi Seema near Machilipatnam. Probably Thalagadadīvi might be one among the islands located in ancient Mājerika Vishaya in Krishna river basin.

The Mājerika Vishaya had its epicentre at Mājeru, a village located near the coast, where the river Krishna joins the sea, in Krishna district of Andhra Pradesh. Presently, the river flows 5 to 6 kms. away from the village and the distance from the sea is 12 to 15 kms. Recent geomorphological investigations for studying palaeo-harbours on sea coast in the east-coast of Andhra Pradesh revealed that the ancient coast line existed at Mājeru, a few centuries preceding the Christian era. The early historic site, here extends over an area of 15 to 20 acres. Recent excavations brought to light circular brick structures and early historic cultural milieu. Thus it is reasonable to believe that Dantakumāra might have boarded the ship at Mājeru near Thalagaḍadīvi in Krishna river basin.

Similar narrative story with minor variation was recorded in 'Pharapathom', a Siamese Buddhist work. ¹⁸ Though both the texts differ in respect of cetain details and the names of the kings and places, both attest to the final voyage of Dantakumāra, carrying the sacred relic of Buddha from Dantapuram to Ceylon.

It is difficult to know when and how the incident took place? i.e. the presentation of the tooth relic by a Threa to the local king Brahmadatta, whether it was before the distribution of the relics or after it. In this context, it is necessary to examine the statement of Hieun Tsang who described the Brahmin Drona, as a peace maker in handling the situation at the time of distribution of relics and also his skillful technique employed in acquiring the canine tooth relic, as also the ashes of the Master. His observation seems to be very innovative and it explains logically the arrival of tooth relic, to Kalinga region. Probably, the Brahmin Drona, after acquiring the tooth relic, might have passed it on to a Thëra with a view to make the precious relic reach Brahmadatta, the then ruling king of Kalinga. From this, it appears that the Brahmin Drona must have hailed from the Kalinga region. Otherwise he could not have made bold to steal the relics in a clandestine manner, more so at a crucial time i.e. division of the relics. Therefore, it is reasonable to believe that the tooth relic reached Kalinga immediately after the great distribution of the relics. Afterwards, must have begun the battles between the kingdoms of Magadha and Kalinga, after knowing the fact of consecration of the tooth relic in a stupa at Dantapuram, the capital city of Kalinga, as attested by the literary work DaladaVamsa.

There are divergent views among scholars about the exact location and identification of Dantapuram in Kalinga region. Cunningham, who initiated the study of identifying historical towns and kingdoms mentioned in literature, attempted to identify Dantapuram with the present Rajahmundry, a prominent town located on the left bank of the river Godavari, 19 basing on the description of Kalidasa. 20 Pliny 21 mentions Dandagula, as the capital of Kalinga. Ptolemy²² identifies Paloura with Dantapuram. Ceylonese Pali works explain the name of the place as the city of the tooth relice 23 Hieun Tsang, 24 the Chinese traveller, states that Dantapuram possessed a stūpa with a gem on its crown, visible like a star even at night, from Charitra (ce-li-ta-lu) the port of the kingdom, which he calls as 'Uca' (Utkal). The important port town of the Kalinga region during those days was Kalingapatnam, which is very near to Dantapuram. Medieval inscriptions also mention Dnatapura as the capital city of Kalinga.

P.K. Misra, 25 identifies the place Dantapuram with Puri, where lies the present temple of Lord Jagannath, considering that Lord Buddha was one of the incarnations of Vishnu. Pliny²⁶ states that the place Dandagula i.e. Dantapuram was a fortified place, located to the south of Kalinga. B.V. Krishna Rao and Ramadas identified the place Dantapuram with the present fortified site of Dantavaktrunikota which lies on the road between srīkakulam and Siddhotam, in Śrīkakulam district in North-coastal Andhra. 27

S. Levi and other scholars identified Paloura with Dantapuram, owing to its location on the coast of Kalinga. 28 In the early centuries of Christian era, there existed six ports on the coast of Kalinga viz., Tāmralipti (Tamulk), Kõśāmbi (balasoru) Charitrapura (Che-li-ta-lo), Kannagar (Konark), Pālur and Kalinga patnam. 29 Among these port towns, Ptolemy, 30 mentions Paloura as an important port town in Eastern India, which generally matches with the present day village of Paloura in Chittarpur, Ganjam district in Orissa.

Recent survey in and around Paloura resulted in the identification of palaeoharbours such as Pālur and Ghankatasila or Rambha, situated on Southern horizon of Chilika lagoon and North of Rusikulya estuary. Some of the important habitation sites here are Arunpur, Barddhyakuda, Podaghar, Raghunathpur, Jatapradara, Gourangapatan, Madhura-chua etc., covering an area of 40 sq. kms. From these localities, survey has yielded glazed black and red ware, red polished ware, N.B.P. glazed ware, glazed black ware with black core resembling the ceramics of Sumatra and Vietnam and also Chinese

celadon ware and porcelain material, which are datable from early centuries of Christian era to the medieval times. ³¹ So far, no brick strutural activity and antiquities of Buddhist affiliation have been reported from these areas. Based on the above, it is certainly difficult to identify Pālur or Paloura with Dantapuram, a fortified capital city of Kalinga, as mentioned in the literature.

Very recently Explorations and excavations conducted in and around the fort area of Dantavaktrunikōta, near Amudalavalasa, yielded clear evidences in support of the literary data. The early historic fortified city, lies on the right bank of the river Vamsadhara, in Sarbhujali mandal of Śrīkakulam District. It is 40 kms. away from the famous Buddhist site Salihundam, and 46 kms. away from the ancient port town Kalingapaṭnam, in the lower reaches of Vamśadhara, along the same bank. There are regular buses plying from Amudalavalasa and Śrīkakulam, the district headquarters, to the site. One has to get down at the village Rottavalasa and from there it is hardly about 100 mts. walk. The lower reaches of the river Vamśadhāra seem to have fostered inland and sea-borne trade even during the early centuries of Christian era.

The site, at present, is encompassed by an earthen mud rampart raised approximately to a height of 30 feet (Pl.5). It appears that the fort has four entrances on the four cardinal directions. Among them, the northern, southern and eastern entrances are completely disturbed, leaving no traces. However, the western entrance is partly intact and found to be interesting, with a long and narrow passage, represented by a projecting rampart towards west on either side. The dilapidated western entrance is seen clearly facing the village Rottavalasa. In ancient times, the river Vamsadhara might have traversed along the eastern side of the fort, which facilitated inland transport and trade. Presently, the river flows about 25 kms. farther away, exposing thick sandy deposits, stretching from the fort area to the present river bed. The location of the fort and its surroundings recall similar early historic sites at Kōṭaliṅgāla, on the right bank of the river Godavari (ancient Asmaka region) in Karimnagar district and Amaravati on the right bank of the river Krishna (ancient Mahisamandala region) in Guntur district, Andhra Pradesh.

Excavations³² on the north-eastern side of the mound inside the fort area, brought to light a row of *stūpas*, of which, only two were fully exposed. The average extant

height of the exposed structures is 0.60 mt (Pl.6). The core of the stupa comprised rubble and earth. The wedge shaped bricks measure 39 x 35 x 9 cms, 40 x 40 x 9 cms. Fine sherds of black and red ware, black polished ware, red slipped ware and highly polished black knobbed ware occur in association with the brick stūpas.

Likewise, excavations on the South-western side of the habitation mound, yielded two distinct levels of occupation, corresponding to early historic (Pd.I) and early medieval (Pd.II). Period-I is characterised by brick structural activity, in association with black and red ware, black polished ware, red slipped ware, rouletted ware, knobbed ware, beads and bangles. Similarly Period-II is characterised by dull red ware, grey ware and black ware of inferior quality. The absence of black and red ware and brick bats is conspicuous.

Excavations conducted acorss the mud rampart, on the north-eastern side, upto a depth of 1.50 mts., revealed early historic cultural milieu, lying over a thick and compact sterile concretionary layer. This evidence clearly speaks for the existence of a fort in the centuries preceding the Christian era. During the early centuries of Christian era, the Eastern Gangas seem to have improved and strengthened the earlier mud rampart to a considerable extent, by digging the pati earth from the early historic habitation site in the fort area, as the same cultural material is found in the upper levels of the mud rampart.

Excavations at Salihundam, 33 a Buddhist site very close to Dantapuram, brought to light a well established monastic complex and other early historical cultural material such as punch-marked coins, Roman and Sătavāhana coins and inscribed pot sherds in Brahmi characters, ranging in date from B.C.3rd-2nd centuries to 8th century A.D. Not too far from Dantapuram, at Kalingapatnam, another port-town near the coast, excavations revealed a Buddhist site datable from B.C.2nd to 1st century A.D. 34 Recent excavations at Bavikonda near Visakhapatnam, unearthed a large Buddhist monastic complex and relic caskets datable to 3rd century B.C.35 Kalingapatnam, Bojjanakonda, Pavurallakonda, Ramatirtham, Lingarajupalem, Kodavali, Adurru, Dharapalem, Kagithammametta, Timmavaram, Erravaram, Gopalapatnam etc., in ancient Kalinga region suggests that, the people of this region embraced Buddhism long before Asoka's conquest of Kalinga.

It is also interesting to note that excavations brought to light highly polished black knobbed ware in prolific quantity in the early levels of Dantapuram along with black and red ware, polished red ware, black ware, chocolate ware and other early historic materials. Similar variety of black knobbed ware was reported earlier, in abundance, from the habitation levels of Sisupalgarh in Orissa³⁶ and also at Gopalapatnam³⁷ in Andhra Pradesh, along with N.B.P. ware. The same ware was also reported from Mauryan levels at Kaundinyapura³⁸. Generally the N.B.P. ware in northern India is associated with the Janapada sites and assigned a date ranging from 6th to 5th century B.C. The occurrence of similar N.B.P. ware sherds at Amaravati, 39 Vaddamanu40 and other sites in Andhra Pradesh suggests the prevalence of cultural contacts between the northern and southern India during pre-Christian times. The appearance of black knobbed ware in association with N.B.P. ware at Sisupalgarh in Orissa, enables us to date the site to 5th-4th centuries B.C.41 This knobbed ware can be conveniently called as 'Kalinga ware', as it was found exclusively in the Kalinga region, extending right from Sisupalgarh in the north to Gopalapatnam in the south, along the coast, like the N.B.P. ware of Northern India. Thus it is reasonable to assign the date 5th-4th century B.C., or even earlier, for the beginning of habitation at Dantapuram.

A study of the above literary and recent archaeological data proves the fact that Dantapuram referred to in various literary texts, is identical with Dantavaktrunikota, situated near Amudalavalasa in Śrīkakulam district of north-coastal Andhra. This place might have flourished as a major urban centre or Janapada with monastic and non-monastic establishments and flourishing trade, which dates back to the lifetime of Gautama Buddha.

REFERENCES

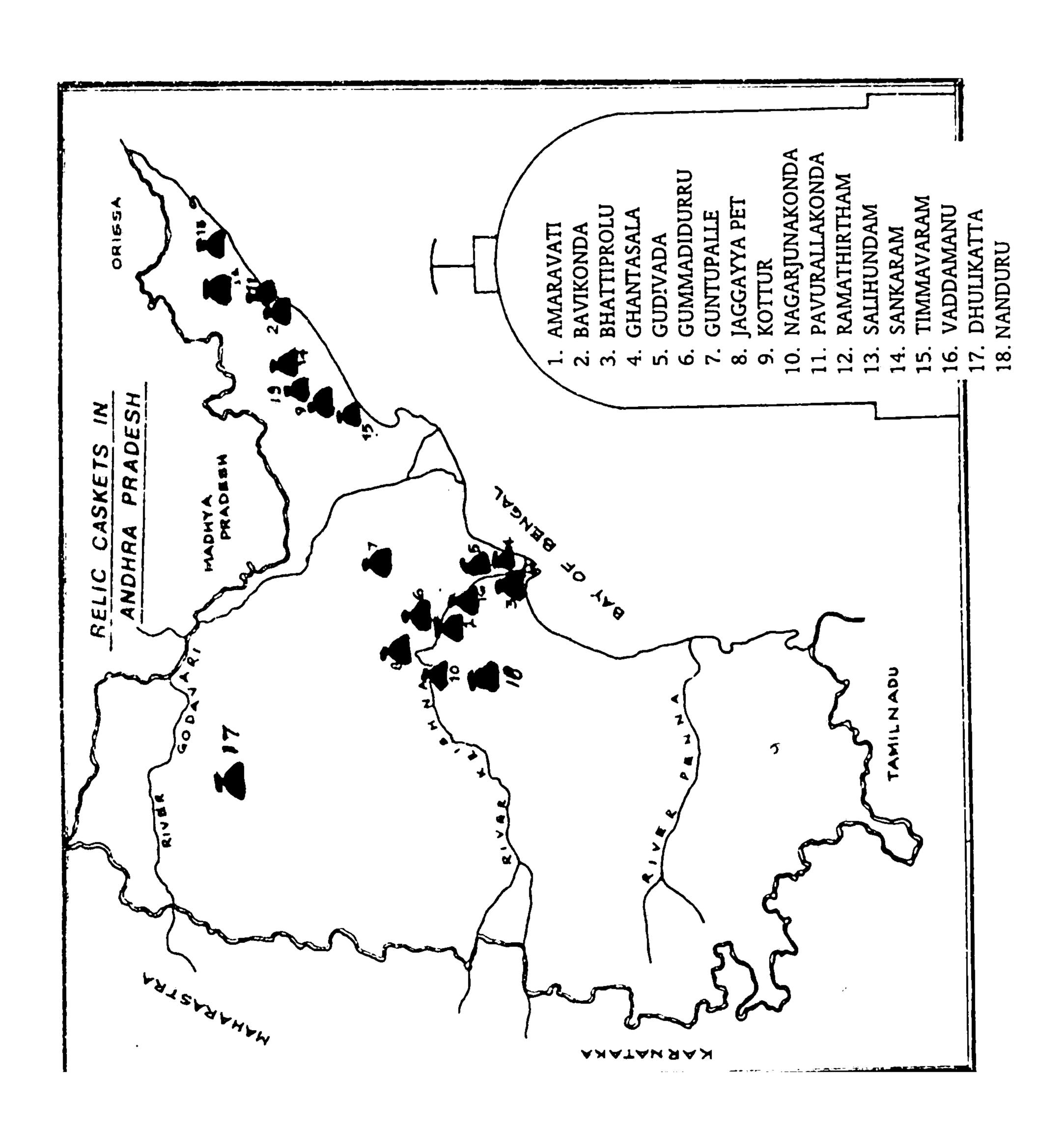
- 1. *I.A.*, I.V, 1926, PP.98-99.
- 2. JAHRS, Vo.2, P.I., p.27.
- 3. Mahabharata (Udyogaparvam), XL VII.
- 4. G.R. Nandargikar (Ed.), Trs.), Raghuvamsa, Vol.VI, 1897, Bombay, p.54.
- 5. Uttaradhyayana Sutra, XXI, 1.4.
- 6. JAHRS, Vol.2, P.I., p.4-6.

- 7. Max Muller, (Ed.) Rhys Davids (Tr.), Dīghanikāya, Vol. XI, London, p.138.
- Ganapati Sastry (Ed.), Ārya-Manjuśri Mūlakalpa, 3 parts, Trivendram, 1897, p.168. 8.
- B.C.Law (Ed.), Dathavamśa, Punjab Sanskrit Series, Lahore, No.III, 1925, p.110. 9.
- Ibid., pp.4-6. 10.
- Fausboll (Ed.), The Jataka, Vol.III, No.301, pp.1-5. 11.
- **12**. *Ibid*, Vol.II, No.276, pp.251-262.
- E.B. Gowell, The Jataka No.479, Book XIV, p.143. 13.
- M. Somasekhara Sarma, 'The epic story of the Lord's Tooth' Buddha Jayanti 14. Souvenir, 1956, pp.144-53 and also see B.C.Law, 'Datha Vamsa ' in JASB, Vol.XXVIII, pp.186 ff.
- B.C.Law (Ed.) Dattavamsa (composed in 310 A.D. and translated in 1200 A.D. by 15. Dhammakirthi), pp.284-287, 295-96 and also P.V. Bapat (ed), 2500 years of Buddhism, 1987, p.246.
- 16. M. Somasekhara Sarma, Op.Cit., 1956 pp.119-21.
- K. Nageswara Rao, Chindaya Sankara Rao and K. Śrīnivasa Rao, A paper presented 17. on significance of Remote sensing based geometric mapping in Archaeological investigations' at N.R.S.A., Hyderabad, 1995.
- M. Somasekhara Sarma, Op.Cit., 1956, pp.149-150. 18.
- S. Majumdar Sastri, Cunningham's, Ancient Geography of India, pp.592-93. 19.
- Raghuvamsa Cant, IV, 38, and 40-432; VI, 54. 20.
- Pliny, Naturalis Historia, Book VI, XXIII, p.72.. J. Mc. Grindle, "Ancient India as 21.
- J. Mc. Grindle, "Ancient India as described by Ptolemy," (Ed.S.N. Majumdar Sastry) *22*. pp.69-70.
- 23. JAHRS, Vol.II, PI, p.21.
- 24. Rhys Davids, Thomas Watters, on Yuan Chwang's Travels in India (629-645 A.D.), 1961, Vol.III, pp.194-195.
- JAHRS, Vol.II, PI, p.22. **25**.
- 26. Pliny, Op. Cit., VI, XXIII, pp.72-74.
- 27. JBORS, XV, pp.110-111 and see Epigraphia Indica, Vol.XIV, p.361 for Ramadas' opinion.
- A.K. Pattnayak, "Palur through the ages" in Itihas, Vol.XXI, 1995, pp.113-115. 28.
- R.K. Mukerjee, Ancient India, 1958, Allahabad, p.517. **29**.
- S.N. Majumdar (Ed.) J.W. Mc. Grindle, Ancient India as described by Ptolemy, 1972, **30**. Calcutta, pp.69-70.\
- Pradeep Mohanty, Jitu, Mishra and Kishor K. Basa "Archaeological investigations 31.

34 Buddhist Relic Caskets in Andhradesa

- into Plotemy's Paloura" in News Letter AH-SAN, 1997, p.14.
- 32. B. Subrahmanyam, "Excavations at Dantapuram, Srikakulam District", Andhra Pradesh, in Annual Admn. Report of the Dept. of Archaeology & Museums, Govt. of A.P. for the year 1993-94, Hyderabad (cyclostyled).
- 33. R. Subrahmanyam, Salihundam (A Buddhist site in Andhra Pradesh), Hyderabad, 1964, pp.20-21.
- 34. IAR, 1997-98, p.14.
- 35. N.R.V. Prasad, *Bavikonda* (A Buddhist site in North Coastal Andhra Pradesh), Hyderabad, 1994, p.41.
- 36. B.B. Lal, "Sisupalgarh-1948" in Ancient India, Vol.5, p.78, pl.XLVI.
- 37. B. Subrahmanyam, 'Excavations at Gopalapatnam, Visakhapatnam, District' Andhra Pradesh, *ARAP*, 1992-93 (Cyclostyled).
- 38. M.G. Dikshit, Kaundinyapura, 1968, p.72, fig.26.
- 39. *JESI* (Mysore), 1974, pp.60-74.
- 40. T.V.G. Sastri (Ed.) et.al., "Vaddamanu Excavations and Explorations in Krishna Valley," *BACRI*, Hyderabad, 1983, pp.4-5.
- 41. B.B. Lal, Op.Cit., 1948, p.78.

Map II



Chapter-IV

SITES AND RELICS

South India is dotted with a good number of Buddhist sites and it was only from Andhra Pradesh that a number of Buddhist relic caskets have been reported from the stūpas, chaityas, votive stūpas, Vihāras, underneath the images and icons. Earlier, the haphazard diggings of the people and local Zamindars at Buddhist monastic complexes for procuring building materials, resulted in accidental unearthening of stone, crystal, gold and silver reliquaries at Timmavaram, Gudivada and Amaravati. Due to the intervention of Western scholars, these priceless reliquaries were recovered and preserved carefully in the Museums in India and abroad.

Systematic and careful excavations conducted by A.H. Longhurst, Walter Elliot, Alexander Rea, James Burgess, Robert Sewell etc., especially at Bhaṭṭiprōlu, Ghantasala and Amaravati exposed relic caskets which created much curiosity among Indian scholars about various aspects of these valuable reliquaries. Subsequent excavations carried out at Salihundam, Gummadidurru, Nagarjunakonda etc., by the Indian scholars also brought to light priceless relics hitherto unknown. The occurrence of different shapes of reliquaries and their deposition in the stūpas suggests the prevalence of different modes of religious practices while enshrining the relics. Generally, in the early phase, the reliquaries were encountered in the center of the dome or within the dome. Afterwards they were embedded in the peripheral areas of the stūpas. Interestingly, relics were also kept in the pedestals or pīṭhas or underneath the icons. The important sites which yielded the holy relics are Amaravati, Bavikonda, Bhaṭṭiprōlu, Ghantasala, Gummadidurru, Ramatirtham, Sankaram, Erravaram, Salihundam, Nagarjunakonda etc., to name a few (Map.II). A detailed study of the relics and the sites, may help us to know to whom these relics belonged to and when they have been consecrated in the stūpas.

AMARAVATI

Amaravati, a famous pilgrim centre, both for Buddhists and Hindus, in Guntur District, is situated on the right bank of the river Krishna, about 35 kms. from Guntur

town. The nearest railway station is Guntur and buses ply from this town regularly. In ancient times, the village Amaravati was known as Deepāladinne (mound of lamps). The well fortified town 'Dharanikõta' or 'Dhānyakataka' which flourished as the capital city of the Sātavāhanas, lies 1 k.m. away from the present Amareswara temple complex.

Tradition holds that during pre-Christian times, the fertile alluvial river beds of Dhānyakataka, facilitated not only the cultivation of paddy or gain but also enabled the people to establish a republic of Janapada, with all the infrastructural facilities, which, in course of time developed into a 'grain producing centre', from where, the surplus foodgrains were supplied to other parts of the country, through inter and intra-trade routes and hence it came to be known as 'Dhānyakataka' ('Dhānya' means grain, and 'Kataka' means place in Telugu).

The prevalence of maritime trade can be observed from the presence of a rockcut navigational channel and a wharf point, belonging to the closing centuries of pre-Christian era at this place.² Perhaps, it was an important inland port-town in pre-Christian times, through which, high class glass ornaments in multifarious colours, made in milliflori technique from Mediterranean region were imported.3 An inscription from Amaravati (2nd century A.D.) refers to the installation of an image of Bhagavati Pushpatara.⁴ According to a Tibetan text Tārā Dharani, Tāra helps in crossing the ocean. The continuance of trade activity at this site during the early centuries of Christian era is also well attested by the occurrence of rouletted and arretine wares, as also Roman amphorae, besides a good number of Roman coins.

The earliest reference to the site at Amaravati occurs in a local Prakrit Inscription as 'Damnakada'.⁵ Subsequent Sanskrit and Telugu inscriptions call it as Dhānyakataka, Dhānyavātika, Dhānyamkapuram, Dharanikota, Dannālakota, Dhannada etc. Hieun Tsang' (640 A.D.), the Chinese traveller who visited this place when Buddhism was on the wane called it as 'Te-na'ka-che-ka', a Chinese version of 'Dhanyakataka'.

Medieval inscriptions mention 'Dhānyakataka' as a famous Buddhist centre, where Saivism also flourished since at least 10th century A.D. and interestingly, both the religions flourished together at this site for more than five centuries. A pillar inscription dated Circa 1100 A.D. records the visit of the Pallava king Simhavarman to 'Parama Buddha Kshëtra of Dhanyakataka'. Another pillar epigraph from the same temple dated

A.D. 1182, belonging to the reign of Kota Keta II, describes the architectural and sculptural embellishments of the Mahāchaitya, as 'Chaityam' atyunnatam' yatra nāna-chitra-Suchitritam'. Further, it also records certain endowments made by the king to the Lord Buddha. Another record issued by Bayyamāmba, 10 wife of Kõta Beta II dated 1234 A.D. refers to the offering of a perpetual lamp to the God Buddha at 'Srī Dhānyaghāti'. From this, it becomes clear that the kings of medieval Andhradësa, though they were staunch followers of Saivism, also extended to patronise Buddhism.

Further, it is interesting to find an inscription at Gadaladeniya in Kandy district, Ceylon, dated 1344 A.D.¹¹ perhaps the latest record, which mentions certain restoration and renovative works done by Dharmakirti, a Sthavira of Ceylon, to a two-storeyed image-house at Dhānyakataka'. This fact is also recorded in Saddharma Ratnākara a Ceylonese work of late medieval times written by Vimalakirtti. There are no epigraphical or literary references to the place 'Dhānyakataka' as a Buddhist centre after 15th century A.D.

As regards literature, the tantric work Sekoddesatika of medieval times refers to it as Srīdhānya. The Manjuśrī Mūlatantra refers to it as 'Srī Dhānyakataka'. Some Tibetan works also mention the name 'Siristhāna' i.e. Dhānyakataka. The name ' Dharanikõta' appears to have been derived from Dharnis or Mantras (hymns) of Tantrayāna.13

The earliest reference to the temple of 'Amarëswara' at Amaravati occurs in the Eastern Chālukyan record of the king Chālukya Bheema, dated 10th century A.D.14 Thus it marks the beginnings of the Saivism and the gradual decline of Buddhism at Dhānyakataka. Rāja Vasi Reddy Venkatadri Naidu (18th century A.D.) who was a staunch follower of Lord Siva, worshipped the Lord Amarëswara at Dhanyakataka and named this historic place as 'Amarāvati'. 15 It thus becomes clear that the name 'Amarāvati' is of recent origin.

The ancient brick mound in Dhanyakataka was considerably damaged by the local Zamindar, Sri Vasireddy Venkatadri Naidu, during his search for suitable building materials like brick and limestone blocks, in the course of which, he came across a stone casket. The fact of disturbance of the site, was reported first by Colonel Colin Mackenzie¹⁶ (1817). He was the first to prepare the general plan of the 'Mahāchaitya', in

view of its importance (Fig.I). Nearly after three decades, Sir Walter Elliot (1845)¹⁷ excavated the mound partly and recovered a number of lime-stone Buddhist sculptural panels, which were immediately sent to the Madras Museum. More than three decades later, Robert Sewell (1877)¹⁸ and James Burgess¹⁹ (1881) further probed the area for antiquarian remains. Later on, Alexander Rea²⁰ visited the site (1888-89) and excavated a small stūpa, located near the southern gate of the site and recovered a relic casket.

Again, after a lapse of about six decades, the site was taken up for excavation by R. Subrahmanyam²¹ (1958-59) who unearthed five relic caskets, from the southern side of the *Mahāchaitya*, besides other cultural remnants, like sherds of N.B.P. ware, rouletted ware and a bronze icon belonging to Vajrayāna phase. He also framed the chronology for the site as ranging between 3rd century B.C.and 9th century A.D. The occurrence of stone and bronze icons of Maitreya, Manjuśri, Lokeśvara, Vajrapāṇi, Heruka etc. of Vajrayāna faith clearly attest the gradual transformation of Mahāyāna Buddhism at Amaravati into its final Tantric Vajrayāna form.

Subsequently, excavations were conducted by I.K. Sarma²² (1973-74) at this site, with a view to study the cultural sequence of the habitation, and also to arrive at the relative chronology of the Mahāchaitya. In the process, he identified five distinct cultural periods. They are Period-I (4th-3rd century B.C.) charaterised by N.B.P. ware, black and red ware, and fragments of inscribed pot sherds in Brahmi characters reading 'Thisapala' and Masala' besides iron pieces, a fragment of Asõkan pillar edict etc. In Period - II (2nd century B.C.- 1st century A.D.) also continued the same wares i.e. N.B.P. and black and red ware, along with punch marked coins. The bricks used in the construction of the gateway measure 47 x 30 x 9 cms. and 42 x 21 x 9 cms. The sculptured panels encountered in this period closely resembled those of Barhut of the post Asokan period. Period.III (1st-2nd century A.D.) is represented by rouletted, kaolin, polished black, polished red ware and typical Sātavāhana coins in lead, potin, copper etc. Period-IV (3rd-6th century A.D.) is characterised by prolific occurrence of Ikshvāku and Vishnukundin coins. Period-V (6th-11th century A.D.) is represented by the occurrence of images of Vajrayāna, clay sealings with Buddhist creed formulae and other medieval cultural material. Thus, on the whole, the excavations carried out at different times and the occurrence of label inscriptions at the site, inform us clearly that Dhānyakataka flourished as a prominent Buddhist centre since at least 4-3rd centuries B.C.to 14th century A.D.

An important inscription incised on one of the slabs of the Mahāchaitya, mentions the name of a King 'Rāja-kumariya Sammaliya' in 2nd century B.C.Brahmi characters (A.R.I.E., 1953-54 No.57, pp.3, 21 & 35). From this, it appears that the region of Amaravati was under the control of the local chieftains for some time before the appearance of the Sātavāhanas.

The Mahāchaitya is one of the largest and magnificent Buddhist edifices (49 mts. dia) in Andhra Pradesh, comprising a brick built circular vedika or drum with rectangular ayaka paltforms (7.20 x 2.52 mts.) on the four cardinal directions. It seems that five octagonal ayaka pillars were planted on each of the platforms, to signify the Five Great events from the life of the Master. The drum and dome were veneered on the exterior with sculptured slabs. The original Mahāchaitya was perhaps a modest earthen mound, enlarged afterwards, during different periods decorated by limestone slabs and provided with railing and gateways. The renovation of rail at Amaravati, according to an inscription, was attended to by Ven. Buddharakshita.²³ Tārānātha of Tibet,²⁴ mentions that the renovation of the railing around the stūpa at Amaravati was taken up by the Āchārya Nāgārjuna (Manjuśrī Mūlatantra). The monastic complex of Amaravati, was identified with the Pūrvaśaila Sanghārāma as described by Hieun Tsang.25

CASKETS: During the year 1988-89, the Archaeological Survey of India planned to conserve and restore the monument, to its original shape. Initially, repairs to the drum and ayaka paltforms were taken up, as a result, a series of caskets were unearthed from the western ayaka platform (1990), the south-eastern corner of the northern ayaka platform, the eastern corner of the northern ayaka platform, and the eastern ayaka platform (1991).26 Caskets from the southern āyaka platform were encountered already in 1958-59.27 Thus the discovery of caskets from the four cardinal points of the Māhāchaitya, obviously confirms to the principles laid down in the texts, regarding the method of enshrining the relics on the four cardinal points (Pema Dorjee, stupa and its Technology: A Tibeto-Buddhist perspective).

Earlier, the local Zamindar, found a stone relic casket²⁸ and later on, another relic casket was unearthed while exposing a small stupa near the southern gate, by Alexander Rea.²⁹ Subsequently, a series of caskets came to light from the *āyaka* platforms of the Mahāchaitya at different levels (Fig.II). Thus altogether a total of 10 caskets of varying sizes and shapes, made of different materials were reported from the site. They are as follows:

No.1: Recovered from the Mahāchaitya by the local Zamindar, this is a stone box contained a crystal casket in which were found a small pearl and small leaves of gold (Fig.III)

No.2: It was discovered by A. Rea in the precincts of the Mahachatiya. It is a globular clay receptacle, coated with thick lime plaster and looks like a ball, which in turn, contained a gold reliquary (3 1/," high) resembling a Buddhist dagoba, with a prominent umbrella (chatra). The crudely ornamented gold reliquary consisted of the upper lid and the lower container. In the lower container were a small fragment of bone, ivory articles, a seal of lapis-lazuli incised with Brahmi characters and six small gold flowers (Pl.7).

No.3 to 7 (SOUTHERN ĀYAKA PLATFORM): Excavations on the southern side of the platform yielded five crystal caskets from the slots of the Urdhva-pata, of the Ayaka railing. Of the five, one is cylindrical in shape, while the remaining four resemble a stūpa. One of the inscriptional slabs discovered near the ayaka platform, datable to 2nd century A.D. refers to the renovation work (navakamma) while another mentions the installation of the chaitya-kambha with dhātu, on the southern side of the stūpa. (Sri Dhānyakataka chaitya jina dhātu dharibhuve). Each casket contained a relic inside, along with other objects like gold flowers, pearls, coral beads etc (Pl.8A&B). This raises a question whether the original relics of the Master were consecrated or reconsecrated in the stūpa during the 2nd century A.D.

No.8 (WESTERN ĀYAKA PLATFORM): The foundation trench, at a depth of 35 cms. below the pradakshināpatha near the western āyaka platform yielded a small crystal casket, embedded in a miniature red ware pot and covered with a lid (Fig.IV). It resembles a stūpa in shape and consisted of two parts. The lower part is a circular container. The upper lid looks like the dome of a stūpa, topped by a square hārmika and a flattish Finial. The casket contained twelve irregular short cylindrical beads of shell, two cylindrical beads, a pendant of faceted rock crystal, and another cylindrical pendant made of bone, one hexagonal and two flat rectangular beads of fine blue beryl (Pl.9).

No.9 (EASTERN ĀYAKA PLATFORM): There was a limestone casing slab (4.20 X 1.70 X

0.32 mts.) on the eastern *āyaka* platform, with a circular slot covered by a stone lid. Inside the slot was a sturdy and heavy crystal casket divided into (42 cms.) two parts. The lower i.e. base was sealed by a solid crystal piece. The lower part looks like an elongated stupa and contained eight tiny beads of pearl, one double spacer bead of pearl and one unfinished spacer bead of crystal (Pl. 10).

No. 10 (NORTHERN AYAKA PLATFORM): Near the northern ayaka platform, exactly towards the south-eastern corner, at a depth of 80 cms., were found fragments of an ivory casket, devoid of receptacle (Pl.11). The shape of the casket, after its reconstruction, closely resembled the one found at Piprahwa.

An examination of the above relic caskets reveals that all were found within the precincts of the Mahāchaitya. While the five caskets i.e. those found on the south were unearthed from the āyaka platform and the one on the eastern side was found a little away from the ayaka casing slab. The casket on the western side was placed inside a miniature pot. The caskets on the west and north, were deposited below the pradakshinapatha level.

The discovery of the caskets from the four āyaka platforms of the Mahāchaitya at various levels, clearly indicates that they were consecrated, probably during the enlargement or renovation of the Mahāchaitya, at different periods i.e. between 2nd century B.C. and 2nd century A.D. This is supported by tradition also which records that one Mahādëva Bhikkhu, a missionary sent by Asõka,30 might have carried the relics of the Master and visited Mahishamandala and probably instigated the ruling prince of Dhānayakataka to erect a Mahāchaitya over the original relics of the Buddha. The above evidence is corroborated by the discovery of relic caskets, containing bone relics of the Master on the southern side of the Mahāchaitya, which fact is also confirmed by an inscription in 2nd century A.D. characters, engraved on a chaitya kambha, discovered on the southern side of the ayaka platform.31 From this, it appears that the original deposition of the relics of the Master was not recorded during 2nd century B.C.at the time of consecration in the Mahāchaitya, whereas, fortunately, this fact has been recorded in 2nd century A.D. probably at the time of reconsecration of the relics in the peripheral areas of the ayaka platforms of the Mahachaitya, during renovation. The Manjusri Mūlakalpa also alludes that the stūpa at Dhānyakataka enshrines the relics of the Jina or Buddha (Sri Dhanyakataka Chaitya jina dhātudharibhuvë as mentioned on āyaka pillar).32

BAVIKONDA

It lies at a distance of 16 kms. away from Visakhapatnam town, along the beach road, leading to Bhemunipatnam. Excavations (1982-87) on the hill top brought to light an extensive Buddhist establishment consisting of a Mahāchaitya, embedded with relic caskets, large Vihāra complex, a number of votive stūpas, a stone pillared congregation hall, rectangular halls, a refectory etc(Fig.V). In association with these structures were recovered, a Sātavāhana lead coin, three Roman silver coins, fragments of Brahmi label inscriprions, Buddhapāda slabs decorated with ashṭamaṅgala symbols and other early historic cultural milieu, datable from 3rd century B.C.to 3rd century A.D.³³

The Mahāchaitya at Bavikonda is an imposing structure, erected on the northern side of the Vihāra complex. It has four entrance ways (2 mts. X 4.30 mts.) on the four cardinal points and provided with a lower pradakshiṇāpatha, (3 mts. wide), a circular drum with āyaka platforms, an upper pradakshiṇāpatha (1.50 mts.) and a hemispherical anḍa. Half moon steps in brick were provided at the entrance ways, leading to the lower pradakshiṇāpatha. Connecting these entrances, was raised an outer railing in brick (0.05 mt. high), presently seen in five courses. The floor space of the entranceways and the pradakshiṇāpathas was made up with lime concrete, with a smooth finish. The drum is reached by a flight of steps, attached to the brick āyaka platforms. The brick walls of the structures were plastered with lime.

Buddhapāda slabs, exquisitely carved with ashṭamaṅgala symbols, were found only on the southern and nothern āyaka platforms. The extant dome was raised to a height of 2.25 mts. containing 12 courses of bricks and measuring a dia of 16.50 mts. The presence of fragments of a stone chhatra indicate the existence of a chhatravali over the hārmika. The hollow space inside the dome was filled with rubble and red earth. The sizes of the bricks used in the construction of the chaitya are 57 X 27 X 7 cms. and 50 X 25 X 7 cms.

CASKETS: While attending to the conservation work of the Mahāchaitya, five receptacles containing silver and gold caskets were recorved from the inner brick course of the anda, at diagonal points, exactly facing the āyaka platforms (Fig.VI)³⁴. On the southern side, a khondalite stone receptacle, resembling a stūpa was noticed, containing clay,

silver and gold caskets, placed one within the other respectively. Gold and precious stone objects were kept inside the gold casket. Further, an earthen urn of medium size, was found below the stone receptacle, which contained ashy deposit, burnt charcoal and corporeal remains, probably of the Master, along with silver and gold caskets and a number of precious beads. Its occurrence on the southern side is of special significance, for, the southern quarter represents the abode of Yama, the Lord of Death. Except for the stone receptacle, all the remaining four were clay receptacles, placed in red ware urns, similar to the one containing bone and ashes. Each clay receptacle, resembles on the exterior, a coconut shell or hemispherical in shape, provided with a knobbed lid and decorated with incised concentric grooves. The silver and gold caskets were profusely decorated with incised swastikas and lotusses alteranately. The gold caskets kept inside the silver ones contain minute beads of torquois, pearls and corals.

No.1 (EASTERN SIDE): This terracotta reseptacle contains silver and gold caskets. They also look like a stupa in shape. The gold casket divided into two parts contains four beads, one torquois and three pearls (Pl.12).

No.2 (WESTERN SIDE): Like the above, the outer terracotta receptacle contains silver and gold caskets, in turn contain one brownish coral bead, one torquois bead and four small perforated pearls. The lids of these caskets are decorated with lotus and swastika designs, with a prominent knob at the top (Pl.13).

No.3 (NORTHERN SIDE): This is a terracotta receptacle, containing a silver casket, found in mutilated state. The latter contained another casket. The lid of the former is decorated with swastika and lotus medallions, separated by vertical spokes, connecting the upper and lower circles, at the rim level. The gold casket is comparatively bigger (2.5 cms. dia) and resembles a stupa. This is in two parts. The lower half is plain, whereas the upper lid is decorated with swastika and lotus designs, for each alternately, separated by lines. The lid is decorated with two concentric circles and connected by spokes and a prominent knob. Inside are found one green torquois and coral bead (Pl 14).

No.4&5 (SOUTHERN SIDE): A khondalite stone casket (No.4) resembling a stūpa (36 cms. height and 24 cms. in dia) was found in two parts, i.e. the lower container and the upper lid. The lower part represents the drum (anda) and at its base are two applique projections separated by a prominent groove in the center. The lower projection

represents the outer railing, while the upper projection represents, the lower pradakshin a patha. The flat top portion of the drum represents the upper pradakshināpatha. The hollow (15 cms. dia X 12.5 cms. deep) portion of the lower container was meant for keeping the clay receptacle (Pl.15).

The upper i.e. lid part represents the hemispherical anda, with a square harmika 6.5 cms. On the facade of the harmika, two faint Brahmi letters reading POYA are found and they are similar to the one found at Thotlakonda, which reads as "POYADHI" in early Brahmi characters, datable to 3rd-2nd centuries B.C. The word "PÕYA" mentioned here might refer to one who gained knowledge of the 'Põyasutta'. Above the harmika is a conical knob which represents the base of the chhatra. Inside the lower i.e. the container, are a clay receptacle, silver and gold caskets, one within the other. The red ware clay receptacle looks like a $st\bar{u}pa$ (10 cms. high and 10.75 cms. dia) divided into two halves. The lower half has a slightly sagger base with an incurved featureless thick rim, meant to fix the upper lid. The lids of the metal caskets are decorated with lotus and swastika designs. The gold casket also is similar to the others, in shape and size. But the decoration of swastika and lotus are separated by spokes. It has a pair of incised concentric circles with a projected knob at the top. Inside the gold casket, there is a small green torquois bead.

URN: It is medium sized earthen pot (20 X 23 cms.) with a conical lid, similar to the other clay receptacles in its shape (Pl.16). It contained a lump of ash, burnt charcoal and a bone piece, along with silver and gold caskets (Pl. 17) The gold casket in the urn is more or less of the same size, like the others, on east and west. But, the upper portion of the lid is engraved with an embossed wheel, with a prominent knob at the top. The design is very conspicuous. Inside it are a thin minute gold piece and twenty nine beads, which include two green torquois, five light brown coral beads, four silver beads, eight medium sized and thirty minute small beads. Altogether there are fiftyone precious beads, placed in the gold casket (Pl.18).

It is interesting to point out that, below the corporeal remains in the urn, a net probably, weaved of silken cloth was placed to serve as base. This indeed is not only rare, but also, a unique phenomenon to be noticed unlike as in the case of other Buddhist sites which yielded relic caskets. This method of depositing the corporeal remains seems

to suggest the Supreme Holiness and high Sanctity attached to them, which obviously strengthens the view that they belonged to the Great Master.

The northern silver casket and the casket in the urn on the south are bigger in size. All the gold and silver caskets were made of thin sheet. The decorations over the gold and silver caskets appear to have been made with the help of wooden hammers and small chisels, by the gold-smiths of the periods. The meticulous care taken by the Swarnakāras in depicting the symbols through dots on a thin sheet of gold, obviously speaks for their delicate artistic skill. The auspicious symbols viz., chakra, swastika and lotus on the caskets and ashtamangala symbols on the Buddhapādas confirm to the orthodox nature of the Theravada school which existed at this site.

Till recently, it is believed that the relic caskets were embedded only in the center of the stūpa. But the excavations at Salihundam and Amaravati revealed that the relic caskets could be enshrined even along the periphery of the drum or at the ayaka platforms. The relic caskets at Salihundam Phase II were recovered from the periphery of the stupa, whereas at Amaravati, the relic caskets were recovered from the ayaka platforms at various levels.

The occurrence of principal relic casket i.e. urn with corporeal remains of the Master, acquires greater distinction and celebrity. The positioning of the Buddhapādas, intentionally, on the southern and northern ayaka platforms, outside the dome portion in the same alignment as the caskets, deposited in the inner course of the brick rim of the anda, is worth noticing, for, it is the first of its kind to be reported from a stupa in Andhra. The worship of Buddhapādas on a separate platform has been observed at Thotlakonda, a nearby site of Bavikonda. Normally, the occurrence of Buddhapādas on the ayaka platforms or on any part of the stupa obviously suggests that the stupa was built exclusively for dedicatory purpose. But the discovery of the corporeal remains on the south and the arrangement of the Buddhapādas on the āyaka plarforms clearly informs that the deposited corporeal remains belonged to the Master only. This gains support from the fact, in the neighbouring district of Srikakulam. lies a place called Dantapuram, identified with Dantavaktrunikõta, where, according to Daladavamsa the tooth relic of the Lord Buddha was worshipped and a stūpa built over it.

If any credence could be attached to the story narrated in the Pali work (310 A.D.), i.e. Daladavamsa, regarding the arrival and worship of the tooth relic of the Lord Buddha at Dantapuram identified with Dantavaktrunikõta of Dantapuram, a contiguous site to Bavikonda, then there is no surprise in accepting the above hypothesis. It can be assumed that certain portions of the relics of the Master were also distributed, probably after the great distribution of the relics, among the kings of the east-coast region of Andhradësa in which lies the central part of Kalinga, in ancient times, which played an important role politically and religiously.

Probably due to this importance, sprang a cluster of Buddhist sites, in and around the region, such as Thotlakonda, Pavurallakonda, Sankaram, Dharapalem, Gopalapatnam, Erravaram, Amalapuram etc. It is also interesting to note that a row of hillocks around the Buddhist settlements of Bavikonda, Thotlakonda and Pavurallakonda, are popularly known as Risi kondalu (hills of monks). Another important fact that deserves notice is that the villagers who reside presently at the foot of the hillocks of Bavikonda and Thotlakonda, bear the surname Buddhala, which seems to suggest that the impact of these Buddhist settlements was so deep which it penetrated into the lives of the masses at large.35

Description & Contents of the Caskets Found at Bavikonda.

				Measurement of the Caskets			
S. No.	Direc tions	Description & Contents	No. of Beads	Weight gms.	Diameter cms	Height cms.	
1.	East	Clay receptacle (Mutilated lid)			11.0	6.0	
		One Silver Casket (Bottom portion mutilated)		2.760	2.0	2.8	
		One Gold Casket		0.9520			
		Green Torquois	One		1.3	2.0	
		Pearls	Three	0.0814			

2.	West	Clay receptacle One Silver Casket (Mutilated)		2.930	10.7	10.0
		One Gold Casket Coral	One	1.062	1.3	2.1
		Torquois	One			
_	•	Small perforated pearls	Four	0.293		
3.	North	Clay receptacle with			11.0	11.0
		broken lid				
		One Silver Casket				
		(damaged) One Gold Casket		1.125	1.7	2.5
		Torquois bead	One	1.165	4. 7	٠.٠
		Light brown coral bead	One	0.271		
4.	South				24.0	26.0
		parts				
		Urn			10.8	10.5
		One Silver Casket				
		(damaged)				
		One Gold Casket		1.124	2.0	1.3
_		Green Torquois	One	0.014		
5.	South	Urn			20.0	23.0
		One Silver Casket (Highly corroded & Mutilated)		7.470	4.0	1.7
		One Gold Casket		1.032	2.0	1.5
		Fragment of a bone		1.052	2.0	1
		(triangular shaped bone				
		piece measures 3.4 cms.				
		length, 2.6 cms. width				
		at flat end & 0.9 cm				
		thickness)				
		Beads:				
		Green Torquois	2 Nos.			
		Light Brown Corals	5 Nos.			
		Gold Pieces (Small)	2 Nos.			
		Silver (Small)	4 Nos.			
		Silver (medium)	8 Nos.			
		Silver (minute) TOTAL	30 Nos. 51 Nos.			
		TOIUT	31 MO2.			

BHATTIPROLU

It is a small village situated in Repalle taluq of Guntur district, about 50 kms. from Guntur town. Buses ply regularly to reach this village. It has a railway station also on Guntur-Repalle line. The famous Buddhist $st\bar{u}pa$ here, is considered as one of the earliest $st\bar{u}pas$ of Andhra Pradesh, nay, even South India, situated on the right bed of the canal of the river Krishna. There are also other mounds here, locally known as Pedda lanjja-dibba, Chinna lanjja-dibba and $Vikram\bar{a}rka$ $K\bar{o}ta$ -dibba.

The existence of the *stūpa* here was first reported by Mr. Boswell in 1870 (Fig.VII), later on referred to by Sir. Walter Elliot (1871) and Robert Sewell (1882).³⁶ Subsequently, Alexander Rea³⁷ (1892) conducted a partial excavation at *Pedda Lanjja-dibba* which yielded the constructional details of the *Mahāchaitya* and stone relic caskets. Later on, R.Subrahmanyam³⁸ (1969-70) excavated and brought to light the other details of the *stūpa* and a *Vihāra* complex, besides a stucco head of Buddha and other early historic cultural materials, datable from 3rd century B.C.to 4th century A.D.

The $st\bar{u}pa$ here is a wheel shaped soild structure, built of brick and comprising a dome (132 ft. dia) and a drum (148 ft. dia) with a 8 ft. high wide terrace and four $\bar{a}yaka$ projections on cardinal points. There is a processional path (8' 4" wide) with traces of outer railing. The drum was veneered on the exterior with oblong limestone slabs, alternating with pilasters. The size of bricks used in the construction of the $st\bar{u}pa$ measures 45 x 30 x 8 cms.

CASKETS: Altogether there are five relic caskets reported from the Mahāchaitya, at different times (Fig.VIII).

No.1: Mr. Bosewell (1870) in his report, stated that he found, at the time of demolition of the *Mahāstūpa*, a stone casket, containing a crystal phial with some beads, pearls, etc. It is not known where these were displayed.³⁹

No.2: Robert Sewell, during his operations on the top of the *Mahāchaitya* (40 ft. high), discovered a stone relic chamber, made of slabs dove-tailed into one another. Inside the chamber lay a clay bowl (*chatty*) with a receptacle made of soap stone. The latter contained a crystal phial. In it, were found a pearl, some ashes and few bits of gold leaf.⁴⁰

Unfortunately, both the receptacles were broken and thrown away, during their voyage to England and the remaining crystal phial or casket was presented to Dr.Burnell. The systematic excavations conducted by Alexander Rea resulted in the discovery of three important inscribed stone relic caskets (Nos. 3,4 & 5) of a different variety.

No.3: After the removal of bricks upto a depth of 14'6" from the top of the Mahāchaitya, an irregular black stone granite receptacle, (2' 11" X 2' 6") embedded in the brick work, was found. 41 Each receptacle contained two parts i.e. lower and upper, The inner sides of both the upper and lower stones of the receptacles were polished. The lower receptacles had a rectangular relic chamber, engraved with an inscription in two lines around its rim (Fig.IX). They read as follows.

- "KURAPITUNÕ CHA KURAMA(T)LU CHA KURASA SIVA (SA) MAJUSAM- PANATI (a) PHALIGASHAMUGAM CHA BUDHASARIRANAM NIKHETU", "BANAVAPUTASA KURASA SAPITUKASA MAJUSA".
 - "By the father of Kura, the mother of Kura, Kura (Himself) and Siva (Siva), (has been orderd) the preparation of a casket and (has been given) a box of crystal in order to deposit some relics of Buddha (Buddha)."
 - "By Kura, the son of Banava, associated with his father (has been given), the casket."
- (b) "UTARO PIGHAPUTO KANITHO"

"Utara (Uttare), the youngest son of Pigaha (Vigraha)".

The relic chamber of the receptacle contained a globular stone casket. Two small semi-spherical vessels were placed on the western side and a crystal prism, gold flowers etc., on the eastern side of the casket. The earth inside the relic chamber of the stone receptacle contained bits of copper, a copper ring, a small bead, two double pearls, two small semi-spherical brown metal cups with gold beads studded at the apex and bottom, with two thin gold sheets depicting trisula (Nandipada or triratna) symbols, a single gold bead, four flowers with eight petals, double edged gold bead, seven triangular gold pieces, a hexagonal crystal spacer bead with label inscription on each side etc., (Fig.X).

The inscription on the spacer bead read as "MATUGAMASA (NAM) DAPURAHI, SUVANAMAHA, SAMANUDESANAM CHA, GILANAKERASA AYASAKA, (SA) THIYA, GOHIYA A-GA DANAM" An A-ga, — gift by the women from Nandapura (,) and by the Sramanas from Suvanamaha, in the Ayasakasathi gosthi of Gilanakera(?). (Fig. XI)

The globular casket (H. 4½" X 4½" dia) contained a cylindrical crystal phial (dia,2 ½ X 1 ¼"H.) with moulded sides and flat top and bottom. The latter had a flat bone fragment (1½" broad). In the space in between the crystal phial and the bottom of the globular stone casket, were eight small beads, nine small flowers of various sizes, six hollow gold beads, four small copper flowers, one blue coloured amethyst bead, ninteen small pearl beads etc. Twenty four silver punch marked coins arranged in swastika shape were found at the bottom of the stone casket (Fig.X). The coins on the obverse show symbols such as śrīpādas, triśūlas, lotus flowers and other emblems and they are plain on the reverse.

No.4: Further diggings in the central portion revealed, at about 17' depth from the top and on the northern side of the central post, another stone receptacle similar to the above.⁴² It also consisted of the upper lid (2.3" X 2" X 10") and a lower relic container (1.8" X 1.4" X 12"). On the innere wall of the lower relic container around the socket, is an inscription in ninteen lines (Fig.XII). The inscribed letters were smeared with white lime, perhaps to protect from damage and to enable reading the script, which perhaps helped in preserving the inscription as such.

The legend on the casket reads as: "GOTRI, HIRANAVAGHAVA? V(U)GALAKO K(A)LAHO, VISAKO THORASISI, SAMANO ODALO, APAKASHAMUDO, ANUGA(H)O KURO, SATUGHO POTAKO (P)OTO ALINAKA, V(A)RUNO PIGA(LA)KO KOSHAKO, SUTO PAPO KABHERAKH(O) (GA)(C)KO, SAMANA(D)ASHO BHARADO, ODALO THORATISO TISO, GILANO JAMBHO, PUDARA (?) (B)UBO, GALAVATA...(?) JANAKO, GOSALAKANAM KURO, UPOSHATHAPUTO UTARO, KARAHAPUTO".

"The Committee (consists of): Hiranavaghava (Hiranyavyaghrapad), Vugalaka (Udgaraka), Kalaha, Visaka (Visvaka), Thorasisi (Sthaulasirshi), Samana (Sramana), Odala, Apaka, Shamuda (Samudra), Anugaha (Anughaha), Kura, Satugha (Satrughna), Potaka, Pota, Alinaka (Alinaka) VAruna, Pigalaka (Pingalaka), Koshaka (Kausika?), Suta, Papa, (Kabherakha?), (Kuberaka?) Galeka(?), Samana (d)asha (Sramanadasa), Bharada (Bharata)

(L.12), Odala (Audara?) Thoratisa (Sthaulatishya), Tisa (Tishya), Gilana (Giana), Jambha, ..Buba ...Janka, of the Gosalakas (Gosalaka), Kura, the son of Uposhatha, (Uposatha), Utara (Uttara), the son of Karaha."

"SAMA(NADA) SHA(TO HITA) . A .. BUDDASHA SARIRANI MAHIYANUKAMMA ..."

"Nothing can be said regarding the contents of this inscription, except that it mentions the relics of Buddha."

"GOTHISAMANO KUBO, HIRANAKARAGAMANIPUTO BUBO."

"Kuba (Kumbha), the ascetic of the Committee(?)'. 'Buba, the son of the villageheadmen Hiranakara (Hiranyakara)".

"SHAGA(TH)INIGAMAPUTANAM RAJAPAMUKHA (I) SHA : I(SHA) PUTO KHUBIRAKO RAJA SHIHAGOTHIYA PAMUKHO (I) TESHAM AMUAM. MAJ (U)S(AM) PHALIGASHAMUGO CHA PASANASHAMUGO CHA(II)".

"By the sons of the Shagathi nigama (guild or town), chief among whom in the king-king Khubiraka (Kuberaka), the son of Sha-i, is the chief of the Shiha (Simha) Committee-by these (has been given) another casket, a box of crystal and a box of stone."

"SANNO CHAGHA(NA) PUTO UTARU ARA MUTARA"

"Samana (Sramana), the son of Chaghana (Jagbanya-?) Utara tutturu".

The relic chamber of the receptacle contained loose earth and a crystal phial 15/2 dia X 2 34" height) moulded in the shape of a stupa in two separate parts. The earth in the relic chamber consisted of one hundred and sixty four gold flowers, having six, eight and nine petals. Some of the petals of the flowers are dotted. Further, there were two circular gold flowers, with two armed figure made on thin sheet, two gold trinacriss, two gold stems and flowers, six hollow gold beads, a coral bit, a small coiled gold ring, two pearls, a garnet, an oval crystal bead, six coral beads, flat oval blue crystal bead, two flat-six sided beryl drops, a number of copper leaves, flowers and stems, a silver metal strip, probably inscribed with Brahmi letters, a miniature umbrella etc. (Fig. XIV)

No.5: At a depth of 18 ft. from the top, on the eastern side of the shaft, was found a stone receptacle more or less circular in shape. 43 It also contained the upper lid (2'3" X 10") and lower container (2'.5" X 2'.3" X 11"). The inner side of the upper lid had a circular polished surface with an inscription in eight lines, whereas the lower container had a socket or a relic chamber with an inscription in one line around it (Fig.XIII). All the letters were whitened (Pl.19).

The legend on the upper lid of the stone casket reads: "NEGAMA, VACHHO CHAGHO, JETO JAMBHO TISO RETO ACHINO SHABHIKO, AKHAGHO KELO MAHO, SETO CHHADIKO OKHABULO, SONATORO, SAMANO, SAMANADASHO, SAMAKO, KAMUKO CHITAKO (II)."

"The members of the guild are: Vachha (Vatsa), Chagna (Changa?), Jeta (Jayanta), Jambha, Tisa (Tishya), Reta (Raivata) Achina (Achirya?), Shabhika (Sabhika), Akhagha (Akshaghna), Kela, Kesa (Kesa), Maha (Magha), Seta (Svaitra?), Chhadika (Chhandika?), Okhabula, Sonature (Swarnottara), Samana (Sramana), Samanadasha (Sramanadasa), Samaka (Syamaka), Kamuka Chitaka (Chitraka)."

The legend on the lower container reads:" ARAHADINANAM GOTHIYA MAJUSA GHA SHA(M)UGO CHA(I) TENA KAMA YENA KUBIRAKO RAJA AM(K)I (II)."

"By the Committee of the venerable Arahadine (Arhaddatta), was given a casket and a box. The work (is) by him by whom king Kubiraka (Kubëraka) caused the carving to be done."

In the relic chamber of the receptacle, was a dislodged crystal phial with a $(2^{1})_{a}$ " X 3" high) miniature relic casket in it made of a bery1, (1.06 cms. X 1.16 X 2 cms.). The latter contained three cylindrical holes in which splinters of bone were kept and closed by a small white crystal stopper with a hexagonal knob and a gold leaf fixed on to it. To close the neck of the casket with the stopper firmly, a thin gold piece was used and one more gold piece was placed at the bottom of the casket. There were two amethyst beads, a yellow crystal bead, a flat white crystal, six pearls, a yellow hexagonal crystal drop, thirty two seed pearls, two armed figure in gold, a gold quatre-foil, a piece of white silicate, iron cinder, a few bits of copper, thirty gold flowers, etc. (Fig.XIV).

The occurrence of these caskets in the centre of the Mahāchaitya suggests that these caskets were deposited systematically, in the center of the dome, which appears to be an early method of consecration of the relic caskets in the stupas. All the inscriptions engraved on the stone caskets were whitened as in the case of other Mauryan edicts

found at Erragudi and Rajulamandagiri in Andhra Pradesh. The placing of silver punch marked coins, swastika in shape, seems to indicate an important religious practice, reported for the first time in Buddhist context in Andhra Pradesh. Similar plans i.e. swastika were observed in the core of the brick stūpas, though at a later period as at Nagarjunakonda and Peddaganjam in Andhra Pradesh. In earlier times, this plan was noticed in the Nirvana stūpa of Kusinagar. Thus on palaeography, these casket inscriptions are dated to pre- Asokan times.44

The paraphernelia deposited along with the original relics of the Lord Buddha in the inscribed stone receptacles in the Mahāchaitya suggests that the festival of consecration of the relic caskets was performed with much adoration and pomp, to which thronged members of various guilds and monks from different regions, under the leadership of Rāja Kubëraka, who ruled the tract in coastal Āndhra with probably Bhattiprolu as its capital in pre- Asokan times.

GHANTASALA

It was a prosperous and sea-borne trade centre in ancient Mājerika vishaya, situated near Machilipatnam, a port town in Krishna district. The existence of the Buddhist settlement and habitation mound here, was first reported by Boswell (1870-71). There are regular buses plying from Machilipatnam which is approximately about 20 kms. away and it is the nearest railway station. Ptolemy calls it as 'Kantakossyla', an emporium in the region of Maisolia.45

In and around the village, lie several mounds locally known as Yennammapādu, Ghotka-mālapalli, Kotadibba and Lanjadibba, which yielded fragments of mandapa pillars, inscribed slabs, āyaka pillars, brick bats, early historic pottery, images of Buddha, Roman and Sātavāhana coins etc.46 Recently a hoard of Kshātrapa coins was also reported from this place, now kept in the State Museum, Hyderabad.

The site being in close proximity to the sea on the east-cost of Andhradësa towards south, attracted many people from farther regions. It enjoyed close cultural contacts with many neighbouring Buddhist centres. The people of this place made munificent donations to the stūpa at Amaravati.47 Upāsika Bödhisiri of Nagarjunakonda, built a stone Mandapa at the eastern gate of the Mahāchaitya at Kantakasāla.48 It is interesting to note that the wife of a Mahānāvika⁴⁹ (Master Mariner) donated an āyaka-stambha to the Mahāchaitya at Ghaṅṭasāla.

The mound called Lanjadibba (112 mts. dia and 23ft,high) was first excavated by A. Rea. Which brought to light the structural remnants of a Mahāchaitya. The plan of the stūpa is very interesting, as it resembles in plan to those of Bhattiprolu and Nagarjunakonda. The dome of the stūpa was constructed on wheel pattern, encompassing the central square hub. These two structural components of the stūpa were connected by spokes and the gaps in between so formed were filled with black earth. There is a terrace around the dome with wide space (5' 7" X 3' 6" height) which probably served as inner pradakshiṇāpatha. The terrace or drum had four āyaka projections (17' 6" X 5'). There is an outer pradakshiṇāpatha too (Fig.XV). The occurrence of fragments of limestone panels, such as coping stones and railing pillars, decorated with motifs such as garland-bearing dwarfs, around the stūpa, suggests that it was well-fenced with railing and embellished, like the stūpa at Amaravati. Epigraphical, numismatic and ceramic evidences provide a date ranging from 1st-2nd century A.D. to 3rd-4th century A.D. for the existence of Buddhism at the site.

CASKETS: As in the Bhattiprolu stūpa, here also, was dug a central square pit on the top, which extended upto the bottom of the stūpa, with spacious and widened squares. From it were reported two caskets at different levels in the centre of the stūpa.⁵¹

No.1: At a depth of 3 ft. in the centre, was encountered a square hole (9") filled with earth. While removing the earth filling from it, few broken pieces of a red ware bowl (chatti), a square lead coin with illegible symbol on one side, a pentagonal blue coloured bead, a crystal bead and three small beads were found.

No.2: After the removal of earth and the components of the Casket No.1, was noticed a red ware terracotta receptacle (chatti, dia. 4 ½" X 4 ½" ht.) with a knobbed lid. It contained another small glazed bowl (1 ¾" x 2 ¼") which looks like a stone casket. It contained fragments of bone or coral, a white hexagonal crystal bead, five small round beads, a flat shaped pearl bead, six small beads, two pieces of yellow crystal, one eight-petalled gold flower, a gold leaf and some bits of minerals, similar to those found in the caskets at Bhattiprolu. The small casket or chatti had a saggar base (Fig.XVI). In order to keep this in a firm position in the terracotta receptacle, the sides and bottom of the

casket were intentionally packed with compact earth, as it contained precious mortal relics of the Master.

GUDIVADA

Presently, it is a moderate town and a taluq headquarters in Krishna district. It can be reached by train running between Vijayawada and Bhimavaram. There are also regular buses from Vijayawada.

The existence of the Buddhist settlement, locally known as Lanja dibba, was first reported by Boswell (1870)⁵² and later on mentioned by Sewell and Burgess. A. Rea⁵³ excavated the site and exposed a solid brick built stūpa, similar to the one at Bhattiprolu, in its constructional pattern. No clear structural details were drawn since the site was disturbed considerably.54

CASKETS: Earler, Burgess noticed four stone relic chambers made up of slabs in the four corners of the stūpa, but they were found to be empty.55 In 1840, Walter Elliot, referred to certain relic caskets available in Madras Museum which were said to have been brought from this place. They are four stone vases, each containing a crystal reliquary, resembling the crystal caskets reported from Bhattiprolu. The lids of these caskets had a prominent knob. These caskets were seen by Sir Henry Montgomery in 1843.56 Other details are not recorded. They are now preserved in the Govt. Museum, Madras.

GUMMADIDURRU

It is another small village, about 10 kms. away from Madhira railway station on Vijayawada-Hyderabad line. It lies about 1 km. north of Ramareddipalle and 9 kms. east of the famous Buddhist site Jaggayyapeta in Nandigama taluk of Krishna district.

Excavations (1926) brought to light an extensive Buddhist settlement, comprising a Mahāstūpa, votive stūpas, apsidal chaityagrihas and other secular and religious structures. The cultural milieu includes sculptured panels, beads, two lead coins of Andhra period, a casket, and early historic pottery. The discovery of an inscription datable to 2nd century A.D. engraved on a votive stūpa and one hundred and twenty seven inscribed clay tablets, belonging to the Buddhist creed in Nagari characters of late medieval period, clearly suggest a prolonged life for the site.⁵⁷ Some of the seals bear a longer legend stamped with a row of five stūpas on the top.

The plan and construction of the Mahāstūpa is quite interesting. It is 55 ft. in dia and stands to a height of 4 ft., with four ayaka projections (13 X 4 X 2 ft.). On plan, it appears to be wheel shaped. Its central part is in the form of a swastika, with a central square hold. The exterior of the drum wall of the stupa is embellished with sculptured slabs, like the Amaravati stūpa. The slabs are decorated with stūpa motifs alternating with pilasters. The flanking pillars are seen with flowers or dharmachakra motifs on the top and symbol of throne with foot-prints at the base. An inscription of 2nd century A.D., engraved on a drum slab, records the construction of the Mahāchaitya by a native of Dakshinapatha. On the western ayaka platform is a standing Buddha image, with a dedicatory record of 7th century A.D. which mentions a monk by name Rāhula, who caused the consecration of the idol. The occurrence of label inscriptions on the slabs in Brahmi and also in Nagari charaters and clay tablets inscribed with Buddhist creed formulae suggests that the Buddhist establishment here survived right from 1st-2nd century A.D. till medieval period, like the other Buddhist centres at Amaravati, Guntupalle and Salihundam. Interestingly, the discovery of the clay tablets bearing Buddhist creed formulae appaears to be a noteworthy feature in South-Indian Buddhist sites. The practice of incising clay tablets with formulae of Buddhist creed was prevalent in North Indian stūpas. At Paharput and Mainmati, thousands of tiny unburnt clay stūpas, encasing clay tablets have been reported from the stupas. The concept behind the insertions of dharnis inside the stupas is explained in an inscription found in Orissa, according to which, the person who constructs a chaitya with a deposit of dharani inside it is equal to be erection of one lakh Tathāgata Chaityas (E.I., XXVI, 1941-42, pp.171 ff). Several stūpas at Ratnagiri yielded terracotta plaques and stone slabs bearing dharanis (Debala Mitra, 1971, p.228). Similarly at Gilgit in Kashmir 1931 manuscripts, votive clay stūpas, tiny tablets inscribed with the Buddhist creed and plaques recovered from a stūpa (Debala Mitra, 1971, p.113). CASKETS: Inside the main stūpa, at a distance of 6 ft. from the northern wall of the central square, was found a damaged silver relic casket containing fifteen pieces of a gold necklace, kept in an earthen pot with buried face downwards at the southern end.

All the beads of the necklace are hollow and they seem to have been filled with shellac

(Pl.20). The metal casket also contained a bone fragment. For all intents and purposes, it was the original relic casket of the Mahāchaitya, which might have been deposited, away from the central part of the dome, on safety grounds and it might be a religious custom that prevailed during the early centuries (1st-2nd A.D.) of Christian era, as noticed at Amaravati and Salihundam.

GUNTUPALLE

It is a famous Buddhist settlement, known for its unique and exuberant rockcut architecture in the Eastern Deccan. It is situated near the village Jilakarragudem, about 10 kms. west of Kamavarapukota and 45 kms. north of Eluru Railway Station in West Godavari District. Locally it is known as Gundupalle. The site was first reported by Robert Sewell⁵⁹ in 1882, which was later excavated, partly by Alexander Rea,⁶⁰ who called it as 'Nāgalapalle'. Subsequently, A.H. Longhurst, 61 in 1916 brought to light few votive stūpas, circular chaitya grihas, Brahmi label inscriptions etc. Nearly, after five decades, scholars like M. Venkata Ramanayya,62 K. Raghava Charry, N.V. Ramanayya and R. Subrahmanyam⁶³ conducted thorough survey and exposed well-planned structures of the monastic complex.

The rock-cut caves here consist of simple rectangular halls, with cells in a row. The entrances were decorated with arched facades. The monastic establishment comprises of circular chaitya with a stūpa, brick stūpas, a circular brick chaitya, four pillared congregation hall, an apsidal Buddha chaitya, votive stūpas etc. Other cultural materials of the site include mandapa pillars, incised with inscriptions belonging to the time the king Sirisada of Mahā-Mëghavāhana dynasty, early historic pottery, bronze icons, Buddha images etc., all chronological ranging in date between 3rd-2nd century B.C.and 9th-10th centuries A.D.

K.R. Subrahmanian identified this monastic complex with the Buddhist monastery described by Hieun Tsang, in view of its situation in Vengila or Vengi country. I.K. Sarma⁶⁴ identifies this monastic complex with 'Mahānāgaparvata' mentioned in one of the Brahmi label inscriptions discovered at the site. The available cultural materials here, suggest that this complex continued upto 10th-11th century A.D. as a renowned

Buddhist centre in Vengi region, affiliated first to Mahāyana sect and afterwards to Vajrayāna.

CASKETS: Altogether four relic caskets were discovered here in three phases.

PHASE-I: No.1: Alexander Rea, during the year 1889, unearthed a stone casket, cylindrical in shape with moulded rim and base. It contained a copper vessel. A large white crystal hexagonal bead, a miniature gold alms bowl and tiny gold beads were kept in the vessel.

PHASE-II: No.1: In the year 1968-69, M.N. Prasad Rao65 discovered a copper casket embedded in the votive stūpa No.4. It contained silver and gold caskets, one within the other respectively. Beads of bone and crystal were found in the gold casket.

No.2: Two metallic discs, probably part of a casket, were recovered from votive stūpa no.3.

PHASE-III: No.1: Again in the year 1976-77,66 while clearing the debris near the stupa site, were recovered caskets made of copper, silver and gold, kept inside, one within the other. A votive terracotta stūpa and a bronze idol of Bõdhisattava Padmapāni (15.5 X 8.8 cms) were also recovered along with the caskets. The gold casket contained mortal relics. The figure of Padmapāņi was depicted in seated aspect i.e. Mahārāja Līlāsana posture, on a padma pitha (lotus pedestal). The prominent prabhamandala clearly suggests that it was meant for worship in one of the temples of the complex. There is a label inscription engraved on the pedestal in Deva Nagari characters, reading "HE-DHARMA HETU PRABHAVA". Palaeographically, the characters are datable to 9th-10th century A.D.

Thus the occurrence of caskets, along with an inscribed bronze image, suggests that the practice of consecrating relic caskets in the stūpas or underneath the images continued even upto the early medieval times.

JAGGAYYAPET

It is one among the many early Buddhist sites of Andhradësa, located on the left bank of the river Krishna. There are regular buses plying from Vijayawada. About 2 kms. to the east of the town, lies a mound, locally known as 'Dhanambodu' or 'Hill of Wealth', which was highly disturbed. It was first reported by Robert Sewell, later on excavated by J. Burgess. 67

In ancient times, its original name was Velagiri, which afterwards became Vedagiri and Elagiri, as can be seen from inscriptions found at the site. Later on, over this mound was raised a village known as Bëtavõlu. Subsequently, Rāja Venkatadri Naidu of Chintapalli, developed it into a town and named it as Jaggayyapeta, after his father.

Excavations brought to light a Mahāstūpa (31 1/2' dia) embellished with architectural and sculptural slabs, as at Amaravati and a processional path (101/2 ft. wide). The fallen fragments of the outer railing, near the pathway, suggest that it possessed a decorated stone railing. The occurrence of epigraphs, besides sculptural carving such as winged animals, capitals, pilasters and other early historic antiquities, provide a date ranging from 2nd century B.C.to 6th century A.D. for the site. The inscription datable to 3rd centuryA.D. found at the site records "BHAGAVATO BUDDHASA MAHA CHAITYA PUVADARA" and also as "BUDDHASA MAHĀ CHITYA PUVADARA ĀYAKA KHAMBHA". 68 The text recorded on the ayaka pillar is as follows:

TEXT:

- Siddham Rāno Mādharīputasa Ikhākunām Sirivīra Purisadatasa samvachhara 20 vasapakham 8 divasami 10 kammakaratho Nadature avesanisa Nakachamdasa putõ gāme Mahakamdurure avesani
- Sidhatho apano mātaram Nagilānīm puratokatunam gharanīmcha Samudānīm bālakām cha Mulasirīm
- bālikām cha Nāgabudhanikām cha budhanakāmtasa gharanīm cha Kanikam bālakācha Nāgasiri Ch mda
- siri bālikāmya Sidhathanikās evam natimitasambandhi vāgena sahagamo 4. Velagiriyam Bhagavatõ
- Budhasa Mahāchetiya puvadarõ āyakakamiba 5 savaniyutõ apanõ deyadhammam savastanamhi
- tasukhaya patithapita ti.

MEANING: "Success: on the 10th day of the 8th fortnight of the rainy season in the 20th year of king Mādharīputra ŚrīVīrapurusadatta of the Ikshvāku family, the artisan Siddhārtha, resident in the village of Mahākamdurūra, the son of artisan Nagāchandra, resident in the village Nadatura in Kammarāstra erected the five āyaka pillars near the eastern gate of the Mahācaitya of Bhagavan Buddha, as a meritorious gift (dëyadhamma) for the good and welfare of all living beings. He was associated with his mother Nagilani, and his wife Samudani and his son Mūlasri and his daughter Nākabudhanika and his brother Budhanika and his wife Kaṇika and their two sons, Nāga Siri and Chandrasiri and daughter Siddhārthanika and all his blood relations and friends."

In this epigraph, the stūpa was praised as 'Budhasa Mahāchëtiya' in 3rd century A.D. characters. It means that the stūpa gained popularity, even before Ikshvāku times since it already contained the relics of the Master. Actually the existence of the Mahāchaitya and monastic complex was attested by the discovery of epigraphs datable to 3rd-2nd B.C.at the site and the fact i.e. consecration of the relics of Lord Buddha was only recorded during Ikshvāku Period.

CASKETS: While clearing loose earth beneath the dome of the Mahāstūpa, a small fragment of the outer stone casket was noticed. No further details are available. The inscription mentions the stūpa as Mahāchaitya as it enshrined the relics of the Master. Probably due to large scale vandalism, these relic caskets were destroyed.

KOTTUR

The village Kottur lies on the left bank of the river Sarada near Elamanchili. It is about 52 kms. from Visakhapatnam town. The earliest reference to the village is found in the Allahabad pillar inscription of Samudragupta (4th century A.D.) wherein it was mentioned as Kotura (Girikottura). During this period the region was under the political control of the local king Svamidatta. In the slopes of the Panchadhara hills there is an early historic mound littered with brickbats and potsherds. Excavations, here, brought to light a stūpa and a Vihāra complex (1954-55 I.A.R.).

CASKETS: Recently, (The Hindu Daily, 12th September, 1997) while attending to the conservation of the *stūpa* by the A.S.I., Hyderabad Circle, chanced upon a stone receptacle made out of Khondalite stone, near the drum portion (Pl.21). It resembles the stone receptacles reported from Timmavaram and Bhattiprolu. In the outer container of the receptacle, was embedded a green colour soapstone reliquary, a small crystal phial, three

gold foils, 20 silver flowers and 98 beads. A cut chocolate red colour bead incised with a rampant lion is an important find in the deposition of the casket. A brahmi label inscription reading 'Thambhayya Dānam' is engraved on the soap stone reliquary datable to 2nd century B.C.on palaeographical grounds.

Here, the inscription on the reliquary perhaps indicate the name of a person who donated the casket for enshrinement of the holy relic in the stupa, like the Bhattiprolu relic caskets. In the crystal phial, were a fragment of bone and pearls, Next to the Bhattiprolu ones, this is the second inscribed stone relic casket reported from Andhra Pradesh. It appears that the typology and method followed in the arrangement of caskets one within the other reminds those found at Timmavaram and Bhattiprolu.

NAGARJUNAKONDA

The famous Buddhist centre, Nagarjunakonda is situated about 20 kms. from Macherla railway station in Guntur District. There are regular buses from Guntur town. The vast Buddhist establishment which flourished here lay in the Krishna river valley slathered by the Nallamalai hill range. It seems to have been so named after the great Buddhist Teacher Āchārya Nāgārjuna, the propounder of Madhyamika school of Philosophy and who spent his last days in a monastery on the hill Sriparvata. In the inscriptions it was called as Srī Parvata. There are no references to Nagarjunakonda, either in epigraphs or literature, till 16th century. A lithic record of the King Vīra Purushadatta of Ikshvāku dynasty called him as Śrīparvatādhipati. 69The hill 'Śrīparvata' was rightly identified by scholars with Nagarjuna-konda, as the valley and hills are perched with innumerable variety of monastic complexes. The capital city of Ikshvākus, was mentioned as 'Vijayapuri' in the epigraphs.70

The site was discovered first, accidentally, by Sri A.R.Sarasvati,71 Assistant in Epigraphy, Archaeological Survey of India, in March, 1926. Subsequently, Longhurst⁷² and Md. Hamid Quraishi73 (1927-31), conducted preliminary excavations and unearthed a number of Buddhist monasteries, limestone sculptures, epigraphs etc. Afterwards, T.N.Ramachandran⁷⁴ in 1938 exposed more remnants of Brahmanical and Buddhist monuments. During 1954-60, R.Subrahmanyam⁷⁵ conducted excavations on a large scale and brought to light the complete picture of the structural pattern of religious and secular

edifices built by the Ikshvāku rulers (3rd-4th century A.D.). Afterwards H.Sarkar 16 unearthed some more structures.

The occurrence of a good number of coins belonging to Gautamīputra Sātakarni, Vāsishtīputra Pulumāvi, Yajna Śrī Sātakarņi etc., and also an epigraph of the king Gautamiputra Vijaya Sātakarni,"dated in his 6th regnal year, clearly attest to the hold of the Sātavāhanas in the valley, well before the Ikshvākus. The valley came into prominence only after the victory and annexation of some parts of the valley from the Sātavāhanas by the king Vāsishthīputra Ehavula Chāntamūla and Vāsishthīputra Rudra Purushadatta. During this period, the kings, queens, lay-worshippers and a number of monks from different parts of the country and also from other distant lands like Ceylon contributed their mite for the development of the Buddhist establishments at Nagarjunakonda, which made the valley a great centre of Buddhist theology.

It is interesting to note that the monastic system here was well planned in accordance with different sects at different places in the valley (Fig.XVII). Each consisted of a Mahāstūpa, a stūpa chaitya, a Buddha chaitya with Vihāras built on trisāla or Chatussala pattern, with a pillared mandapa in the centre. Each monastery was named after a sect, such as Mahiśāsaka, Bahusrutīya, Apara mahāvinasëliya, Chaityaka etc. Interestingly enough, there was a Simhala Vihāra meant exculusively for the monks of Ceylon. Thus Nagarujnakonda of Vijayapuri become a prominent religious centre for Buddhist monks, within a short period of 100 years. The occurrence of number of lead coins of Sătavāhana kings and a terracotta coin mould in Chuladhammagiri vihāra, suggest that the monasteries possessed separate mints of their own 78.

During this period, it is interesting to find that the women folk were the major donors, who patronized Buddhism in the valley. Though the kings were basically staunch followers of Brāhmanical faith and built several shrines for Hindu Gods, their queens were responsible for the construction of Buddhist edifices and made liberal donations. The Upāsikas like Bodhi Siri and Chandra Siri, were mainly responsible for the construction of a number of monasteries at Nagarjunakonda, nurtured largely by traders and also business men who visited the place for commercial transactions, which is attested by the occurrence of a good number of epigraphs, coins and other evidences.

Excavations conducted at different times, brought to light a number of structures belonging to both Brahmanical and Buddhist faiths of 3rd-4th century A.D. They consist of stupas, apsidal shrines and vihāras, such as Dharani- vihāra, Kumāra Nandi vihāra, Mahisāsaka vihāra, and Bahusrutīya vihāra, besides, other structures like asvamēdha complex etc. The secular structures include the arena, bathing ghat, residential structures and also structures relating to defence and military.

The presence of a large number of monasteries and temples in the valley seems to suggests the existence of certain specialised artisan communities, engaged in carving sculptural panels and building religious edifices, who organized themselves into guilds as seen from the epigraphs of the site. These stone workers were called as Sëlāvaddhakis. The presence of damaru, bow and the arrow marks on the stone slabs and reliefs obviously indcate the existence of organized guilds with their institutional emblems.

Excavations also brought to light a number of carved limestone pillars, railings, casing slabs, sculptural slabs and epigraphs incised in Brahmi characters. The Jātaka stories like Hamsa, ghata Jātaka, Kalakapi Jataka, Sibi Jātaka, Mahā Ummagga Jātaka, Mara Jātaka, Sukra Jātaka, Māṅdhātu Jātaka, Mahāpaduma Jātaka, Sa si Jātaka, Viśśaṅtara Jātaka, Daśaratha Jātaka, Campeya Jātaka etc. were exquisitely carved. A close study of the sculptured panels reveals that the artists followed the texts like Buddha charita, Saundarānanda, Avadāna Sataka, Lalita Vistāra etc., in carving the narrative panels. Unlike the early stūpas of Āndhradësa and also of nothern India, the stūpas of Nagarjunakonda were built in wheel shape, with hub and spokes, resembling an umbrella on plan.

Thus, the above cultural evidences such as coins, epigraphs and structural edifices, provide the date i.e. 3rd-4th century A.D. for the vast monastic complexes of the valley. The recently discovered copper plates of Prithivi Śrī Mūla Rāja, issued from Kondavidu, belonging to 5th-6th century A.D. refer to a Navakammika, resident of Aparasaila vihāra, who was appointed for the renovation works of the Mahāvihāra at Gunapasapura, in East Godavari district. Scholars have already identified the Aparasaila vihāra mentioned in the inscriptions with Nagarjunakonda. From this, it becomes clear that the monastic complex at Nagarjunakonda continued to flourish upto 6th century A.D.

CASKETS: Excavations yielded a good number of relic caskets from different monastic complexes. The discovery of some of the caskets underneath stone images suggests a departure from the previous method (in the stūpas) of consecrating the holy relics. Interestingly, stupas were also raised for the ordinary monks or lay worshippers and also for animals. Some of the important caskets are as detailed below.

No.1: The Mahāchaitya was built on wheel pattern, comprising a drum (5' high, 120' dia) encircled by a brick wall (5' high) and providing enough space in between for processional path (13' wide). The drum had āyaka platforms (22' x 5') with āyaka pillars encircled by railing and gateways fenced around on the four cardinal sides. The simple and elaborate method of construction of the Mahāchaitya, stands as a perfect example of a plain and typical Āndhra stūpa. The bricks used in the construction measure 20" x 10" x 3".

Digging in one of the outer chambers of the Mahāchaitya (Fig.XVIII), on the northern side (Pl.22), yielded a broken earthen pot (Pl.23), filled with earth and mixed with few crystal beads and a silver receptacle, resembling a stupa (2 $\frac{1}{2}$, "high) in shape. The latter i.e. silver receptacle contained a small gold casket (3 1/4 " dia) containing a fragment of bone and few gold flowers, pearls, garnets etc. (Pl.24) A Prakrit inscription of princess Chantisiri found on a pillar datable to 3rd century A.D. mentions the consecration of the relic of Lord Buddha in the Mahāchaitya.84 It reads as follows:

TEXT:

- Siddham namõ Bhagavatõ Samma-sambu (dhā)sa dhātuvara-parighītasa Mahāchëtiye
- Mahāsenāpatisa mahātalavarasa Vasithīputasa Pukīyanām Mahākamdasirisa
- bhayā mahāsenāpatisa mahātalavarasa Vinhusirisa mātā mahātalavari apanõ
- bhayakulam parinămetu (na) atanõ ubhaya-lõka-hita-sukha-nivanathaya cha imam
- selakhambham patithapītam mahārājasa Siri-Virapurisadatasa samva 6 vā pa 6 diva 10.

MEANING: "Success: Adoration to the Lord, the Supreme Buddha absorbed by the best of elements. At the Mahāchëtiya, the Mahātalavari (who is) the wife of the Mahāsënāpati, the Mahātalavara Vāsitiputa Mahākamdasiri of (the family of) the Pūkiyas and (who is)

the mother of the Mahāsënāpati, the Mahātalavara Vinhusiri (Skt. Vishnuśri) with due regard to both the families to which she belongs and for the sake of her own welfare and happiness in both the worlds and Nirvana, has erected this stone pillar. In the 6th year of (the reign of) Mahārāja Siri-Vīra-purisadata, the 6th fortnight of the rainy season, the 10th day." It appears that the king received the relic of the Master and enshrined it in this Mahāchaitya. Presently the relic is now being worshipped in the Mulagandha Kūtivihāra at Saranath.85

No.2: Kottampalugubõdu Monastery No.2: It is a small votive stūpa, which yielded a stone relic casket (1'4" high) resembling in shape a miniature stūpa, with a conopy, fixed with a small iron rod. It contained a clay pot, glazed with pale green surface. Inside it was a copper casket (4" high). It enclosed a silver casket (2" high) which in turn possessed a small gold casket (1 $\frac{1}{3}$," high). In it, were found a fragment of bone, lotus and jasmine flowers, gold and a few decayed pearls and coral beads.86

No.2A: This stūpa yielded two dislodged caskets, one gold and the other silver, resembling a stupa in their shapes. There are amethyst and torquoise beads in the dome-shaped silver casket, and torquoise beads of pearl, bone, coral, lapis-lazuli and leaf shaped flowers in gold casket. A tiny bone relic was found within the gold casket.87

No.3: This stūpa enshrines a tiny piece of a bone relic, placed in a small gold casket, which in turn was kept in another gold receptacle and looked like a miniature stūpa. The latter was placed in a silver receptacle (3" dia) having a top handle. In it, were kept few gold leaves, pearls and coral beads. The silver casket in turn was placed in an earthen pot (Pl.25 A&B).88

No.4: Nallarallabodu Monastery No.2: While unearthening a small brick stūpa nearby the monastery, came to light some relics deposited in an earthen pot, besides a dozen pots and begging bowls.89 The clay pot contained a silver receptacle (2" dia) which resembles a miniature $st\bar{u}pa$. It enclosed a tiny gold casket (3 1/2" dia) which possessed few gold leaves and flowers, red coloured glass beads, rock crystals, corals, pearls and relics (Pl.26). The occurrence of relics along with domestic pottery and the location of the stupa outside the monastic complex obviously suggests that the stupa belonged to a Buddhist monk.

No.5: Closely situated near monastery III, the *stūpa* yielded the relics of monks. There were six globular pots and bowls which contained ash mixed with earth and also some semi-precious stones, pearls, corals etc.⁹⁰

No.6: Koṭṭamipalugubōḍu, Monastery No.3: The stūpa here which yielded relics, lies approximately at a distance of 1 km. to the west of the Mahāchaitya, built of brick in wheel (40' dia) pattern. It was well decorated with sculptured limestone slabs, depicting various Jātaka tales and the Great events in the life of the Master. There are four āyaka platforms decorated with āyaka pillars on the four cardinal directions. While removing the filling from the spokes upto the foundation level, in the chamber facing north, was found a crushed silver receptacle (2" high), comprising two parts i.e. lower and upper, which contained a gold casket (Pl.27A). The latter looked like a bowl with a lid (3/4" high x 1" dia) and it contained a number of gold lotus flowers, a pair of coins bearing the bust figures of male and female bearing typical facial features of Greek origin. Both are of same size and style. Prominent holes on the top of the coins suggests that these were used as pendants (Pl.27B). These coins might have been issued to commemorate an important event. Such type of coins used as medallions were also reported from Veerapuram in Krishna-Tungabhadra valley from early historic levels.

However, the occurrence of these medallions in association with bone relics in the *stūpa* at Nagarjunakonda, poses some curious problems regarding (a) the identification of these royal personages and (b) as to why these medallions with portraits have been deposited exclusively in the *stūpa*?

The probable answers for these are, firstly, if we consider them as royal couple of foreign origin who were staunch followers of Buddhism, then it appears that they lived here for some time and died at the place and hence to commemorate this event, as a token of their memory, these medallions were deposited along with their relics, in this particular $st\bar{u}pa$. Otherwise the deposition of the medallions intentionally in the $st\bar{u}pa$ can not be explained satisfactorily. The occurrence of some panels depicting figures wearing western costumes from Nagarjunakonda further attests to the visit of people from West Asian countries to this place. In this context, it is not out of place to point out that $st\bar{u}pas$ could be built for the Chakravartins or important people of veneration as per the tenets of Buddhist law. Secondly, according to Longhurst, the occurrence of

medallions i.e. the one with features of a Greek male and the other with a commoner is having typical Indian features identifiable with the queen Chantisiri, sister of king Chāntamūla, may suggest that they have been struck to commemorate some special event, such as building the great stupa as well as witnessing the consecration ceremony of relics by a foreign dignitary at Nagarjunakonda.

No.8: This wheel patterned brick built stupa yielded two relic caskets, one is made of copper and the other of debased silver, containing gold flowers, pearls, semiprecious stones, bone and lumps of ash (Pl.28). The broken glazed pot with triratna symbol, nearby the find spot, suggests that these caskets were probably deposited in a pot. 92

No.9: Kottampalugubodu, Monastery No.3: Excavations in the stupa (42' dia) by Mr. Gopala Pillay, on the western side of the valley, yielded a few animal bones belonging to ox, deer and hare, along with a terracotta head of a doll. On the other side of the stupa were found globular pots, filled with animal bones and earth (Pl.29). The Consecration of animal bones in the stupas was considered as a sacred act by the Buddhists, for, the Master, i.e. Buddha assumed these forms in his previous births. It is also interesting to find a broken panel depicting Jātaka unearthed from the stūpa. Representation of animal figurines like hares, jackals, otters, gazelle, panthers and peafowls is common in Nagarjunakonda art. There are also literary allusions to the construction of stupas for animals. The Mahākapi Jātaka refers to the construction of a chaitya for the noblemonkey king. However, no full skeleton of an animal has been found in the stupas, whereas it was reported in megalithic burial context at Nagarjunakonda, at Muktyala in Krishna valley and at Pochampadu in Godavari valley. It appears that it was a common religious practice to bury animals, as noticed in the megalithic burials of South India. The occurrence of stupas exclusively for the consecration of relics of animals at Nagarjunakonda is indeed a unique feature and perhaps, first of its kind, to be reported from the Buddhist stūpas of Āndhradësa, nay even India.

No.9a: It yielded an earthen pot containing a silver casket with a flat base, globular body and a knobbed top. The latter contained a gold casket in which were placed beads, a hemispherical crystal object and a blue stone piece.94

SITE No.6: (A) Buddha Chaitya: At the entrance of this apsidal Buddha chaitya, (38'8" long) was a decorated half-moon limestone, carved with a frieze of animal figures like socket.95

lion, elephant, deer, horse, bear, bull and buffalo at its peripheral arch edge. Near the apse, stood a mutilated statue of Buddha (6' 10") broken into pieces, with its pedestal intact, which is decorated with fully blossomed lotusses (Pl.30A). Interestingly, in the portion between the legs, in the upper part of the pedestal, is a socket (1'2" depth and 5/3" broad) which was fitted firmly and perfectly with a stone stopper or lid (Pl.30B). Its removal, resulted in the discovery of a capsule (3/4" long and 1/3" dia) made of thin sheet of gold, which was kept in another circular hole ($1^{3}/4$ " long and 1/2" dia) inside the

The capsule or barrel shaped tube contained 95 pearls (the big one measuring 1/8" dia and the others smaller than even the mustard seeds) a fragment of bone and lump of ash (Pl.30C). Both the ends of the tube might have been closed tight by hand pressure, after keeping the relics. The occurrence of the holy relics inside the pedestal of the statue of the Master, clearly suggests that they belonged to the Master only and none else. It also appears that this was a new method of consecrating relics not encountered any where in Andhra Pradesh.

(B) MONASTERY: This was planned on trisāla pattern. Interestingly, in the north-east corner of cell No.1, in the eastern wing of the monastery, was found a limestone vase in pūraṇaghaṭa shape (15" high, $10^{-1}/_2$ " dia and 4" at the mouth) in seven parts, viz., the bottom part ($3^{-1}/_4$ " high), the narrow belt ($1^{-1}/_2$ " wide), upper part of the body of vessel ($3^{-1}/_4$ " high), neck ($1^{-1}/_2$ " high) and a rim (3/4" high and $5^{-1}/_8$ " dia). The top of the vessel was covered with a limestone stopper which looks like a saucer, made in two parts (2" high and $4^{-1}/_2$ " dia), decorated with lotus designs. There is a hole in the center of the cover or lid to fix a chhatra - ($6^{-1}/_2$ " dia and $1^{-3}/_4$ " high) probably with the help of an iron rod (Pl.31). Inside, the vase contained two small pieces of teeth, one wisdom tooth (1/4" dia) and the other of the front file (1/8" wide). These teeth relics were small in size. Scholars are of the opinion that these teeth relics belong to the great Teacher Āchārya Nāgārjuna. In the absence of clear epigraphical evidence, for the discovery of relics in the cell of a vihāra, facing a stūpa, it is difficult to ascribe them to Āchārya Nāgārjuna.

However, the artistically and skillfully carved limestone vase, in the shape of an auspicious religious motif i.e. pūranaghata, obviously suggests that it was prepared for

keeping the relics of an important personage or an Acharya of high rank. The vase, deposited with relics, might have been placed temporarily in one of the cells of monastery, perhaps with a view to consecrating it in a stūpa on an auspicious day, later on.

PAVURALLAKONDA

Pāvurāllakonda or Pāvurāllabõdu is the local name of a hill, popularly known as Narasimhaswamykonda, near Bhimili about 30 kms. from Visakhapatnam. There are regular buses from Vizag to reach this place. The rivulet locally known as Gosthani flows near the northern periphery of the hill and joins the sea, thus forming a vast confluence at the foot of the hillock, which served not only as water resource for the inhabitants of Pavurallakonda but also as a navigational point for inland trade during the early centuries of Christian era.

At different levels on the hillock, along the east-west axis, nearly 14 to 16 rockcut troughs or cisterns were found hewn into the bed rock, meant for collecting rain water. Near the entrance of the tank were found two Brahmi label inscriptions, reading "KUMARIKALA" and "KUVANA (KIRIGANA) PAULAGAMENA TATAKA CHHATA MATAPODANAM". Another label inscription was also noticed near the cistern on the western side of the habitation, which reads as "NAGAKA (CHA) RU (BHA) THA".

Trial excavations in the habitation, revealed foundations of vihāras with cells and a common verandah, circular chaityagrihas, votive stūpas, halls etc. Associated with the structures were found two Satavahana coins, a Roman coin, inscribed pot sherds, besides black and red ware, black polished ware, red polished ware, beads etc. Basing on the above epigraphical and cultural material, the site can be dated between 3rd century B.C. and 2nd century A.D.

CASKETS: A dislodged small copper casket, containing two parts i.e. the upper lid and the lower container, was recovered while exposing the votive stupa No.1 situated near the tank.97 However, no relics were available.

RAMATIRTHAM

It is a small village situated about 12 kms. north-east of Vizianagaram, the headquarters of the district. On the northern side of the village are two prominent hillocks, locally known as Durgakonda and Gurubhaktakonda, perched with extensive Buddhist monasteries datable to 1st-2nd century A.D. There are also some Jaina images datable to 8-9th century A.D.

On the western summit of the hillock, is a stūpa (84' dia) with a dome (42' dia) and a neatly paved processional path. Excavations conducted at this site by A. Rea, brought to light, brick built apsidal chaityagrihas with stūpas, vihāras, images of Buddha, a lead coin, clay seals, stone votive stūpas, iron objects etc. One of the clay seals found here, contains a Brahmi legend reading "SRI SIVA (MAKA) VIJAYA RAJA SELASAGHASA", in characters of Ist-2nd century A.D. Similar name also occurs in one of the label inscriptions at Amaravati. From this, it appears that the king Sivamaka Vijaya was a local chieftain, who most probably ruled over this area for sometime, after the eclipse of the Sātavāhana kingdom. From here, it appears that Buddhism continued to flourish for a long period till the rise of Jainism in this region as evidenced by the stone temples and inscriptions.

CASKETS: A small stone casket resembling the shape of a dagoba, was found near the entrance of Chaitya No.4. The lid of another stone casket was also found in the debris of Chaitya No.5.98 No details of either the relics or other materials are available.

SALIHUNDAM

It lies on the right bank of the river Vamsadhāra, in between two famous Buddhist settlements, viz., Dantapuram in the upper reaches of the same river and Kalingapaṭnam in the lower reaches i.e. near the confluence of the river with the sea, in Srikakulam district. It is 12 kms. away from Kalingapaṭnam. There are regular buses from Srikakulam town.

The location of the site and its survival upto the medieval times, obviously suggests that, it might have been a meeting place for the northern and southern cultural traditions. According to local tradition, it was the place meant for 'procuring and stocking rice or paddy', for, literally the term Sāli means 'Rice', and Hundam means 'Konda'. From here,

surplus foodgrains were supplied to other regions. In ancient times, this settlement was known as 'Sālipetaka or Sālipedaka' as known from two Brahmi label inscriptions.99 It is known as 'Mahā Uga Pavathe'100 (Mahõdake Parvata), as can be seen from an inscribed pot sherd, found at the monastic complex. This monastic complex is also known as Kottahārāma as seen from an inscribed pot, recovered from an apsidal Buddha Chaitya. 101 An epigraph dated 1260 A.D. engraved on the temple wall of Srikakulam refers to this place as 'Sālivendam' and it was gifted to Lord Śrī Kūrmanatha at Srikurmam by one of the subordinates of the Eastern Gangas. 102

The site was first reported by late Rao Saheb Gidugu Venkata Rama Murthy Pantulu in 1919 A.D. and later on, it was excavated by A.H. Longhurst, 103 T.N. Ramachandran (1943), and R. Subrahmanyam (1954).

The Buddhist settlement perched on the hill-top looks very imposing, overlooking the river Vamsadhāra. Excavations brought to light apsidal and circular chaityagrihas, pillared mandapas, vihāras, images of Buddha, votive stone stūpas and platforms, spoked stūpa, terracotta receptacles, a good number of inscribed Brahmi potsherds and sculptures of Tara, Manjusri, Marichi etc. belonging to the Vajrayana phase. It is interesting to note that a small lithic record datable to 2nd century A.D. mentions 'dhama rāno Asõka sirino'.104 Some scholars tried to identify him with the Mauryan king Asoka, as the site yielded punch-marked coins and other early historic cultural material, datable to 2nd century B.C.but palaeographically, the script is datable to 1st-2nd century A.D. only. Further, the Korni plates 105 of Anantavarma Choda Ganga (12th century A.D.) mention this holy place as Mundu marru; it means the place is famous for 'mundiya monks' (Monks with clean shaven heads). The above fact leads us believe that this place survived as a prominent Buddhist centre in the central Kalinga region till the medieval times i.e. 12th century A.D.

CASKETS: In the course of excavations of the circular Chaityagriha or Mahāchaitya (Fig.XIX) were unearthed reliquaries similar to the ones reported from Bhattiprolu. The central reliquary is bigger in size, kept in the centre whereas the smaller ones were kept on either side of the central one, along the inner brick rim of the anda of the Mahāchaitya (Pl.32A). Each reliquary contained a crystal casket comprising two parts i.e. the lower, a receptacle which looks like a drum and the upper lid which appears like the harmika of

a stupa. The central casket seems to appear that it was an exact replica of the Mahāchaitya. The occurrence of caskets in three different shapes of a stūpa suggests the existence of three different kinds of religious architectural edifices at the site. Altogether, eight relic caskets were unearthed in two phases, four in each.

PHASE-I: Excavations brought to light three crystal reliquaries from the Mahāchaitya and a stone casket from a stūpa nearby the Mahāchaitya (Pl.32B).

No.1: The crystal casket was kept in a rectangular receptacle containing gold flowers. The flowers were kept in a slot made at the bottom of the receptacle.

No.2: It is also from a rectangular receptacle containing five gold flowers intact and one gold flower in three bits.

No.3: It resembles a miniature model of a Mahāchaitya. It contains a broad circular base (vëdika) or receptacle, a dome (anda), and a cubical harmika, which resembles a rail and the cylindrical part looks like the shaft of a chhatra. The casket contained two gold flowers in five bits.

No.4: It is an empty stone relic box (14" x 12" x 5") recovered from the centre of the stūpa (25' dia) located to the west of the Mahāchaitya (Pl. 32C).

PHASE-II: Excavations conducted by R.Subrahmanyam (1954) yielded four cylindrical terracotta receptacles which contained domical shaped silver caskets, resembling a 'Bharani' from a votive stupa (10 mts. dia) to the north of the Mahāchaitya (Fig.XX). 107 All the receptacles were found from the periphery of the stupa (Pl.33A), except No.5, which was recovered from a socket grooved into one of the bricks of the outer brick course (Pl.33B).

No.5: The terracotta receptacle without lid (height $4 \frac{4}{10}$ " X dia $3 \frac{3}{10}$ ") contained a broken silver casket, in which $(1^{3})_{10}$ dia), five gold flowers (Swrnapushpas) and a fragment of bone were deposited.

No.6: The terracotta receptacle without lid (height $4\frac{4}{10}$ " X $3\frac{1}{2}$ " dia) contained a broken silver casket $(1^{3}/_{10})$ dia) which in turn possessed seven gold flowers.

No.7: The terracotta receptacle without lid (height $4^2/_{10}$ " X $3^4/_{10}$ " dia) contained a broken silver casket (height $1^{3}/_{10}$ " dia) and six gold flowers.

No.8: The terracotta receptable (height $3^{7}/_{10}$ " X $3^{4}/_{10}$ " dia) with lid contained a broken silver casket (height $1^{3}/_{10}$ " dia) and six gold flowers.

It is interesting to note that the reliquaries found here remind the evidence obtained at Amaravati, where the caskets were recovered from the periphery of the southern āyaka platform. In the early stūpas, viz. Bavikonda, Ghantasala, Bhattiprolu etc., the caskets were reported from the centre of anda or from within the circle of the anda portion, whereas at Amaravati and Salihundam (Phase II), the caskets were recovered from the peripheral area of the ayaka platforms. The probable reasons for this appear to be that the caskets were enshrined at various places at the time of carrying out renovations for the stupas or it might be a religious custom during the early centuries of Christian era.

SANKARAM

To the north of Anakapalle railway station, about 3 kms., lie two hillocks perched with Buddhist remains, locally known as Bojjanakonda and Lingalametta. The nearest village is Sankaram, a corrupt form of Sanghārāmam and it is 50 kms. away from Visakhapatnam town in Visakhapatnam district. The rivulet Sarada flows close by the village, which might have served as principal water source both for trade and drinking.

The site was first reported by Alexander Rea¹⁰⁸ (1907-08). The hill Lingalametta is elegantly dotted with a row of rock-cut votive stūpas, which look like the 'Siva Lingas' of Hindu pantheon and hence, it is known as Lingalametta. On the top of the other hillock Bojjanakonda, lie the main stūpa, brick built votive stūpas, vihāras, rock cut cells, apsidal rock cut shrines etc. The technique of construction of the stūpa is very interesting. The existing outcrops of the hillock were intelligently exploited for raising the structures. The main stupa consists of a square platform (80' x 11'9") approached by a flight of steps, a drum (64'8" dia X 7'6" high) and a dome (60'8" dia). The projected bed rock of the hillock was trimmed into, though unfinished, domical part of a stupa upto a height of 4'7" and from thereon, it might have been covered with brick masonry work to obtain the shape of an anda.

Other antiquities recovered from the site include seventy copper coins of the

Eastern Chalukyan dynasty (7th century A.D.), seals, sealings, inscribed tablets, one lead coin bearing the figure of a horse (Sătavāhana coin), one gold coin of Samudragupta, images of Buddha, and a huge sitting life size image of Hārīti of Vajrayāna period (9th century A.D.) etc., 109 besides a relief figure of Ganesa and other figures of Vajrayana phase. Basing on architectural features of the monastic complex and other early historic cultural materials, the beginnings of the site may be dated to 2nd-3rd century A.D. and it continued upto 9th-10th century A.D.

CASKETS: To the south of the rock-cut stupa on the eastern hill were found two stone relic caskets from brick votive stupas No.2 and 3. They measured 6" height X 6" dia and 10" height X 8" dia respectively.110 No other details of the relics are available.

TIMMAVARAM

Timmavaram or Timmāpuram is a roadside village situated 4 kms. away from Pithapuram in East Godavari District. The nearest railway station is Pithapuram on Rajahmundry-Visakhapatnam line. In A.D. 1948, Rāja Venkata Suryarao, Zamindar of Pithapuram, demolished the stupa at Timmavaram for collection of building materials. In this, he had recovered some relic caskets. These caskets were acquired subsequently by Sir Walter Elliot from the Zamindar and displayed in Madras Museum.¹¹¹ The diagrams prepared by the author are detailed below:

CASKETS: Altogether, five stone receptacles with lids were recovered. Each receptacle contained a crystal relic casket, in which were deposited few splinters of bone, precious stones i.e. ruby and emerald, a small pearl, a bit of coral and a piece of gold leaf (Fig.XXI).112

No.1: The stone made receptacle contained inside, a clay receptacle, divided into two parts. The latter again contained a crystal casket, resembling a stūpa in its shape. It consisted of two parts. Beads and other precious materials were kept in the lower container.

No.2: This, like the above, also contained a crystal casket inside, having two parts. It resembles in shape, those reported from Nagarjunakonda, Salihundam and Amaravati. It also, like the others, consists of two equal parts, the upper lid surmounted by a prominent knob representing harmika. In the lower container were kept some beads and other materials.

No.3: It is more or less similar in shape to the relic crystal casket No.2 and also the nature of contents.

No.4: It is a finely carved stone receptacle, containing a crystal relic casket, resembling a stūpa. It resembles the crystal casket No.1, except for the elongation of the dome i.e. the upper lid.

No.5: This also is more or less similar to the receptacle No.4 and contains a crystal casket and resembles the casket found on the western side of the ayaka platform at Amaravati. It also contained beads and other precious materials.

An examination of the above caskets reveals that all the stone receptacles bear close resemblance to the caskets found at Bhattiprolu and Kottur, in respect of the manufacture of stone receptacles and their arrangement i.e. keeping one inside the other, except for the absence of label inscription in Brahmi characters on the stone receptacles. Burgess prepared rough sketches of the caskets in situ, in which, one of the stone caskets looks like a stupa in its outer shape and comprises of two parts. The upper part looks like an anda with prominent harmika on the top, whereas the lower part appears to be a circular drum, containing a deep relic chamber or socket. The remaining caskets also show close resemblance to the stone grinders having sockets. The lids look like a half-cut coconut shell. From the occurrence of crystal reliquaries inside the stone relic receptacles, and their similarities with some of the crystal caskets like those of Bhattiprolu, Nagarjunakonda, Amaravati and Salihundam, it is quite reasonable to assign a date ranging between 2nd century B.C.to 1st century A.D. for the existence of the monastic complex of Timmavaram or Timmapuram.

VADDAMANU

It is small village, located about 34 kms. north-east of Guntur town and 10 kms. south-east of the famous Buddhist site, Amaravati. The western and north-western part of Chinnakonda and Peddakonda nearby the village, are perched with ancient remains. The site was first reported by Sewell¹¹³ in 1887 A.D. as 'Wudlamanu'. Subsequently it appeared as Vaddamānu in the topo sheet.

In the year 1980, R. Subrahmanyam collected early historic pottery and coins

from this place and displayed them at Amaravati in an exhibition held in connection with Krishna *Pushkaram* festival. During the years 1981-85, the Birla Archaeological & Cultural Research Institute, Hyderabad conducted excavations and brought to light a well-established monastic complex, coupled with early historic cultural materials. The vihāra at Vaddamanu was established by Maha Meghavahana as known from the copper plate grant of Prithvī Śrī Mūla Rāja (6th century A.D.) issued from Kondavidu. It also mentions certain other donations made by the king to the monks belonging to Ārya Bhikshu Sangha and Śākya-Bikshu Sangha, residing at Vadhamāna Mahāvihāra.

Interestingly, on the hill top of *Peddakonda*, near one of the cisterns, came to light a Brahmi label inscription engraved in typical Asõkan characters i.e. 3rd century B.C.mentioning the name 'Rānō Samaka' or 'Sōmaka' probably a local king. The names of the other kings revealed by the coins are Mahāsada, Sivamaka Sada, Asaka Sada etc. who belonged to the Sada family ruling over parts of coastal Andhra for some time before the advent of the Sātavāhanas.

Excavations resulted in unearthing a *Mahāstūpa*, several votive *stūpas*, vihāras, pillared halls, elliptical structures, fragment of a crystal lid, Brahmi label inscriptions, coins, art motifs and a good number of inscribed pot sherds, etc., ranging in date from post Mauryan to Vishnukundin times (B.C.300-600 A.D.).¹¹⁶

CASKETS: During the excavations were noticed a fragment of an upper lid of a crystal casket, along with other early historic materials, in the slopes of the hillock. Preparation of caskets or receptacles in crystal for the deposition of the holy relics was already in vogue since the pre-Christian times. In section, the crystal fragment looks like a lid of a casket. The consecration of a relic is also attested by a broken epigraph found in typical Mauryan characters at the site, which reads as "Ara ... (tu) Sarīra (dā) nam". 117 Probably, the epigraph refers to certain donations made by the king, monks and guilds to the Mahāstūpa at the time of consecration of the relic (dhatu) as noticed at Bhattiprolu.

NANDURU

The village Nanduru lies about 16 kms. to the north of Bapatla in Guntur district. In the year 1930, while digging earth a brick encasement and other dilapidated brick structures were unearthed. Inside the encasement was an inscribed earthen pot (16" X $5^{1}/_{2}$ ") oval in shape filled with the corporeal remains. Probably it is the first ever known

pot reliquary which bears the names of monks or persons whose relics were collected in a pot, labelled and deposited in brick encasement with a view to raise a stupa or structure over it. It appears that no archaeological investigations subsequently have been taken up at the find spot to enquire into the nature of the habitation. Recently a number of Buddhist settlements such as Buddam, Karlapalem, Nandayapalem, Etravaripalem etc. have been reported nearby Nanduru.

CASKETS: The red ware pot resembles the urn unearthed from a Mahāchaitya at Bavikonda (Buddhist site Visakhapatnam dist.). On the shoulder of the pot, is a Brahmi label inscription in Ikshvāku characters (3rd century A.D.) (Pl.34). It contains seven letters with two marks of interpunctuation reading Ayamani h pustika h.118

The discovery of the pot reliquary with an inscription on it was critically examined by scholars to findout its exact meaning and interpretation. Prof. K.A. Nilakanta Sastry¹¹⁹, deciphered the Brahmi label inscription as Ayamani Prustica. The first word Ayamani is probably the name of the person which Prof. Sastry read it as Aryadeva (a disciple of Nagarjuna) while the second word Pustica as Prastica which literally means anything that is burnt. Thus, considering its careful preservation and labelling the reliquary pot, Prof. Sastry considered the relics in the pot as belonging to no less a person than the celebrated Buddhist divine Aryadeva.

D.C. Sircar¹²⁰ totally disagreed with the reading and interpretation offered by Prof. Sastri. According to him, the first word Ayamani could be read as Aryamani or Ayamani, but not Aryadeva. The second word is not Prustica but it could be read as Pustica as similar types of letters were found in the inscriptions of Jaggayyapeta and Nagarjunakonda. According to him, the lable inscription understudy, obviously refers to two proper names (viz.) Ayamani and Pustica probably the wife and husband whose relics were preserved in the pot and their names duly labelled on it. The reading of D.C. Sircar was accepted by several scholars.

Similar epigraphical (2nd century A.D.) evidence comes from Dhānyakataka¹²¹ which reads:

[&]quot;Siddham (name) Bhagavato gāmmamahivathasa Pendavatikasa Nāgasenasakhudacetiya - Hagha Vani kiniya Patithapitam Savasatamata a.....".

It refers to enshrinement of the relics of Nagasena - a Pendavatika or a teacher in a Khudachaitya in the precints of the monastic complex at Dhānyakataka.

Thus, the evidences from Nandur and Dhanyakataka clearly suggest that the reliquaries other than the Master were invariably engraved with the names of monks or teachers. Further, a remarkable difference is also observed in the nature of contents of the deposition. Examples of this type were reported from the stūpas at Sanchi. It seems that this particular custom might have been in practice from 3rd century A.D. onwards.

DHULIKATTA

Dhulikatta or Dhulikota (Mud built Fort) is a local name to the habitation site situated near Vatakapur village in Karimnagar district. It is 20 kms. from Karimnagar town. Next to Kotilingala, it is another extensive early historic settlement reported from the Telingana region. It may be one of the 30 walled towns of Andhras mentioned by Megasthanese. The settlement is located on ancient trade route leading from Vidharbha, South Kosala and Andhra to Dhānyakataka.

Excavations brought to light a Mahastūpa belonging to Theravada Buddhism. It consisted of a drum with ayaka platforms, Pradakshinapatha, dome etc. The drum is decorated with fine relief sculptures depicting Muchalindanaga, Bodhi tree, Buddhapādas etc. Some of the pannels are inscribed with the names of donors in early Brahmi characters (2nd century B.C.). The other structures unearthed are granaries, gateways, guard rooms, houses, wells, drains etc.122 The important antiquities include are the Sātavāhana and Roman silver coins, terracotta figures, beads and bangles, inscribed ivory seals, a portrait coin of Siva Sri Pulamavi, a bronze figure of mother and child (Hariti). Stone rubbers and pestles and early historic pottery ranging in date from 3rd century B.C.to 2nd century A.D.

CASKETS: The Mahāstupa is an imposing structure consisted of a well decorated drum and intact dome. The top portion of the dome on the northern side is disturbed. While excavating the peripheral areas of the stupa on the Southern quadrant, unearthed a stone receptacle with a socket, inscribed with Brahmi letters on the rim¹²³. Probably the receptacle might have dislodged from the disturbed portion of the harmika of the stupa. The inscribed letters are faintly seen due to weathering. No other details are available.

ERRAVARAM

It is a road side village on Rajahmundry - Annavaram National high-way No.5, in Yeleswaram mandal of East Godavari district. It is 33 kms. east of Annavaram - a famous pilgrimage centre in Andhra Pradesh. Towards south-east of the village is a hillock locally known as 'Dhanam dibba' (which means 'hill of wealth') contained number of Buddhist structural remains. Rock cut troughs, similar to the ones reported from Thotlakonda, Bavikonda, Pavuralakonda, Gopalapatnam etc. are seen near Mahāstūpa area. Two rock cut caves are noticed close to the habitation area which look like the ones reported from Gopalapatnam near Tuni. On the eastern ledge of the hillock is a dilapidated Mahāstūpa imposingly constructed overlooking vast plains alround. Survey at the habitation area resulted in the discovery of long bricks (56 X 28 X 8 cms.), incised brick with Brahmi letter 'bha' dated to 1st-2nd century A.D., broken stone columns, grinding stones, stone rubbers and early historic pottery. The location of the site and its environs coupled with other cultural materials suggest an early date i.e. 2nd century B.C.for the beginnings of the habitation on this hillock and it might have continued upto 2nd century A.D.

CASKETS: In the year 1997, while digging the Mahāstūpa (Dhanam dibba) for collection of colour stones by the treasure hunters unearthed a stone reliquary at a depth of 30' ft. from the centre of the mound. The discovery of relic caskets from the centre of the dome is reported from Ghantasala and Bhattiprolu. The stone reliquary (29 cms. high X 30 cms. width) made out of local khondalite stone looks like a miniature stupa is consisted of two separate parts i.e. the lower receptacle and the upper domical lid (Pl.35 A&B). Sufficient space (dia 9 cms. X 2 cms. depth) is marked in the lower container or receptacle to keep the relic casket in its position. To accommodate the entire body of the relic casket a hollow space (19 cms. dia X 14 cms. high x 6 cms. depth) is created in the upper portion of domical lid. The shape of the lid represents the dome of a stūpa having a square harmika and a projected chhatra. Though the reliquary is made out of khondalite stone, it is well finished and polished. Except the parts of the outer reliquary of the relic casket, the contents inside it are carried away by the treasure hunters. On enquiry it was revealed that the reliquary contained a crystal casket. No other details are available.

REFERENCES

- P.V.P. Sastry, 'Andhra Desa Charitralo Dharanikota', Dhanyakataka (in making of Andhra history), Guntur, 1987, p.45.
- K. Raghavachary, 'Dharanikõta' and its western contacts', in Q.R.H.S., XII, No.3., Calcutta, 1972-73, pp.167-68.
- Ibid., p.167. 3.
- M.N. Katti, paper read at the National Seminar on 'The impact of Buddhism on the life and culture of South India', Mythic Society of India, 1979, Bangalore.
- Luders list, I, 225 & 271 and also P.V.P. Sastry, Op. Cit., 1987, p.45. **5**.
- Ibid., p.45. 6.
- Rhys Davids (ed.), Thomas Watter's On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India, Delhi, 1961, pp.214-**7**. 215.
- E.I., X, pp. 43-44, & SII, 1, pp.25-28.
- *E.I.*, VI, p.155. 9.
- 10. *Ibid.*, p.159.
- 11. Epigraphia Zeylanica, IV, 1943, pp.90 ff.
- 12. B.S.L. Hanumantha Rao, "Dhānyakataka in Early Andhra History', Dhānyakataka (in making of Andhra History), 1987, p.11.
- 13. P.V.P. Sastry, Op.Cit., 1987, p.58.
- 14. P.R.K. Prasad, 'Amareswaralaya Prachinatha A Review, Dhānyakataka', (in making of Andhra History), 1987, p.61.
- 15. P.V.P. Sastry, Op.Cit., 1987, p.58.
- 16. Doughlas Barret, Sculptures from Amaravati in the British Museum, London 1954, p.22.
- 17. Robert Sewell, Report on the Amaravati Tope Excavation on 1st Site, in 1877, Appendix II Reprint, 1973, pp.67-69.
- 18. *Ibid.*, pp.22-28.
- 19. Doughlas Barret, Op.Cit., 1954, p.25.
- 20. ARASI, 1905-06 & 1908-09, pp.88-91.
- 21. *IAR* 1958-59, p.5
- 22. IAR 1979-74, pp.4-5.
- K. Rama, Buddhist Art of Nagarjunakonda, New Delhi, 1955, p.16.
- 24. Manjuśrī Mūlatantra, I, p.88.
- 25. Rhys Davids, Op.Cit., 1961, p.214.

- 26. D.R. Gehlot, 'More Reliquaries from Amaravati Mahāchaitya', in Sri Ramachandrika, Edts. I.K. Sarma & A.V.N. Murthy, New Delhi 1993, pp.263-66.
- 27. *IAR* 1958-59, p.1.
- 28. J. Burgess, stūpas of Amaravati & Jaggayyapeta, London, Pl.LIII, Nos.4 to 7.
- 29. ARASI, 1908-09, pp.88-91.
- 30. W. Geiger (Tr.), Maha Vamsa, Ch.XII, p.82.
- 31. Manjusrī Mula Tantra, I, p.88.
- 32. IAR 1958-59, p.1.
- 33. N.R.V. Prasad, Bavikonda (A Buddhist site in North Coastal Andhra Pradesh), Hyderabad 1994, pp.40-41.
- 34. B. Subrahmanyam, Research & Training Officer, Dept. of Archeaology and Museums discovered the relics while attending to the conservation work in February 1993, from anda of the stupa.
- 35. N.R.V. Prasad, Recent Buddhist Discoveries in Visakhapatnam District (Relic Caskets at Bavikonda), Hyderabad, 1993, p.11.
- 36. Robert Sewell, List of Antiquarian Remains in Madras Presidency, Vol.I, London, 1893, p.77.
- 37. A.Rea, South Indian Buddhist Antiquities, Madras, 1894, pp.7-8.
- 38. IAR, 1969-70, P.1.
- 39. A. Rea, Op.Cit., 1894, p.7.
- 40. *Ibid.*, p.7 & 9.
- 41. A.Rea, Op.Cit., 1894, pp.11-12.
- **42**. *Ibid.*, p.13.
- 43. *Ibid.*, p.14.
- 44. G. Buhler, E.I., Vol.II, p.325.
- Debala Mitra, Buddhist Monuments, Calcutta, 1971, p.215.
- 46. *Ibid.*, p.215.
- J. Burgess, The Buddhist stupas of Amaravati and Jaggayyapeta, London, 1887, p.106.
- *E.I.*, XXVII, p.3. **48.**
- 49. E.I., XXVII, (1947-48), p.4.
- A.Rea, Op. Cit., 1894, pp.32-34.
- Ibid., p.33. 51.
- G.O.No.1725, 1870.
- 53. A. Rea, *Op.Cit.*, 1894, pp.18-19.

- 54. Ibid., p.18.
- 55. J. Burgess, Op.Cit., 1887, p.99.
- 56. A.Rea, Op.Cit., 1894, p.19.
- 57. Md. Hamid Quraishi, 'Trial Excavations at Alluru, Gummadidurru and Nagarjunakonda' ARAD, Southern Circle, 1926-27, pp.155-56.
- 58. *Ibid.*, p.156.
- 59. R. Sewell, Op.Cit., 1882, pp.35-36.
- 60. A.Rea, G.O.No.646, dt.2.8.89, STBA (1894), p.IV, Govt. of Madras.
- 61. A.H. Longhurst, "The Buddhist Monuments of Guntupalle, Krishna District", ARAD, (1916-17) 1917, pp. 30-36.
- 62. IAR, 1916-62, p.97 and also see IAR 1968-69, p.64.
- 63. R. Subrahmanyam, The Guntupalle Brahmi inscription of Khāravela, A.P. Govt. Arch. Series, No.3, (Hyd.), 1968, p.2
- 64. I.K. Sarma, Studies in Early Buddhist Monuments and Brahmi inscriptions of Andhradësa, Nagpur, 1988, p.85.
- 65. *Ibid.*, p.85.
- 66. IAR, 1976-77, p.74.
- 67. J. Burgess, Op.Cit., 1887, p.107-08.
- 68. *Ibid.*, Inscription No.2,3,p.110.
- 69. I.K. Sarma, 'Select inscriptions of Nagarjunakonda', JOR, Vol.XXIX, 1959-60, Part I-II, pp.41-59.
- 70. E.I. Vol.XX, p.22 & and see I.A.R., 1958-58. The inscription mentions 'Vijaya Puriya-Purvadisa bhaga Vihare chula-Dhammagiriyam'.
- 71. A.H. Longhurst, The Buddhist antiquities of Nagarjunakonda, MASI, 1938, No.54.
- 72. ARASI, 1927-28, pp.118-20 & 1928-29, pp.100-104 & ARSI 1929-30, pp.144-151.
- 73. ARASI, 1926-27, pp.150-161.
- 74. T.N. Ramachandran, Nagarjunakonda, Delhi 1938, No.71.
- 75. R. Subrahmanyam, "Nagarjunakonda", in Buddha Jayanti Souvenir, Jaggayyapet,1956, pp.80-86.
- 76. H. Sarkar, Studies in Early Buddhist Architecture of India, Delhi 1966, pp.74-110.
- 77. E.I., XXXVI, pp.273-74.
- 78. R. Subrahmanyam, Op.Cit., 1956, p.84.
- 79. K. Rama, Op. Cit., 1995, p.16.

- 80. E.I. XX, pp.22-23.
- 81. V.V. Krishna Sastry, Three grants of Prithvī Śrī Mūlarāja from Kondavīdu, Hyderabad 1992, pp.203.
- 82. AAR, A&M, 1994-95 Hyd, (cyclostyled).
- 83. A.H. Longhurst, "Excavations at Nagarjunakonda", ARASI, 1927-29, pp.101-102.
- 84. Ibid., p.101.
- 85. S.K. Bhattacharya, 'Buddhist relic caskets in Indian Museum' Puratattva, No.17, p.44.
- 86. A. Ghosh, (ed.) An Encyclopaedia of Indian Archaeology, New Delhi, 1989, p.274.
- 87. Ibid., p.274.
- 88. Ibid., p.274.
- 89. A.H. Longhurst, Op.Cit., 1927-28, p.103.
- 90. A. Ghosh, Op.Cit., 1989, p.274.
- 91. A.H. Longhurst, Op.Cit., 1928-29, p.103, & 1929-39, pp.147-48.
- 92. IAR 1955-56, p.24.
- 93. A.H. Longhurst, Op.Cit., 1929-30, p.148-149.
- 94. A. Ghosh, Op.Cit., 1989, p.274.
- 95. T.N. Ramachandran, Op.Cit., p.13.
- 96. *Ibid.*, pp.15-17.
- 97. B. Subrahmanyam, "Excavation at Pavurallakonda, Visakhapatnam district, AAR & A&M, Hyderabad, 1993-94 & 95.
- 98. *MASI*, 1910-11, p.79.
- 99. R. Subrahmanyam, Salihundam A Buddhist site in Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad, 1964, Plate XLIV, 1919-20.
- 100. *Ibid.*, Fig.13,2, p.85 & p.89.
- 101. R. Subrahmanyam, Op.Cit., 1964, p.4 & p.87.
- 102. ARASI, 1919-20. pp.35, ff.
- 103. E.I., XXVII, pp.133 ff.
- 104. R.Subrahmanyam, Op.Cit., 1964, pp.83-90.
- 105. JAHRS, Vol.XXIX, Parts, 3 & 4, p.24.
- 106. E.I., XXVIII, pp.133 ff.
- 107. R.Subrahmanyam, Op.Cit., 1964, pp.114-116.
- 108. A. Rea. "Explorations and excavation of ancient Sites' ARASI, 1908-09, pp.1-10.
- 109. Ibid., p.6.

- 110. Ibid., p.9.
- 111. J. Burgess, Op.Cit., 1970, p.99, pl.III, Nos.8-12.
- 112. Sir Walter Elliot, I.A., Vol. XII, 1883, p.34.
- 113. IAR, 1962-63, p.2.
- 114. T.V.G. Sastry, Vaddamanu Excavations, Hyderabad, 1992, p.262.
- 115. V.V. Krishna Sastry, Op.Cit., 1992, pp.3-4.
- 116. T.V.G. Sastry, Op.Cit., 1992, pp.22-27.
- 117. Ibid., p.264.
- 118. D.C. Sircar, "Nandur Earthen pot inscription" JAHRS, Vol.XIX, 1952, pp.203-209.
- 119. K.A.N. Sastry, JOR, Vol. VIII, Madras, 1934, pp.95-99.
- 120. D.C. Sircar, Op.Cit., 1952, p.204.
- 121. J. Burgess, Op.Cit., 1887, p.93 and also see CENTURY Sivarama Murthy, no.103, p.298.
- 122. V.V. Krishna Sastry, Proto and Early historic cultures of A.P., Hyderabad, 1983, p.186.
- 123. Ibid.
- 123. Presently displayed in ASP Museum, Kakinada (Recovered on 30.1.97). The author has personally seen the relic casket and also its find spot.

Chapter VI

RELIC CASKETS: MATERIALS AND METHODS OF CONSECRATION

The corporeal remains of the Master, monks, chakravartins etc., were enshrined in the stūpas and chaityas along with various other objects made of different materials like gold, silver, copper, bronze, semi-precious stones, corals etc. in various methods. Usually, either bones or ashes were kept exclusively in a tiny gold casket, which, in turn was placed in other primary receptacles made of gold, silver, copper (Pl.36), bronze, crystal (Pl.37), beryl, Ivory (Pl.11), clay (Pl.38), stone (Pl.39) etc. Interestingly an Iron receptacle in cylindrical shape has been reported from Manikyala near Mathura.¹ Thus, the selection of material, the finish of the casket and other associated objects depends not only on the rank or status of the persons whose relics were consecrated, but also on the degree of veneration and economic position of the donors.

Generally, all the outer caskets were modelled or moulded in the shape of a stūpa. There are ornamental silver and gold caskets inside, bearing symbols of wheel, lotus medallions and swastikas, as noticed at Bavikonda ²(Pl.40). Such decorated metal caskets have so far not been reported from any other site in Andhradëśa. The handle of a crystal casket found, in stone coffer from Piprahwa³ in Uttar Pradesh, was decorated with a fish motif and was stuffed with seven gold bands, having granulated six petalled flowers and circular gold frames with tiny beads. The bronze casket from Shah-ji-ki-Dheri in Peshwar⁴ shows a nimbate figure of Buddha on the knob of the lid and two standing deities, lotus flower design and flying hamsa motifs on the lid. The gold casket from Bimaran No.2⁵ was portrayed with the figures of standing Buddha in niches. Probably it is the earliest datable depiction of the Buddha image. Similarly, the stone chest in the relic chamber of Sambodhi mound in Bihar was engraved with figures of a man dressed in flowing robes. The steatite casket recovered from stūpa No.2 at Andher in Madhya Pradesh², was adorned with figures of elephants, horses and winged animals.

Interestingly, at Bhattiprõlu⁸, Silver punch marked coins associated with the relics were reported from one of the caskets. Similarly, copper punch marked coins from Vaisali⁹ and a silver coin of Gautamiputra Satakarni (174-203 A.D.) associated with a gold plaque, depicting the figure of seated Buddha from Sapora¹⁰ in Gujarat were reported from the relic caskets. The stūpa at Manikyala datable to 1st century A.D., yielded Kushana coins in association with the relics11. Gold coins used as medallions were reported along with relics from the stūpa of monastery No.III at Nagarjunakonda¹². It is a general phenomenon to notice the deposition of coins of the kings and a variety of beads along with the corporeal remains in the relic caskets. Beads of finished or unfinished or etched ones are reported from the depositions. Interestingly, a chocolate red colour bead, meticulously incised with a rampant lion was reported from Kottur¹³. Similarly a bead with a recumbent bull was noticed in the contents of the relic casket reported from Bimaran-4,14 in Gandhara region. The discovery of these coins or beads depicted with animal figures along with relics obviously indicates the authorship of the king or dynasty that laboured the construction of the stūpa.

Another noteworthy find is a long strip of thin silver sheet resembling in a book shape, inscribed with Brahmi letters along with relics in Casket No.2 at Bhattiprõlu 15. Similarly, the Nidāna Sutra written with ink on a copper plate was reported in a relic chamber from a stūpa, behind the Nirvāna stūpa at Kuśinagar. Yet, another interesting discovery is the inscribed copper casket from Devanimore¹⁶, a Buddhist site belonging to 4th-5th centuries A.D. in Gujarat, which contained silk bags, a bottle made of gold and some organic materials, like the minerals found at Bhattiprõlu and Ghantasala. The label inscription engraved on the casket mentions that the relics belonged to Dasabala i.e. Buddha. Two Sandal wood pieces were reported along with steatite caskets from stūpa No.3 at Sanchi¹⁷. Similar evidence was reported from the stūpa at Bagiawari village in Santhal parganas of Bihar state¹⁸ where the stone box reliquary was scented with chandana churna (sandal powder). The crystal casket from Piprahwa¹⁹ contained gold plaques incised with symbols like swastika, triratna, triangle headed standard and figurines of two females on a gold piece, lion and elephants on a gold plaque, a bird in malachite, wooden and silver vessels. A casket prepared with bark, wrapped in leaves was reported from Nandara stūpa I near Jalalabad. 20 Another wooden casket was reported

from Jaulian stūpa A II at Taxila. 21 It was kept in a model stūpa made of lime plaster and decorated with blue and crimson paint and inlaid jewels.

All types of boxes or receptacles containing relics, are termed as relic caskets. A relic casket is the one which contains the holy relic or relics of the Master or monks, along with other paraphernalia. The outer box or primary casket which contains the relic casket within a marked space, is known as receptacle. According to Buddhist texts, the larger vessel which contains the smaller one, is known as reliquary or Manjusha, while the smaller one which contains the holy relic is known as relic casket or Samudgaka²². Thus, the Manjusha denotes a box or receptacle in wider sense. The Bhattiprõlu stone receptacle No.123 contains a label inscription which reads as 'KURAPITUNO CHA KUMA THU CHA KURASHA SIVA (SHA) MAJUSAMPANATIPHALIGA SHAMGAM CHA BUDHASARIRANAM NIKETU'. The above terms Manjusha or Samudgaka refer to a stone receptacle or a relic casket, meant for depositing the original relics of Lord Buddha.

The casket recovered from the Mahāchaitya at Nagarjunakonda²⁴ contained exclusively a fragment of bone, belonging to the Master, kept in a small gold casket which, in turn was placed in the other gold casket of bigger size along with other precious materials. Interestingly, at Lalithagiri in Orissa²⁵, a fragment of bone was found wrapped in a gold foil and kept in a gold casket, which in turn was placed in silver, steatite and khondalite receptacles, one within the other. Similarly the stupa at Manikyala yielded a fragment of bone wrapped in a golden leaf²⁶. The bone relic wrapped in gold foil was also reported from Sirkap²⁷. Since the 'holy relic' belonged to the Great Master, such meticulous care was taken. The Bhojpur stūpa No.4 near Sanchi,28 yielded a black earthen ware casket engraved with a word 'Mun' on it (which means the 'holy'), which generally applied to Buddha himself. Inspite of the absence of label inscriptions on the caskets, the importance and reverence shown to the relics and the care taken by wrapping them with precious metals or keeping them in valuable caskets leads us to believe that they actually belonged to the Great Master.

The Mahāchaitya at Bavikonda²⁹ yielded a medium sized red ware urn, in which were kept silver and gold caskets, one within the other, which contained precious metals like gold and silver, besides huge quantity of corporeal remains like bone, ash and charcoal.

It was placed intentionally (along with the other stone casket) on the southern side of the Mahāchaitya, for, the cardinal direction i.e. south-stands for Yama, the 'Lord of Death'. It is for the first time that we find such huge quantity of corporeal remains deposited. keeping a net woven of silk thread at the bottom of an urn pot, from a Mahāchaitya in the entire South India.

The stone receptacles of Bhattiprõlu 30 (Pl.41) were inscribed with early Brahmi characters of 3rd century B.C.and whitened around, just like the Asõka n edicts found at Erragudi³¹ and Rajulamandagiri³² in Kurnool district. Similar evidence was reported from the Bhojpur stūpa No.2 near Sanchi³³, where the lid of the casket was thickly coated with white wash and over which traces of ink letters were faintly visible. The stūpa shaped khondalite stone receptacle found at Bavikonda shows on its exterior two inscribed illegible letters reading 'PO' and 'YA' datable to 3rd century B.C.³⁴ There are ayaka pillar inscriptions mentioning the consecration of the relics of the Master in the Māhachaityas from Amaravati³⁵, Jaggayyapeta³⁶ and Nagarjunakonda³⁷. Interestingly there are inscriptions on the receptacles or caskets, mentioning the name of kings, rājas, donors etc., who constructed the stūpas and donated the caskets. Sometimes the names of the guilds or monks were also inscribed on the receptacles or caskets as noticed at Bhattiprõlu. The relic casket inscription of Bhattiprõlu³⁸ mentions the name of a king Rāja Kuberaka and his meritorious services rendered in consecrating the relics of the Master in the Mahāchaitya. One of the earthen reliquaries from Hadda-13,39 shows a Kharosthi inscription written with ink giving the name of an architect by name Sangamitra who caused the deposition in the stupa.

Another inscribed pot reliquary comes from the Bhojpur stūpa No.7.40 The legend reads as Patito (the degraded). The reliquary might have related to a person or monk who was awarded the punishment of degradation due to his indecent conversation or immoral behaviour or dissensions amongst the fraternity. It was the most common punishment for breaches of discipline in the ancient Buddhist church. Interestingly another inscribed soap stone reliquary with Brahmi characters datable to 2nd century B.C.reading 'Thambhayya Dānam' was reported recently from Kottur' in Visakhapatnam District. Perhaps the label inscription indicates the name of the person who donated the casket for enshrinement of the holy relic. Similarly, at Taxila⁴², one of the caskets from the

stūpa bears a Kharosthi label inscription which records the enshrinement of the relics of the Holy man (Buddha) by Urasaka, scion of Cintavakria, a Bactrian, resident of the town Naocha. Another inscribed casket (18" height) with Kharosthi script (1st century A.D.) was reported from the monastery of Navakarmika, Kurram district, Peshawar. 43 The casket looks like a miniature stupa with harmika and a series of umbrellas. The inscription on the pedestal records the enshrinement of the bodily relics of Holy Sakya-Muni by a person belonged to Sarvāstivāda sect of Buddhism. The casket was also inscribed with the anuloma portion of the Pratitya-Samutpāda or Nidana Sutra. Such textual matter was earlier reported at Gopalapur in the Gorakhpur district and also at Kusinagar from the relic chambers. Such instances are often reported from the north Indian Buddhist sites.

The stupas belonging to pre-Christian period show various methods and practices of consecrating the relic caskets i.e. placing the relic caskets in the central part of the anda, a little away from the hub or within the circle of the anda, or either in the foundation levels or at the level of the upper pradakshināpatha or drum level as found at Bhattiprõlu 44, Jaggayapeta45 and Bavikonda46, whereas in the stūpas built during the early centuries of Christian era, relic caskets were deposited in the peripheral areas of the stupas, or below the foundations of the ayaka platforms or over the ayaka platforms or below the pradakshinapatha, or in the slots of the ayaka pillars or sockets found either in the drum slabs or ayaka slabs, or in the gaps between the spokes etc., as noticed at Amaravati⁴⁷, Nagarjunakonda⁴⁸ and Gummadidurru⁴⁹. The latter method of depositing the relics might have been adopted for safeguarding the precious relics from human vandalism. It also suggests the possibility of reconsecration of the original relics, recovered during renovation of the stupas, at a later date, at various palces without disturbing the anda.

There are a variety of methods adopted in depositing the relics, depending on the hierarchial status and economic well being of the individuals and religious customs in vogue. Later on, came into vogue certain practices based on economy, belief and faith. It is also interesting to note that certain stupas were built for enshrining relics of animals like hare, monkey, ox etc., as reported from stūpa No.9 at Nagarjunakonda50 believing that they represent the previous births or incarnations of the Master.

Relic caskets were generally embedded within a roughly dressed granite stone receptacle, as noticed at Timmavaram⁵¹ and Bhattiprõlu⁵². In some cases, the receptacles were carved finely, resembling a stūpa in shape, as reported from Bavikonda⁵³, Sankaram⁵⁴, Erravaram⁵⁵ Ramatirtham⁵⁶ and Timmavaram⁵⁷. Interestingly, at Salihundam⁵⁸, there are crystal and cylindrical terracotta receptacles. The latter types have screw like grooves on the exterior, enabling them to be kept in grooved bricks on the outer course of the anda, with a view to keep them firmly and safely (Pl.33B). Interestingly, a stone relic casket in purnaghata shape was reported from Nagarjunakonda⁵⁹ (Pl.31). The crystal casket in the shape of a swan (hamsa) was reported from Sirkap at Taxila⁶⁰. At Ratnagiri⁶¹, relic caskets were deposited in a socket made into a brick and covered by a brick bat. The golden casket from Manikyala⁶² was wrapped in a silk bag and sealed with wax and kept in a relic chamber. Sometimes, relic chambers were made in the inner course of the brick rim of the anda and finally sealed by the bricks of the next layer, as clearly observed at Bavikonda⁶³. Separate relic chambers were built to deposit the caskets with stone slabs on the four cardinal directions of the anda, a phenomenon noticed at Gudivada⁶⁴. In the stūpa at Bhojpur⁶⁵, near Sanchi (2nd century B.C.), the relic chamber was made into two tiers in brick i.e. the lower one larger and the upper one smaller, containing fragments of bone and teeth. At piprahwa⁶⁶, the relic caskets were placed in brick chambers, built in the middle of the anda and covered with bricks and brick bats. The caskets of simple type were deposited in pots filled with ash and earth, as noticed at Gummadidurru⁶⁷ and Nagarjunakonda⁶⁸. The Bojpur stūpa No.8 also yielded pot reliquaries filled with abundant human bones⁶⁹. Such practice suggests the low status of the monk and also the poor economic condition of the monastery.

It is a strange custom to notice the enshrinement of the images of the Lord Buddha in the *stūpas* instead of his relics. Excavations at Saranath⁷⁰ brought to light stone images of standing Buddha in *Varada mudra* from the votive *stūpas*. Probably it was happened due to dearth of body relics, the texts of the *Pratitya Samutpāda Sutra*, inscribed tablets with Buddhist creed formulae and subsequently images of the Buddha were enshrined within the *stūpas*. The custom was noticed from the Gupta or post Gupta times onwards.

It is interesting to note the custom of depositing the relic underneath the stone images which was in vogue during the 3rd century A.D. in Andhradësa. The classic example of this type comes from Mahisasaka Vihara complex at Nagarjunakonda71, wherein, ashes, relics and beads were kept in a gold tube and deposited in a slot made between the legs, in the upper part of the pedestal (Padma-pītha) of the Buddha image in a Chaityagriha. In earlier times, we have seen quite often, the consecration of relics in Mahāchaityas, stūpas, votive stūpas etc., at various places, whereas the above discovery at Nagarjunakonda reveals a new method of depositing the holy relics below the images or below the pedestals of the statues. Perhaps, this particular method was borrowed in later times by the Hindus, at the time of installing various images in the garbhagriha of the temples, on auspicious days.

Interestingly, evidence of deposition of reliquaries in the foundation layers of brick structures of religious order comes from Sagrahawa near Tilaura-kot which is identified with Kapilavastu located in the Lumbini-Taulihawa region of the Nepalese Tarai. Fuhrer (1887-89) who excavated the area exposed nearly eighteen brick structures having brick foundation layers⁷². Some of the bricks, depict motifs of various weapons and lotuses. Underneath these foundations, he exposed copper reliquaries containing precious objects like nāga (serpents) figures made out of gold, gold flowers, grains, white and black talc etc. Some of the copper reliquaries were even kept in grooves made inside the bricks. Basing on the above evidences, the excavator ascribed these structures to Buddhist order and tries to put them to pre-Mauryan or Asokan times. Surprisingly, no human bones or ashes were reported from these reliquaries73.

Scholars like P.C. Mukherji and V.A. Smith supported the hypothesis postulated by Fuhrer, basing on the discovery of copper reliquaries below the brick foundations. Whereas, Debala Mitra⁷⁴ who studied the drawings and reports of Fuhrer's observations came to the conclusion, that the reliquaries devoid of ashes or bones belonged to pure Brahmanical order and it is further supported by similar evidence occurring in the foundations of brick temples of medieval period at Kodan, a nearby site. Mitra had also shown certain references pertaining to rituals such as 'Ratnanyāsa and Istika-nyāsa' while laying foundations for the construction of religious structures in medieval texts

like 'Aparājita Priccha' (12th century A.D.), Ksīrāraņava and Dīpārņava (16th century A.D.).

Whereas the Tibetan texts like 'Rnying ma bka' and Sahaja Vilāsas commentary on Vimolosnisa support the hypothesis postulated by Fuhrer. The former text says that at the time of construction of a stūpa, a circular foundation trench, corresponds to the space of the dome of the stūpa is to be laid which is generally known as lion throne section of the stupa. In this trench, nine pits to keep nine naga vases are to be dug. Each vase is to be filled with five kinds of jewels viz. corals, gold, silver, pearl and undamaged gems; five kinds of medicinal substances viz. Sadaghra, Vjaghra (castor oil), girkarni (Kantakari, wild Rubus, Solanum Jaquini), Pato and hasdeva; five kinds of grains viz. wheat, barely, unhusked rice, sesamum and masa; five kinds of perfumes viz. sandal, camphor, safforn or safflower, nut meg and Agaru (Eagle wood or Aloe); five kinds of food essences viz. snying po lnga, refined salt, unrefined sugar, butter and silaji (brag zhun). Of the nine vases, four on Cardinal and four intermediatory and one at the centre are to be placed. Another vase familiarly known as 'Lord of earth vase' is to be placed in front of the central vase⁷⁵. All vases are to be concealed and encased with stones which oftenly depict with lotus motifs. In the light of above textual reference, the discovery made by Fuhrer at Sagrahawa, obviously belonged to the Buddhist order.

More or less similar type of evidence i.e. Istika-nyasa has been reported from Papanasi group of temples near Alampur in Andhra Pradesh, where, underneath Sivalinga in the garbhagriha of the temples were discovered brick bats, gold flower, leaf shaped gold foil and corroded copper coins. While dismantling the sikharas of these temples, decorated copper reliquaries having spouts were noticed76. These vessels contained precious stones, a gold flower wrapped in a thin gold foil, corroded coins etc. It reminds us the 'Ratna-nyāsa' ritual followed during the construction of the temples.

All the above evidences clearly suggest that the ritual ceremonies, though they have their roots in Brahmanical order but borrowed by the Buddhists who carried out the tradition followed and practiced during the construction of their religious buildings. Later on, the Hindus followed the rituals during the time of construction of temples.

REFERENCES

- W. Zwalf (ed.), Buddhism Art and Faith, London, 1985, p.30. 1.
- N.R.V. Prasad, Bavikonda (A Buddhist site in North Coastal Andhra Pradesh), Hyderabad, 2. 1994, pp.53-58.
- W.C. Peppe, "The Piprahwa stūpa containing relics of Buddha" JRAS of Great Britain 3. and Ireland, 1898, pp.573-78.
- AS IAR 1908-09, pp.38-39 4.
- K. Walton Dobbins, 'Buddhist Reliquaries from Gandhara' in Ed. Devendra Handa & A. 5. Agrawal, Ratnachandrika, 1989, p.109
- Nayanjot Lahiri, 'A little known Buddhist Relic stupa in the Santhal Parganas' in 6. Puratattva No.2, 7, PP.96-99.
- A.Rea; South Indian Buddhist Antiquities, Vol.XV, 1894, pp.11-12. 7.
- 8. B.P. Sinha and S.R. Roy, Vaisali Excavations (1958-62), Patna, 1069, pp.21-22, Pl.VIII.
- B.Lal Indraji, "Excavations at Sapora, Thana district" 1881-82, Journal of Bombay Research 9. Royal Asiatic Society, No.15, pp.292-315 and also see Devanagana Desai's article in JRAS, Vol.56 x 59, 1986, pp.7-8, pl.lb.
- W. Zwalf, Op.Cit., 1985, p.28. 10.
- D.C. Sarcar, Select Inscriptions, Vol.I, 1965, pp.224-25, and see E.I., Vol.II, pp.323 ff. 11.
- ARASI, 1929-30, pp.147-48. 12.
- Published in The Hindu daily, 12th september 1997 and also personally seen the contents 13. of the casket by the author.
- K. Walton Dobbins, Op.Cit., 1989, p.114 14.
- 15. A.Rea, op.Cit., 1969, p.13.
- **16**. E.I., Vol.X, No.654.
- 17. J. Marshall, Monuments of Sanchi, Vol.I, p.32.
- 18. Nayanjot Lahiri, Op.Cit., pp.96-99
- W.C. Peppe, *Op.Cit.*, 1898, pp.573-8. 19.
- K. Walton Dobbins, O.P.Cit., 1989, p.117 20.
- J. Marshall, Taxila, 1951, I, 373, III, Pl.110, a & d. 21.
- R. Subrahmanyam, Salihundam (A Buddhist site in Andhra Pradesh), Hyderabad, 1964, 22. p.115.
- G. Buhler, 'The Bhattiprõlu Inscriptions' E.I., Vol.II, pp. 326-27. 23.
- A.H. Longhurst, 'Excavations at Nagarjunakonda' ARASI, 1928-29, pp.147-48. 24.
- 'Relic caskets of Lalitagiri in Orissa', a paper submitted to International Seminar on 25. Marine Archaeology' held at Andhra University, Visakhapatnam, 1994-95.
- W.Zwalf, Op.Cit., 1985, p.28. 26.
- J. Marshall, Op.Cit., 1951, I 173, III, pl.36.h 27.

- 28. Manjushree Rao, Sanchi Sculptures (An Aesthetic and Cultural study), New Delhi, 1994, P.108.
- 29. N.R.V. Prasad, Op.Cit., 1994, pp.53-55.
- 30. G. Buhler, Op.Cit., pp.323-29.
- 31. D.C. Sarcar, Op.Cit., 1965, pp.50-52.
- 32. E.I., XXXV, pp.211-218.
- 33. Manjushree Rao, Op.Cit., 1994, P.108
- 34. N.R.V. Prasad, Recent Buddhist discoveries in Visakhapatnam district (Relic caskets from Bavikonda), Hyderabad, 1993, p.5.
- 35. *E.I.*, XX,p.326.
- 36. J. Burgess, The Buddhist stūpas of Amaravati & Jaggayyapeta, London, 1987, p.110.
- 37. E.I., XX, 1933, p.20.
- 38. G. Buhler, Op.Cit., pp.326-27.
- 39. K. Walton Dobbins, Op.Cit., 1989, p.117.
- 40. Manjushree Rao, Op.Cit., 1994, P.108-109.
- 41. The Hindu daily, 12th September 1997.
- 42. J. Marshall, *Taxila*, Vol.I, Cambridge, 1951, pp.256-57.
- 43. *E.I.* Vol. XVIII, pp.16-20.
- 44. A.Rea, Op.Cit., 1969, pp.7-8.
- 45. J. Burgess, *Op.Cit.*, 1887, pp.107-108.
- 46. N.R.V. Prasad, Op.Cit., 1994, pp.19-20, fig.5.
- 47. I.A.R., 1958-59, p.1.
- 48. A.H. Longhurst, 'Excavations at Nagarjunakonda', ARASI, 1928-29, pp.100-101.
- 49. Md. Hamid Quraishi, 'Excavations at Alluru, Gummadidurru and Nagarjunakonda', ARASI, 1926-27, PP.155-156.
- 50. ARASI, 1928-29, pp.148-49.
- 51. J. Burgess, *Op.Cit.*, 1970, p.99, pl.III, 8-12.
- 52. *E.I.*, II, pp.323-29.
- 53. N.R.V. Prasad, *Op.Cit.*, 1994, pl.XLVIII.
- 54. ARASI, (1907-08), 1909, pp.1-3.
- 55. Discovered in 1977 at Erravaram (East Godavari Dist.) and now on display in Kakinada Museum.
- 56. ARASI, (1910-11), 1914, PP.XLIII, fig.9, p.79.
- 57. J. Burgess, *Op.Cit.*, 1970, p.99.
- 58. R. Subrahmanyam, Op.Cit., 1964, pp.114-116.
- 59. T.N. Ramachandran, 'Nagarjunakonda' MASI, No.74, Delhi, 1953 p.13. and also see Manjushree Rao, *Op.Cit.*, 1994, pp.1
- 60. JASB, XXXI, 1862, pp.175-83.

- "Relic caskets of Lalitagari in Orissa", A paper submitted to International Seminar on 61. Marine Archaeology, at Andhra University, Visakhapatnam, 1994-95.
- W. Zwalf (ed.), Op.Cit., 1985, p.30. 62.
- N.R.V. Prasad, *Op.Cit.*, 1994, pl. fig.5. 63.
- A.Rea., Op.Cit., 1969, p.18-19. 64.
- **65**. W. Zwalf (ed.), Op. Cit., 1985, p.27.
- K.M. Srivastava, Op.Cit., 1986, p.35-37. 66.
- 67. ARASI, 1926-27, pp.155-56.
- 68. ARASI, 1928-29, PP.148-151.
- 69. Manjushree Rao, Op.Cit., 1994, p.104-111.
- 70. I.A.R - 1963-64, p.12 & 107.
- R. Subrahmanyam, 'Nagarjunakonda' in Buddhajayanti Souvenir, Jaggayyapet, 1956, 71. p.86.
- Annual Progress Report, Archaeological Survey, North-West provinces and Audh Circle, 72. 1887-89, pp.1-2.
- P.C. Mukherjee, A report on a Tour of Exploration of the Antiquities in the Tarai, Nepal, 73. Archaeological Survey of India, Imperial Series, XXVI, Part-I, 1901, Calcutta, pp.25-28.
- Debala Mitra, the relics of Sagrahawa, a study of the foundation deposits and the 74. Istikanyasa, in JAHRAS, No.XXXIII, Parts 2-4, 1973-74, pp.1-8.
- Pema Dorjee, stūpa and its Technology (A Tibeto Buddhist Perspective), New Delhi, *7*5. 1986, pp.40-42.
- I.K. Sarma, 'Alampur Temples: Rare evidences on Constructional Modes and 76. Consecrational rites', in Sri-Ramachandrika, Ed. A.V.N. Murthy and I.K. Sarma, 1993, pp.351-59.

Chapter VI

RELIC FESTIVAL

The Buddhists strongly believe the age old tradition i.e. any fragment or part of a man's body either its detachment or transformation continues to maintain inseparable relation with the personality of person to whom it belonged. It is on this philosophical concept, the corporeal remains of Lord Buddha were consecrated in several *stūpas* for worship. The *stūpas* containing the sacred relics were considered by the Buddhists as physical and eternal presence of the Lord Buddha himself. The text *Saddharma Pundarika sutra* (3rd century A.D.) also alludes the same.

The Mahāparinibbāṇa sutta also mentions the construction of stūpas, the main objective of which was to worship the relics of holymen and all resplendent Buddha. Buddha himself ordained that the stūpas can only be erected for Buddha, Pratyeka Buddhas, Arhats and Chakravartins. It resulted in the worship of the relics of Buddha.¹ Devotees and lay worshippers during those times celebrated the relic consecration festival with much pomp and solemnity and the same tradition continued for many generations afterwards.

Early inscriptions of Āndhradēśa allude to the practice of consecrating the relics which was celebrated on a large scale by royal people and local potentates. In this connection, it is to be mentioned that one of the relic casket inscriptions from Bhattiprolu² informs the elaborate arrangements made by a local king called Rāja Kubëraka, on the occasion of the consecration of the 'relics of the Master' in the Mahāchaitya. It obviously reveals the religious zeal and veneration shown towards the worship of relics by the royalty, traders, guilds and Buddhist monks of different regions of Āndhradēśa. It may also be seen that the Mauryan king Asōka instructed the rājas under his jurisdiction, to worship the relic shrines of the Master, as one of their duties.³ The āyaka pillar inscriptions found at Dhānyakaṭaka,⁴ Jaggayyapeta⁵ and Nagarjunakonda⁶ refer to the consecration

of the relics of the Master. Probably, the existing dilapidated stupas were renovated, additions and embellishments were made to the stupas in order to obtain a new look, particularly at the time of reconsecration of the relics of the Master. The Buddhist work Daladavamsa ⁷ describes the terrible battles fought by the kings, especially between Magadha and Kalinga, for the acquisition of the 'tooth-relic of the Master'. It shows the deep religious sanctity attached to the corporeal remains of the Master.

Same veneration was shown, while consecrating the relic too. This was done with much pomp on a large scale in accordance with the rules laid down by the holy Buddhist Texts. In addition to the Indian sources, Foreign accounts also furnish some details about the relic festival. Fahien,8 the noted Chinese traveller furnishes a vivid account of the tooth relic festival of Buddha. According to him, the festival was celebrated in the middle of 3rd month of the year. Ten days before the commencement of the occasion, the road ways leading to the Abhayagiri vihāra were cleaned and decorated with flowers by the monks. Then the king sat on grandly caparisoned elephant, and a man dressed in royal robes beating the drum make the following proclamation:

"The Bodhisattva, during these Asankhyëya-kalpas, manifested his activity, and did not spare his own life. He gave up kingdom, city, wife, and son; he plucked out his eyes and gave them to another; he cut off a piece of his flesh to ransom the life of a dove; he cut off his head and gave it as alms; he gave his body to feed a starving tigress; he grudged not his marrow and brains. In many such ways as these did he undergo pain for the sake of all living beings. And so it was, that, having become Buddha, he continued in the world for forty five years, preaching his law, teaching and transforming, so that those who had no rest found rest, and the unconverted were converted. When his connexion with the living was completed, he attained Parinirvana".

After this proclamation was made, the king arranged an exhibition on either side of the road with five hundred men which represents the previous Buddhas very elegantly and prominently viz., 'here as Sudāma, there as Sama, now as the king of elephants and then as a stag or a horse'. On the final day, the relic of Buddha, was taken in procession through the main streets of the city. The people sprinkled sweet scented water and offered flower wreaths and thus, it arrives into the hall of Buddha in the Abhayagiri vihāra. The monks who gathered there, burn incense, lamps, and render all

the ceremonial services day and night without stopping for ninety days. After that, the relics were returned to the vihāra. It is very interesting to note that the procession taken out during the relic festival was so naturally depicted in one of the panels of Nagarjunakonda (Pl.42). Hieun Tsang also mentions that sufficient care was taken in cleaning the tooth relic, personally by the king, three times a day with sandal powder, perfumes and milk. Such was the reverence and faith shown by the royalty towards the sacred relics of the Buddha. The festival was thus observed with great devotion and splendour through the ages. The worship of the relics of Lord Buddha was meticulously depicted in the sculptural panels of Amaravati (Pl.43) and Nagarjunakonda (Pl.44).

It is interesting to note that the relics and replicas of two caskets of Sariputra and Mahāmogallana which were presented to the Mahabodhi society for enshrinement in the Chetiyagiri vihāra at Sanchi9 are being taken out once a year on the occasion of Vaisākha Buddha Pūrnima for celebrating the relic festival. Still the practice of worshipping the relics with great honour on Buddha Pūrnima day is being continued every year.

REFERENCES

- Susheela Pant, The Origin and Development of Stupa Architecture in India, Varanasi, 1976, p.67.
- G. Buhler, 'The Bhattiprolu Inscriptions', E.I.II, pp.326-27. 2.
- 3. D.C. Sarcar, Select Inscriptions, Delhi, p.36.
- E.I., Vol.XX, p.326.
- J. Burgess, The Buddhist stūpas of Amaravati & Jaggayyapeta, 1887, p.110. 5.
- 6. E.I., XX, p.20.
- Dighanikaya, p.138 and also see Dattavamsa, pp.284-287, 295-96.
- James Legge, A Record of Buddhistic Kingdoms. (The Chinese Monk Fahien of His travels 8. in India and Ceylon) 1886, pp.105-07.
- S.K. Bhattacharya, 'Buddhist relic caskets in Indian Museums, Puratattva, Vol.17, p.47.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Agrawala, V.S., Saranath, New Delhi, 1957

Indian Art, Varanasi, 1965

Bapat, P.V., (Ed) 2500 Years of Buddhism, Delhi, 1987

Barua, B.M., Barhut, Vols.I & II, Calcutta, 1934, Vol. III, 1937

Barret, Douglas Sculptures from Amaravati in the British Museum, Lon-

don, 1954

Beal, Samuel, Travels of Fa-hien and Sung-yun, Buddhist Pilgrims

from China to India, 400 A.D.-518 A.D., London, 1869

Bhattacharya, S.K., 'Buddhist relic caskets in Indian Museums', in Puratattva,

Vol.17

Bhattacharya, B.C., 'Harekela and the ruins ar Mainamati', IHQ, Vol. XX,

pp.1-8, 1944

Buhler, G., 'The Bhattiprolu Inscriptions', EI, Vol.II

Burgess, J.,

The Buddhist Stupas of Amaravati and Jaggayyapeta,

London, 1887

Cowell, E.B., and Neil, R.A., Divyavadana, Cambridge, 1886

The Jataka or Stories of the Buddha's Former Births,

London, 1957.

Debala Mitra, Buddhist Monuments, Calcutta, 1971

'The relics of Sagrahawa - A study of the foundation deposits and the Istikanyasa' in, Jahrs, Vol. XXXIII, pts.

2&4, Hyderabad, 1973-74

Desai, D. 'Sopara – Pandit Bhagawan Lal Indraji and After' JASB,

Vols 56,59,1986, pp.7-8

Devendra Handa & Ashvini Ratna Chandrika (Panorama of Oriental studies, Shri R.C.

Agrawal., (Ed) Agrawala Festschrift) Delhi, 1989

Dikshit, M.G., Kaundinyapura, Delhi, 1968

Dutta, Nalinaksha, Early Monastic Buddhism, 2 Vols., Calcutta, 1941 and

1945

Dutta, S.,

Buddhist Monks and Monasteries in India, London, 1960

Fabri, C.L., 'Excavations at Nagarjunakonda', ARASI, Delhi, 1930

Fausboll, V., The Suttanipata, 1973

Ganapati Sastri, Arya Manjusri Mulakalpa, 3 parts, Trivendrum, 1897

Geiger, William, The Mahavamsa, PTS, London, 1958

Ghosh, A.,

An Encyclopedia of Indian Archaeology, Delhi, 1989

Gopalachary,K., Early History of the Andhra Country, Madras, 1976

Hamid Quriashi, Md., 'Excavations at Alluru, Gummadidurru and

Nagarjunakonda', ARASI, 1926-27

Horner, I.B., (Tr), Cullavagga, Sacred Books of the Buddhists, Vol. XX,

London, 1952

Indrajit,B., Antiquarian remains at Sopara and Padana', JBRAS,

Vol.XV, Bombay, 1981 & 1983

Ingholt, H., Gandharan Art in Pakistan, Newyork, 1957

Kern, H., Manual of Indian Buddhism, Strassburg, 1886

Krishna Murthy,K., Mirrors of Indian Culture, Delhi, 1982

Krishna Sastry, V.V., Thotlakonda (A Buddhist site in Andhra Pradesh)

Hyderabad, 1992

Lal, B.B., 'Sisupalgarh-1948', AI, Vol. V.

Law, B.C., (ed)

Dattavamsa, Punjab Sanskrit Series, No. III, Lahore, 1925

Legge, James,

A record of Buddhist Kingdoms, being an account of the

Chinese Monk Fa-Hien and his travels in Indian and

Ceylon, Oxford, 1886

Longhurst, A.H., 'The Buddhist Monuments at Guntupalle, Krishna

district' ARASI, Madras, 1916-17

'Report on the Buddhist remains at Salihundam, Ganjam

district,' ARASI Madras, 1919-20

'Excavations at Nagarjunakonda' ARASI, Calcutta, 1927-

28

'The Buddhist Antiquities of Nagarjunakonda', Madras Presidency, Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India,

Delhi, 1938

Ludwig Bachhofer, Early Indian Sculpture, 1929

Majundar Sastri,S., Cunningham's Ancient Geography of India, Calcutta,

1924

Majundar, S.N., (ed)

J.W.Mc. Crindle, Ancient India as described by Ptolemy,

Calcutta, 1972

Manjushree Rao Sanchi Sculptures (An Aesthetic and Cultural Study) New

Delhi, 1994.

Marshall, John, 'Exploration 'Ghantasala and Salihundam' ARASI,

Calcutta, 1922

The Buddhist Art of Gandhara, Cambridge, 1960

Mehta, R.N., &

Chowdhary, S.N. Excavation at Devanimore, Baroda, 1966

Mukherjee, P.C., 'A report on a Tour of exploration of the antiquities in

the Tarai, Nepal, ASI, Imperial Series, XXVI, Pt.I, Calcutta,

1901

Mukherjee, R.K., Ancient India, Allahabad, 1958

Nandaragikar, (ed & Tr) Raghuvamsa, Vol. VI, BOmbay, 1897

Nayanjot Lahiri 'A little known Buddhist Relic stupa in the Santhal

Parganas', in Puratatva Vol. No.2.

Pattanayak, A.K., 'Palur through the ages' Ithihas, Vol. XXI, Hyderabad,

1995

Pema Dorjee Stupa and its Technology (A Tibeto-Buddhist Perspective)

New Delhi.

Peppe, W.C., 'The Piprahwa Stupa containing relics of Buddha'

JRASGBI, 1898

Pradeep Mohanty, (Etal) 'Archaeological Investigations into Ptolemys' Paloura',

in News letter AH-SAN., Madras, 1997

Prasad N.R.V., Bavikonda (A Buddhist Site in North Coastal Andhra

Pradesh), Hyderabad, 1994.

Raghavacharya, K., 'Dharanikota and its Western Contacts' in, QHRS Vol.XII,

No.3, Calcutta, 1972-73.

Rama, K., Buddhist Art of Nagarjunakonda, Delhi, 1995.

Ramachandran, K.S., Archaeology of South India, Tamilnadu, New Delhi, 1980.

Ramachandraiah, O., Excavations at Jami' 1971: A summary of excavations

results', JAHRS, Hyderabad, 1976.

Ramachandran, T.N., 'The Nagapattinam and other Buddhist bronzes in

Madras Museum, Bulletin of the Madras Museum, New

Series, General Section, VII, No.1, Madras, 1954.

'An inscribed pot and other Buddhist remains
Salihundam', E.I., Vol.XXVIII, 1949-50.
Nagarjunakonda, MASI, No.74, Delhi, 1953.

Ramachandra, T., &
Venkataramanyya, B.,

Lalitavistaram, Madras, 1969

Rama Rao, M.,

Buddha Jayanti Souvenir, Jaggayyapet, 1956

Rayachoudhari, H.C.,

Political History of Ancient India, Calcutta, 1983 South Indian Buddhist Antiquities, Madras, 1894

Rea, A.,

'Excavations at Amaravati' ARASI, Calcutta, 1905-06

Rhys Davids, T.W.,

'Buddhist Suttas', The Sacred Books of the East, Vol.XI,

Oxford, 1881.

'Thomas Watters on Yuan Chwang Travels', Part II, Delhi, 1961.

Sarcar, D.C.,

Select Inscriptions, Vol.I., Delhi, 1965

Sarkar, H.,

Studies in Early Buddhist Architecture of India, Delhi,

1966

Sarma, I.K.,

'Select Inscriptions of Nagarjunakonda', in, JOR, Vol.XXIX, 1959-60

'Some more Inscriptions from Amaravati Excavations and the chronology of Mahastupa', *JESI*, Vol.I, 1974 'Epigraphical discoveries at Guntupalli' in, *JESI*, Vol.V, 1978

Studies in Early Buddhist monuments and Brahmi Inscriptions of Andhradesa, Nagpur, 1988

'Alampur Temples: Rare evidences on constructional modes and consecrational rites', in, *Sri Ramachandrika*, A.V.N. Murthy, and I.K. Sarma (Eds), Delhi, 1993.

Sastry, A.M.,

'Some aspects of Buddhism in Andhra Pradesh', in RSRC,

Memoir, No.1, Guntur, 1983

Sastry, P.V.P.,

'Hyderabad Prakrit Inscription of Govindaraja Vihara',

in, JESI, 1984

Andhradesa Charitralo Dharanikota', in Dhanyakataka

in Making of Andhra History, Guntur, 1987.

Inscriptions of Andhra Pradesh: Nalgonda District, Vol.I,

Hyderabad, 1992.

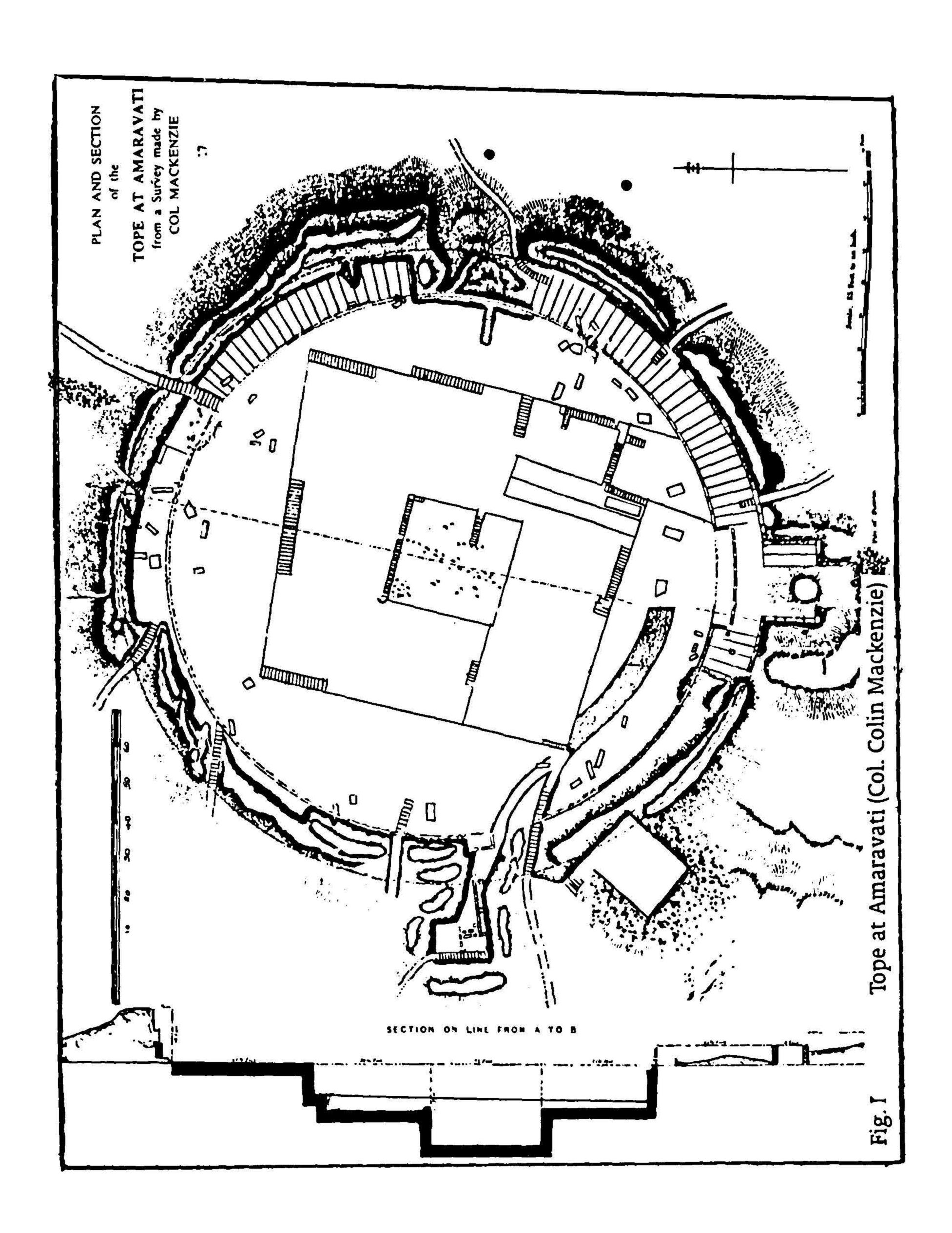
Sastry, T.V.G., (ed)

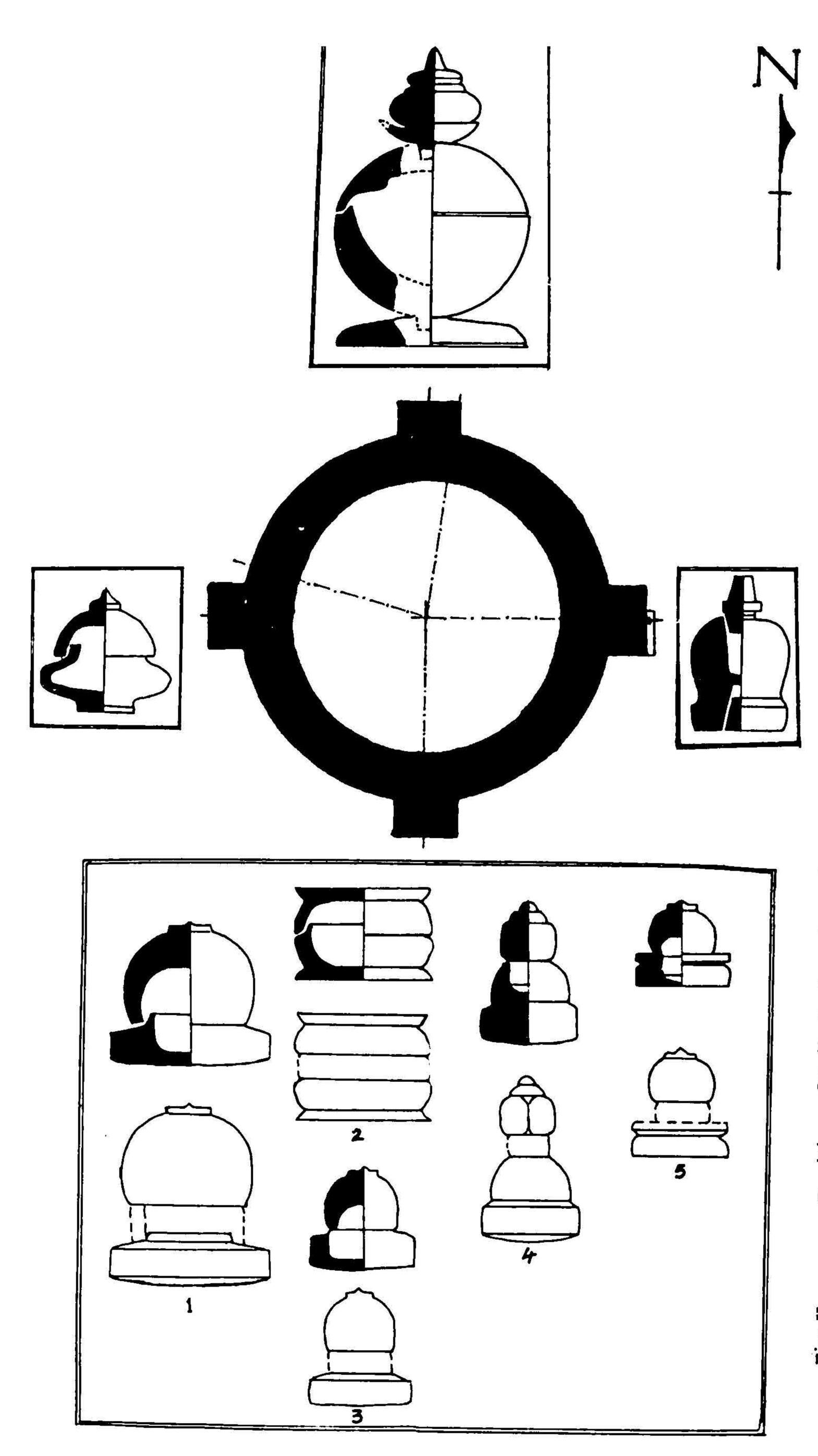
Vaddamanu Excavations, Hyderabad, 1992

Sastry, V.V.K.,

Three Grants of Prithvi Sri Mularaja from Kondavidu,

Hyderabad, 1992





Position of Relic Caskets in Mahachaitya, Amaravati

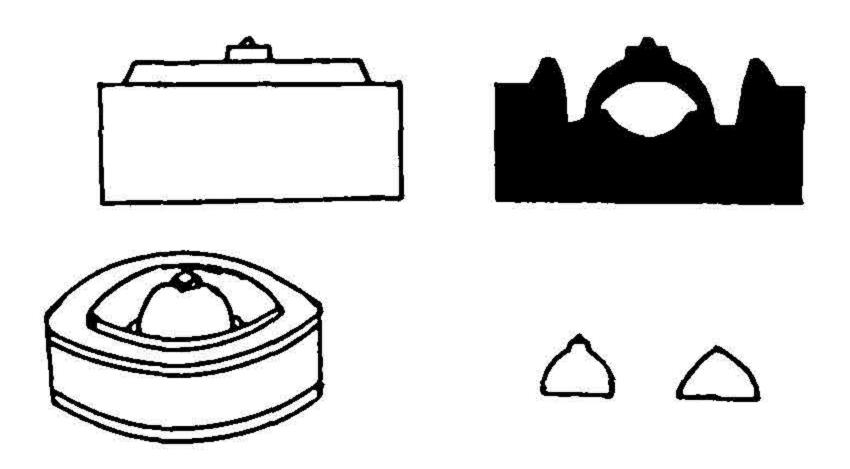


Fig. III Casket Unearthred by local Zamindar (By James: Burgess)

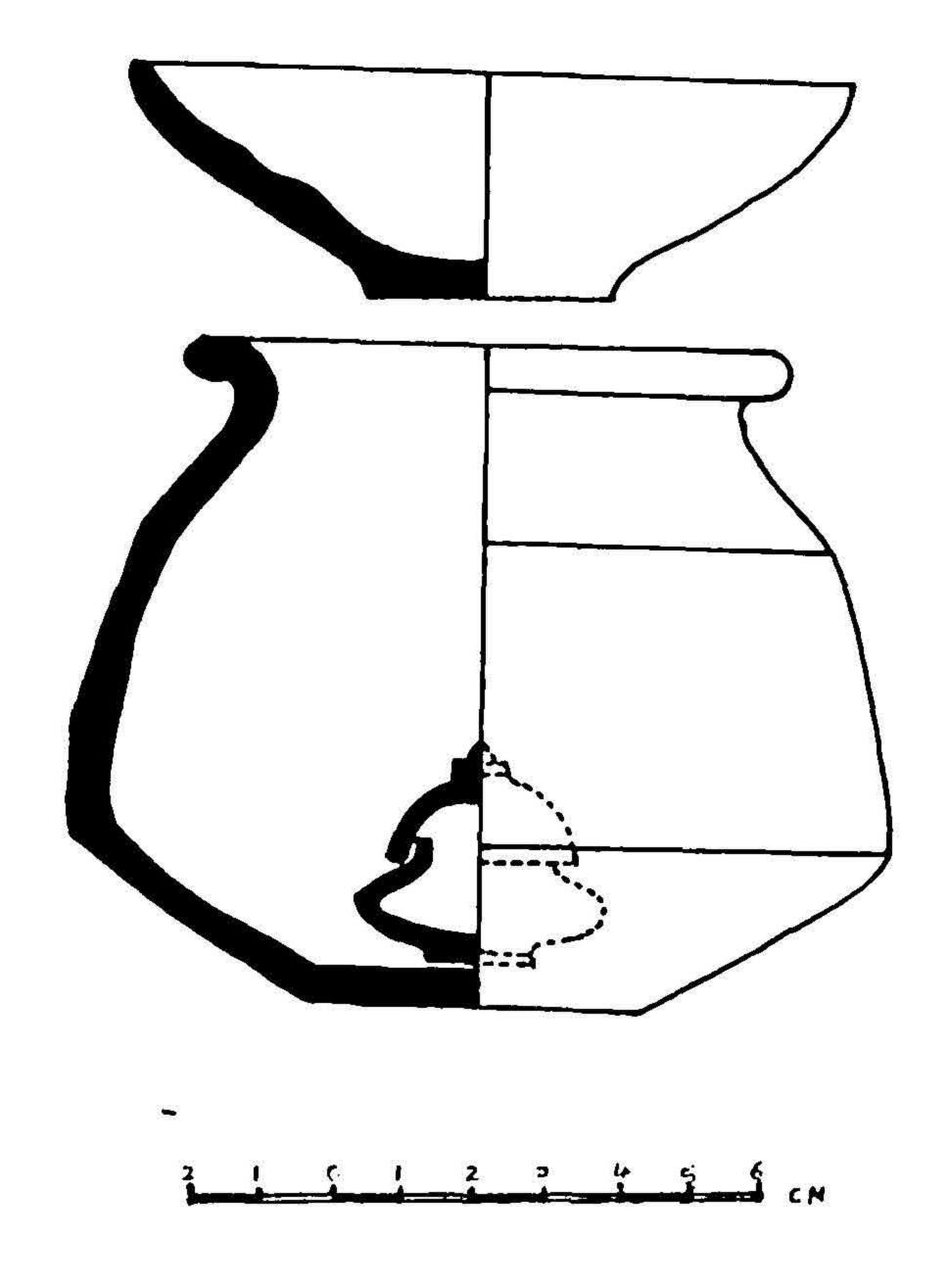
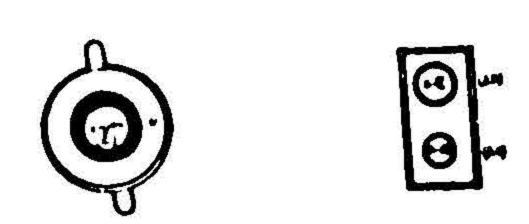


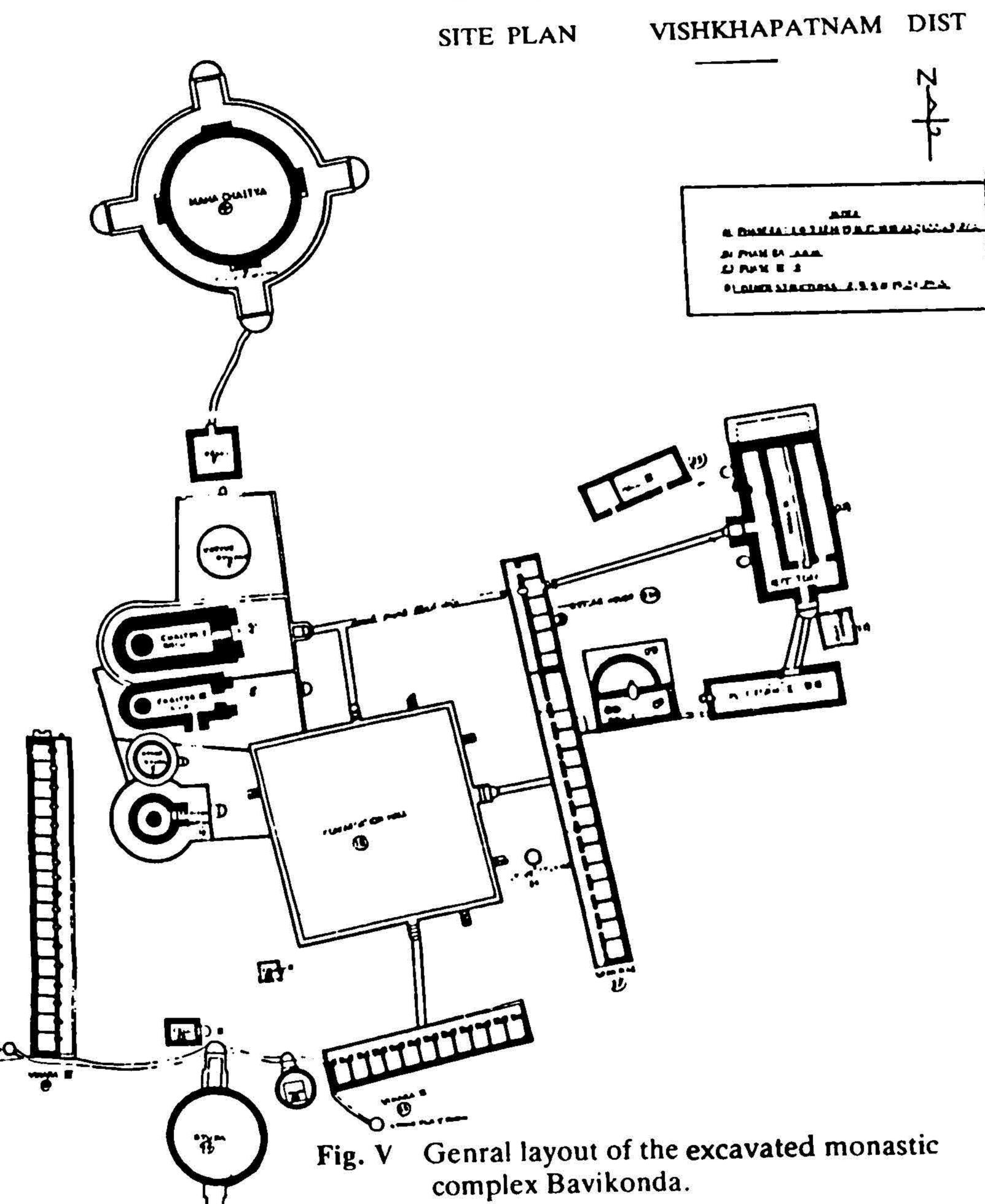
Fig. IV Clay receptacle and crystal casket from the western side of the Mahachaitya Amaravati





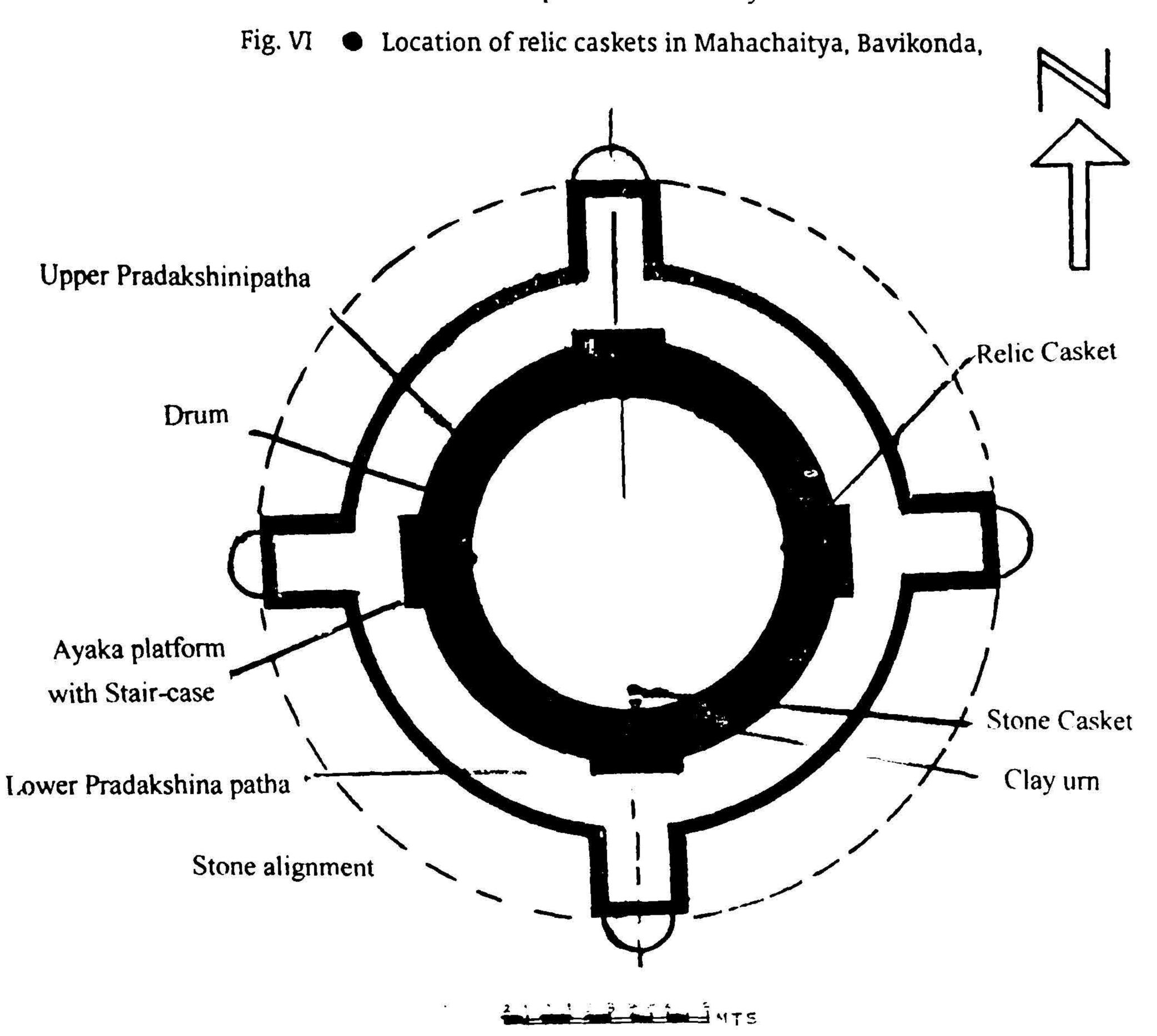


BAVIKONDA EXCAVATIONS

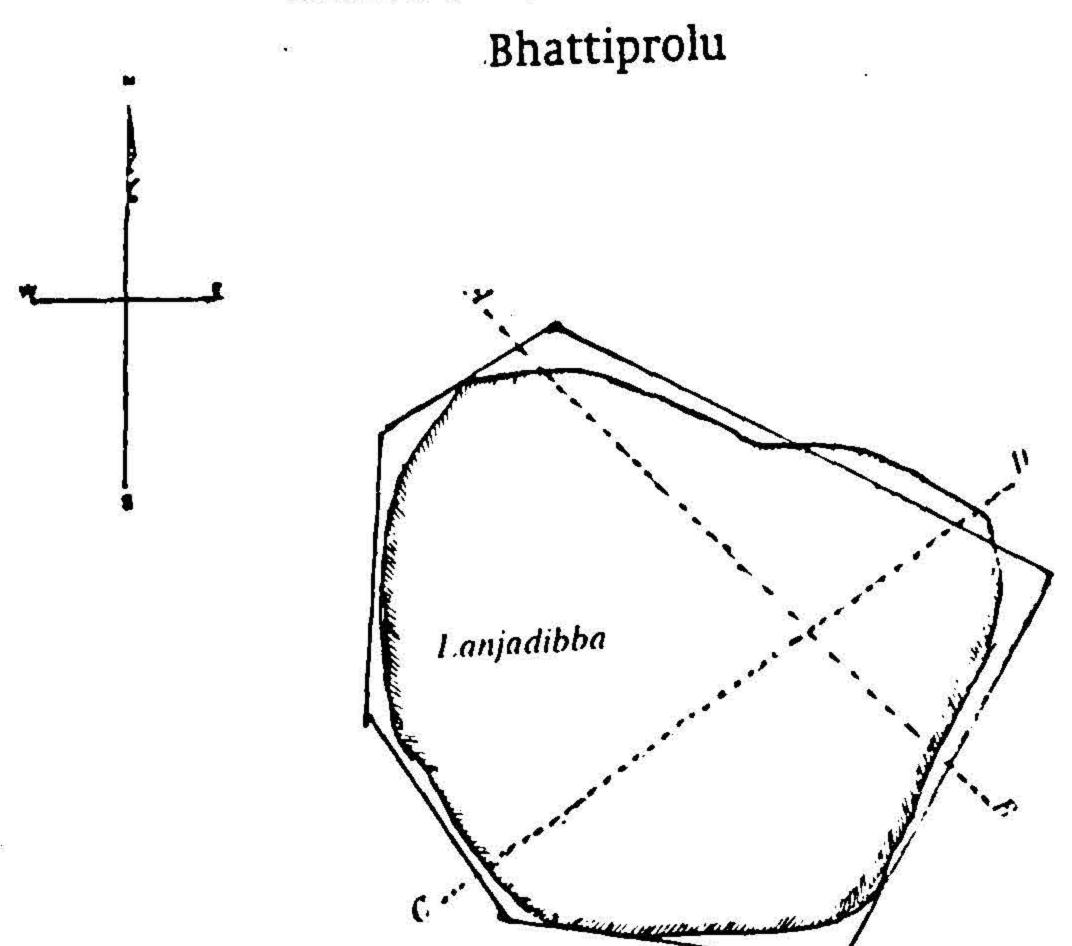


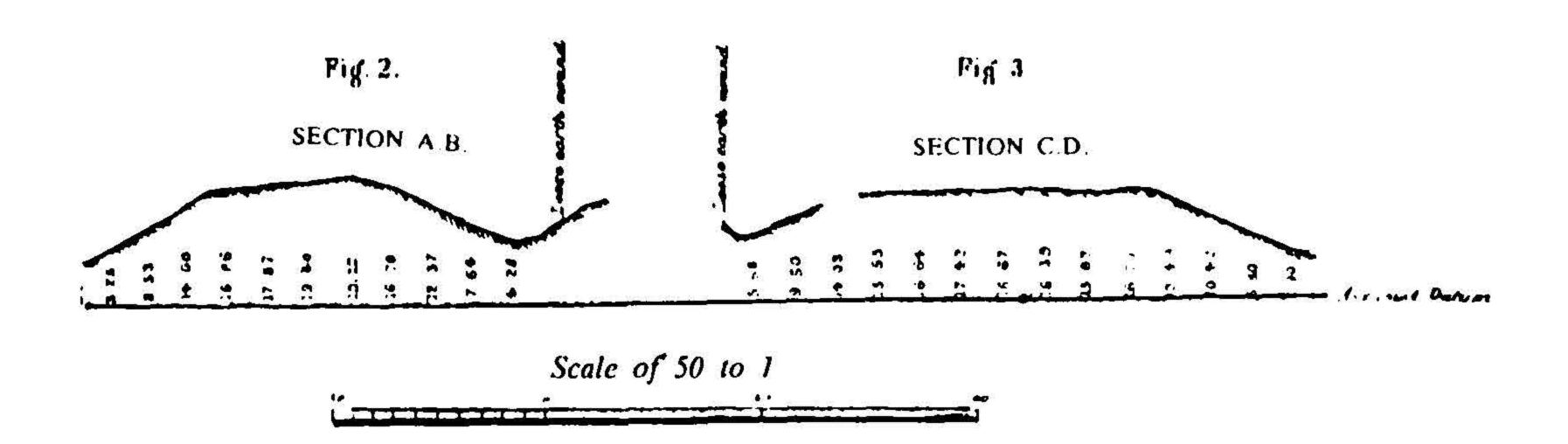
BAVIKONDA

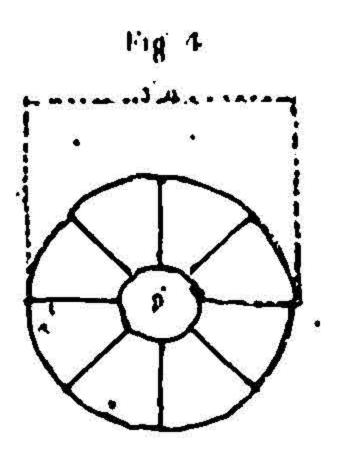
Ground plan of Mahachaitya



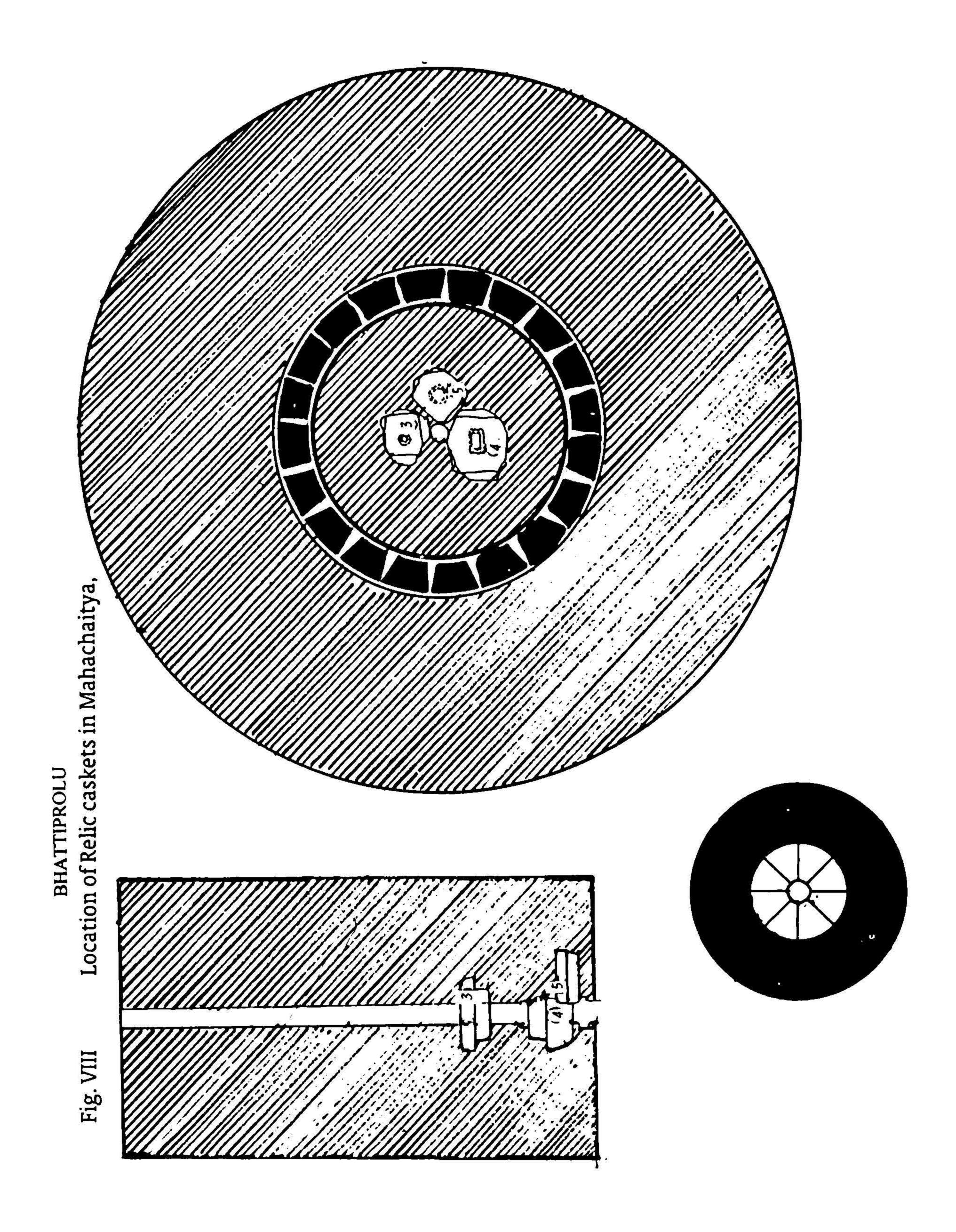
SKETCHOF LANJADIBBA

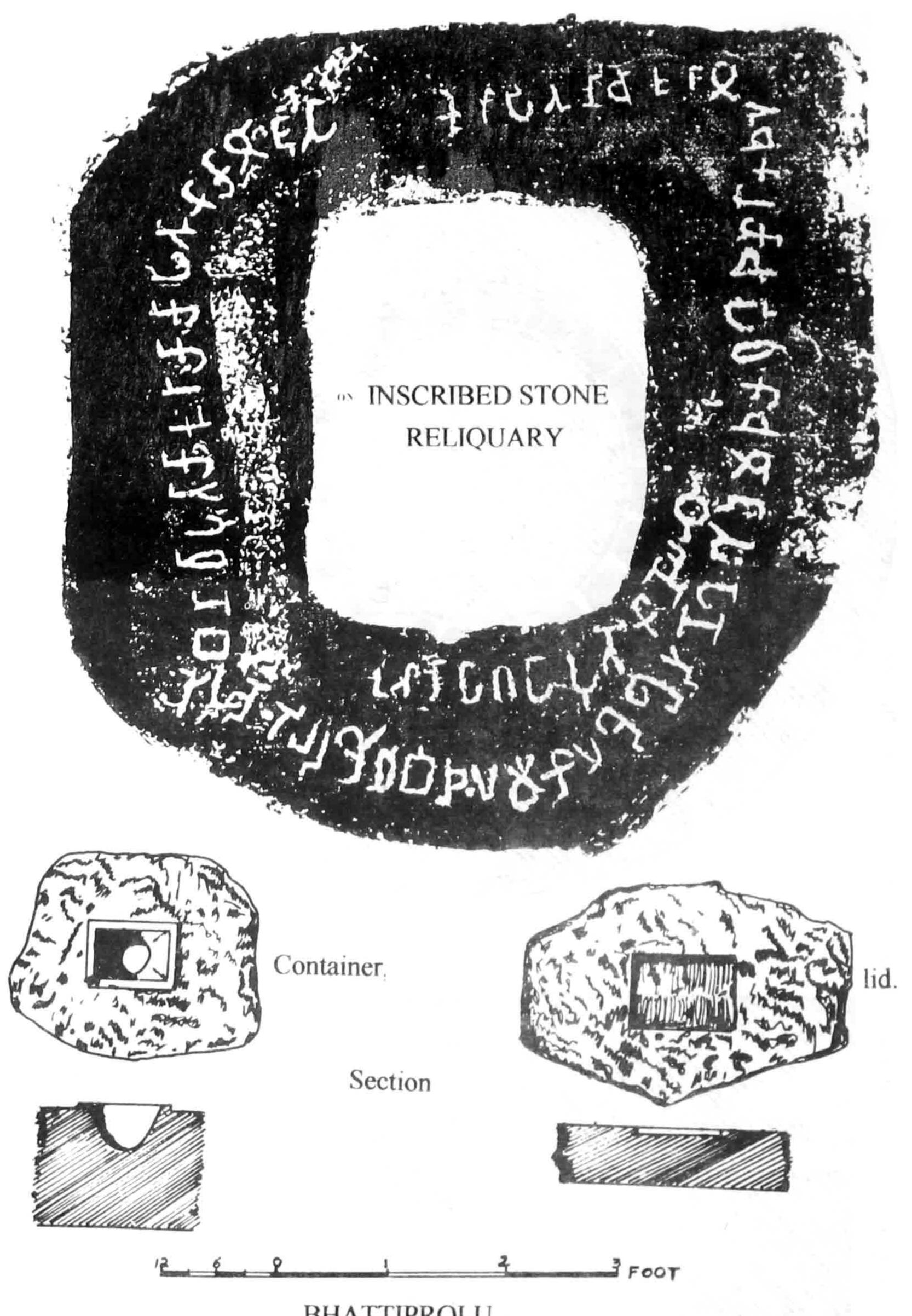




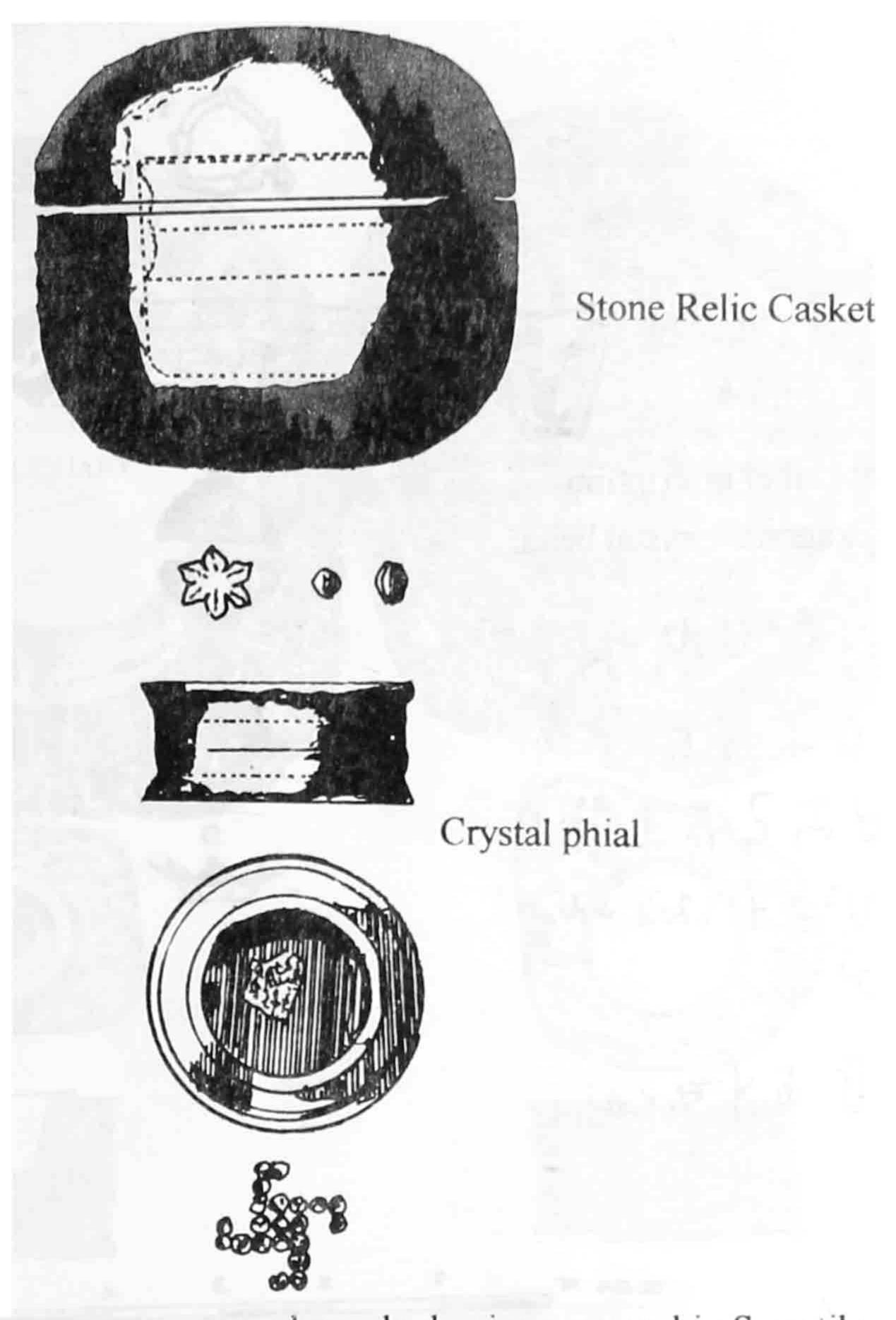


(Boswell 1870) Fig. VII. Sketch of Lanjadibba (Baswell 1870)





BHATTIPROLU, Fig. IX Stone Relic Casket No.3

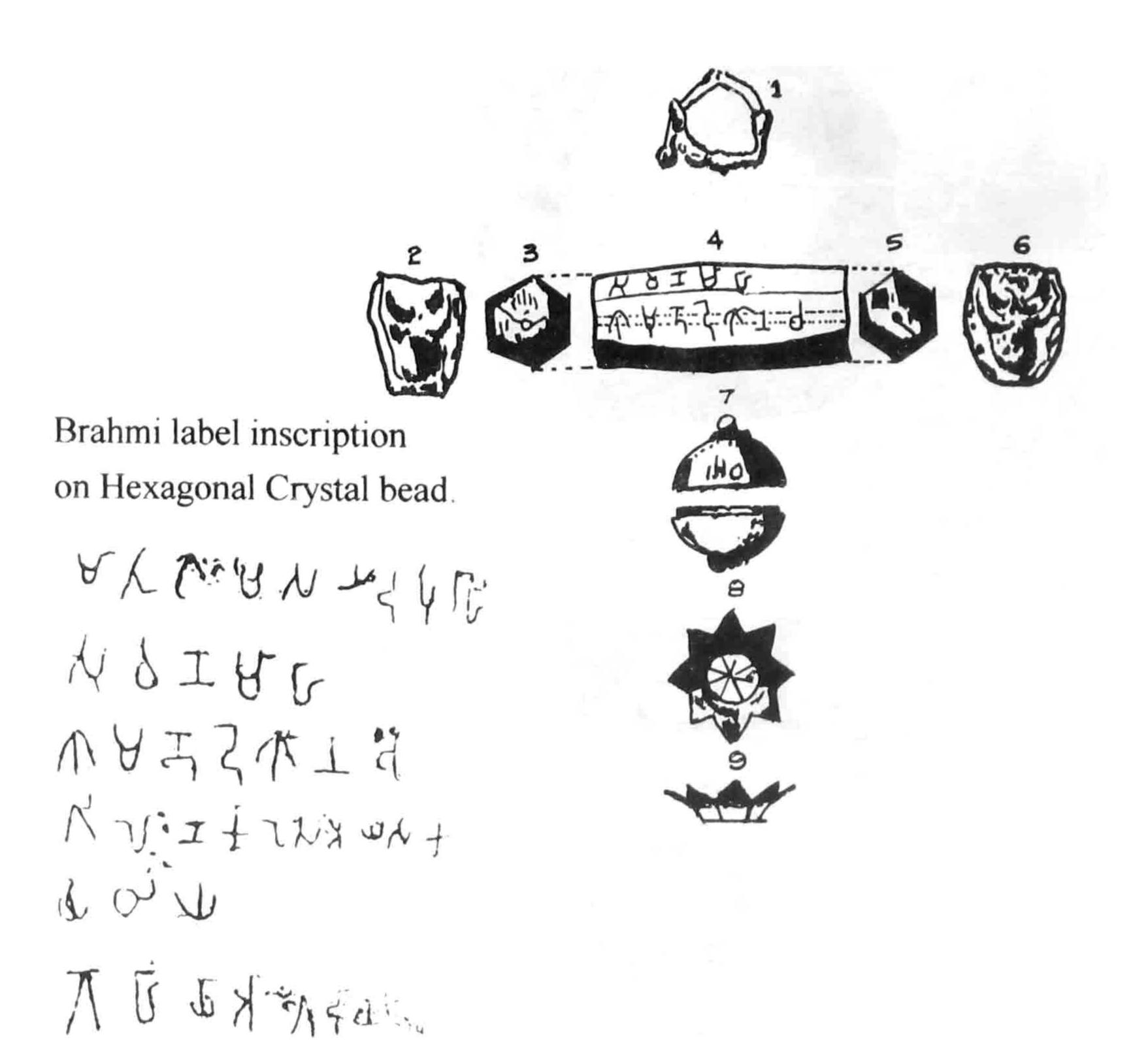


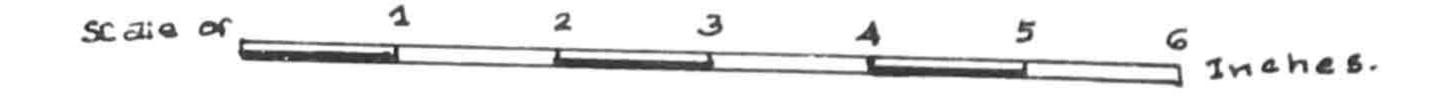
punch marked coins arranged in Swastika



Fig. X Principal relics from Crystal Casket No.3

BHATTIPROLU





BHATTIPROLU

Fig. XI Relics from Casket No.3.

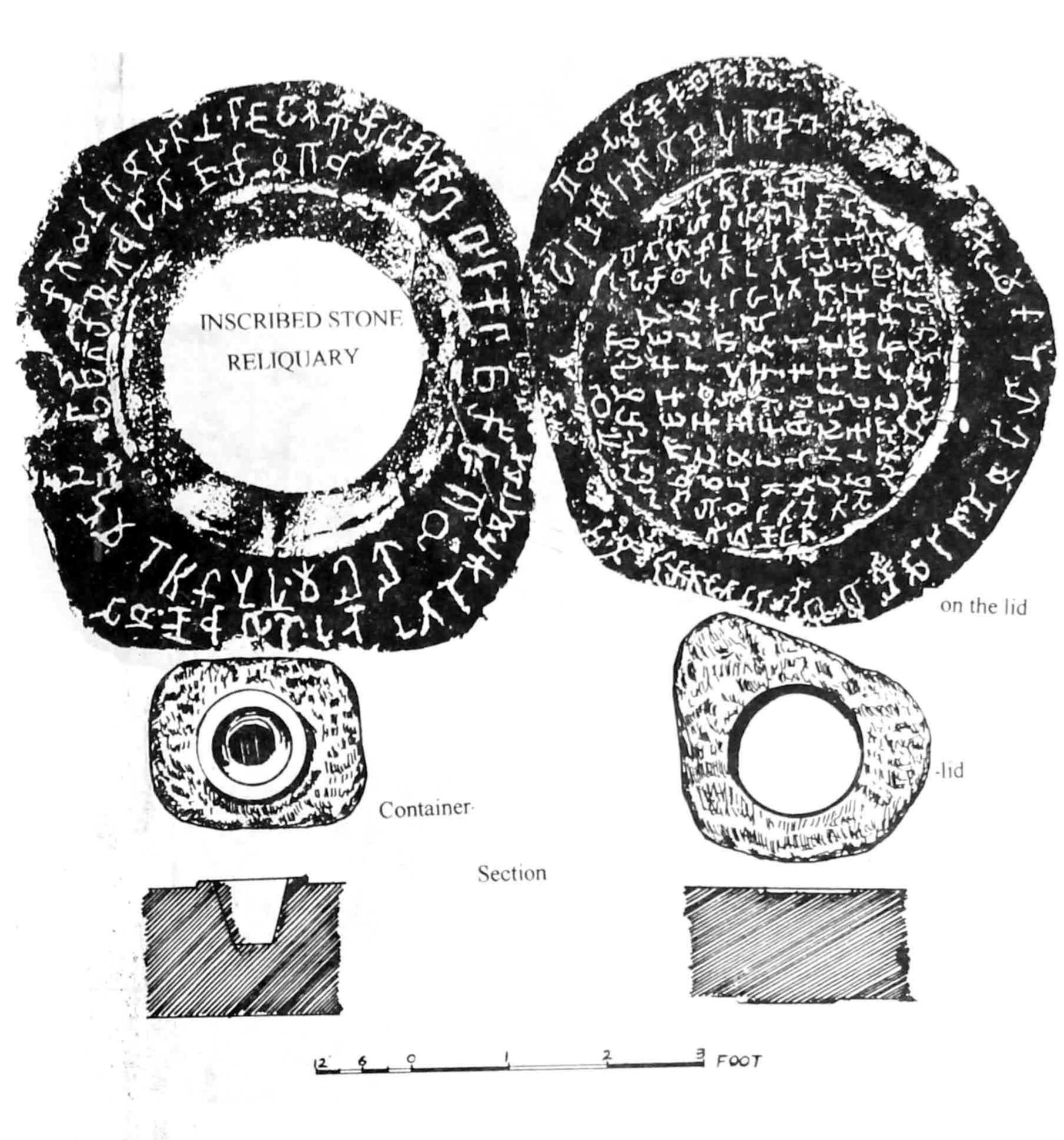


Fig. XII Stone Relic Casket No. 4.

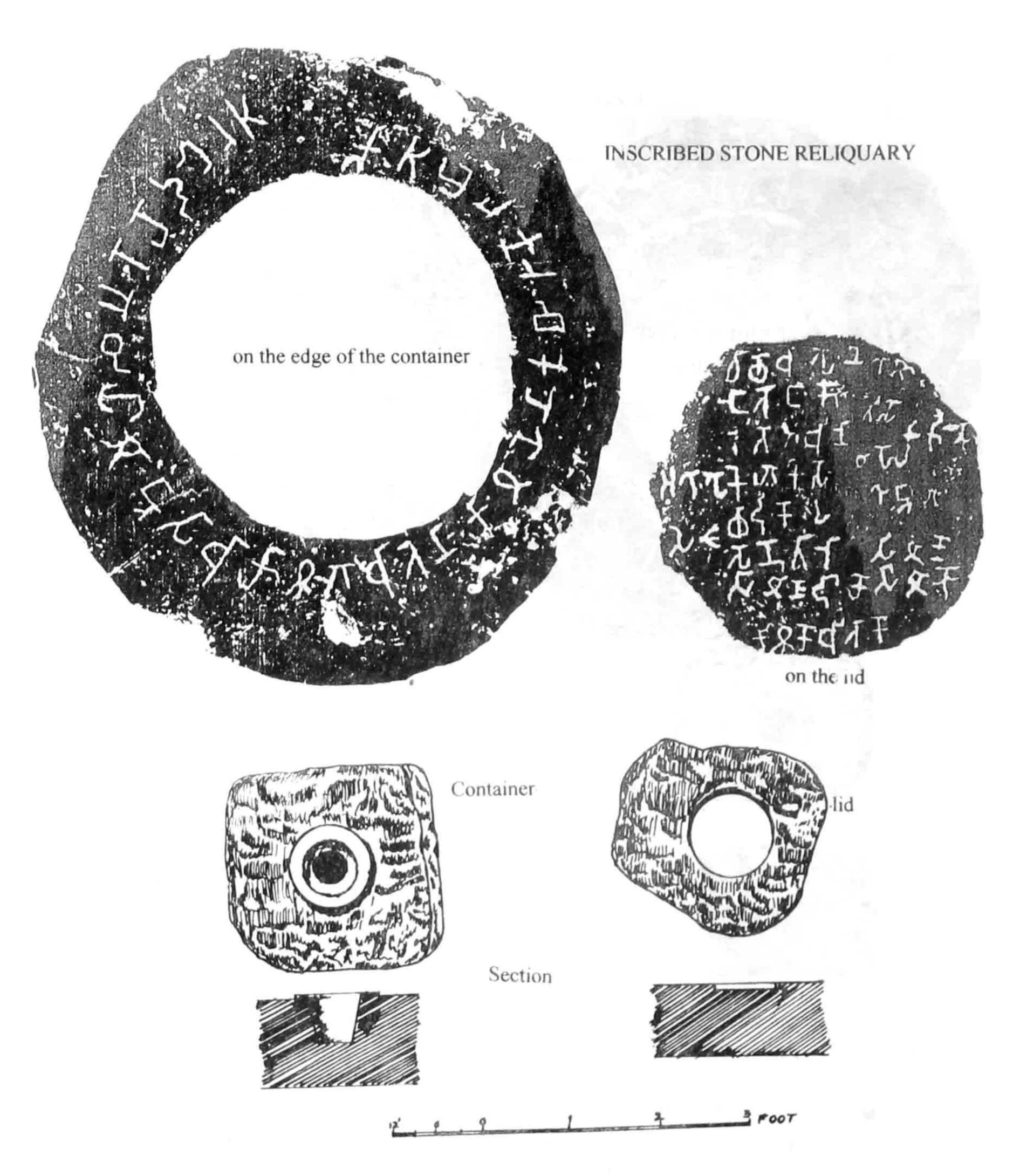


Fig. XIII Stone Relic Casket No. 5.

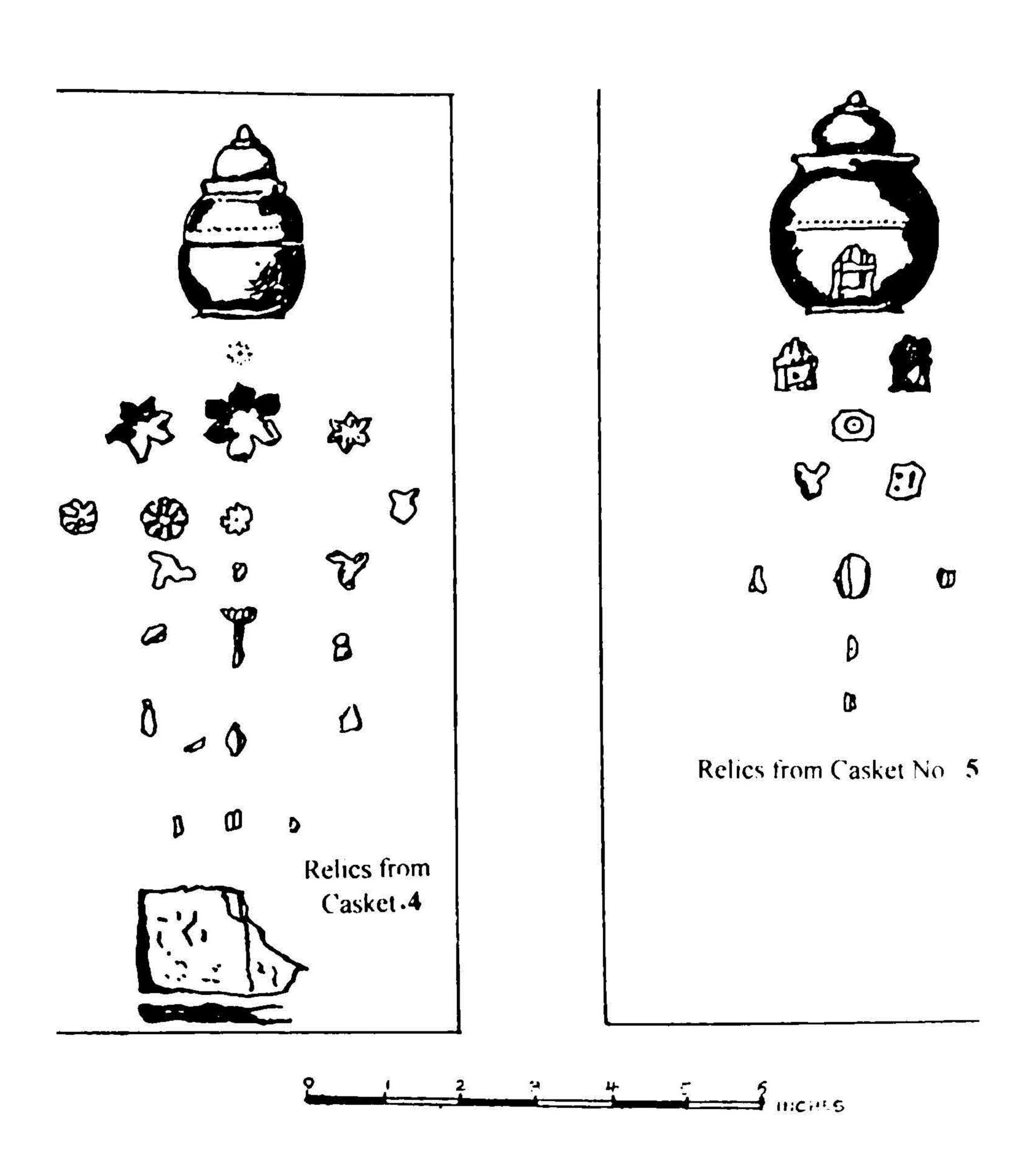


Fig. XIV Relics from Casket Nos.4 & 5

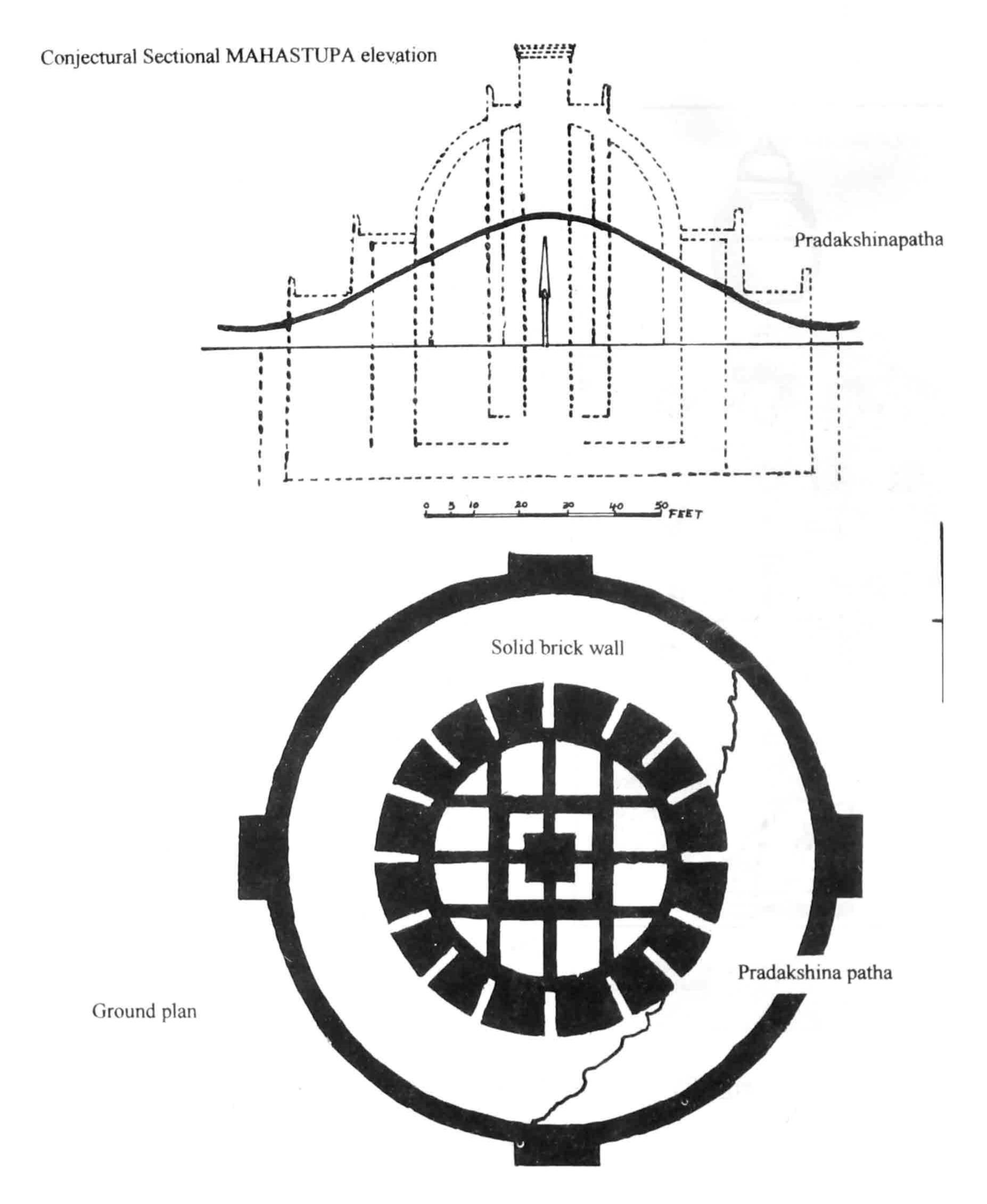


Fig.XV Mahastupa, Ghantasala

GHANTASALA

Relic Casket

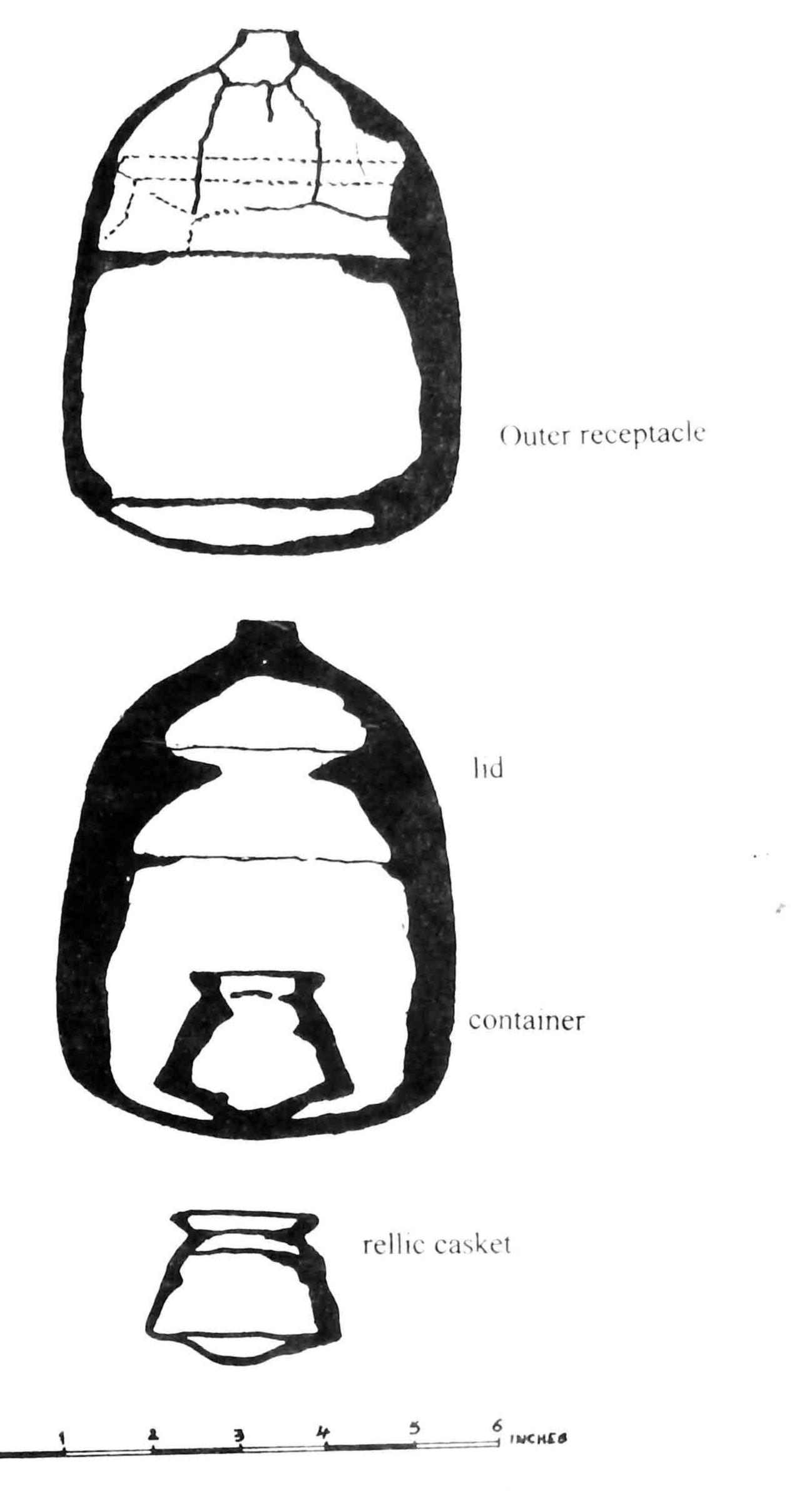
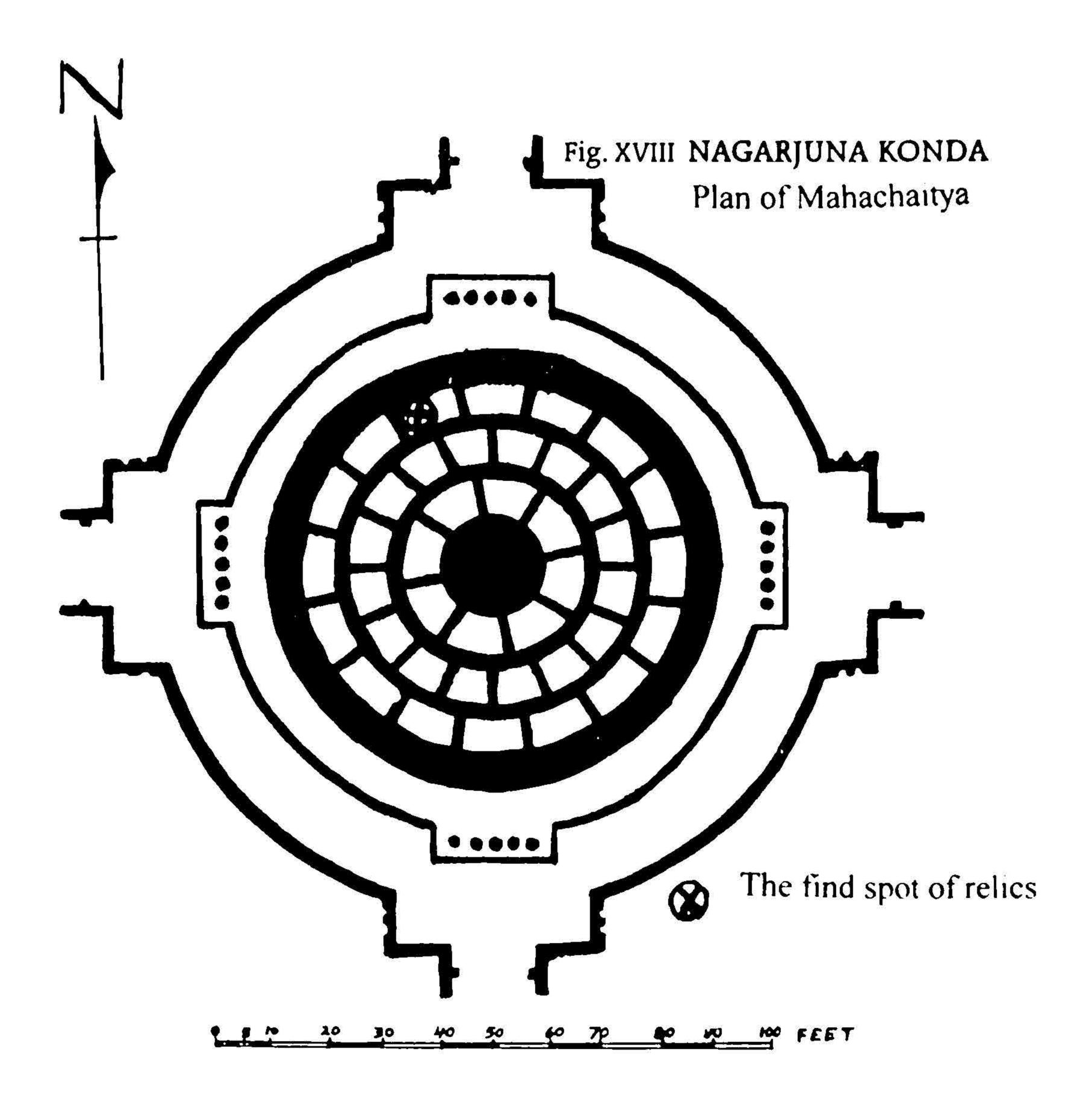


Fig. XVI Relic Caskets, Ghantasala

BOKALI FLASLE CITE 0 0 54 11 154 27 26 8 Δ 32 limi 0 HO T 23 32 A जि किल्ल 00 000000 THE PARTY OF THE P 5 山間門 7 AT NAGARJUNAKONDA 9 0 3 3 THITT 門 田田 0 3 200 FEET 0 0 (3) 24 ó THE PARTY ₩. 8 AD Θ, 8 80 圖 C 25 回 **(**) 20 TILLI

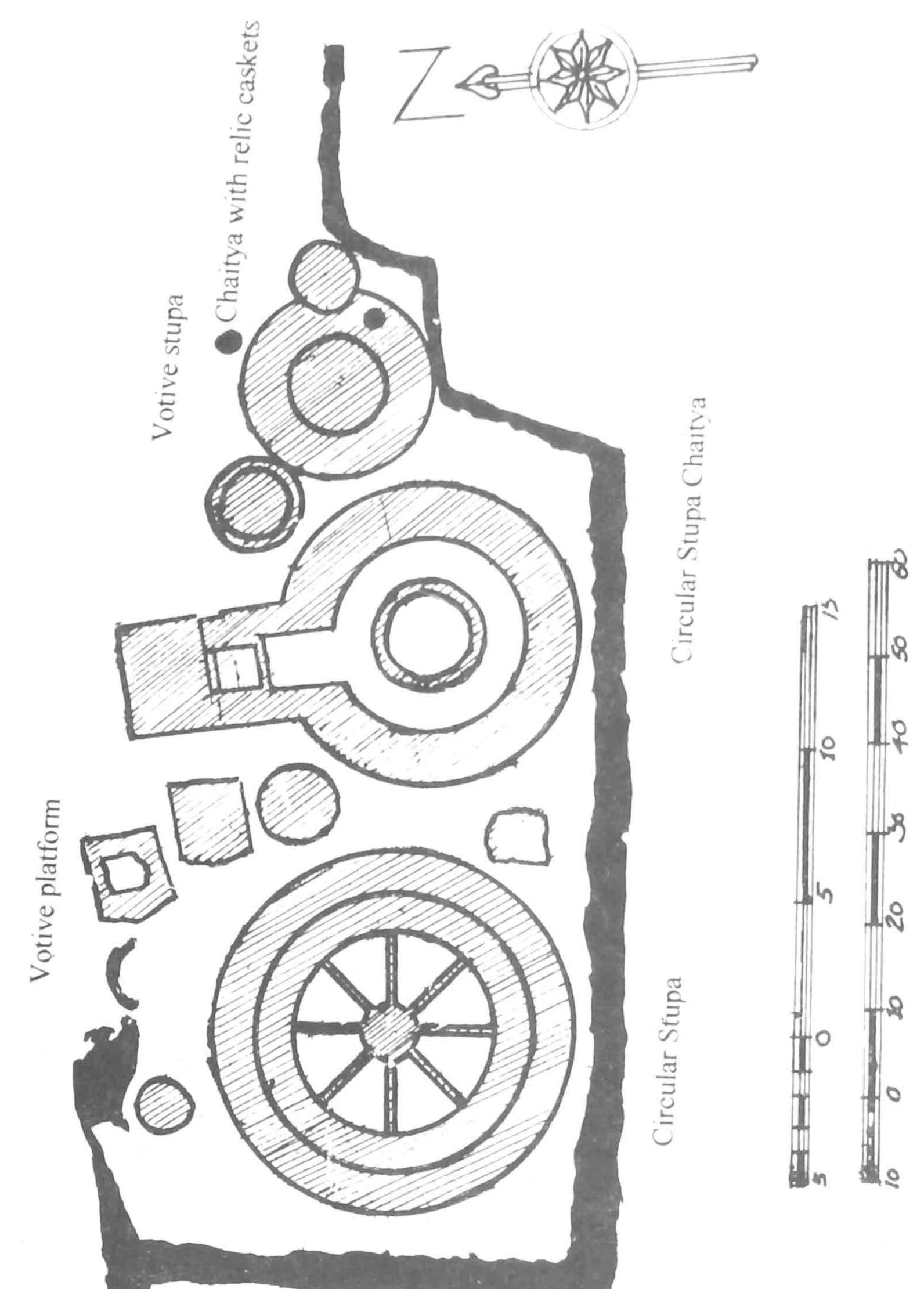
Fig. XVII STUPAS & MONASTERIES



Maha chaitya The Mahachaitya with the stone reliquaries SALIHUNDAM Votive stupa Fig. XIX

Stone relic caskets 7 2

Circular Stupa Chaitya



Cylindrical Terracotta relic caskets from votive stupa,

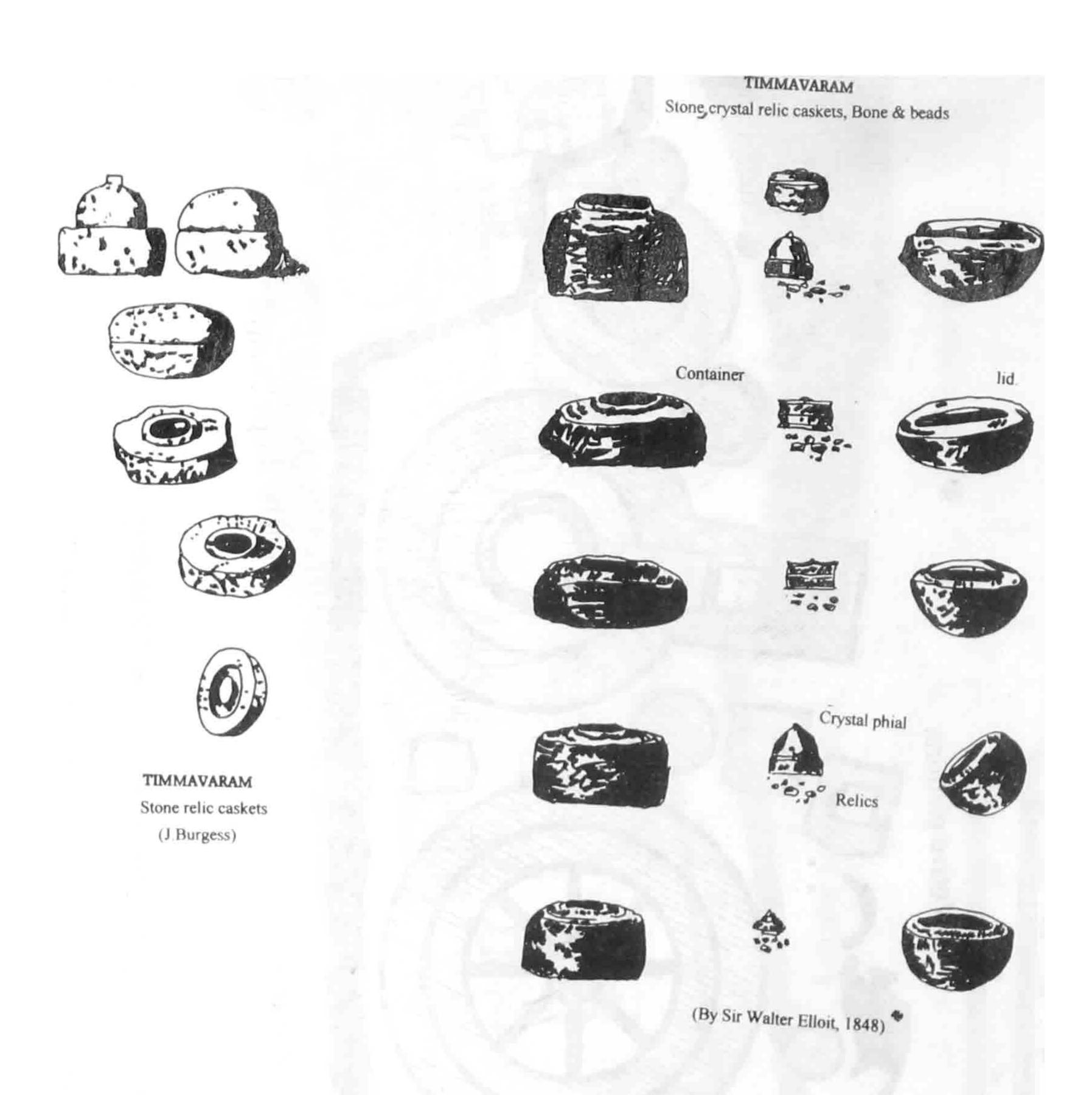


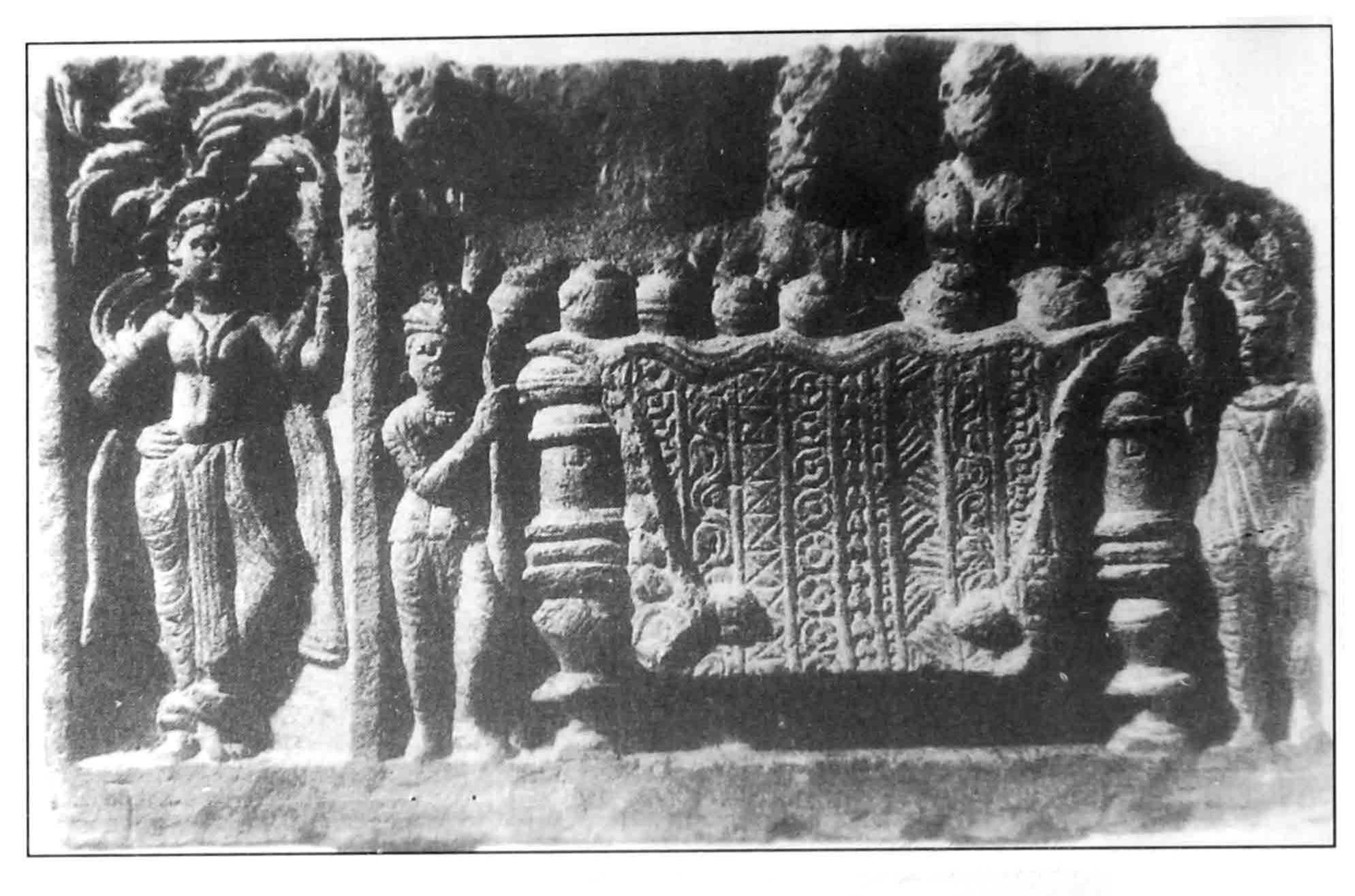
Fig. XXI Stone, crystal relic caskets, bones & beads, Timmavaram



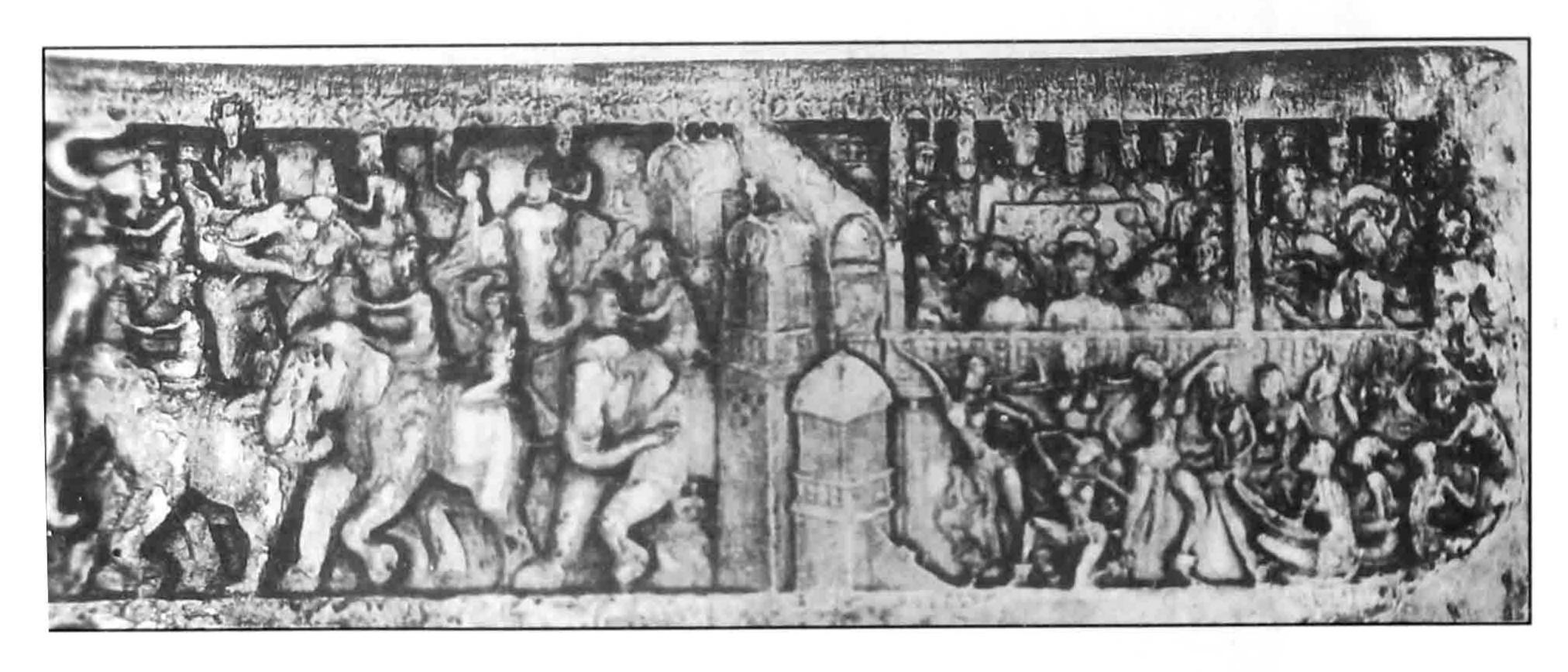
Pl. 1 Mahaparinirvana panel Gandhara Sculpture, 2nd century A.D.



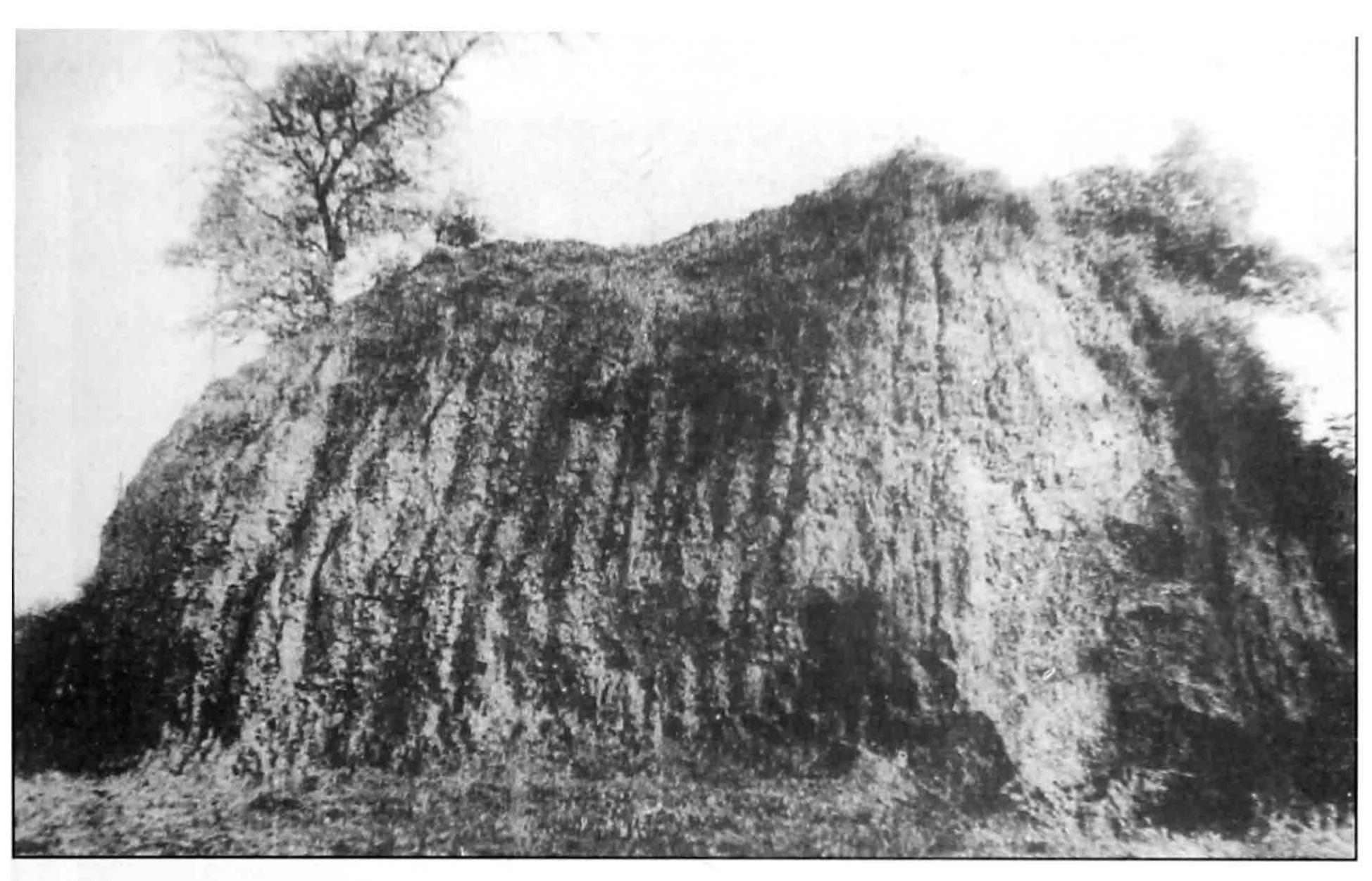
Buddha's Coffin, Gandhara Sculpture, 2nd century A.D.



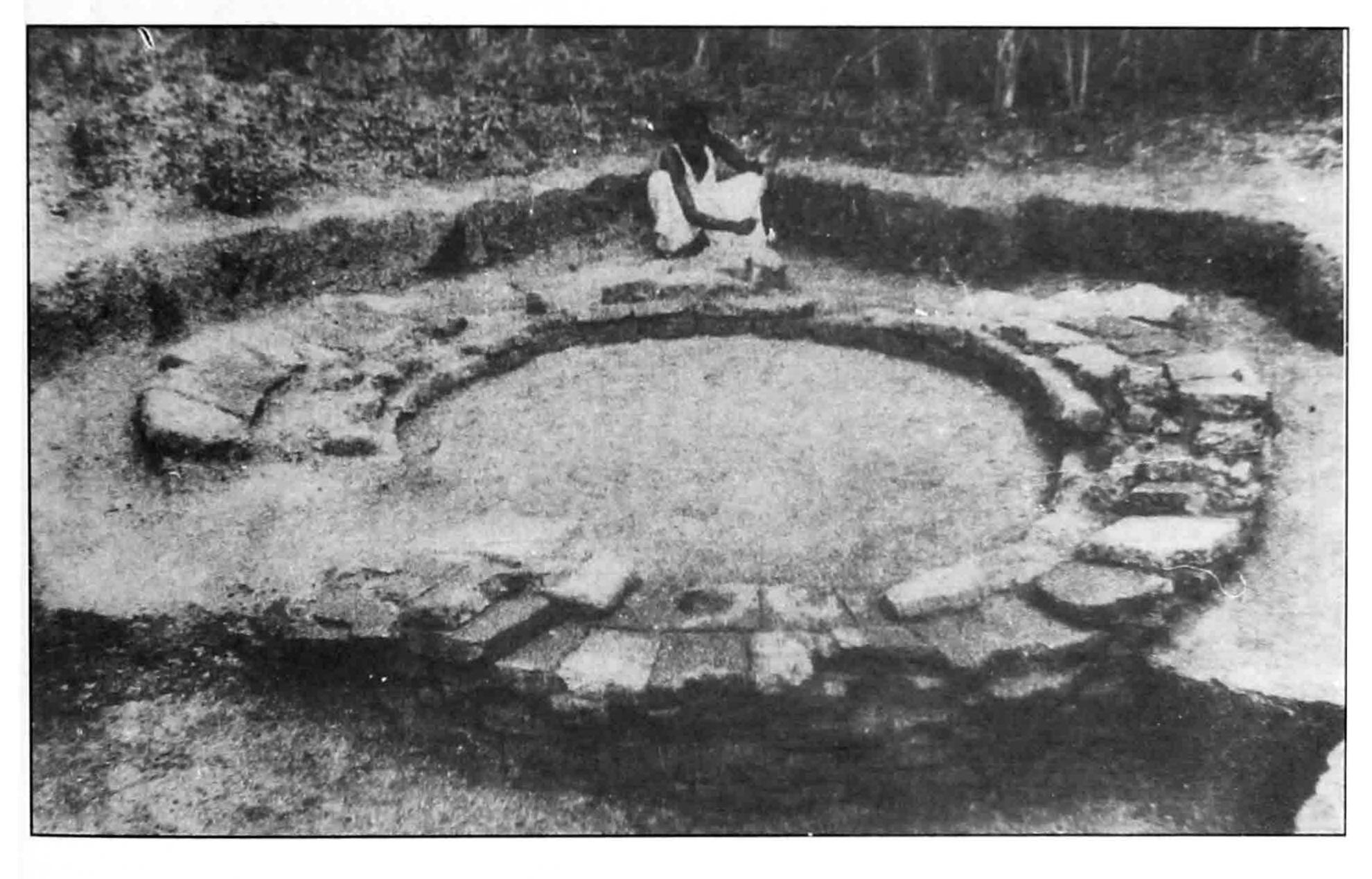
Pl. 3 Distribution of Buddha's Relics by Dona, Gandhara Sculpture, 2nd c. A.D.



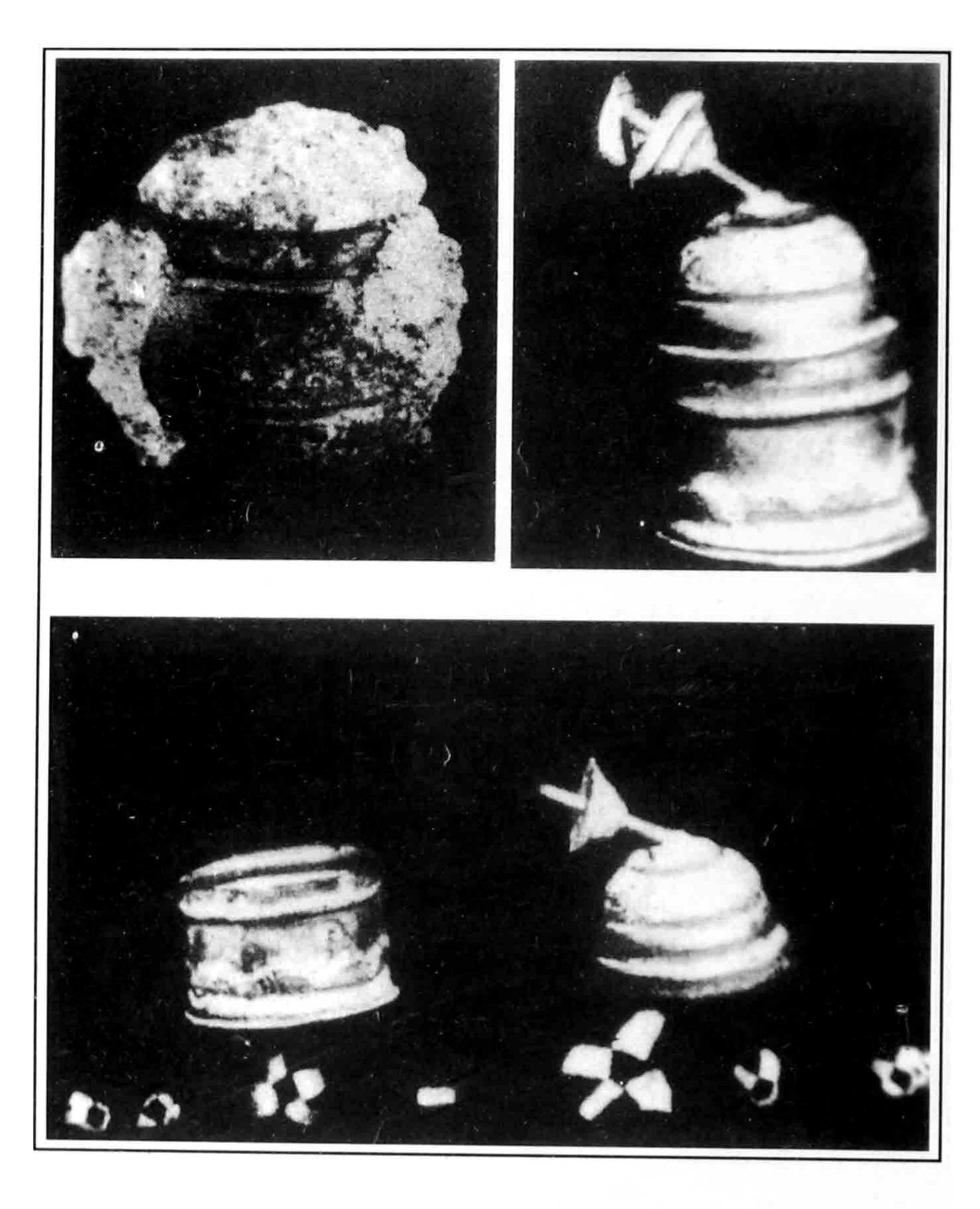
Pl. 4 Distribution and Carrying away the Relics of Buddha, Amaravati panel,



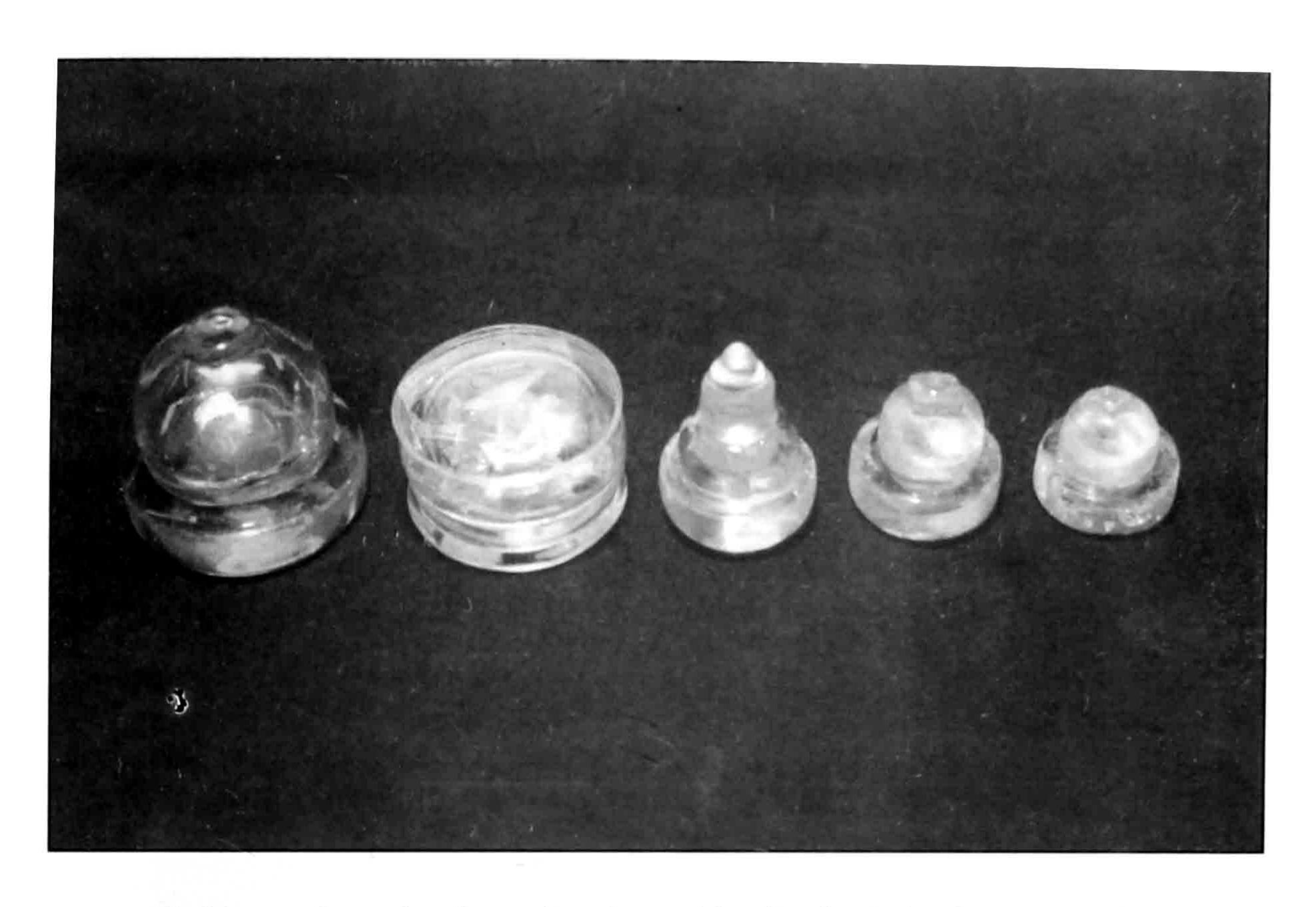
Pl. 5 Mud fort at Dantapura, 4th-3rd century B.C.



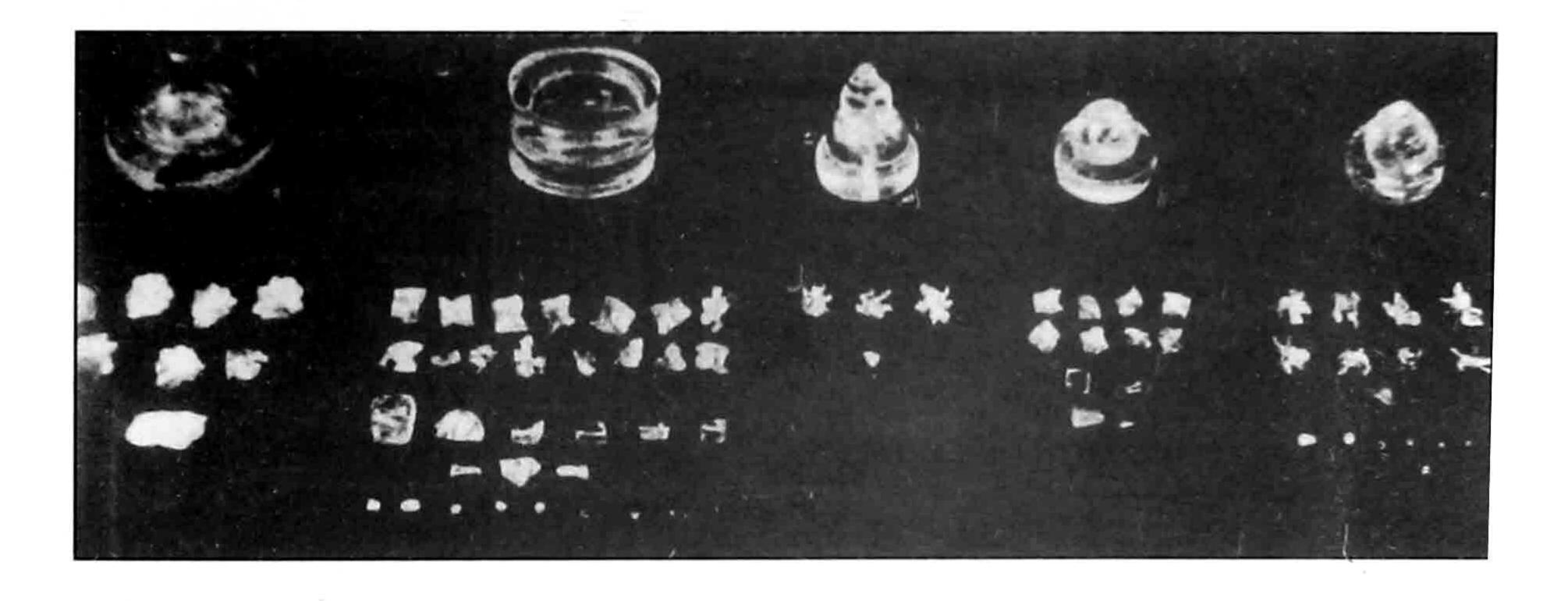
Pl. 6 Remains of Brick stupa at Dantapura, 3rd century B.C.



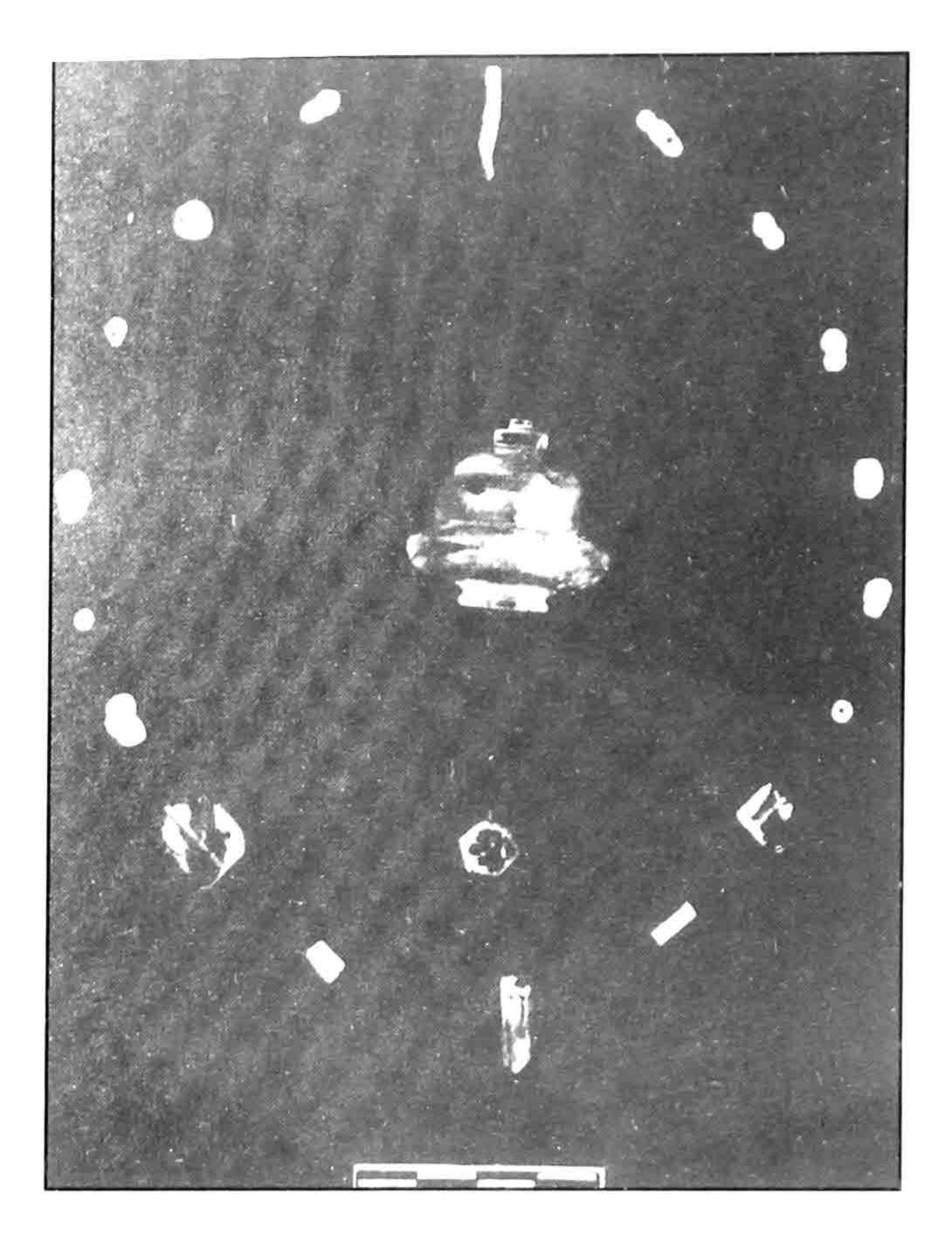
Pl. 7 Gold reliquary and gold flowers, Amaravati.



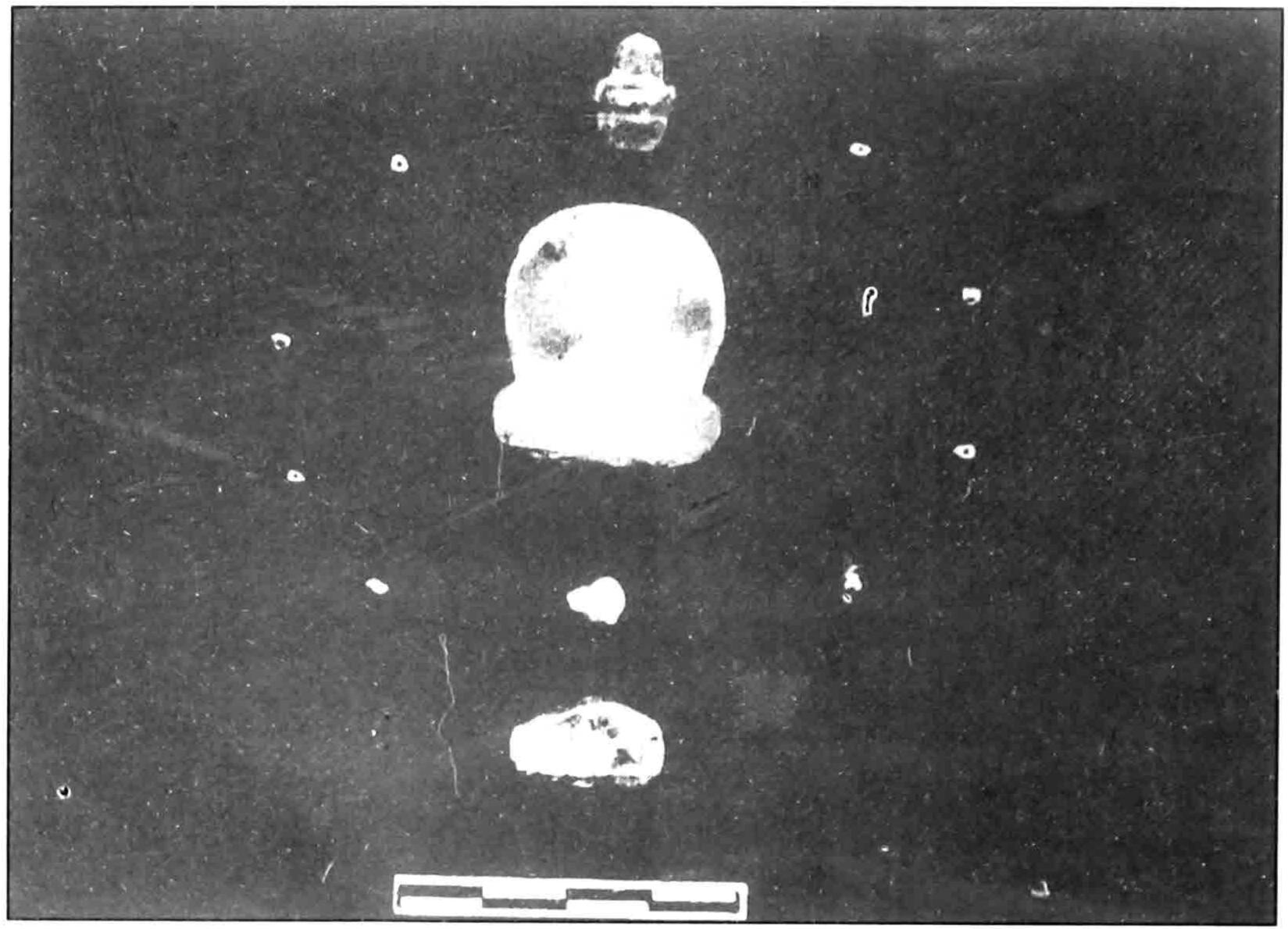
Pl. 8A. Crystal caskets, (Southern side of Mahachaitya), Amaravati.



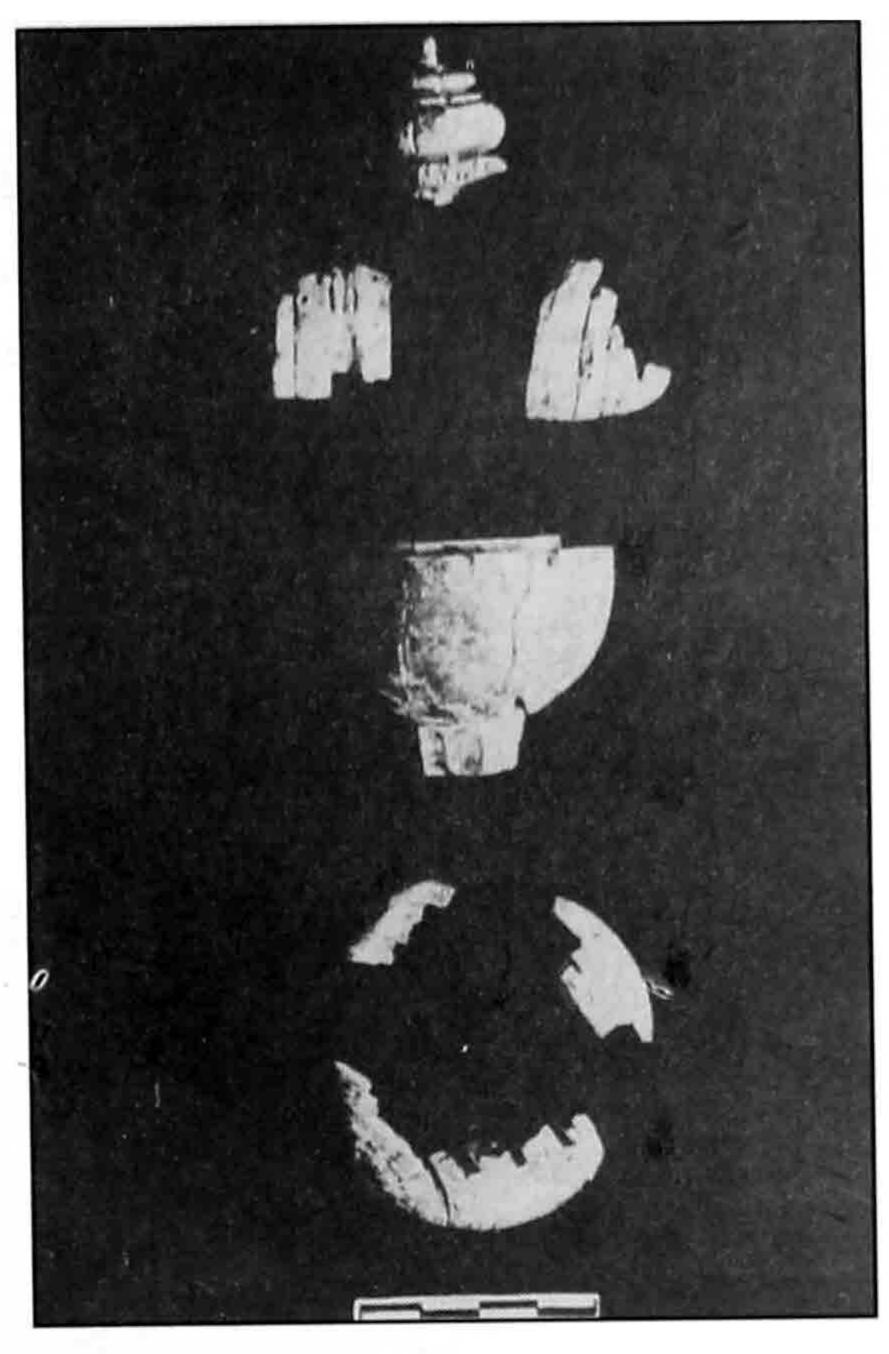
Pl. 8B. Details of crystal caskets and Relics (Gold flowers, pearls etc.), Amaravati



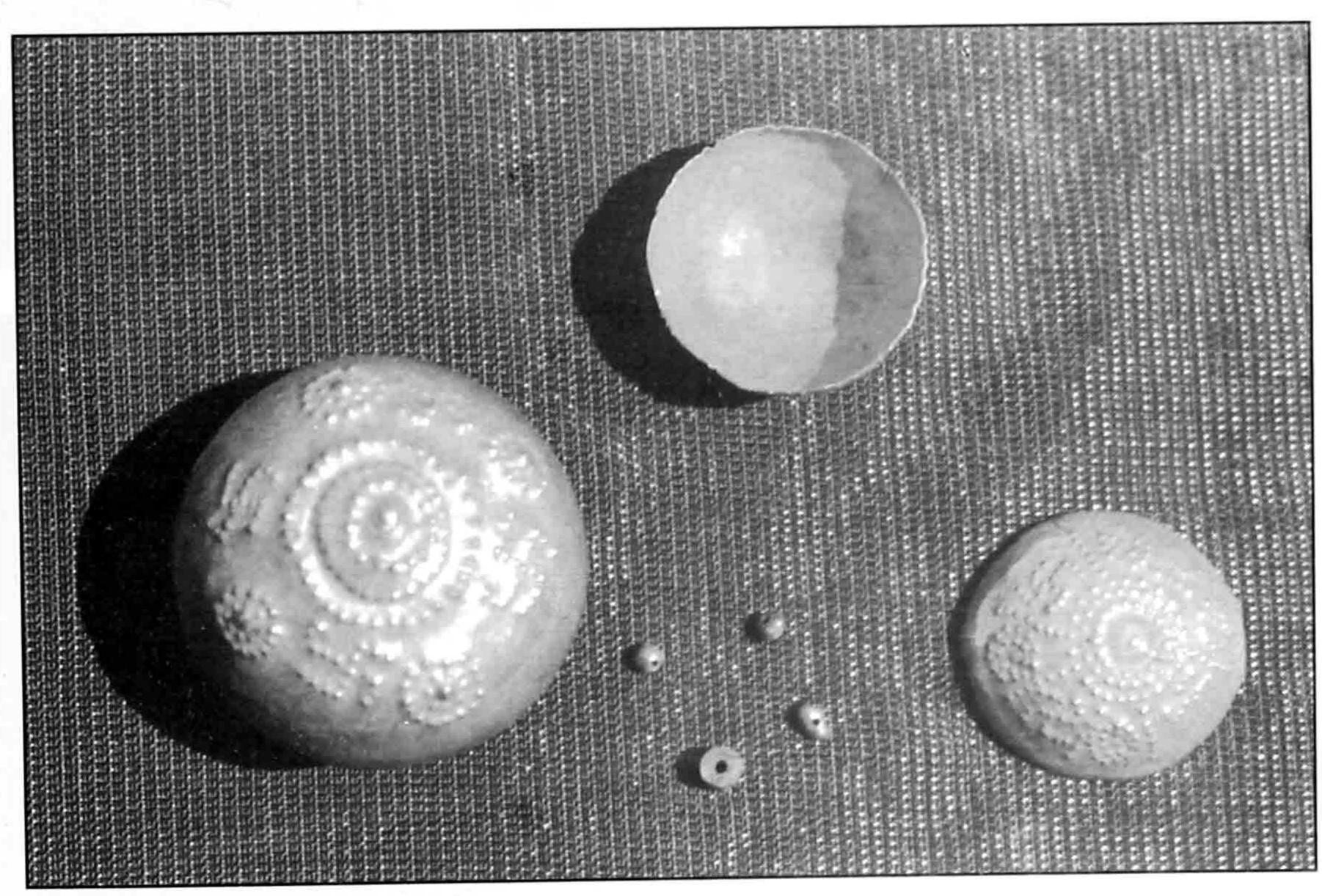
Pl. 9. Crystal casket and Relics,
(Western side), Amaravati



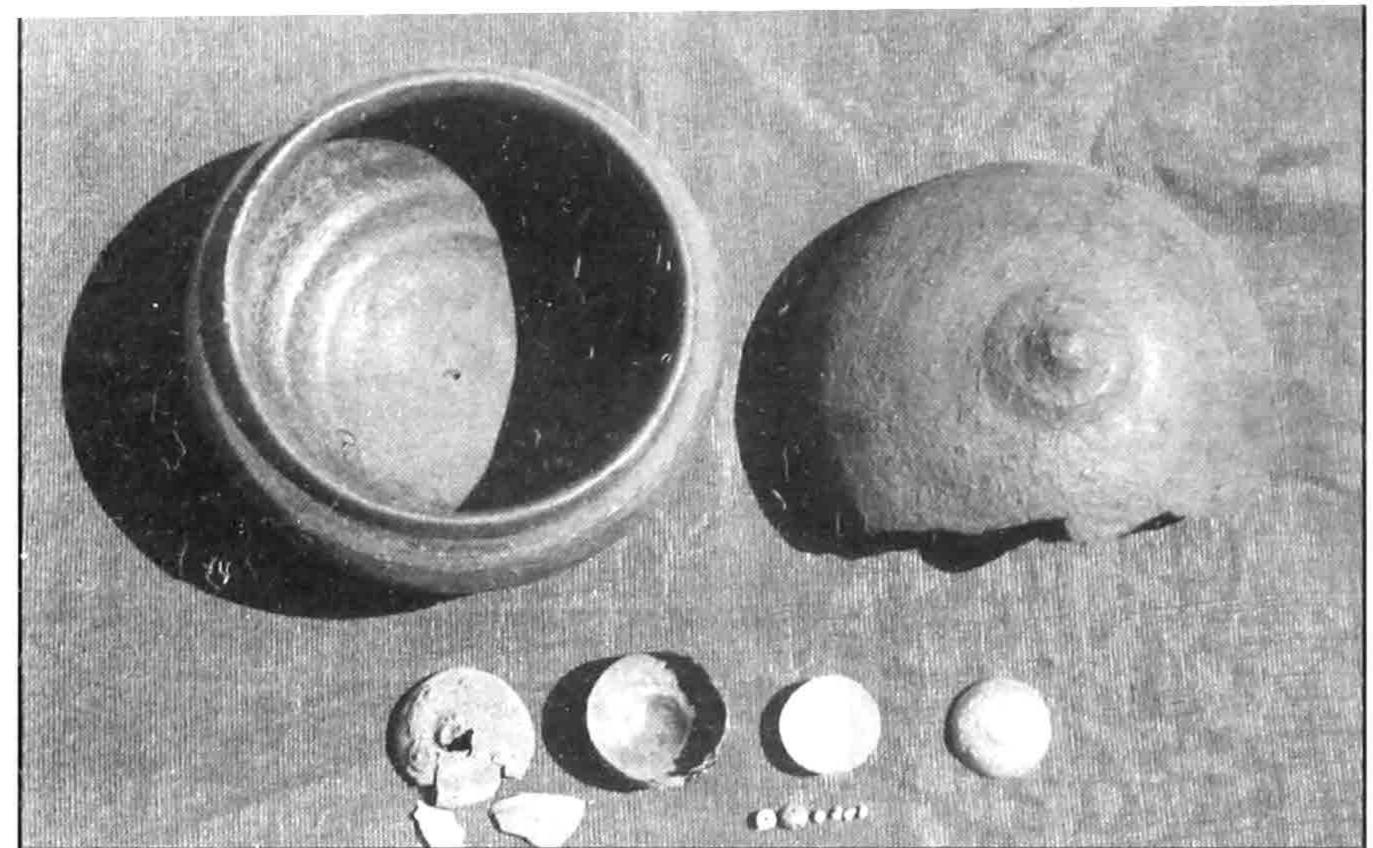
Pl. 10. Crystal Caskets and beads (Eastern side), Amaravati



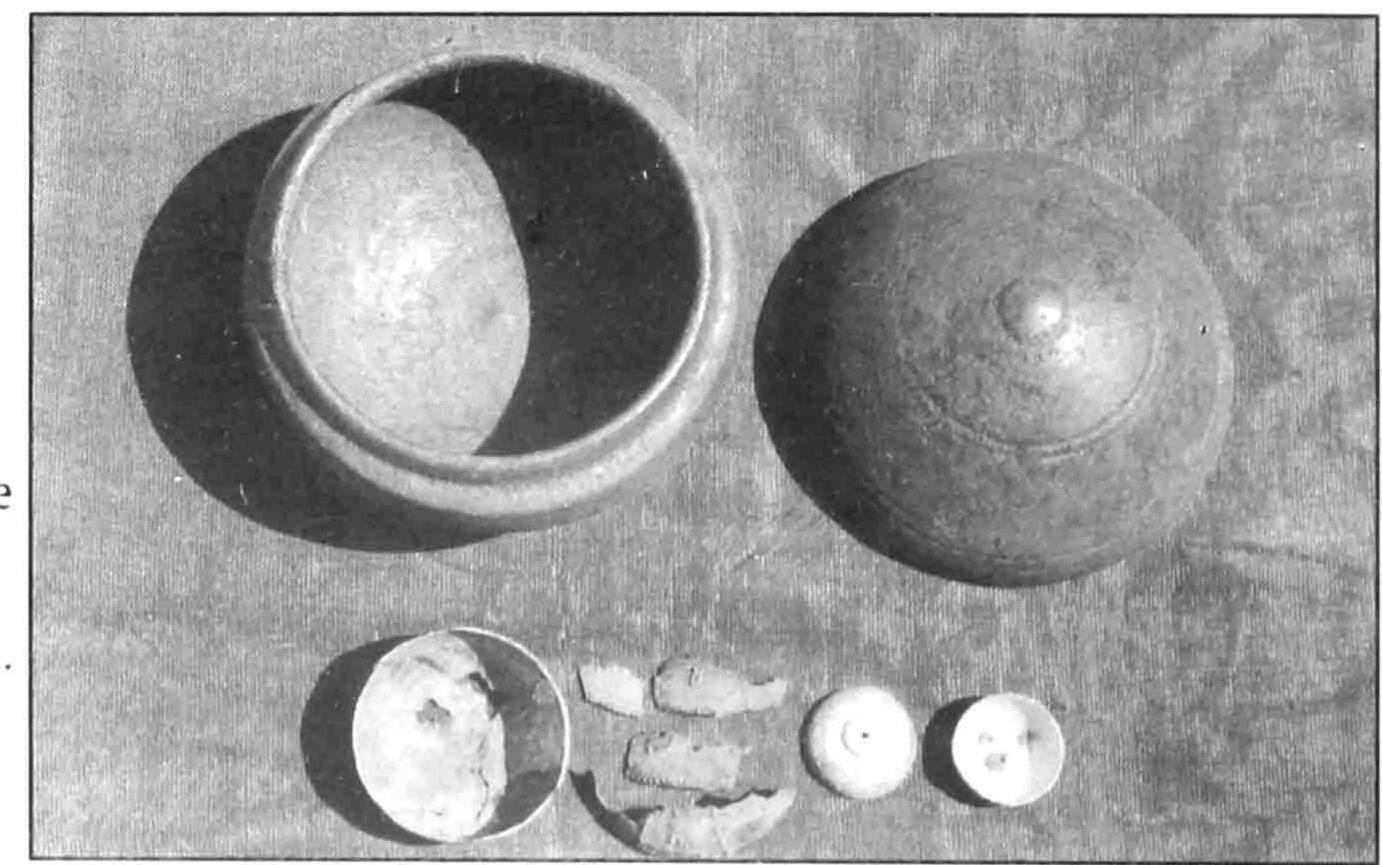
Pl. 11. Fragments of Ivory casket (Northern side), Amaravati



Pl. 12. Silver and Gold caskets with beads, Eastern side of Mahachaitya, Bavikonda.



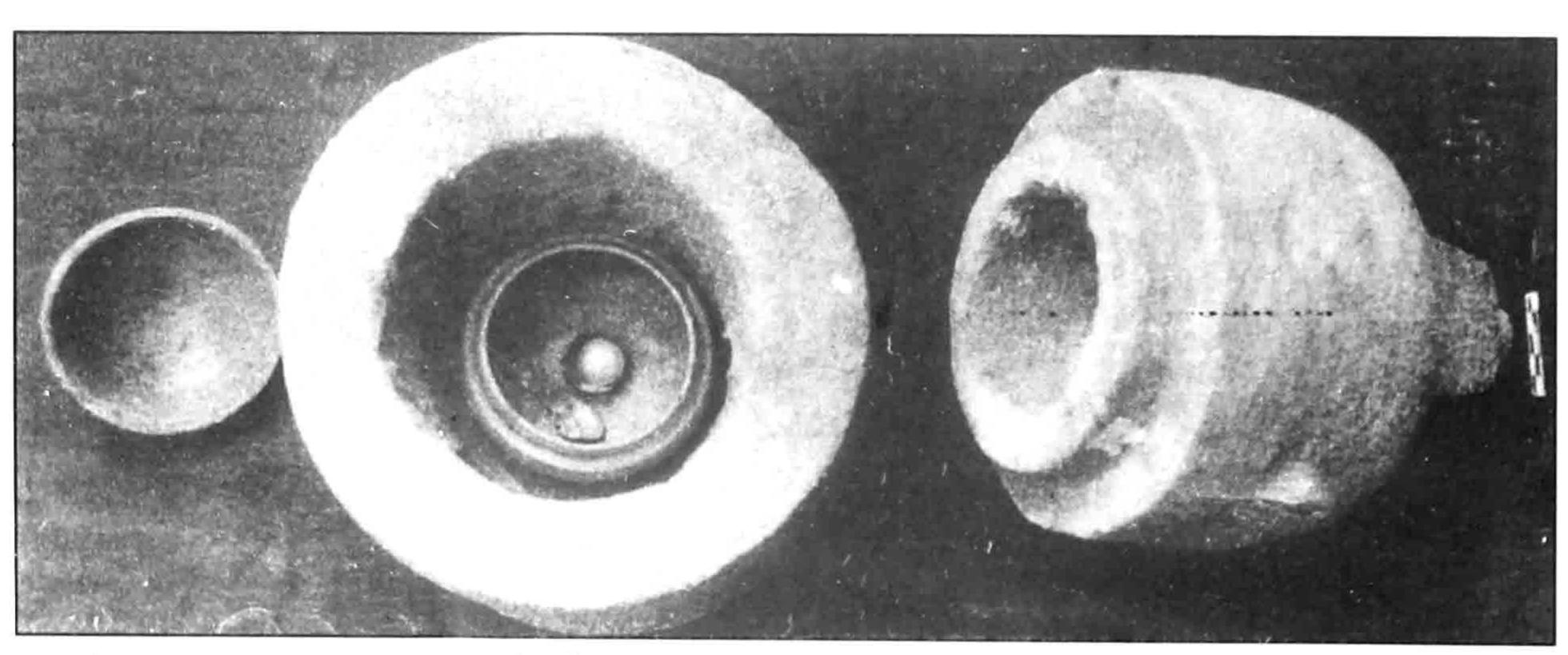
Pl. 13. Clay Receptacle with gold and silver caskets (western side), Bavikonda.



Pl. 14. Clay Receptacle

– Gold and silver caskets

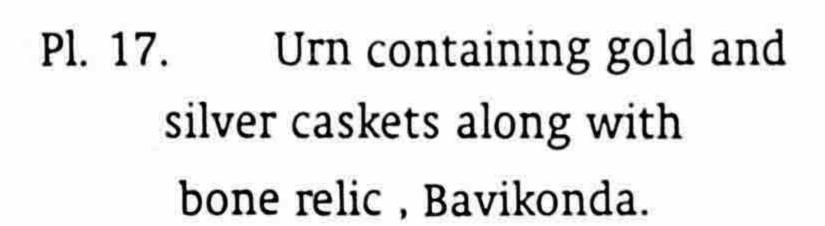
(northern side), Bavikonda.

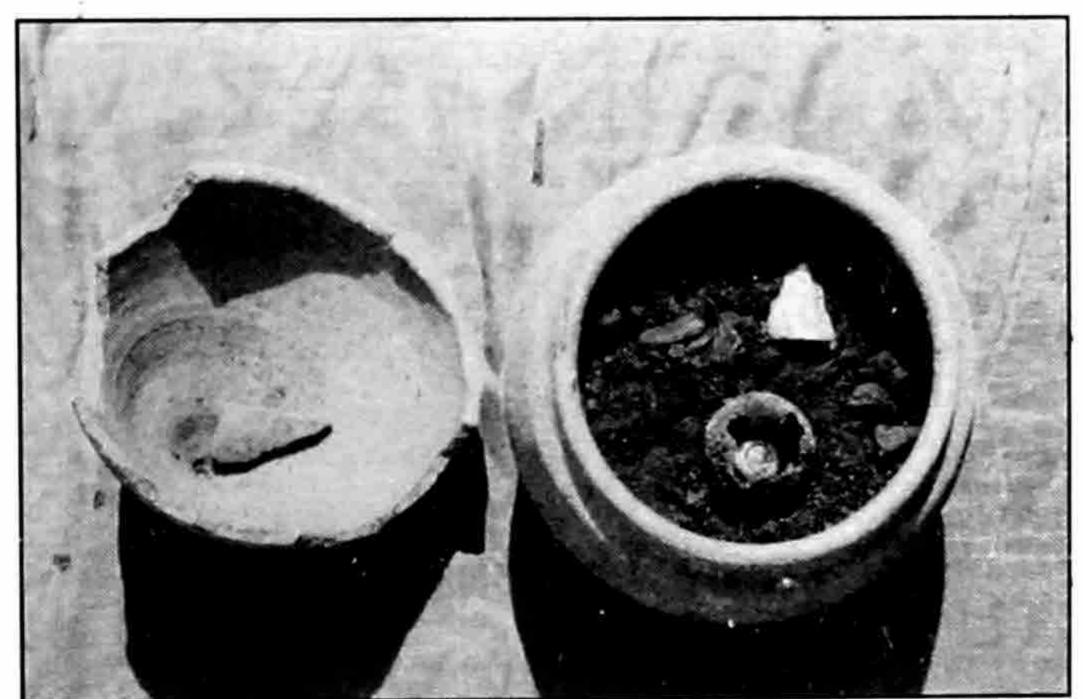


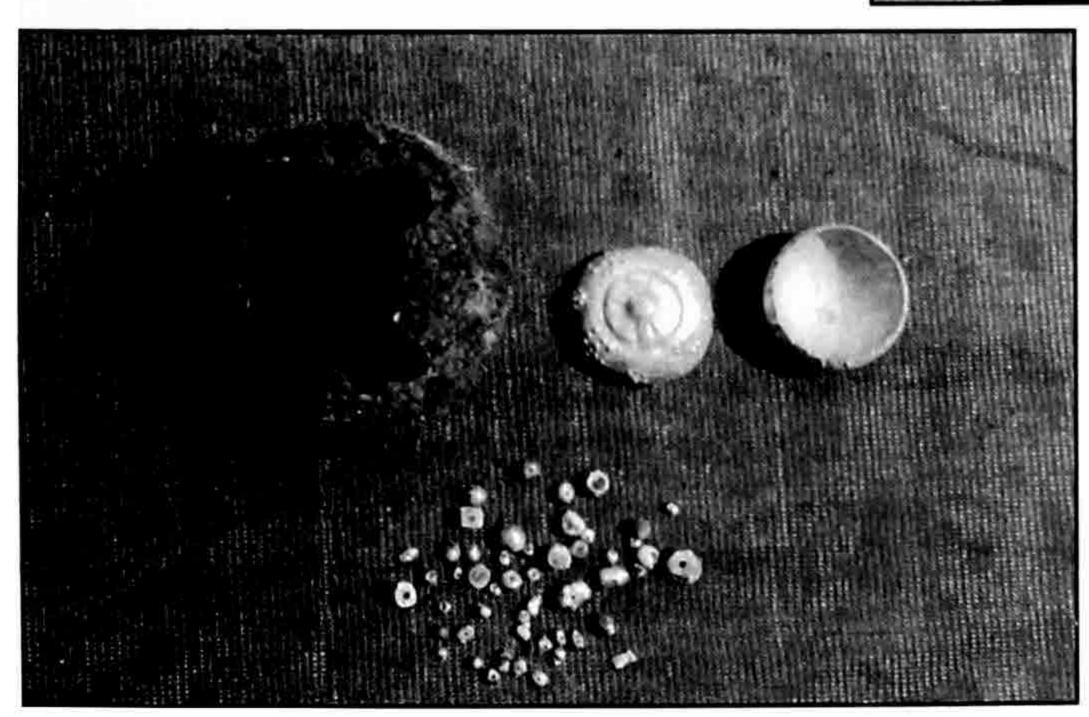
Pl. 15. Stone Receptacle showing silver, gold caskets and coral bead (south side), Bavikonda



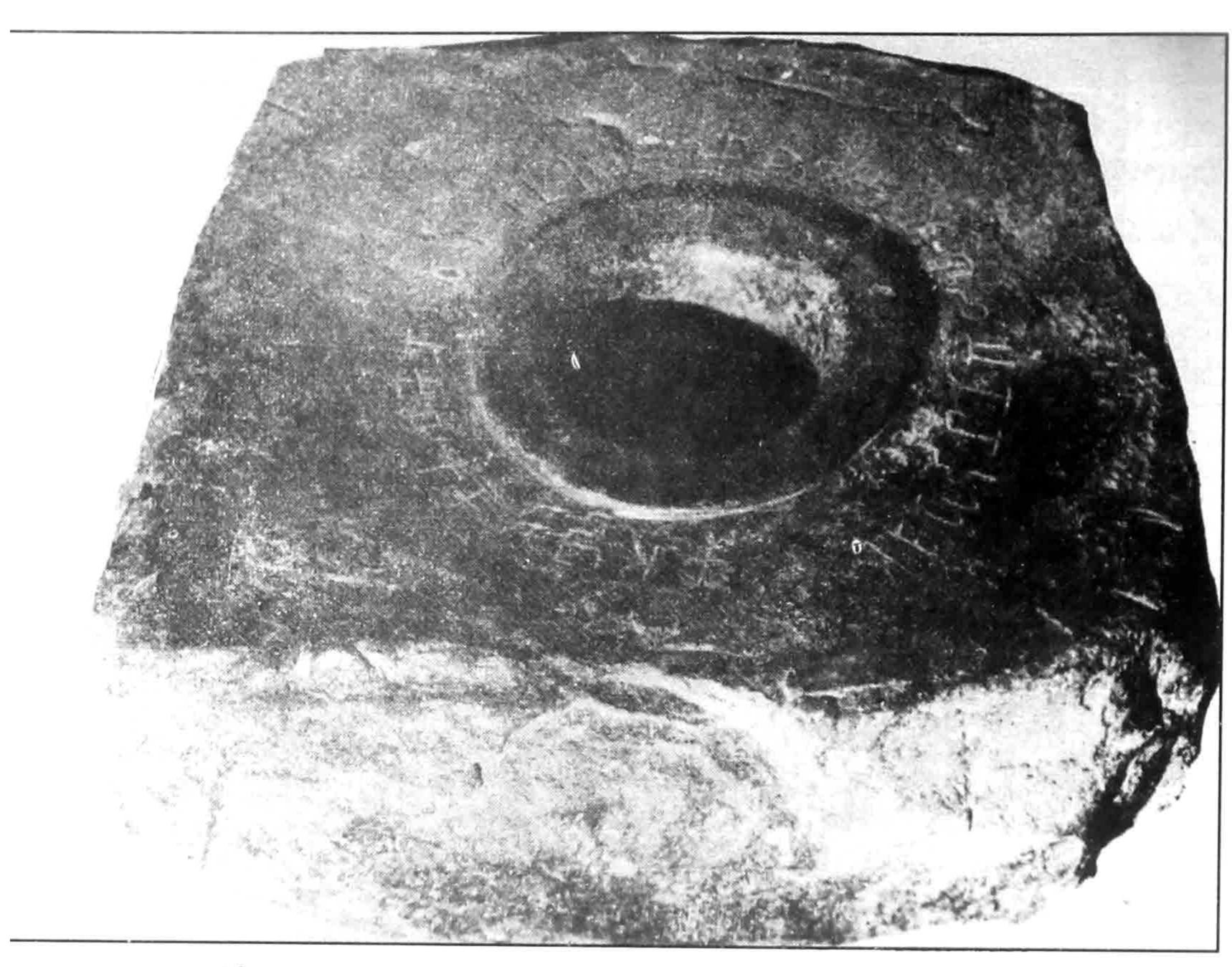
Pl. 16. Urn pot containing corporeal relics (Southern side), Bavikonda.



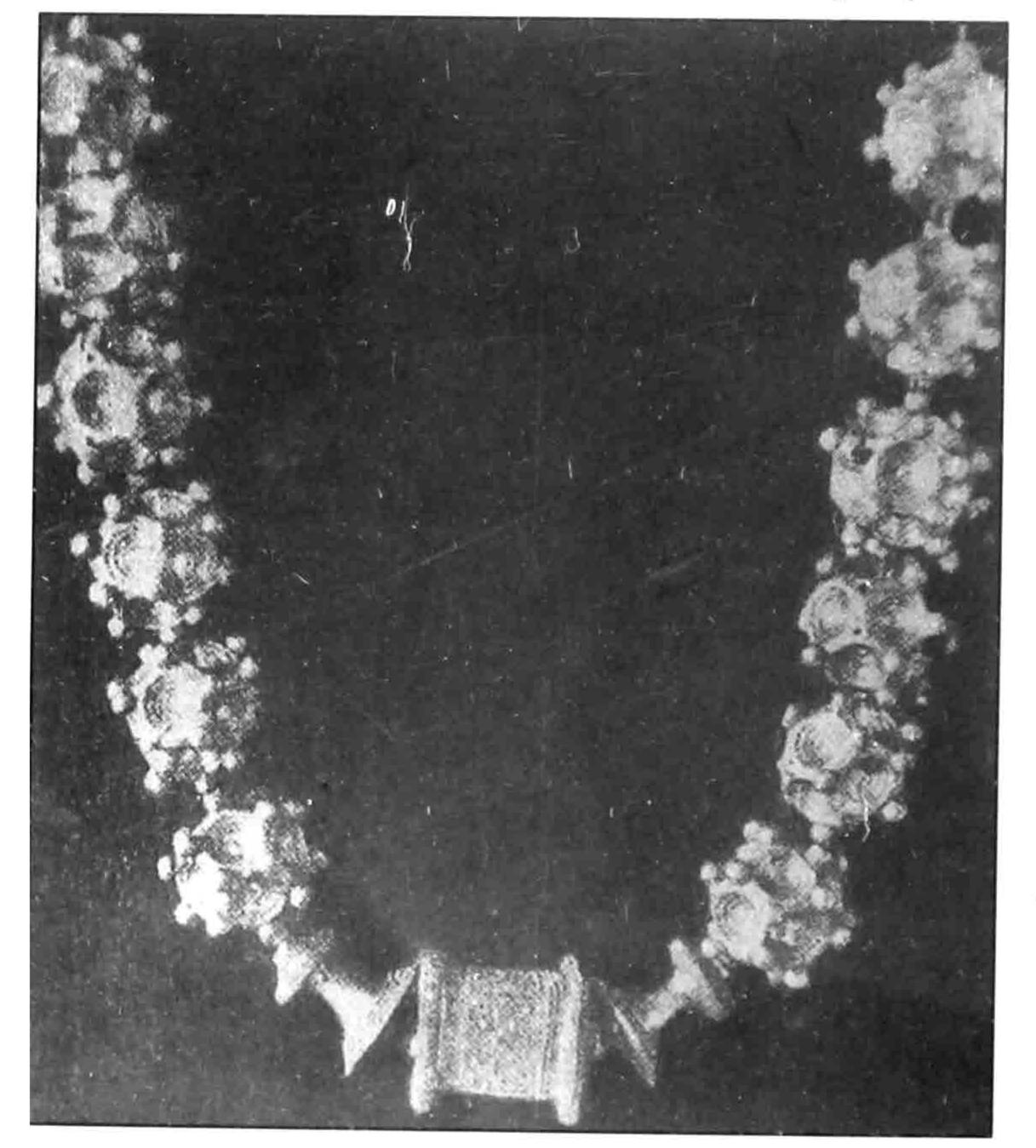




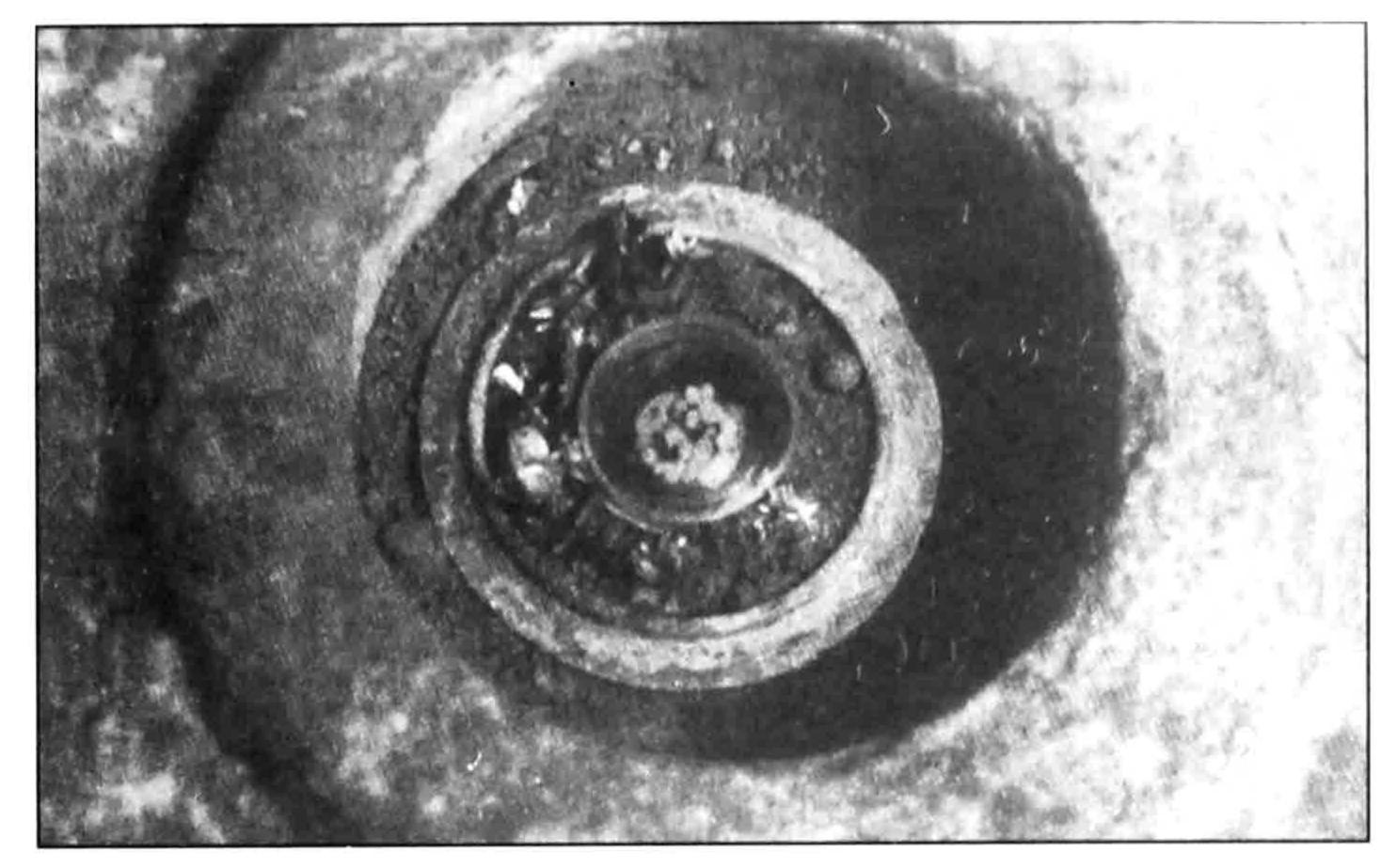
Pl. 18. Silver and gold caskets with beads, Bavikonda.



Pl. 19. Inscribed stone Reliquary, Bhattiprolu.

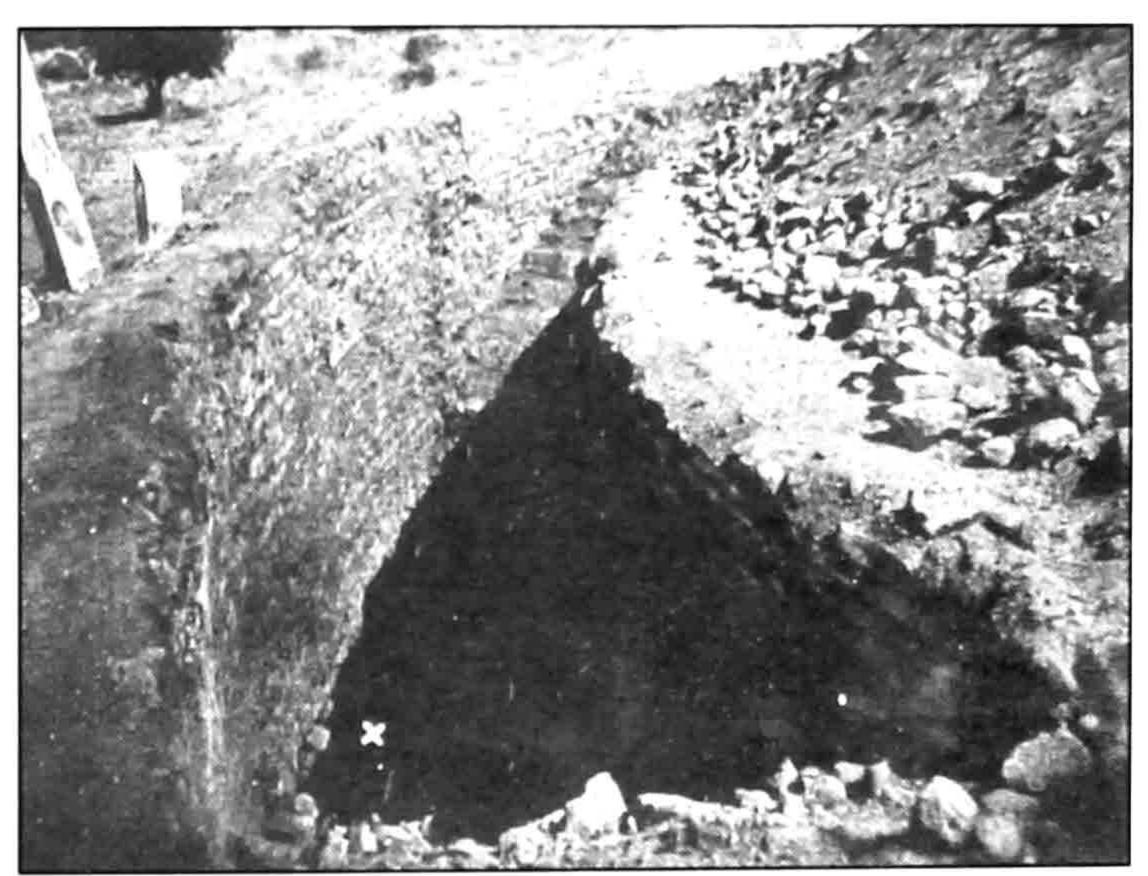


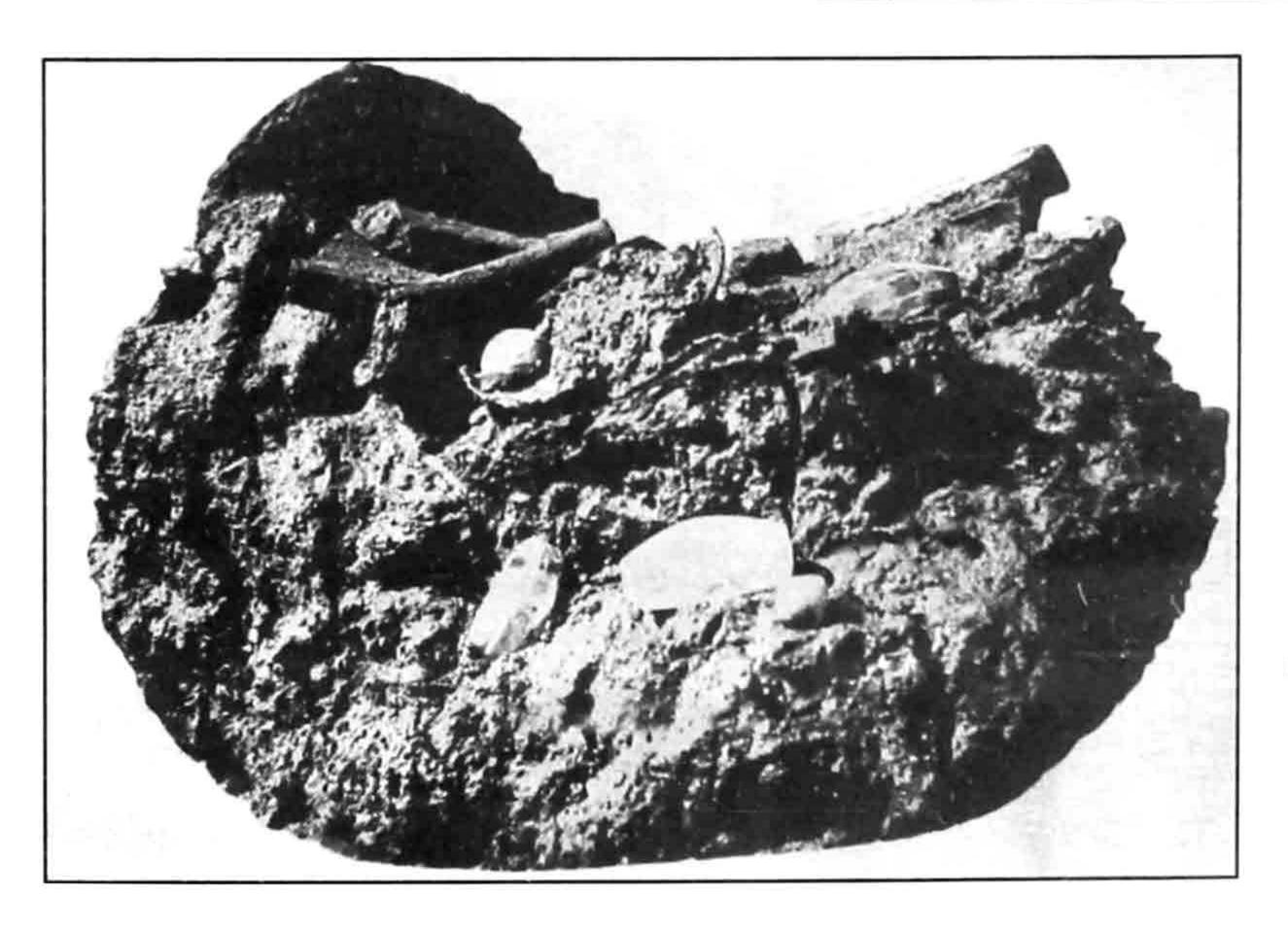
Pl. 20. Gold Beads, Gummdidurru.



Pl. 21.
Stone reliquary
showing crystal phial
and beads, Kottur.

Pl. 22. Mahachaitya showing the Find spot of Relic Casket, Nagarjunakonda.

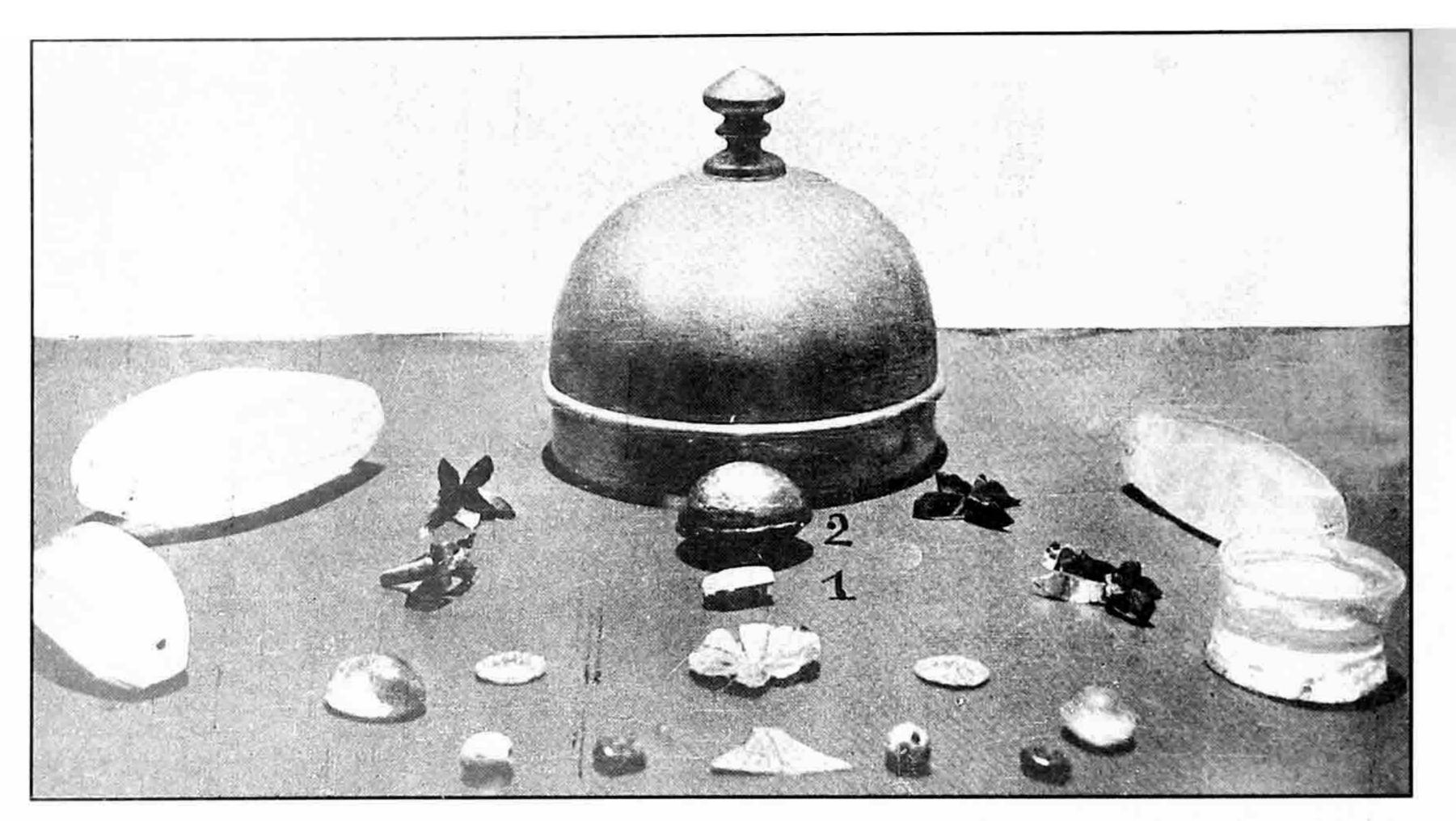




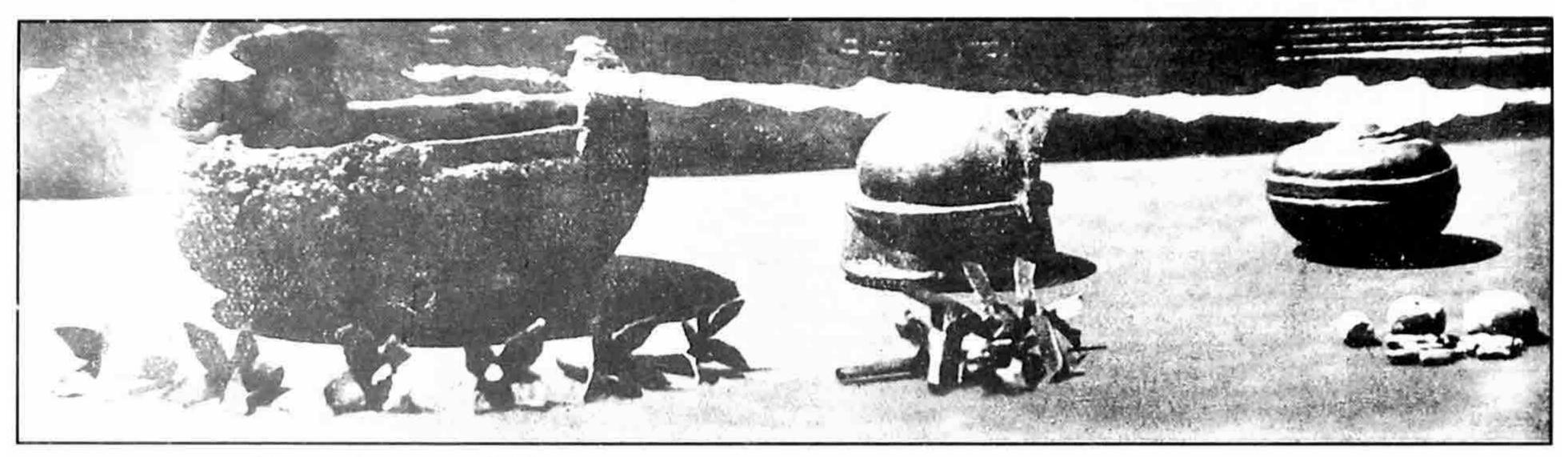
Pl. 23.

Broken pot containing relics

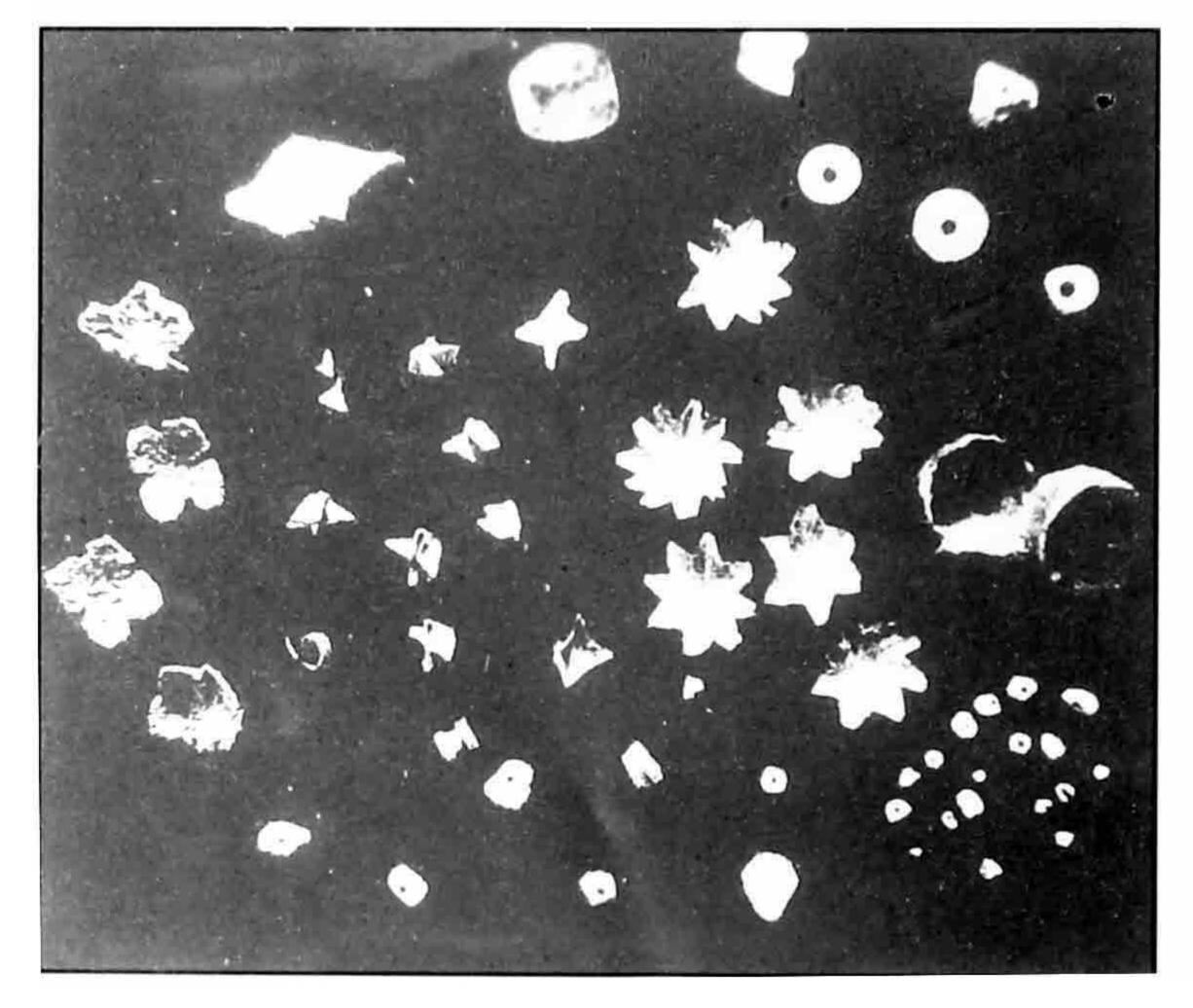
(Mahachaitya), Nagarjunakonda.



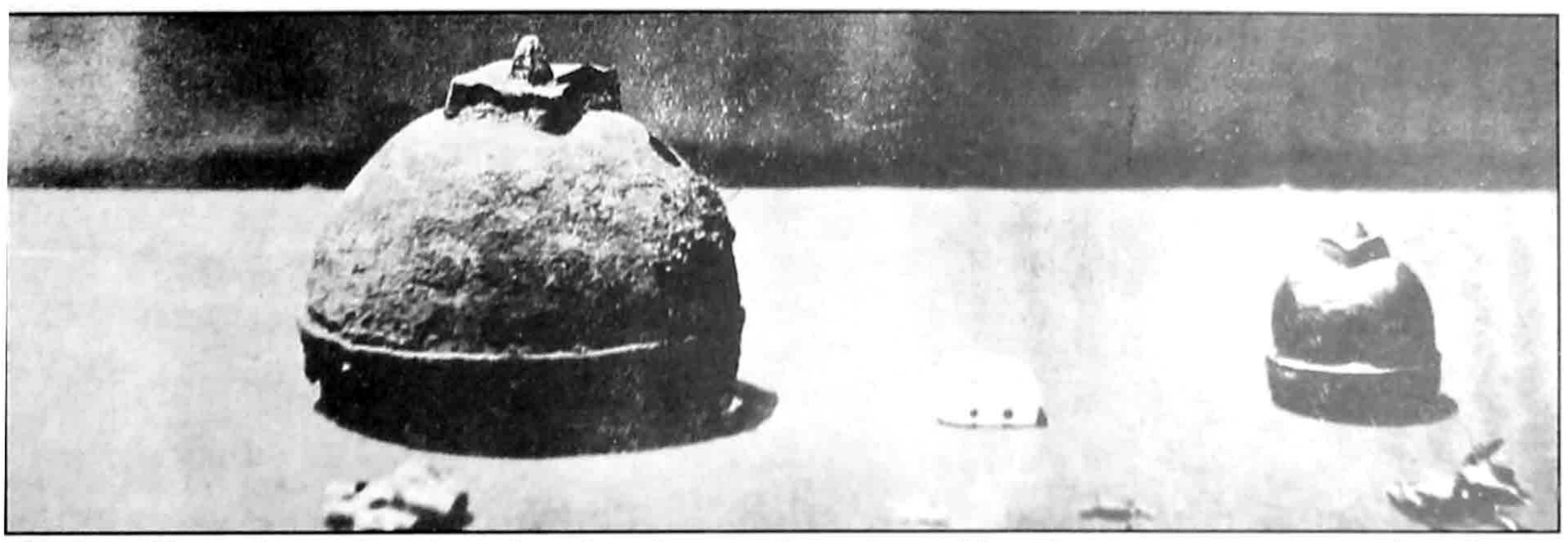
Pl. 24. Silver Relic Casket showing crystal beads, Mahastupa, Nagarjunakonda.



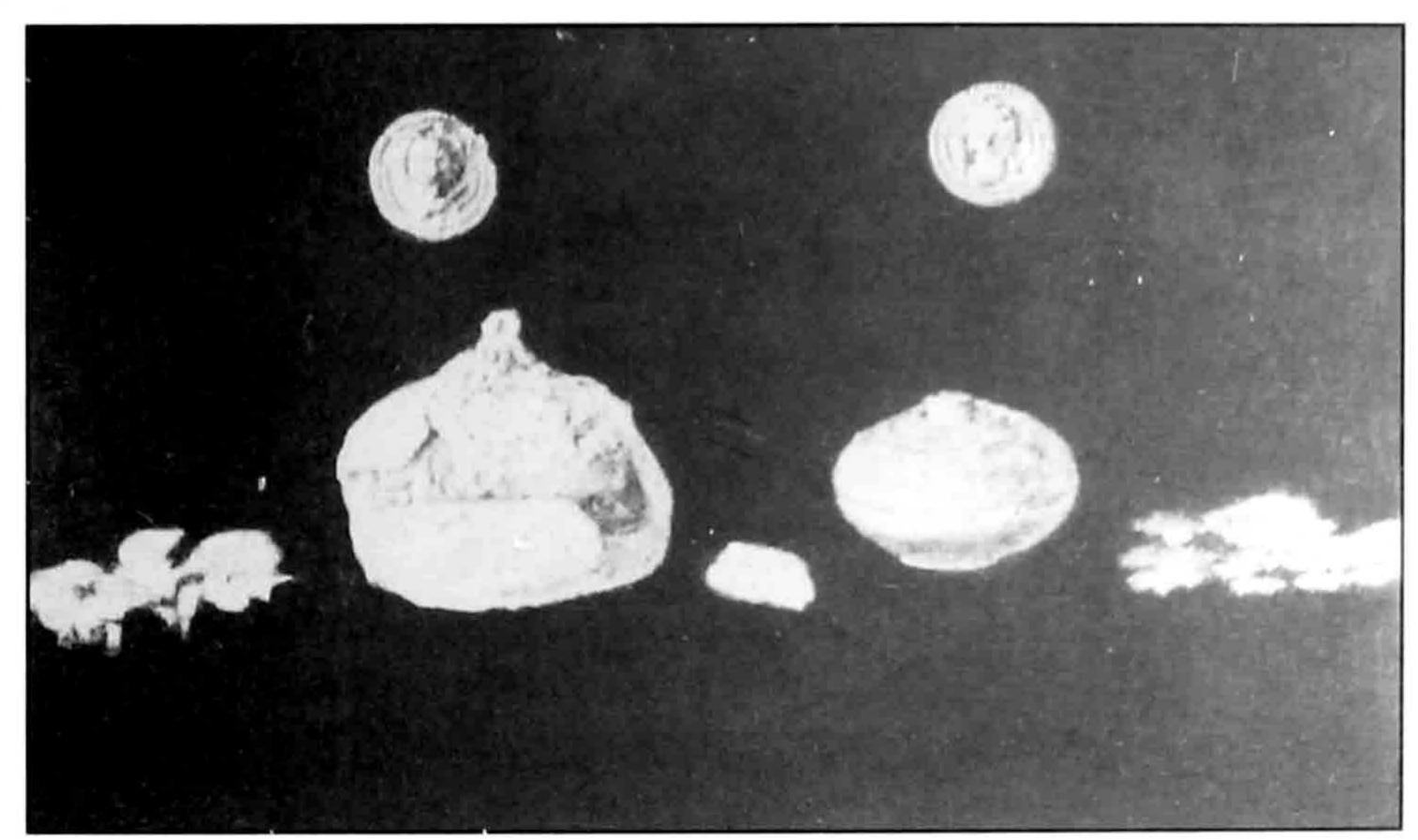
Pl. 25A. Relic Caskets, gold leaves, pearls and coral beads, stupa No.3, Nagarjunakonda.



Pl. 25B. Details of the Relics, stupa No.3, Nagarjunakonda.



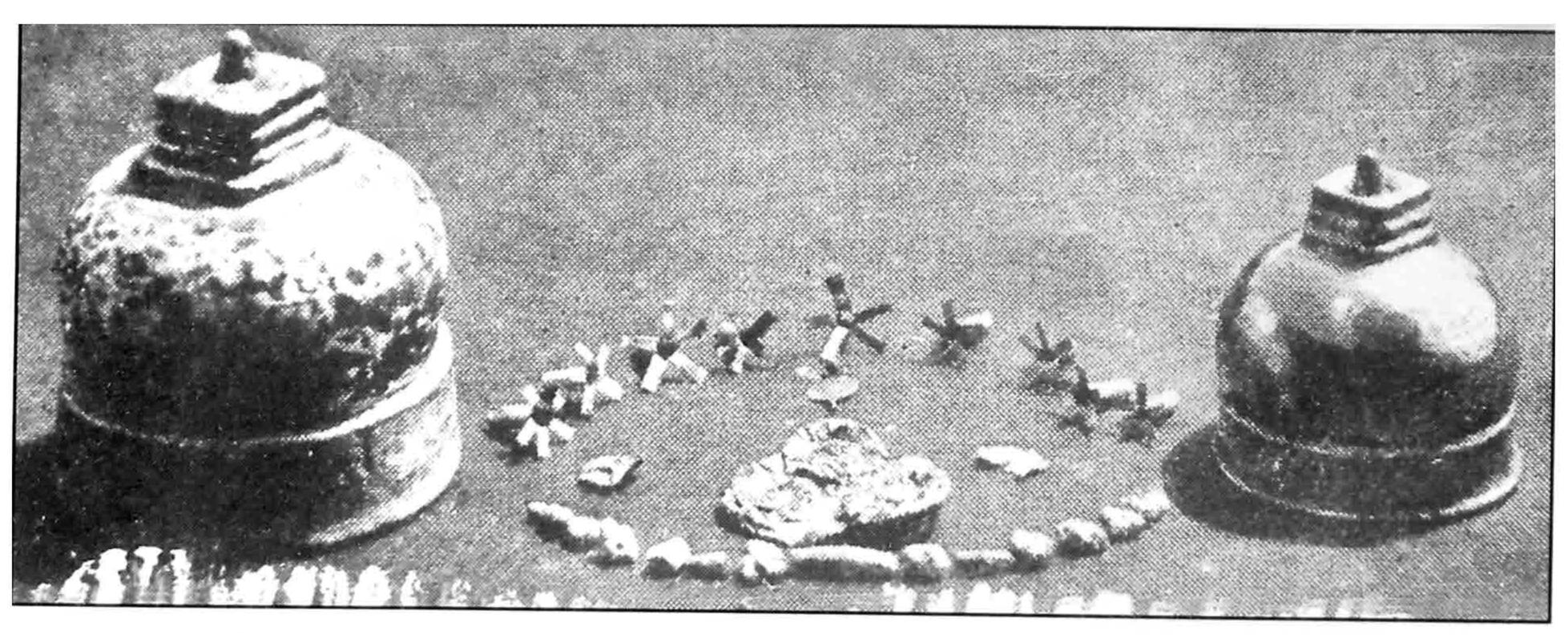
Pl. 26. Relic caskets showing glass beads, pearls and coral beads, stupa No.4 Nagarjunakonda.



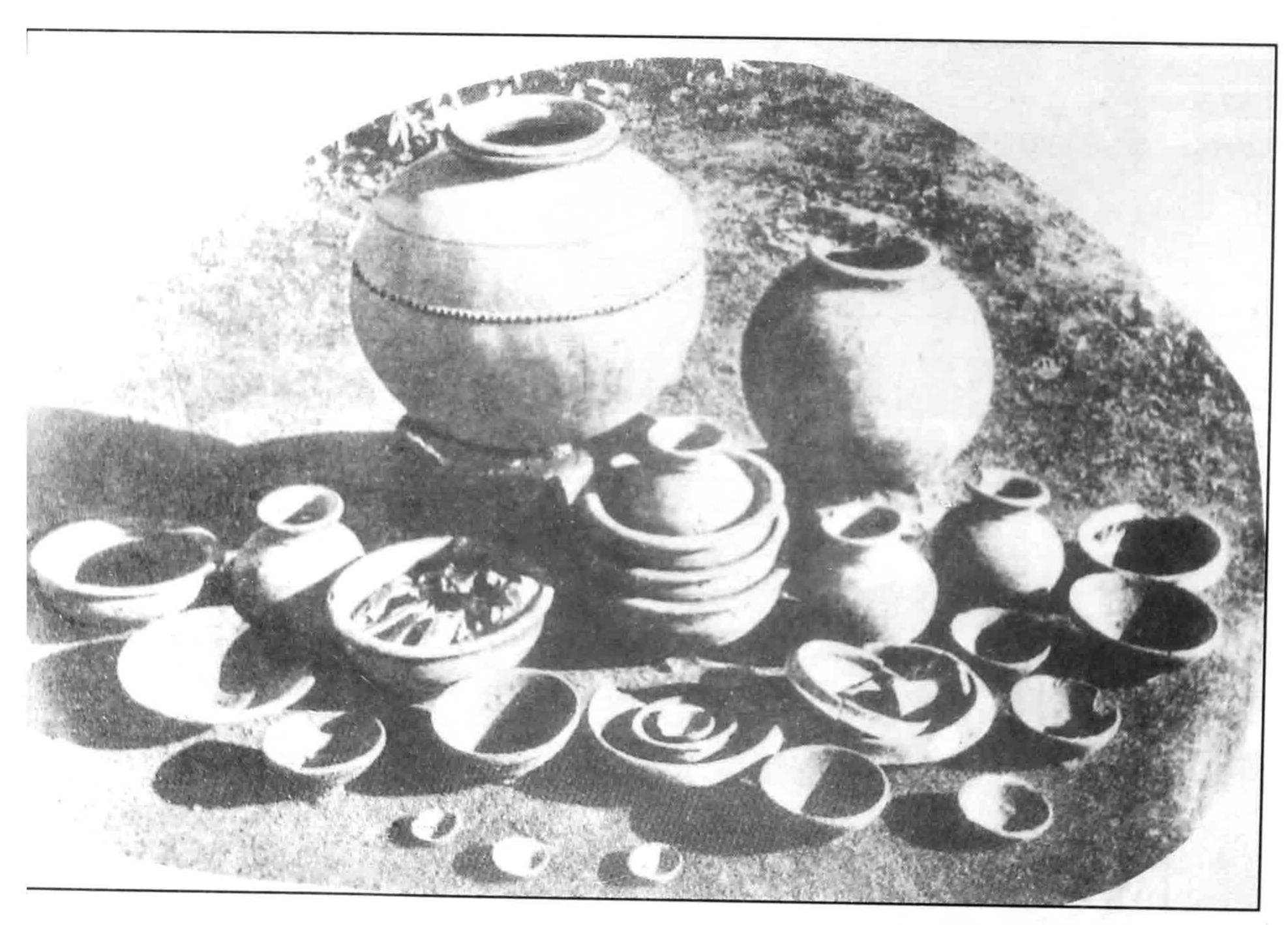
Pl. 27A. Silver and gold caskets with relics and coins, Stupa No.6, Nagarjunakonda.



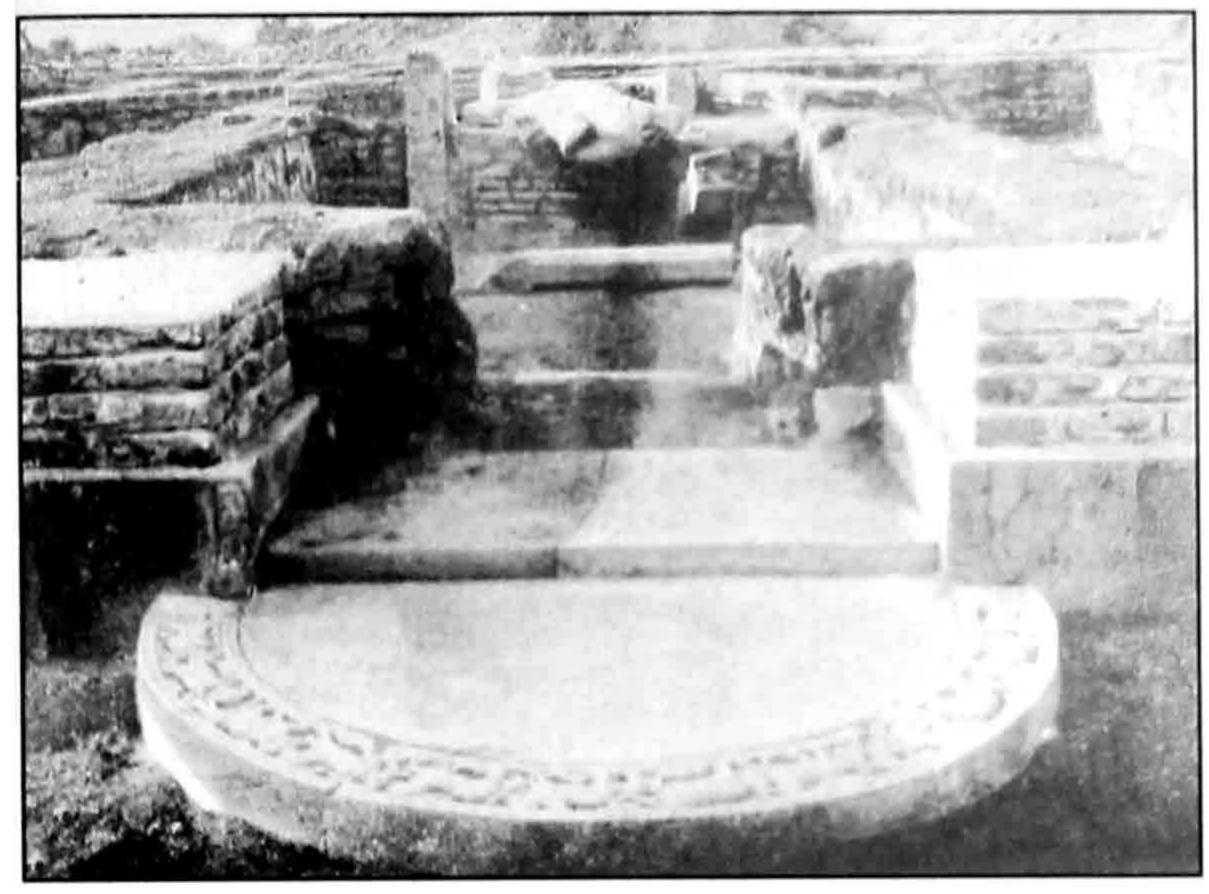
Pl. 27B. Details of coins used as Medallions, Stupa No.6, Nagarjunakonda.



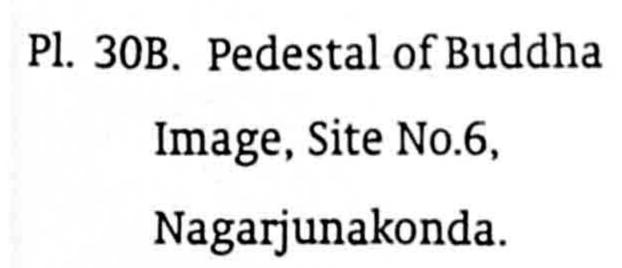
Pl. 28. Stone and copper caskets, Stupa No.8, Nagarjunakonda.



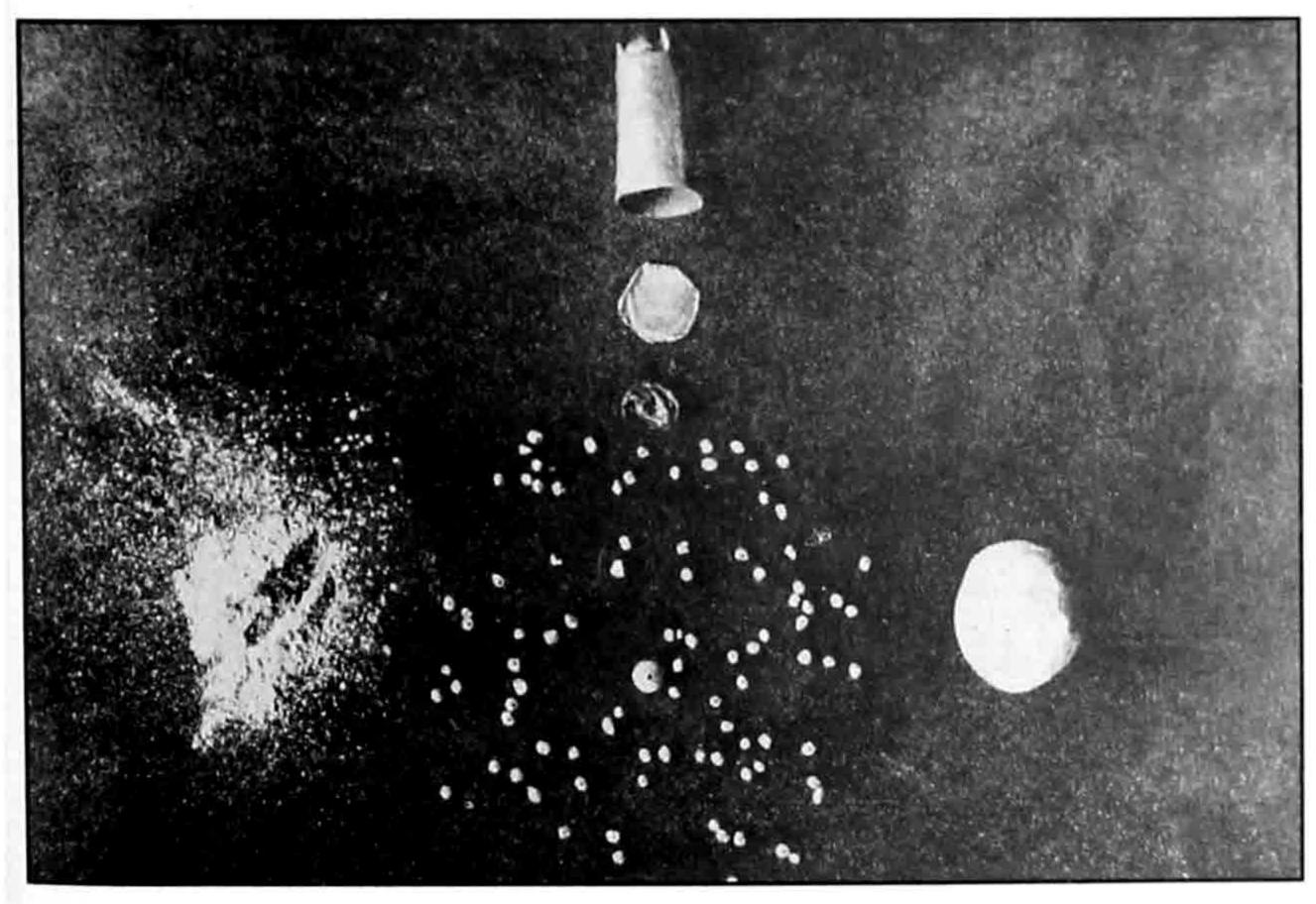
Pl. 29 Globular pots and bowls filled with animal bones, stupa No.9, Nagarjunakonda.



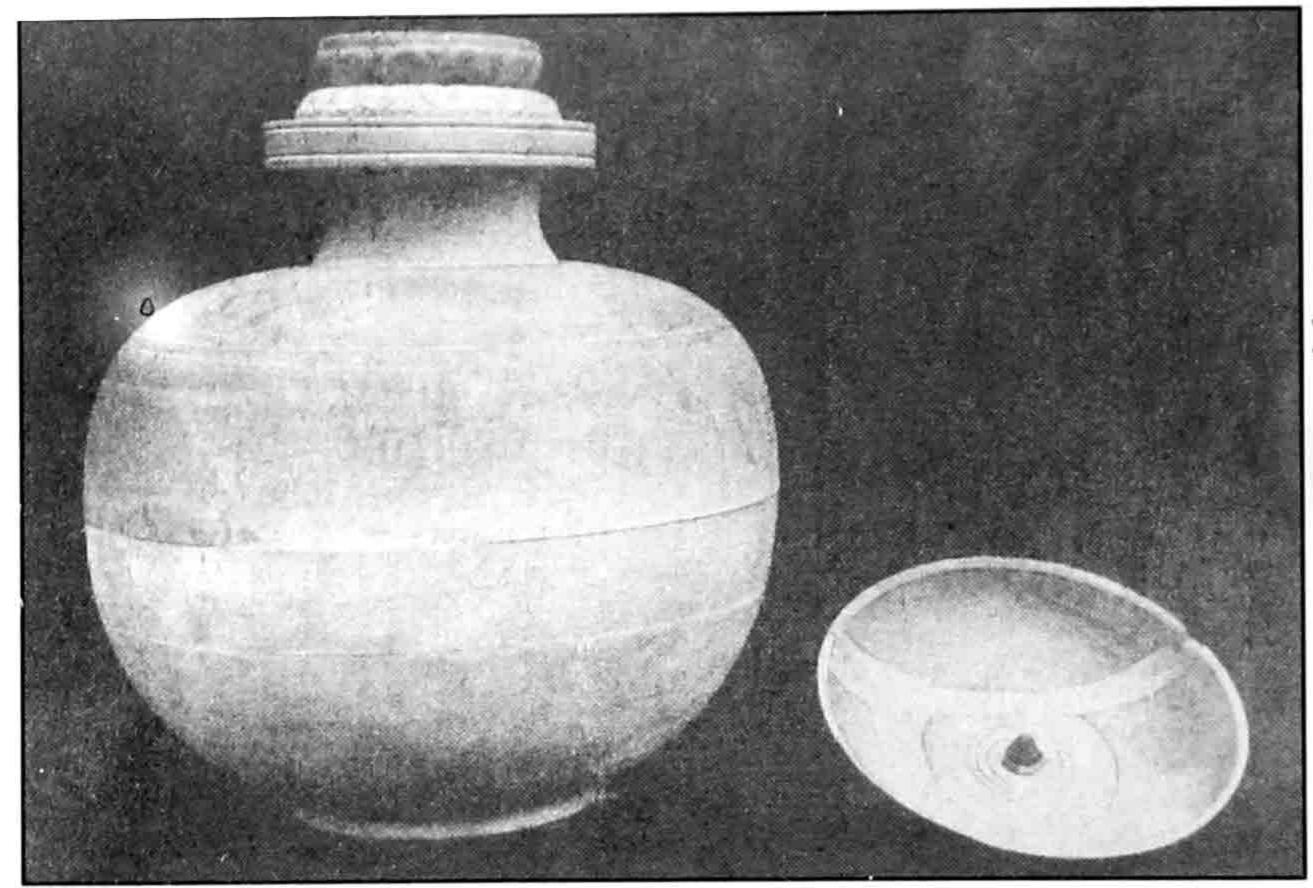
Pl. 30A. Buddha chaitya, site No.6, Nagarjunakonda.







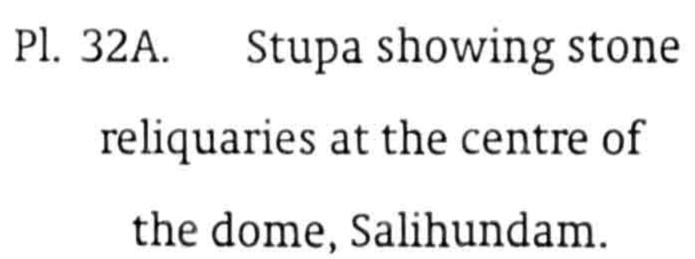
Pl. 30C. Gold capsule, ashes and relics, site No.6, Nagarjunakonda.



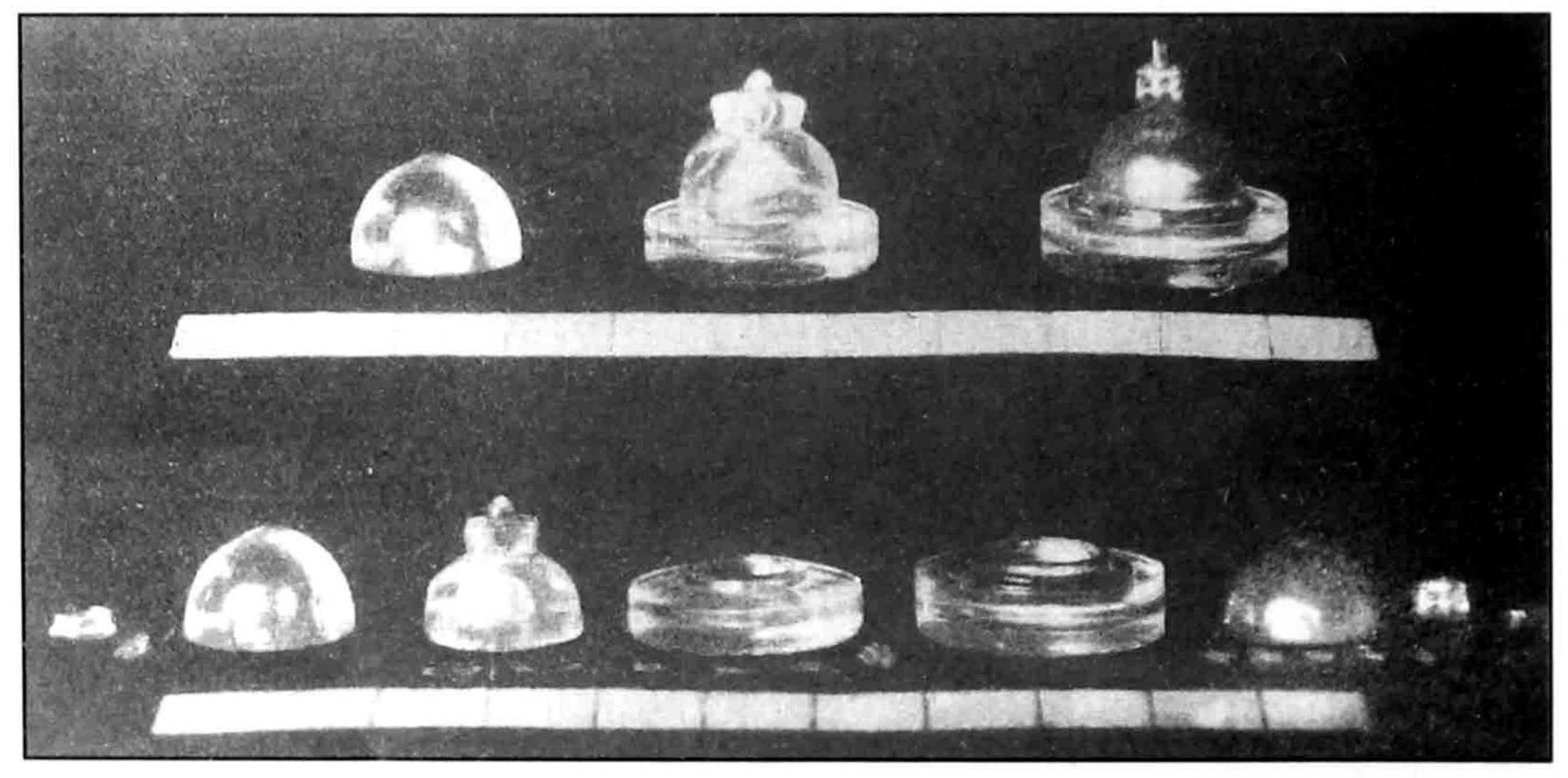
Pl. 31. Purnaghta shaped stone Reliquary, site No.6,

Monastery B,

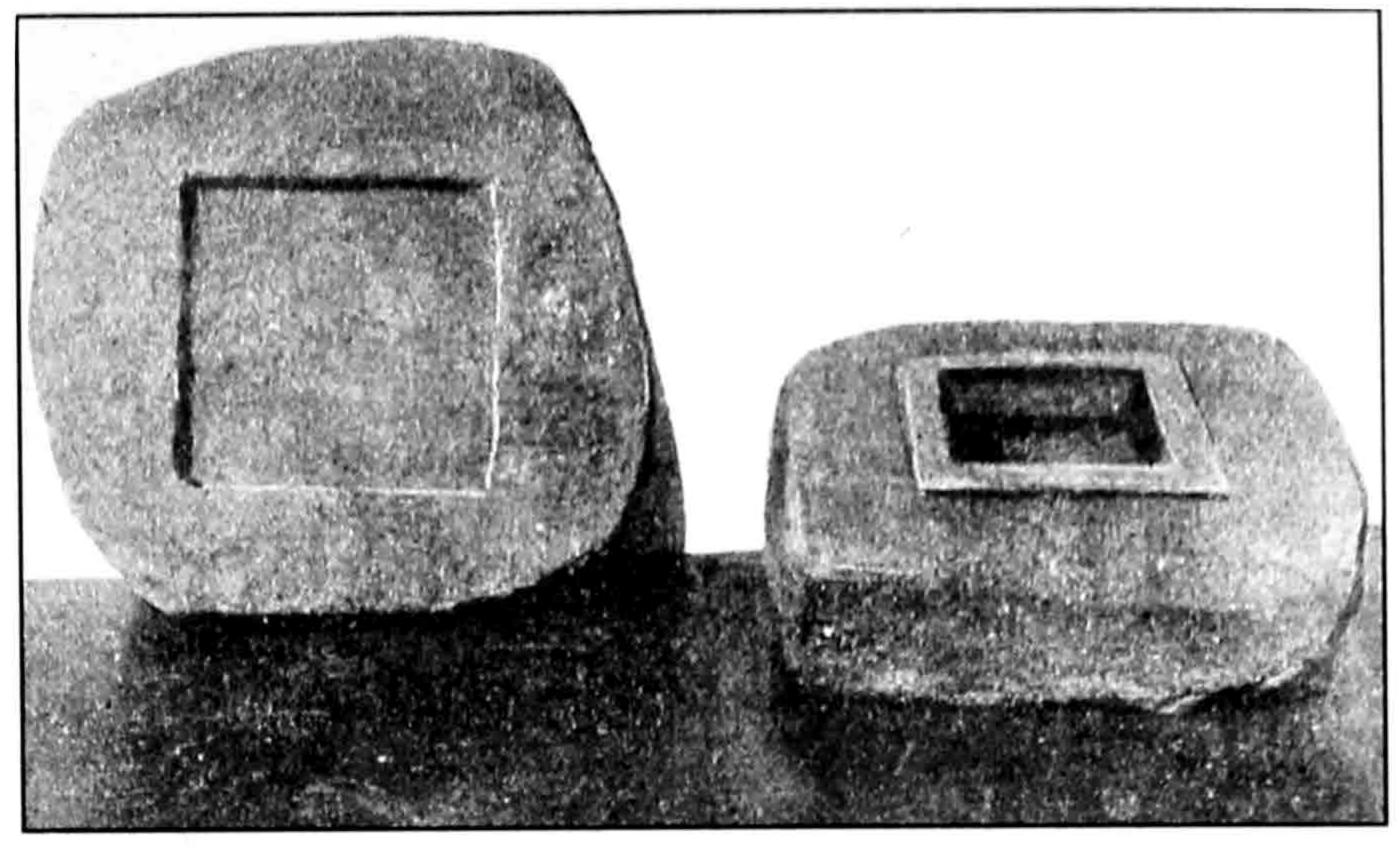
Nagarjunakonda.





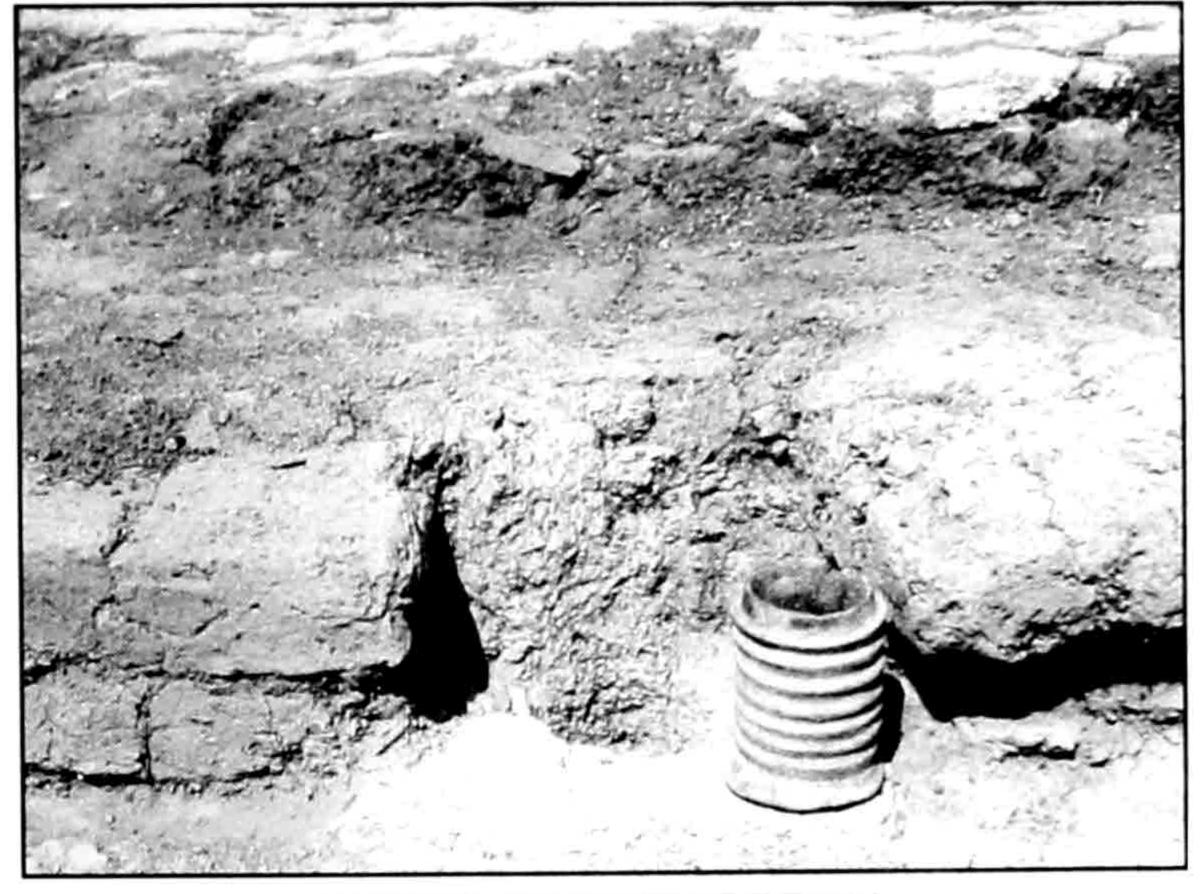


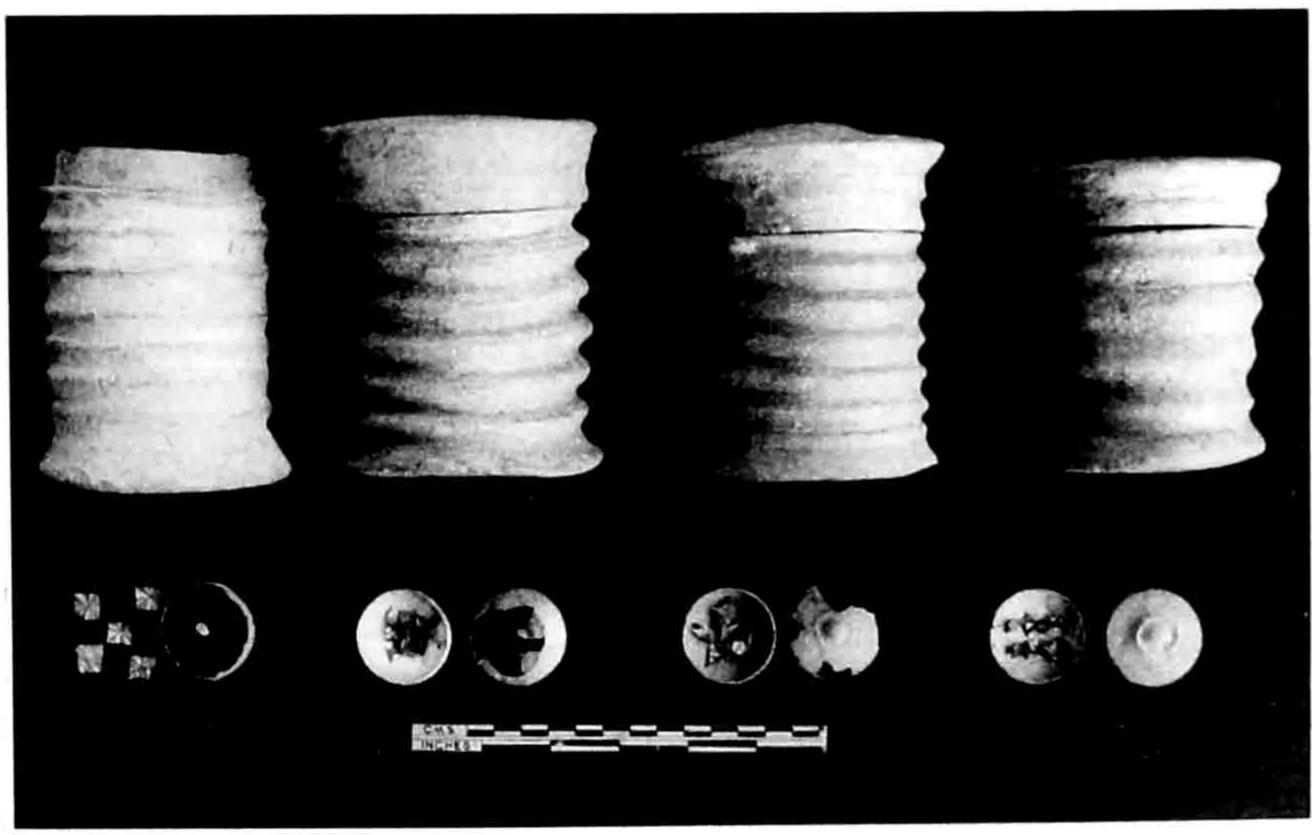
Pl. 32B. Crystal Caskets, Salihundam.



Pl. 32C. Stone Reliquary,
Salihundam.

Pl. 33A. Terracotta receptacle, Salihundam.





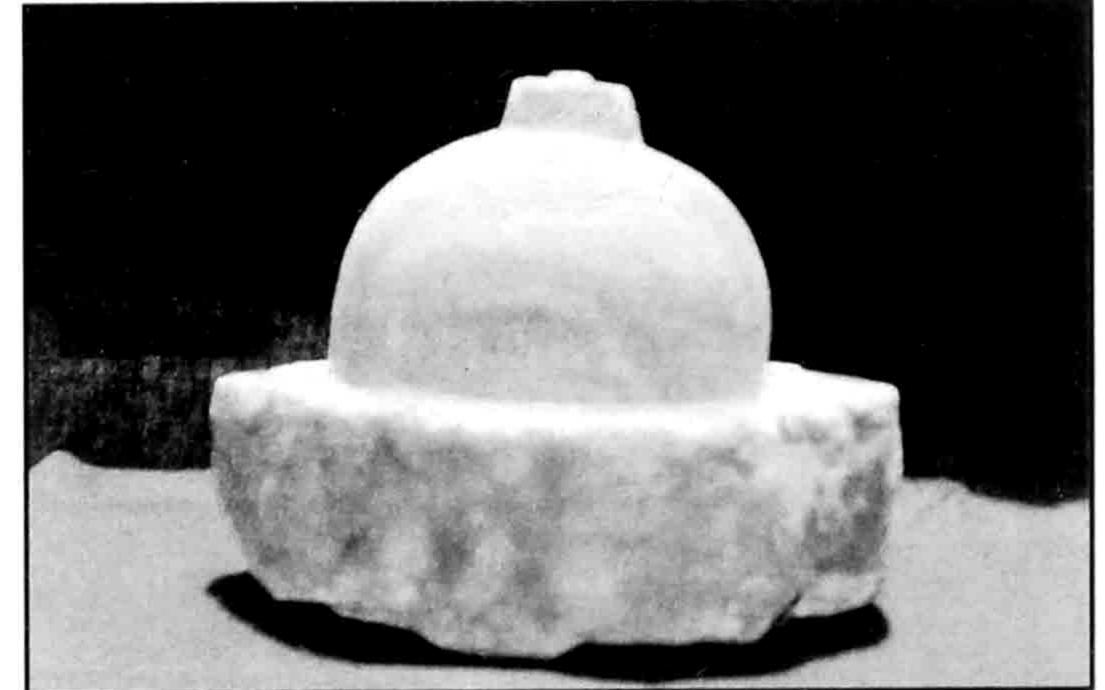
Pl. 33B.

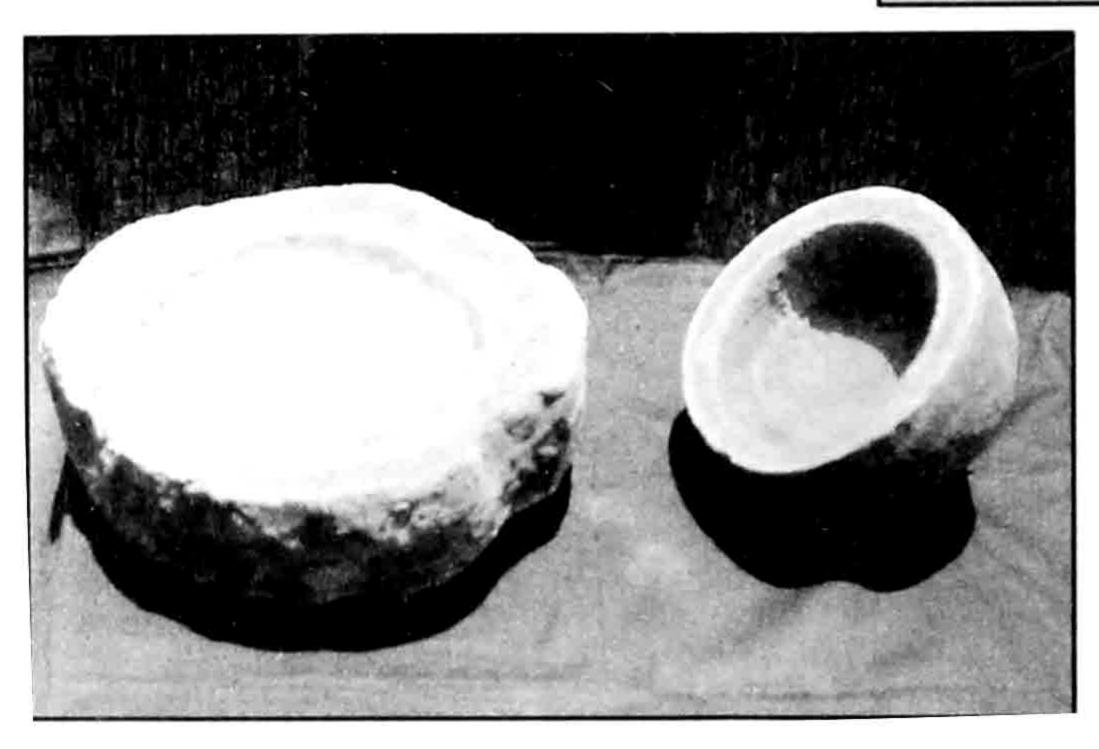
Cylindrical clay receptacles with silver caskets, beads and gold flowers, Salihundam.



Pl. 34. Inscribed pot reliquary, Nanduru.

Pl. 35A. Stone reliquary, Erravaram.

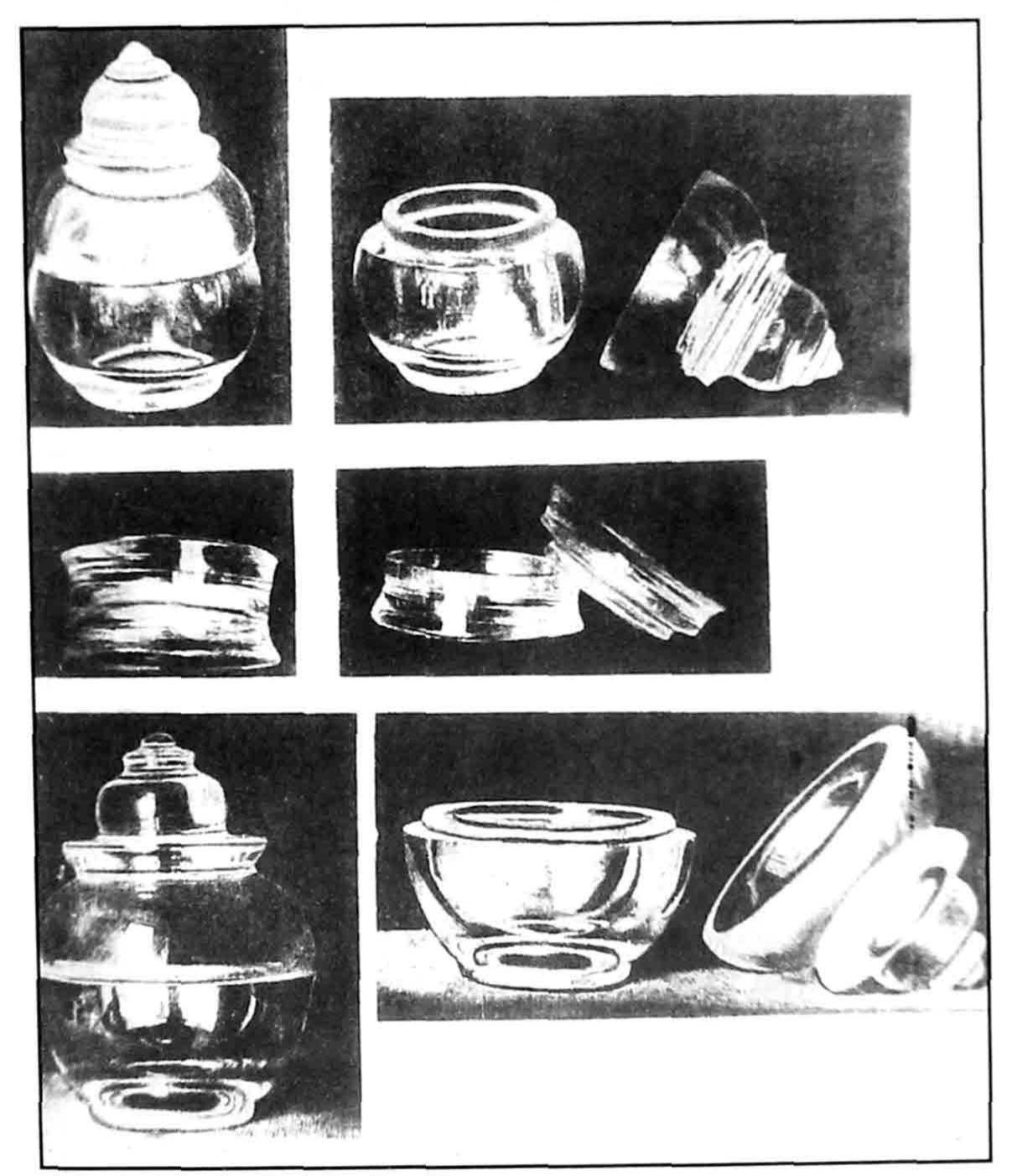




Pl. 35B. Stone reliquary showing lower and upper portions, Erravaram.



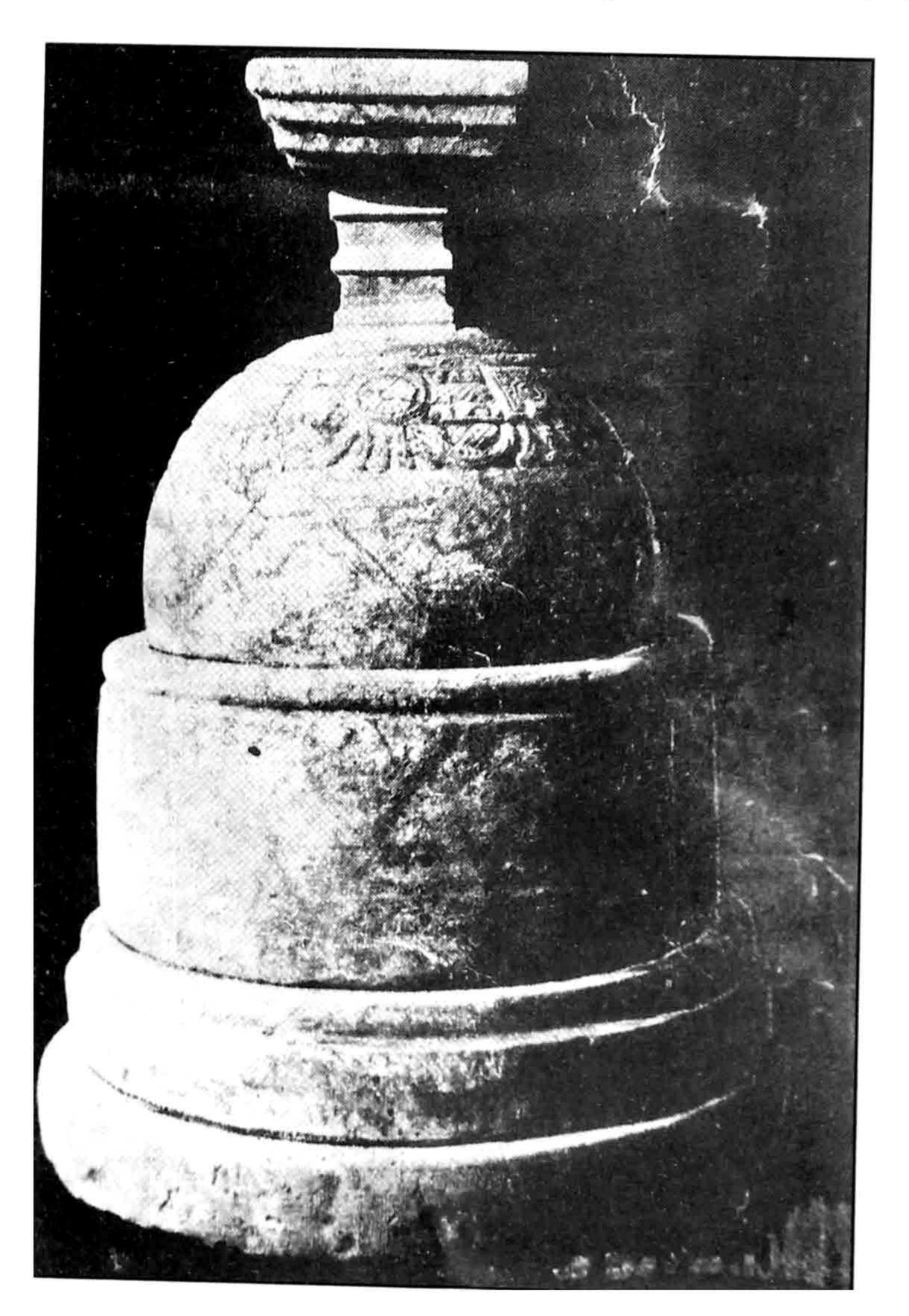
Pl. 36. Copper and silver caskets, Nagarjunakonda.



Pl. 37. Crystal caskets, Bhattiprolu.



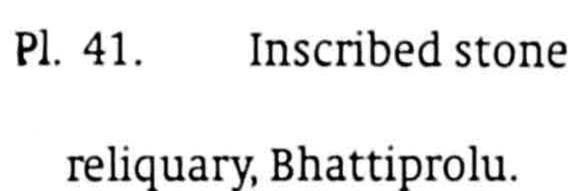
Pl. 38. Clay and Stone Caskets, Bavikonda.

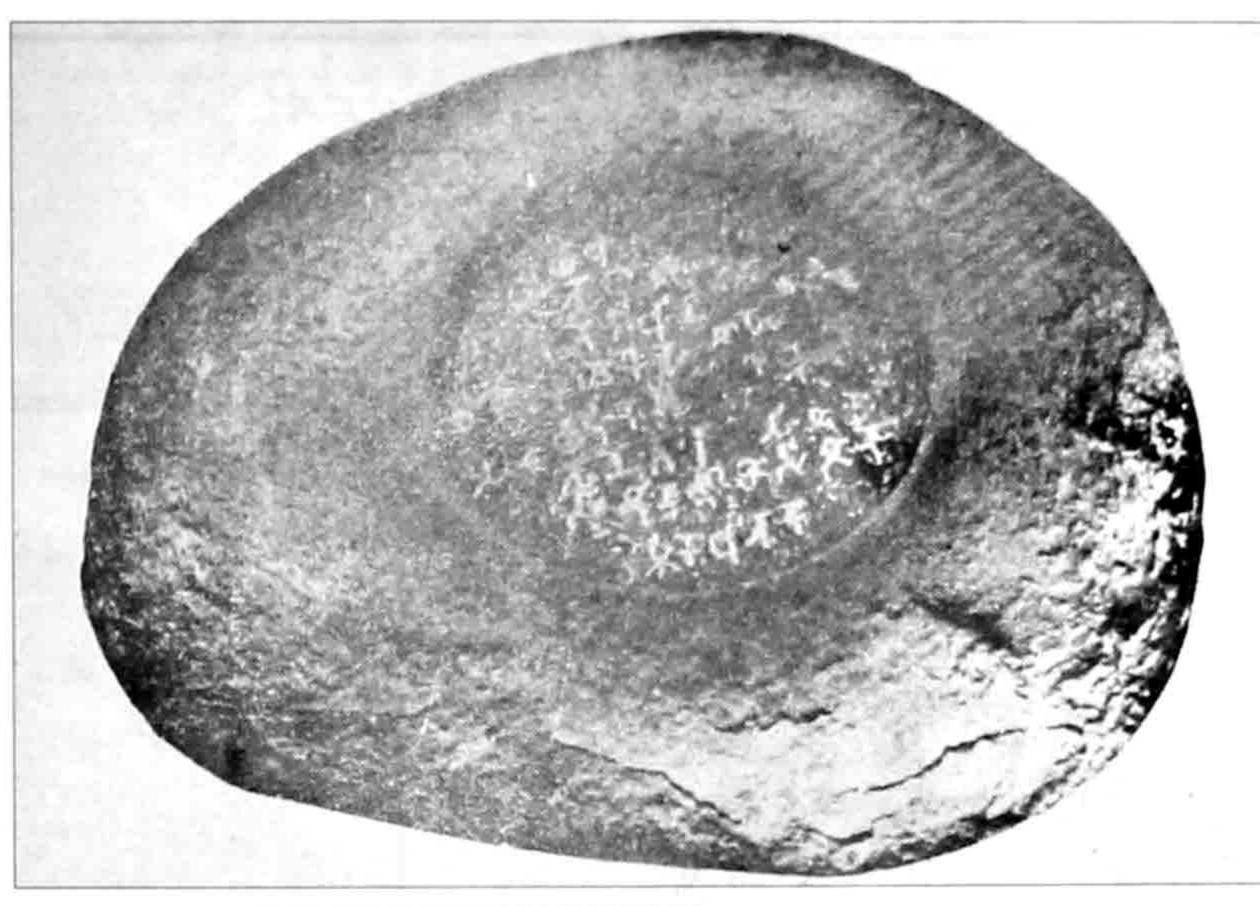


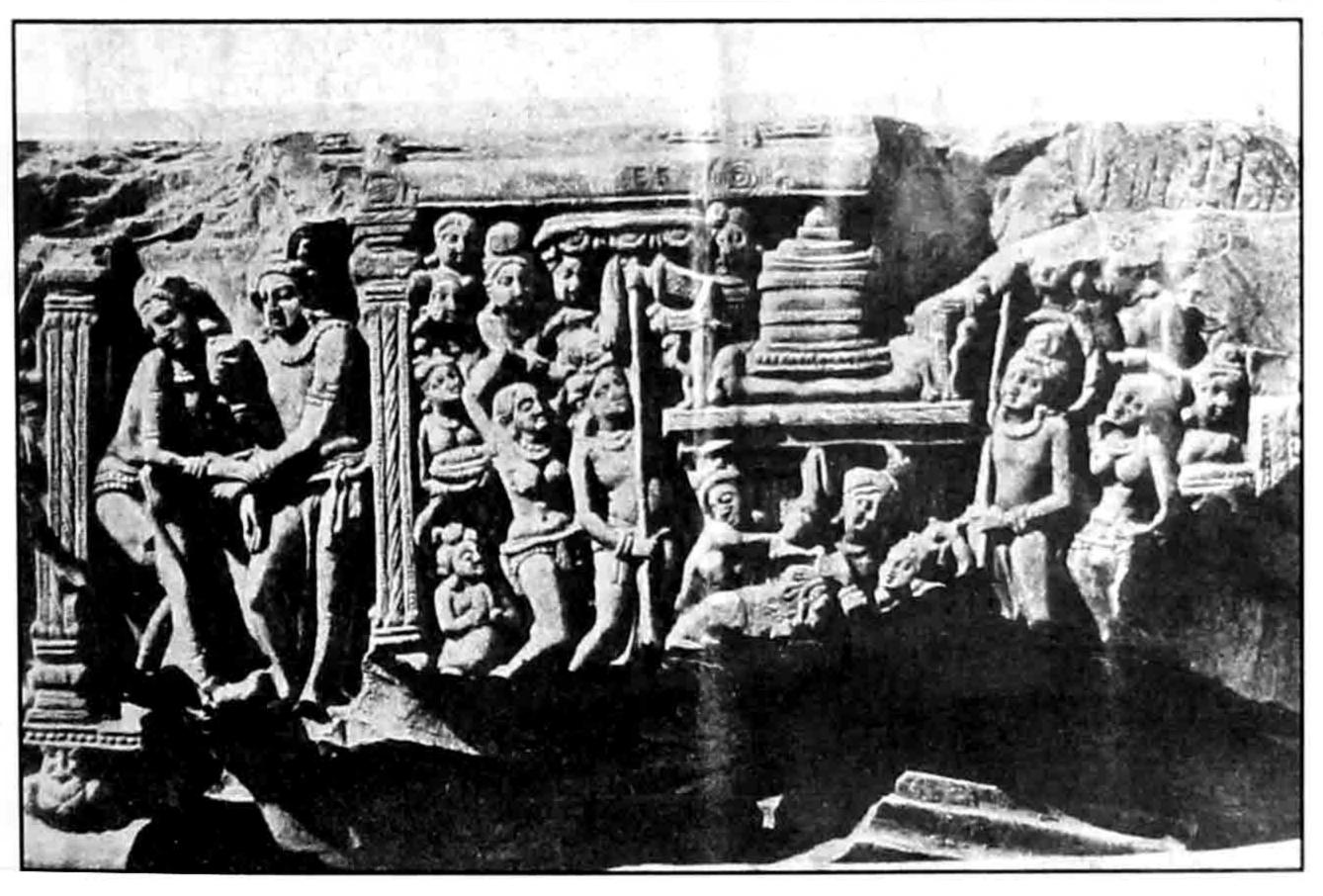
Pl. 39. Stone Reliquary,
Nagarjunakonda.



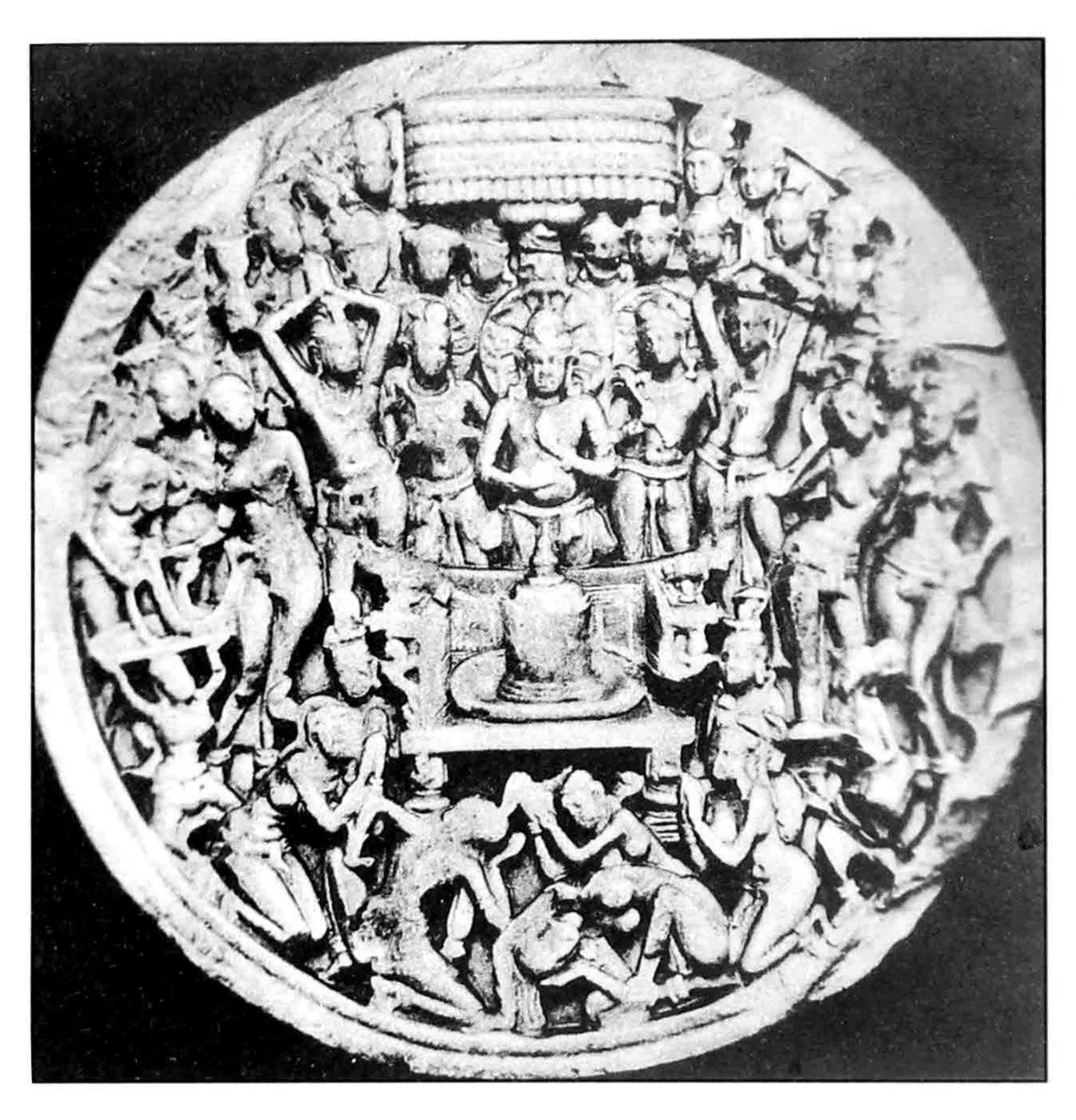
Pl. 40. Gold Caskets,
Bavikonda.







Pl. 42. Procession of
Relic Festival,
Nagarjunakonda.



Pl. 43. Relic worship,
Amaravati.



Pl. 44. Relic worship,
Nagarjunadkonda.

Ananda Buddha Vihara is a public charitable trust devoted to the cause of reviving, preserving and Propagating Buddhist tradition and culture.





Ananda Buddha Vihara Trust

Buddhanagar, Tukaram Gate, North Lallaguda, Secunderabad -500 017, A.P., INDIA Ph: 040 7732421, Fax - 040 7733160