Princely Archaeologies and Plural Sovereignties in Modern South Asia

Edited by Rafiullah Khan

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Cover: The eastern gateway of the Great Stupa at Sanchi. Courtesy: © Victoria and Albert Museum, London

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To my parents

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For Part I, the credit goes to the India Society, London, which has ceased to work anymore, as it has been taken from their 1939 publication entitled *Revealing India's Past: A Cooperative Record of Archaeological Conservation and Exploration in India and Beyond*.

Moreover, I am thankful to the publishers and authors of the four chapters included in Part II. Nayanjot Lahiri's study is republished from her book, *Marshalling the Past: Ancient India and Its Modern Histories*, published by Permanent Black, Ranikhet, India, in 2012. The author and her publisher kindly permitted me to use chapter second from the book in this collection. Upinder Singh happily consented to my request of reproducing a part of chapter nine from her 2004 book, *The Discovery of Ancient India: Early Archaeologists and the Beginnings of Archaeology*, also Permanent Black's publication. I owe my gratitude to both the author and the publisher. Rajasri Mukhopadhyay's chapter was first published in the 2002 *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, and the Indian History Congress positively responded to my idea of the publication of this volume. The permission to reproduce this work was kindly granted. I sincerely acknowledge this act of academic cooperation and generosity. For the inclusion of Luca M. Olivieri's immensely revised article, an earlier version of which appeared in *East and West* (2023), my thanks go to both the author and IsMEO, Italy. All these studies add a valuable collection to the field of South Asian archaeological historiography.

I am also indebted to a number of friends, colleagues and students. In particular, I should mention the following who, from my initial idea of the book all through to its realization, provided, in one way or another, assistance and guidance: Luca M. Olivieri, Sultan-i-Rome, Ifqut Shaheen, Peter Stewart, Nayanjot Lahiri, Upinder Singh, C. Markovits, Andrew Amstutz, Syed A.N. Rezavi, Rukun Advani, Sirat Gohar and Hanifullah. Sirat Gohar extended unforgettable help in the typing and proof reading of the entire manuscript. I am mindful of his cooperation. Khurshid Khan has always been a beacon of light for me and he should always be remembered for his valuable guidance and cooperation. My thanks certainly go to Mike Schurer and Erin McGowan of Archaeopress whose cooperation and patience during the entire process of editing ensured my success.

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August 2025

Foreword

Histories of South Asian archaeology have tended to focus on the colonial period and institutions such as the Archaeological Survey of India. Certain prominent individuals, such as Alexander Cunningham, John Marshall and Mortimer Wheeler have received considerable attention. But there are other political contexts, institutions and individuals who have not been adequately studied or understood. Against this background, this book, edited by Rafiullah Khan, marks an important intervention.

The British empire presented itself engaged in a civilizing mission that included retrieving the lost history of conquered lands. The colonized were, for the most part, cast in the role of 'ignorant natives,' lacking the skills and critical faculties needed for historical inquiry. However, archaeological research and the conservation of historical monuments in the subcontinent was not the monopoly of the British government or European scholars. The European discovery of the South Asia's past would not have been possible without the so-called 'native informants,' who usually remained anonymous or were barely mentioned in passing. Further, there were several 'native scholars' who distinguished themselves in the study of ancient texts, inscriptions, coins and also contributed to archaeology. It should also be remembered that at its height, British colonial rule covered only about three-fifths of the subcontinent, the rest being under the governance of hereditary princes. The princely states varied greatly in size, population and resources. Apart from the many small principalities, there were larger, politically important ones such as Hyderabad, Mysore, Gwalior, Baroda and Kashmir. The history of archaeology in colonial South Asia has to include what was happening in these states.

The title of this book recognizes the importance of the political context and the existence of multiple sovereignties. The relationship between the British and the princely states and that between the Archaeological Survey and these states was complex and was marked by collaboration as well as conflict. Many major historical sites that interested the officers of the Survey lay outside the jurisdiction of the British government of India. These included Sanchi in Bhopal state, Bharhut in Nagod, Ajanta in the Nizam's domain, and Mandu in the principality of Dhar, to mention just a few. So interactions were inevitable. However, the details of these interactions have so far only been partially reconstructed.

This book focuses both on the activities and the historiography of princely archaeology in South Asia. The first part is directly drawn from the volume edited by J. Cumming, *Revealing India's Past: A Cooperative Record of Archaeological Conservation and Exploration in India and Beyond*, published in 1939. Here are useful contemporary summaries of the archaeological, conservation and other work being conducted in several princely states, recounted by some of the major participants themselves. These include an account of Hyderabad by G. Yazdani, Mysore by M.H. Krishna, Baroda by H. Sastri, Jammu and Kashmir by Ram C. Kak, Gwalior by M.B. Garde, Travancore by R.V. Poduval, Jaipur by D.R. Sahni, and Bhopal, Nagod and Mayurbhanj by R. Chanda. These document diverse activities such as the setting up of Archaeological Departments; exploration and excavation of sites; collection and publication of manuscripts and inscriptions; conservation work; establishing of museums; publication of reports and monographs; and the passing of legislation. When the details are collated, they reveal patterns of involvement as well as differences in scale and degree of interest and financial outlay, providing a good overview of archaeological work in these princely states from the latter half of the 19th century till the late 1930s.

The essays in Part II contain post-colonial reflections on the history of South Asian archaeology. What binds them together is that they supplement published sources with archival ones, thereby

offering new insights into archaeological exploration, excavation and conservation, revealing the interactions of different branches of government and agencies, and bringing to light differences in approaches and ideas of various individuals. Archival sources make it possible to look behind and beyond the stereotypes produced and perpetuated by the colonial state. There is enough evidence to argue that destruction went hand in hand with documentation and protection. In fact, certain British officers such as Lepel Griffin (agent to the governor general for central India) and Henry Hardy Cole (curator of Ancient Monuments) were outspoken critics of the vandalism of the archaeologists. Another stereotype was that of ignorant native princes who were either indifferent to historical heritage or saw the past exclusively through a religious or communal lens. This too is belied by the evidence, for instance, by the support extended by the Bhopal Durbar towards the work at Sanchi and the efforts of Sultan Jahan Begum to have the Sanchi relics brought back from England to India. It is not for nothing that John Marshall's volumes on this important Buddhist site in central India are dedicated to the Begum's memory. The archaeological work done in Mayurbhanj state in the early 20th century is less known and reflects the intersection of nationalism and regional pride. Also revelatory are archival sources such as the Malakand Papers and the 'Swat Folder' which enable the detailed reconstruction of the history of the Gilgit manuscripts before and after Giuseppe Tucci obtained them from a Pakistani army officer in 1956 and handed them over to the Department of Archaeology, now housed in the Karachi National Museum. This story reveals the intersection of national, princely and international jurisdictions and interests.

The editor Rafiullah Khan highlights the importance of historical investigations of princely archaeologies in the Introduction as well as the third part of the book. He also points to various issues that require further investigation. These include broadening the ambit of inquiry to hitherto unstudied princely states, examining the interactions among the various durbars, and identifying the differences in their attitude and approach. The ideological underpinnings of the colonial state's interest in excavating and preserving South Asia's past are well researched. Not so the ideological underpinnings of archaeology and conservation in the princely states. According to Khan, these represent a local modernity which recognized the important place of the materiality of the past in claims to sovereignty. Appeals to the past were of interest not only for the colonial state but also for the princes of South Asia. Clearly, this is a subject that requires a great deal of further attention and excavation of the wealth of information that lies buried in dusty files in regional archives. It also calls for greater collaboration and conversation among South Asian archaeologists and historians about their shared past and cultural heritage.

Upinder Singh
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25 July 2025

Introduction

Rafiullah Khan

Colonial South Asia constituted a mosaic of polities, such as, ranging from preponderant British India to Burma, Nepal and five hundred or so princely, or Indian, states. All of them worked in a web of political and administrative relationship which scholars have worked upon in the past few decades. Of particular interest to us are Indian states which were embedded into the British paramountcy through an elaborate system of treaties and mutual obligations. On the whole, the states were free in dealing with their internal affairs while such a privilege was denied to them with regard to foreign relations, communication and defense. In other words, princes were subject to the requirements which British paramountcy entailed. Serious investigations have so far been done in this regard (see for a review, Zutshi 2009). Yet many aspects of this complex relationship still need our attention. Historical studies of archaeological research and management in princely India make one such issue which should not be left unattended anymore. This apparently simple matter in fact marks a much deeper problem in South Asian historiography.

We are aware that there has been an increasing realization that princely histories should be viewed in connection to South Asian history (Ernst and Pati 2007). Building upon this proposition, the present volume aims to broach the subject of princely archaeologies in relation to South Asian, and more particularly archaeological, historiography. In this pursuit, archaeological fieldwork, including conservation, and the complex legal-institutional apparatuses, as were in place in both British India and some of the princely states, need to be taken account of so as to make sense of mutual collaborations and obligations as well as situations of conflict, assertion of ownership or other such crucial issues. All this will potentially go much beyond investigating the process of archaeological research and creation of archaeological evidence into areas such as sovereign and legal pluralities and management of archaeology. Undoubtedly, let me reiterate, we no more can ignore exploring such themes for examination and historiographical analysis.

In one sense, it is heartening that up until now a number of meticulous studies have appeared which constitute a category of its own. Sourindranath Roy (1961), Dilip Chakrabarti (1988/2001, 1997), Upinder Singh (2004, 2021), Himanshu P. Ray (2008, 2018), Nayanjot Lahiri (2005, 2012), Sudeshna Guha (2015), Luca M. Olivieri (2015a, 2015b, 2019), Peter Stewart (2016), Mridu Rai (2009), Ifqut Shaheen (2022, 2024), Rafiullah Khan (2020, 2023, 2024) and many others have made valuable contributions to this field. All such works, save for a few exceptions, overwhelmingly look into the mainstream colonial archaeology and Indology. The present volume brings together some of these few exceptions in order to present a historiographical view of archaeological work in princely states. These works have been collected from different sources wherein they first appeared. They have been divided into two parts. Part I has been reproduced from *Revealing India's Past* (chapter VII) edited by John Cumming (1939). It discusses archaeological activities done till 1937 in the princely states of Hyderabad, Mysore, Baroda, Jammu and Kashmir, Gwalior, Travancore, Jaipur, Bhopal, Nagod and Mayurbhanj. Its different sections have been written by different authors. Overall, it provides a good summary of archaeological work in the mentioned Indian states from the latter half of the 19th century till the partition of India, short of a decade. In the present volume, the original chapter has been untangled in such a way as to make separate chapter for the archaeology of each state. There is just one exception: chapter eight is written by a single author and discusses the three states of Bhopal, Nagod and Mayurbhanj.

Part II of this volume includes four studies which have been published in different sources since the dawn of the 21th century. It makes sense to deal it as a category providing for a postcolonial view of colonial archaeology in princely states as well as the twist which occurred with the partition of India in 1947. Nayanjot Lahiri's study gives a reappraisal of colonial archaeology centred on the site of Sanchi. Sanchi was situated in the Bhopal state which stood 'on the eastern confines of Mālwā' and was bounded 'on the south by the Narbadā river' (Luard 1908: 1). Lahiri demonstrates how the site was burrowed for antiquities in the the 19th century and how with the durbar's vigilance and assertive presence John Marshall, director general of the Archaeological Survey of India (1902–1928), did a new work there. The durbar also tried to get the Sanchi objects repatriated from England, a pursuit which finally worked around the time of the British departure from India. Lahiri also challenges the communal as well as ahistorical prism through which orientalists viewed Indian society and history. In chapter tenth, Upinder Singh argues that local rulers took great interest in conserving monuments and remains in their states. They generously contributed large sums towards preserving and restoring sites of heritage. Both these studies convincingly illustrate how flawed the colonial view of indifferent, ignorant, vacuous and destructive native was. Rajasri Mukhopadhyay's chapter summarizes the archaeological work as was done in the Mayurbhanj state in the early 20th century. Mayurbhanj was one of the most significant states in the Eastern States Agency and was merged to the Indian federation on 1 January 1949 (Senapati and Sahu 1967: 1–5). Finally, Luca M. Olivieri discusses the Italian Archaeological Mission's arrival into Pakistan in the mid-1950s and the discovery and acquisition of the Gilgit Manuscripts by Giuseppe Tucci. This study is valuable in many ways. It belongs to a transitional period after the partition and documents the story from acquisition of the group of manuscripts to its study and publication and final return to Pakistan's Archaeology Department. Olivieri also contextualizes the discovery of the manuscripts to the first-time discovery of Gilgit Manuscripts in the 1930s within the Kashmir durbar's princely realm. Swat and the extension of Pakistan's archaeological laws into that state for commencing Italian archaeological research have also been related to his analysis. This adds an interesting aspect to princely heritage in postcolonial subcontinent.

Part III comprises my own fresh chapter which highlights the importance of historical investigations in princely archaeologies. It brings to the fore various issues for further research and points out the need to make such pursuits related to broader concerns in South Asian, primarily archaeological, historiography.

Since the works collected in this volume first appeared in various publications, the earliest one being in 1939, it was felt desirable to make these diverse texts consistent in terms of spellings, capitalization, diacritics, abbreviations, numerals, contractions, dates and references. Uniformity, therefore, was introduced as per the Archaeopress style and format. Transliterations in Part I have been removed while no such interfering has been made in Olivieri's work owing to some highly technical titles used by him.

Intriguingly, some of the states included in Part I also feature in the subsequent parts. Sanchi, situated in Bhopal, bulks large in chapters ninth and tenth while Kashmir has been referred to in chapter 12, in the context of the discovery of Gilgit Manuscripts in 1955–1956 in Pakistan, and chapter 13. A meticulous study about archaeology and politics in the Kashmir state has also been published by Mridu Rai (2009). For certain reasons, unluckily, it could not be added to this collection. We would have been fortunate if similar postcolonial reappraisals were available for the other states which Part I consists of. Yet, it is to be hoped that this theme would attract attention sooner rather than latter and one day we will be able to better understand princely archaeologies in relation to a broader South Asian historiographical scholarship.

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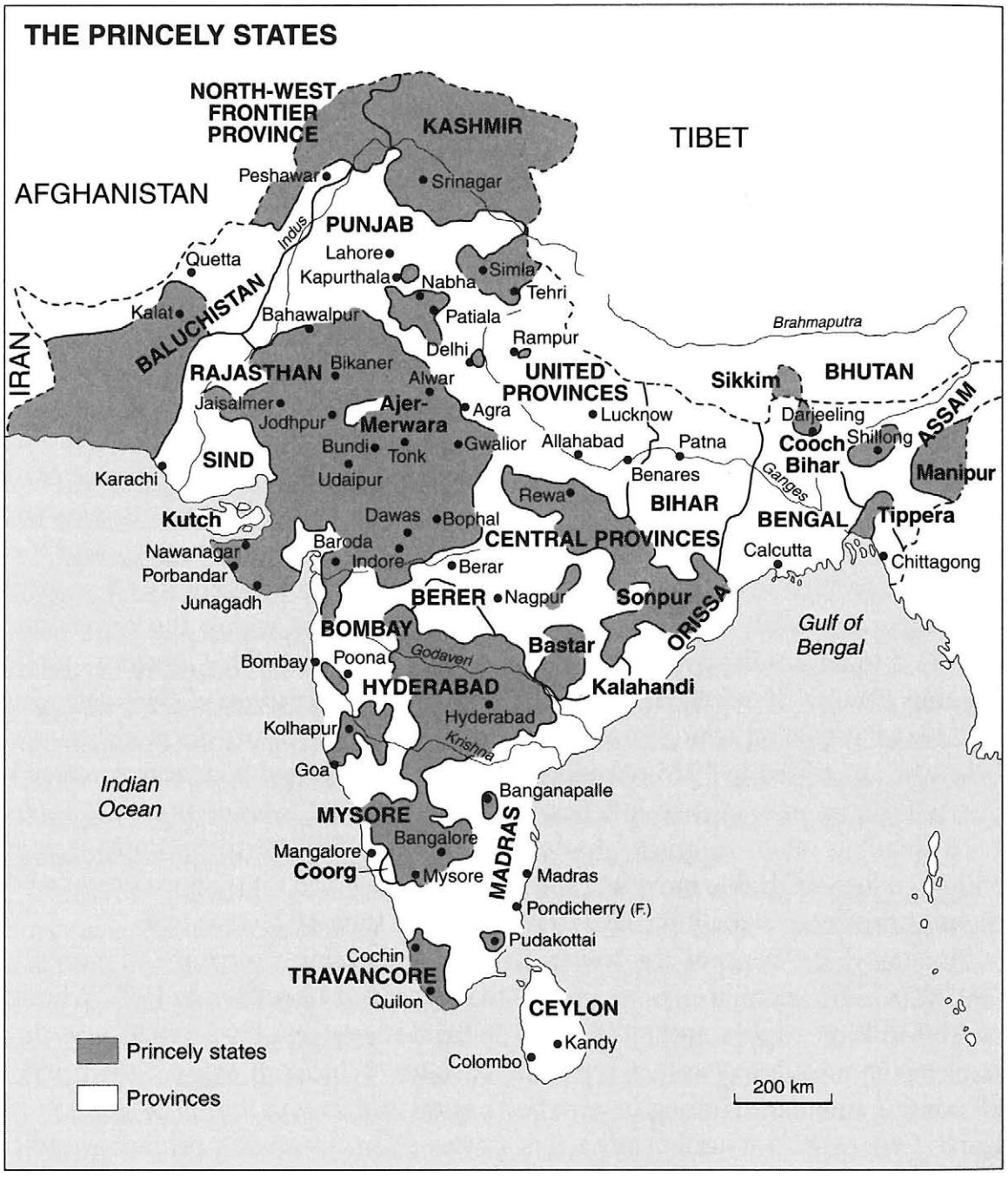

Map of the princely states and provinces of India, from C. Markovits. 2004. *A History of Modern India, 1480–1950*. Reproduced with kind permission of the author.

Part I

Early Twentieth Century Accounts of Archaeology and Conservation in Princely States[1]

[1] This part has been taken from: Cumming (ed.). *Revealing India's Past*: 253–324.

Chapter One:
Hyderabad

Ghulam Yazdani

The Archaeological Department of the state of Hyderabad was inaugurated in 1914, only three years after the accession of His Exalted Highness Nawab Sir Mir Osman Ali Khan, G.C.S.I., G.B.E.

The state government had always shown a deep interest in the exploration and conservation of the archaeological remains of the Dominions, though, owing to the absence of a properly constituted department, attempts in this direction were spasmodic and irregular. During the ministry of the Nawab Salar Jung I enormous sums were spent to preserve the monuments of the state, but after the death of that illustrious statesman official interest in this matter slackened, and the monuments again fell into disrepair and ruin. The Public Works Department occasionally on their own initiative or at the suggestion of the Archaeological Surveyor, Bombay Presidency, in whose jurisdiction the monuments of the state were nominally placed, came to the rescue, but conservation means more than ordinary repairs, and, besides, requires some artistic and scientific technique. The result was that, although the state government incurred considerable expenditure on the preservation of monuments, antiquaries and art-critics deplored their condition and often made appeals for their better upkeep. Thereupon the state authorities entered into correspondence with the director general of Archaeology in India, and with his advice and cooperation constituted an Archaeological Department in the dominions and appointed the present writer as its first director.

The duties of the director were thus defined: 1) to preserve authentic specimens of monumental antiquities of the Nizam's dominions; 2) to excavate such sites and areas as are [were] likely to throw light on the past history of the country; and 3) to arrange for the systematic collection and location of movable antiquities such as sculptures, inscriptions, manuscripts, paintings, coins, arms, fabrics, ceramics, metal work and wood and ivory carvings.

In pursuance of these duties the department since its inauguration has not only preserved all the principal monuments of the dominions, but made excavations at several prehistoric and protohistoric sites and established a museum in Hyderabad for the exhibition of genuine specimens of the local arts and crafts. A vast literature in the form of monographs, guide-books, and illustrated articles has also been compiled, in which the requirements of the serious student and the ordinary reader have been fully considered.

As several of the monuments have an important bearing on the art and culture of the East and even of the West, the utmost care has been observed and every scientific method has been employed by the department to preserve such relics of India's past glory. Take, for example, the conservation of the frescoes of Ajanta, which by the passage of time and the inclemencies of weather had decayed to such an extent that the painted surface was falling off in flakes and perished at the gentlest touch. Further, in the few places where the frescoes were intact they were smeared by some injudicious artists in comparatively recent times with a thick coat of copal varnish in order to brighten their detail and also to preserve them from moisture. The result, however, was the opposite of what was intended; for the varnish, during the course of a quarter of a century, not only made the fine brushwork more indistinct, but in some cases where the dirt had not been removed beforehand from the fresco, converted the entire painting into a dingy patch. Thanks, however, to the liberal

policy of government and the enlightened patronage of His Exalted Highness, all schemes which were submitted by the department in this connection were readily sanctioned; and within the course of a decade or so, the repairs to the caves and the cleaning and conservation of the frescoes have been carried out on such sound principles and in such a scientific manner that these matchless monuments have found a fresh lease of life for at least a couple of centuries.

To give an idea of the expenditure incurred and the solicitude shown, mention may be made of the appointment with liberal remuneration of two Italian experts, Professor Cecconi and Count Orsini, for the preservation of Ajanta frescoes for two seasons—1920-21 and 1921-22. But this expenditure was, however, very small in comparison with the vast sums spent on the building of roads and bridges in order to make Ajanta easily accessible to the ordinary student. The distance from Aurangabad to Ajanta is sixty miles, but there existed a road only for the first thirty miles, and the remaining distance had a cart-track, which was often lost amid boulders and deep ravines, while the last five miles, containing the Fardapur Ghat, had a descent of nearly five hundred feet through precipitous rocks and jutting stones. All these obstacles have now been removed, and a road which can be used by motors has been built right to the foot of the hill wherein the cave-temples are hewn. The Fardapur Ghat is now a most pleasant drive, offering lovely views of the Ajanta valley and the Khandesh plains.

Another measure carried out for the convenience of visitors to Ajanta is the building of a large and comfortable rest-house. The concern and anxiety for the conservation and study of the Ajanta frescoes has been so great that along with the measures enumerated above a systematic scheme has been carried out to reproduce the frescoes by photographic process, in order to keep for posterity an authentic record of this priceless heritage of Indian art. The scheme has been eminently successful; and the two volumes (Yazdani 1930–33), containing the photographic copies of the frescoes of Caves I–II with an authoritative study of them from the artistic and iconographic points of view, have been welcomed by scholars and connoisseurs all over the world. Suffice it to quote here from two reviews, one from the point of view of oriental scholarship, the other as an authority on fine art.

The *Indian Antiquary* for August, 1931, reviewed the volumes in the following words:

> Three previous attempts have been made to copy the frescoes of Ajanta since they were discovered early in the nineteenth century. Major Gill worked there for some twenty years; but the results of his labour were destroyed in the fire at the Crystal Palace Exhibition in 1866. Again, in 1872, Mr. Griffiths, Principal of the Bombay School of Art, commenced to make copies, with the assistance of his pupils, and worked for many years. Unfortunately a great deal of his work was also burnt, but he published his well-known work, *The Paintings in the Buddhist Caves at Ajanta*, in 1896 from the copies saved. Next Lady Herringham, with a band of Indian artists, took up the task during the years 1909 to 1911, and in 1915 published a portfolio of plates, mostly coloured, which gave the public a clearer idea of the wonders of the frescoes. Though most useful for comparison, and perhaps preserving some details that have since been lost, these necessarily lack the accuracy ensured by photographic reproduction possessed by the present splendid series of plates. To preserve what remains of these frescoes for future generations, His Exalted Highness the Nizam authorized his Archaeological Department to have a complete photographic record prepared. The world of art is deeply indebted to the munificence of His Exalted Highness and the active encouragement of his able Finance Minister, Sir Akbar Hydari.

In the Burlington Magazine for May 1931, there is an appreciative reference to

> [. . .] an almost complete set of reproductions as close to the originals as modern science and skill could make them, of what is perhaps the greatest artistic wonder of Asia.

Besides the cave-temples of Ajanta, the Nizam's dominions possess more monuments of the Buddhist faith, among which the *chaityas* (cave temples) and *vihāras* (monastic cells) of Elura (Ellora), Pitalkhora, Ghatotkach and Aurangabad are pre-eminent either for their antiquity or for the style of their architecture and beauty of sculpture. The cave-temples of Pitalkhora and Ghatotkach were in a sad state of neglect, being covered with rank vegetation and filled up with silt which had accumulated through rainwater. The columns and friezes had decayed to such an extent that there was a danger of the rock-roof falling down. These relics have now been thoroughly cleaned, and neat props have been built for their safety. The Buddhist monuments of Elura and Aurangabad have also received a large share of attention; not only have they been cleared of debris and repaired, but footpaths have been laid out and steps constructed so that access to them may be easy.

What has been done for Buddhist monuments has been done in an equal measure and with strict impartiality for the relics of other faiths, whether they be Hindu and Jain shrines or Muslim mosques, tombs and palaces. To begin with the Hindu monuments, mention must be made first of the great rock-hewn temple of Kailasa, the porch of which was crumbling to decay and has been rescued by the insertion of a steel frame outwardly covered by cement plaster of a neutral tint to match the rock surface. The other Brahmanical temples Ravan-ki-Kai, Dumar Lena, Ramesvara and Das Avatara, all of which are at Elura, have been thoroughly repaired, and modern accretions, which disfigured the interiors of these magnificent monuments, have been removed.

Among the medieval temples of this faith, much attention has been devoted to conserve and save from further ruin the Mahadeva temple at Ittagi in the Raichur district, the Vishnuite shrine of Dichpalli in the Nizamabad district, the Panchesvara temple at Pangal in the Nalgonda district, the thousand-pillar temple of Hanamkonda and the great temple of Palampet. The last edifice was in a dangerous condition, but by judicious measures its roof and the beautiful figure-brackets, which are the finest specimens of the twelfth-century Hindu sculpture, have been saved from impending decay.

In the groups of Islamic monuments, Mubarak Khalji's Mosque in the Daulatabad fort, the Jami Masjid of Gulbarga, the Bahmani Mosque in the fort at Bidar, the Kali Masjid in the same city, and the Mushirabad Mosque and the Toli Masjid in the Hyderabad city, have been thoroughly repaired and their original appearance restored by various measures. Several of these edifices rank high in the list of the Muslim monuments of India—for instance, the Great Mosque of Gulbarga and the Bahmani Mosque of Bidar fort, the architecture of both being characterized by a beauty of line in the arrangement of the component parts, which are, however, of the simplest design. Among the edifices of a semi-religious character, mention should be made of the Madrasah of Mahmud Gawan of Bidar and the Badshahi Ashur Khanah of Hyderabad. These two buildings were apparently designed by Persian architects, for the Madrasah of Bidar has a strong resemblance to the Madrasah of Isfahan in Persia, while the tile-work and the hall of the Badshahi Ashur Khanah are copied either from the Shiite shrine of Meshed in Iran or from the buildings dedicated to the same faith in Iraq. The exquisite tile-work of the latter monument has been thoroughly preserved and its roof has been reconstructed, for the timber of the original structure had completely decayed. At the Madrasah of Mahmud Gawan extensive measures have been carried out to repair the building in such a manner as to restore it to some semblance of its first beauty.

Other monuments of the Muslim faith which have been tended with care are the Bahmani tombs of Gulbarga and Bidar, the Baridi mausolea of the latter place, the Adil Shahi tombs of Gogi in the Gulbarga district and the Qutb Shahi tombs of Golconda. In repairing these monuments the department has not only made them structurally sound, but has improved their surroundings by laying out courts and removing all modern excrescences.

Again, perhaps in no part of India is there a greater abundance and variety of forts than in the Nizam's dominions. The reasons are not far to seek, for the plateau of the Deccan has been on the one hand from very early times the meeting-place of different conquest-loving peoples, while, on the other, its special geological formation, consisting of steep rocks standing out in an otherwise fairly level country, offered special facilities to the inhabitants to use the rocks as places of refuge. The traces of large prehistoric settlements at the foot of Maula Ali and Bhongir hills clearly show that the early denizens of the plateau specially selected these sites so that they might climb up the hills in time of danger. It is not at all improbable that at one time the famous scarp of the Daulatabad fort, which in later times must have been chiselled artificially, together with the Golconda rock, was resorted to by the inhabitants for similar purposes. The way in which the people of hilly tracts availed themselves of these natural advantages would have led the dwellers of the plains to use artificial means for piling up similar defences. The mud walls of the Warangal fort and the unshapely watch towers of our modern villages are reminiscent of the early military architecture of the plains of the Deccan. With the advance of knowledge, masonry seems to have been introduced in building defence-walls, first in crude forms, but later quite regularly, although the size of the stones, as in the cyclopean walls, remained a significant feature of the military architecture of the Deccan until the advent of the Muslims. On the walls of the Raichur fort is an interesting carving in which a heavy stone is shown laden on a large four-wheeled cart, tilted up, so that the rear end of the stone nearly touches the ground. Buffaloes are yoked to the cart in pairs; as they grow smaller in front and more indistinct it is difficult to count them. Probably this is meant for perspective. Upon the forward upturned end of the stone is perched the driver, whip in hand, while others are applying long levers to the wheels and stone to help it along. The length of the stone to which the carving refers is 41½ feet, and it is still in the walls of the Raichur fort, near the western gate. Apart from the large size of the masonry, the other distinguishing features of the Hindu military constructions are the irregular form of the stones and the entire absence of the use of cement of any kind. The joints of the stones were first perfectly chiselled, and then they were laid one above the other, being kept together only by their enormous weight.

With the advent of the Muslims into the Deccan, a vigorous style of military architecture grew up, and the use of the guns under Turkish officers and engineers in the latter half of the 15th century brought about still further improvements in the principles and material of building as well as in the laying out of the defences. The present fortifications of the majority of the Deccan forts bear a striking resemblance in their arrangement to the medieval European forts, the influence of the Turkish engineers being apparently the cause of this similarity.

A large number of these forts has been systematically studied and described in detail in the *Annual Reports* of the department. The survey plans of the Golconda, Gulbarga and Bidar forts are also available for sale at nominal prices for the benefit of students. As the Bidar fort was for a long time the residence of the Bahmani kings, they had erected beautiful edifices there for their personal comfort on the one hand, and the display of power and glory on the other. But by the change of dynasties and the consequent havoc as also by the upheavals caused by various sieges, these noble monuments almost completely perished, leaving huge heaps of debris and traces of ruined walls and towers. As Bidar has now been connected with Hyderabad by railway, and the chances of the antiquary and historian visiting the place are favourable, the department has carried out excavations there on a large scale, to expose to view and preserve the old palaces and public buildings. A large volume describing the monuments of Bidar has been prepared for publication in 1939 by the Oxford University Press.

Since its inauguration, the department has discovered several hundred inscriptions; three of these, being the Asokan edicts, are in Brahmi, and the rest in Sanskrit, Kanarese, Telugu, Marathi, Arabic

and Persian. These records have been carefully edited and published in the form of either *Memoirs* of the department, or articles contributed to the *Epigraphia Indo-Moslemica*, a journal published under the authority of the government of India (see Cumming, ed., 1939: 211–21). Of the *Memoirs* of the department, 13 have already appeared. Several of these have been included in the University courses at Madras, Calcutta, and elsewhere. It is also interesting to note that the 'marks' found by the director on prehistoric pottery some 19 years ago have been considered by some scholars to be the origin of the early alphabet of India. Similar marks have recently been found at Mohenjodaro, but the director as early as 1917 had shown their similarity to some of the Brahmi letters and also to the old Cretan, Mycenaean, Etruscan and Libyan characters.

A museum in Hyderabad was opened by His Exalted Highness in 1931, when the hope was expressed that in time it would be reckoned 'as one of the renowned and historic institutions of Hyderabad.' The hope has been amply realized, for the Hyderabad Museum has acquired collections in its sections of sculpture, painting, old arms, ceramics, coins and bidri-ware, which compare favourably with those of the senior institutions of India. The Hyderabad collection of celadon-ware is perhaps unique in the country, for it is based on the extensive collection of this ware which was originally deposited at the Bibi-ka-Maqbarah by Prince Azam Shah for use during the *Urs* (anniversary) of Princess Dilras Bano Begum, over whose remains the mausoleum had been built. The cabinet of coins had also a vast store of the Deccan issues, several of which are extremely rare, as their mints have been identified for the first time by research carried out by the department. The collections of the museum have been enriched by suitable gifts from time to time, and it will be appropriate to mention in this connection that among the gold coins there was one of Mu'azzamabad, a mint of which the gold issues are extremely rare.

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Chapter Two:
Mysore

M.H. Krishna

The Mysore state extends over 29,000 square miles in the southern and highest part of the Deccan tableland, and enjoys a temperate and invigorating climate, which is combined with natural fertility and a good water-supply. These blessings have enabled its inhabitants to play an important part in the political and cultural history of the Deccan during more than 2000 years. The area is thus full of ancient sites, monuments and other antiquities which offer a prolific field for the work of the archaeologist. (For a recent interesting history of Mysore state, see Nair 2012. Editor)

Mr B.L. Rice, an educational officer of the state, who had developed a great love for the literature and history of the Karnata, commenced to publish archaeological studies from AD 1879. In 1884 he became part-time director of Archaeology, and in 1890 a separate Archaeological Department was constituted. A detailed epigraphic survey of the state was started, and the results were published by the time he laid down his office in 1906.

The most important piece of work done by Mr Rice was the collection of nearly 9000 inscriptions. These were read by him with the assistance of the Pandits and published from time to time in the *Epigraphia Carnatica* (Cumming, ed. 1939: 251) with the texts in Kannada characters and transliteration in Roman characters, together with translations in English and introductory notes. The general results of the whole survey were published in a separate volume (Rice 1909). The *Epigraphia Carnatica* series, initiated in 1886, contains 12 large volumes, which are an indispensable source of information for the history of the Deccan. Among Mr Rice's discoveries may be mentioned the minor rock edicts of Asoka in north Mysore, which revealed the extension of the Mauryan empire into the Deccan, the Talgunda pillar inscription disclosing the history of the Kadamba dynasty, the Bhadrabahu and other inscriptions of Sravanabelgula relating to the traditional connection of Chandragupta Maurya with the Deccan, the Vokkaleri plates throwing new light on the history of the Chalukyas, and the Atakur lithic record describing the relations between the Rashtrakutas, the Gangas and the Cholas. Mr Rice also collected hundreds of manuscripts, to preserve which the Government Oriental Library was founded at Mysore. He also selected and published in the *Bibliotheca Carnatica* series some of the most important classical works of Kannada literature, and these publications won for Kannada (Kanarese) a place in the world of ancient Indian literature.

Another valuable work which Mr Rice compiled and published for the government of Mysore was the *Mysore Gazetteer*, prepared on the model of the *Imperial Gazetteer of India*. Among the articles contributed to the first volume in 1897 were some from Mr Rice's pen giving a very interesting though brief account of the history of the Karnata and its culture. The information collected by him about the antiquities of various places in Mysore and their traditions was embodied in the notes on the respective places, and hence Mr Rice's *Gazetteer* is a mine of information. His notes on the architectural monuments of the state were brief; but in the case of some of the most important monuments, he called the attention of the state government to such immediate action as was necessary to save them from ruin. On his recommendation the ruined Vimana tower of the Belur temple was removed, at Halebid the yard of the Hoysalesvara temple was cleared, the renovation of Kedaresvara temple of Halebid was approved, and protective pavilions were put up over the

inscriptions of Asoka. To Mr Rice the Mysore state owes the important place it has gained in Indian archaeology.

The successor of Mr Rice as head of the Archaeological Department from 1906 was his assistant, Mr R. Narasimhachar, who was a great scholar in Kannada and Tamil. His first love was, of course, Kannada literature, and his studies resulted in the publication of three remarkable volumes describing in Kannada the chronology and literary contributions of more than 1000 Kannada authors. No other Indian language except Sanskrit has a history of its literature written with the accuracy and comprehensiveness of Kannada. He was also responsible for getting a large number of rare manuscripts copied and deposited in the Oriental Library. Next to literature, Mr Narasimhachar's attention was given to the collection and study of inscriptions. He revised the readings of Mr Rice in the case of hundreds of inscriptions, and discovered the existence of nearly 4000 new records. He edited a selection of these in the *Annual Reports* of the department. A large number of the records he copied with the intention of publishing them in a series of volumes supplementary to the *Epigraphia Carnatica*; but he was able to publish only the revised and enlarged edition of volume II—the Inscriptions of Sravanabelgula. Mr Narasimhachar's epigraphical work is marked by thoroughness; and among his discoveries may be mentioned the Kudlur plates of Marasimha, an important record and one of the longest known to Indian epigraphy.

Very early in his career, Sir John Marshall, the director general of Archaeology in India, suggested to Mr Narasimhachar two new lines of work—namely, architecture and excavation. Mr Narasimhachar made brief studies of the architectural monuments visited by him in the course of his tours and published his notes in the *Annual Reports* of the department. More detailed studies were made of three temples, on each of which illustrated monographs were published—namely, the Kesava temple at Somanathpur, the Kesava temple at Belur, the Mahalakshmi temple at Doddagaddavalli. He was also responsible for drawing up a list of more than 150 ancient monuments and for moving the Mysore government to make a more organized attempt for their conservation by following the example of the government of India.

In 1922, when Mr Narasimhachar retired on pension, drastic retrenchment was made in the Archaeological Department owing to the financial difficulties following the Great War. Since then the University of Mysore supervised the department; and in the same year Dr Shama Sastri, Curator of the Oriental Library, was appointed part-time director of the Archaeological Department. He was a scholar who had specialized in Sanskrit; two of his interesting contributions published in the *Annual Reports* of the department were his discussion of the Gupta era and his Kannada rendering of the non-Greek passages in a farce of the 2nd century AD, found in the Oxyrhynchus papyrus of Egypt.

The responsibility for collecting manuscripts and editing literary works was gradually transferred to the Oriental Library. Through this institution and its able curators like the late Mr A. Mahadeva Sastri and Dr Shama Sastri, the government of Mysore have published more than 100 highly important works. The Kannada series, which has reached 23 volumes, has continued the work started by the Archaeological Department in the *Bibliotheca Carnatica* series. The Oriental Library now contains over 10,000 manuscripts in addition to a large number of printed books bearing on oriental subjects. It is one of the premier institutions for oriental research in India. During Dr Shama Sastri's regime of six years in the Archaeological office, nearly a thousand new inscriptions were collected, and these were read and published in the respective *Annual Reports*. Among the discoveries of this period may be mentioned the Chukkattur plates of the Gangas and the Gaddemane inscription of Siladitya.

Following the proposals made by Mr R. Narasimhachar with regard to the conservation of monuments in the state, the Ancient Monuments Preservation Regulation was passed in the year 1924. The conservation of the famous temple of Kesava at Somanathpur was started during this period. Among the notices of the architectural monuments published were those relating to the Viranarayana temple of Belavadi and the twin temples of Mosale. In 1924, in expectation of Dr Shama Sastri's retirement, the government of Mysore selected the present writer, who was a lecturer in History at the University, and deputed him for a thorough all-round training at the University of London, the British Museum and the excavation fields in Egypt under famous scholars like Sir W. Flinders Petrie and Professor Ernest Gardner. From 1929 he has been working as part-time director of Archaeology in addition to his regular duties as full-time Professor of History at the University of Mysore. In addition to the continuation of the epigraphical re-survey of the state, and the study of manuscripts bearing on history and antiquities, he started a detailed architectural survey of the state, an examination of all available numismatic data, a study of ancient sites and the scientific excavation of some selected areas.

In the field of epigraphy, an index was published for the *Annual Reports* of the department from 1906 to 1922; and for the great series of the *Epigraphia Carnatica* a comprehensive index (Krishna 1934) was completed and its first part published. The publication of more than 4000 inscriptions collected by Mr R. Narasimhachar was undertaken, and arrangements were made for issuing them in vols. XIV, XV, and XVI of the *Epigraphia Carnatica*. As a result of the re-survey conducted during the last eight years, more than 600 new inscriptions have been collected, some of which are of considerable importance. The oldest of these and perhaps the most important is a rock inscription in Brahmi characters and Prakrit language of Mayurasarman, the founder of the Kadamba Empire. The record throws very valuable light on the political geography of Southern India in the 3rd century AD, which had until recently been considered a dark period in Indian history. Among the Kannada records studied during the last few years may be mentioned the Halmidi stone inscription of about the middle of the 5th century AD, which is the earliest authentic record in the Kannada language now existing, and the Devarahalli stone inscription giving a genealogical list of the Ganga dynasty. A number of copper-plates throwing much new light on the history of the Gangas and others have also been studied, one recent find being the Basavanpura grant, giving a genealogy of the ancient Punnad kings, of whom very little is known. The inscriptions collected and studied during each year have been published in the *Annual Report* with illustrations of the more important ones.

The immortal work of the Hoysalas has given the Mysore state architectural and sculptural wealth deserving of international recognition. During the last nine years a detailed survey of more than a hundred of the important architectural monuments of the state like those of Belur, Halebid, Somanathpur, Belgami, Nandi, etc., has been conducted, and a large manuscript work containing full descriptions of these monuments has been prepared. An introduction tracing the evolution of Deccan architecture during the last 1500 years is in the course of preparation. It is proposed to publish these in a set of volumes along with copious selections from the drawings and photographs collected by the department. Meanwhile, a series of guide books is being issued for the use of visitors. Though archaeologists have been busily working in this small area for nearly 50 years, scarcely a year passes without some new and interesting discovery. Of the monuments studied very recently, two deserve special mention. The Arkesvara temple at Hale-Alur has numerous relievo sculptures of about the Chola period. The Ramesvara temple at Narasamangala is a unique monument built more than a 1000 years ago.

Since the year 1922, the Archaeological Department has applied its attention to the collection, study and review of manuscripts having historical or cultural importance. Almost every year a note is published in the *Annual Reports* of this department on the manuscripts studied during each year.

Among some interesting manuscripts studied during recent years have been the 'Memoirs of Hyder Ally from the year 1758 to 1770,' by Peripoto, a Portuguese in Hyder's service. Further, during the last eight years the Bangalore Museum collection of coins and other available collections have been studied, classified and catalogued. In the coins section of the *Annual Report* of the department detailed studies of the Deccan coins of the various epochs have been published, ranging from the Purana types to the issues of the Mysore state in the 19th century.

In 1928 and the following years some amount of excavation was conducted by the department, particularly at Chandravalli, near Chitaldrug, where a buried Satavahana town of two thousand years ago was discovered. Further excavation was stopped owing to financial difficulties. Nearly 5000 objects, which were collected at Chandravalli, have now been catalogued, and are expected to be published in a special excavation monograph. At Brahmagiri, in the northernmost part of Mysore, below ruined towns of later ages, have been found traces of a microlithic settlement, which may be about six thousand years old. In the absence of funds for undertaking regular excavation, over-ground survey has been conducted upon nearly a score of ancient sites ranging in antiquity from the early palaeolithic times to the 18th century.

The department has in its possession the impressions of thousands of valuable inscriptions, scores of original copper-plates and more than 3000 fine photographs of the great architectural and sculptural monuments of the state. In addition to these, the collection of nearly 5000 ancient coins belonging to the government of Mysore and the transfer from the excavation field of the numerous ceramic and other finds made it necessary for a museum to be organized. A small office museum was started.

There are nearly 250 ancient monuments in the state which are of historical or architectural importance. Most of these have been declared 'protected' under the Ancient Monuments Preservation Regulation and classified for conservation purposes. The Archaeological Department has been very actively working for the preservation of these monuments by inspecting them during its tours, reporting on their condition, initiating conservation, scrutinizing all proposals for repairs and advising and acting as a technical authority on all historical and archaeological matters. An important piece of work now in progress is the conservation of the beautiful gems of Hoysala architecture which have won for Belur, Halebid and other places their great fame. The famous monuments in these places were in a dangerous condition. Steps were taken to repair them and put them as far as possible into their original form; and generous special grants were made by the government of Mysore for this purpose.

In addition to the above activities the Archaeological Department has been functioning as a sort of enquiry office for numerous matters connected with the history, archaeology and culture of South India. The *Annual Report* of the Archaeological Department, which publishes the work of each year in an artistic and attractive form, has been highly appreciated by scholars all over the world.

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Chapter Three:
Baroda

Hirananda Sastri

His Highness Sir Sayaji Rao Gaekwad III, soon after he was invested with full powers, arranged for a survey of most of the important archaeological monuments in his state by the late Dr Burgess and Mr Cousens of the Indian Archaeological Survey Department. Two richly illustrated volumes, named *The Antiquities of Dabhoi* and *The Architectural Antiquities of Northern Gujarat*, were published in 1888 and 1903 respectively. Officers of the Survey were also invited on several occasions to advise on the preservation of several monuments. Eventually, a separate State Department of Archaeology was constituted in 1934. The results achieved were chiefly due to the interest taken by the state government, headed by the Dewan, Sir V.T. Krishnamachariar.

Conservation

The activities of the department were concentrated on listing and conserving the monuments and examining by exploration or excavation the important sites in the state. The monuments which Baroda possesses lie scattered over Kathiawar as well as Gujarat. To name a few, the Rudramahalaya temple at Siddhpur, the Rani Vav well at Patan, the Nilakantha temple at Sunak, the gateways at Vadnagar and Piludra and the sun temple at Modhera cannot fail to excite our admiration, not only for the architectural skill but also for the exquisitely fine carving they display. The state possesses a number of ancient sites, one of which, lying a few miles to the south of Vijapur, near the river Sabarmati, has already yielded palaeolithic implements of considerable importance. The repairs to the Hira Gate at Dabhoi require special mention. This monument, in spite of damage and alterations suffered during the Muhammadan ascendancy, still retains a good deal of its original characteristics, and consequently might well be considered as a typical example of the medieval architecture of Gujarat. It is Hindu in origin, and must have been constructed when the citadel of Dabhoi came into existence. Apparently, this citadel occupies the place which was originally known as 'Darbhavati.' This 'Darbhavati' (the town of *darbha*-grass) is mentioned in a long list of place-names along with 'Bhrigukachchha,' the modern Broach, in the *Romakasiddhanta*, which is quoted by Varahamihira, the well-known Hindu astronomer of about the 6th century AD. The foundation of the citadel of Dabhoi is usually ascribed to Jayasimha Siddharaja, the most famous Chapotkata or Chavada king of Gujarat. The style of the architecture which developed in his time generally goes by the name of Gujarat style. It has close affinities with the Chalukyan style, and a number of structures in the Deccan and Rajputana were constructed after it. Though many buildings of this style in Gujarat are found adapted to Muhammadan wants, yet it goes without saying that it belongs to one special geographical area and one period, and is Hindu in origin.

The citadel of Dabhoi has four gateways, which were probably constructed by the above-mentioned ruler. Two of them, the Hira Gate and the Baroda Gate, are splendid constructions, and still retain their original features. According to the *Vastupalacharita* it would appear that Tejahpala, the rich minister of king Viradhavala and the brother of Vastupala, who together with Tejahpala constructed the famous Neminatha temple on Mount Abu, built or rather repaired the fort-walls. Its beautiful adjunct—namely, the Kalika Mata temple added to the north side—is largely preserved and affords us an idea of the original grandeur of the whole structure. The balcony window is splendidly carved. The outer side of the walls of this temple of Kalika Mata is adorned with a profuse ornamentation,

where bands upon bands with moulding and bas-reliefs are engraved to cover the walls with various figures from basement to the very top. This sort of extravagant and reckless profusion of ornamentation, one is constrained to remark, does not indicate 'any refinement in taste,' but marks 'a falling off in the purity of the style.' The Hira Gate and the adjoining Barhanpur Gate, which is a much later addition and was in a parlous state, were selected for conservation, and much has been done towards their repairs.

Gujarat is known for its old stepped wells. Such stepped wells were known in the days of Kalidasa, the immortal poet of India. One such well was built at Patan by Rani Udayamati, the queen of Bhimadeva I (who was the contemporary of Mahmud of Ghazna and who ruled till AD 1063). This once magnificent structure has largely suffered at the hands of the contractors who despoiled its material. The minute and exquisite carvings preserved in the remaining walls are evidently Saivite in origin. The subjects represented in it are well worth studying. It is exposed to weather and is considerably worn. It has also been selected for conservation, and much of the debris has been cleared, under which the lower portions of the remaining walls, the front side and the well proper were hidden.

The other interesting monuments marked for repair stand in Okhamandal and not very far from Dvaraka, the reputed *dhama* (one of the four sacred places of pilgrimage) of the Hindus. Two are at Bardia, a small village some four miles to the east of Dvaraka. Both had hitherto remained unnoticed, in spite of their architectural value. One of them—namely, the Rama temple, now known as Maha-Prabhu-ni Baithaka—was covered with profuse carving, and had suffered more than its adjunct. Large trees have grown from its foundations and have caused considerable damage to the structure. The vegetation which was hiding it from view and the accumulated debris round its plinth and basement have been removed, so we can now form an idea of its original formation. The supplementary building, which, as its name implies, was dedicated to Lakshmana, has also been cleared. The third shrine stands at Vasai, the old Kanakanagari, about six miles to the east of Dvaraka, and goes by the name of Junagadh (old fort). This was a Jain temple, built about the 12th century AD in the same Gujarat style. It seems to have been used as a place of shelter by pirates. Probably it was destroyed when piracy was suppressed in the 19th century. The preserved portions show how beautiful was the carving with which the building was decorated. The rosettes or lotuses engraved in the ceiling stones are exquisite. The figures carved on the outside are worn and damaged; still they appear to have been well executed. One of the panels, which is still in the original position and which seems to represent *dharma* in the shape of a bull, still indicates the skill and the vigour with which its figures were sculptured. The sanctum was entirely demolished, and no trace of it was left above the ground. The compound was filled with debris, and this once splendid structure was left as a mass of ruins. The ceiling of the dome and of the porch with its artistic floral designs stood in need of immediate repairs. The wall recently raised to close the temple from the east, which consisted of a motley assortment of stones, was not only ugly but also unsafe. The nave and the two side walls of the façade have now been reconstructed. The compound has been cleared of the debris and the original plan traced out. The stone pavement around the temple has also been exposed to view. The outer porch has been repaired, and the large gate towards the south of the compound has also been opened and conserved. The few repairs that have yet to be done will soon be completed to the satisfaction of the villagers and to meet the requirements of archaeology.

Exploration

It is generally believed that the early Indus valley civilization spread as far as Cambay and the valleys of the Narbada and the Tapti. Prehistoric remains have also been unearthed in these parts. Dvaravati (Dwarka) of epic fame was probably so called because of its having been a *dvara* (door) for

the advent of the people who were the builders of that early civilization. With these considerations in view I decided to investigate some of the old sites and see if traces of that remote period could be found. The mighty river Indus had a lower course in early days, and the Rann of Kachchha (Cutch) may have been watered by it. I decided to try my spade in Kathiawar, the more so because an old stele of about the 2nd century AD, now lying in Dvaraka, was found in it several years ago. This is a very important relic and bears an inscription mentioning the self-sacrifice of a brave man in saving the life of his friend, in the reign of the Mahakshatrapa Svami Rudrasena I, who ruled from AD 199 to 222. Amreli is the headquarters of the Baroda territory lying in Kathiawar. Vala, the ancient Valabhipura, which was a seat of government till about the 8th century AD, is about 40 miles to the east of it. Here I selected an old mound, called Gohilwad Timbo, which lies between the two rivulets Vadi and Thebi, and started excavating it. My operations at this interesting site have proved very successful, and I have unearthed various antiquities of considerable interest and age. They consist of terracotta images which are Hindu as well as Buddhist in origin; pottery carved as well as plain; remains of burials in graves and urns; beads, coins, carved bangles of conch-shells; basements of rooms, built chiefly in undressed stone or rubble masonry; brick walls; a tomb made of bricks which measure 17 inches by 12 inches by 2¾ inches; a furnace which belonged to some smiths; and various other relics. Some of the coins unearthed here appear to be Andhra, though they are much defaced. The Nasik cave inscriptions indicate that Kathiawar lay in the jurisdiction of the Andhras, as Gautamiputra Satakarni had annexed it to his territories about the year AD 106. So Andhra coins can well be expected in these parts. Some of these are unshaped thin pieces, and the ingots of lead found with them would show that they were manufactured locally. Along with these relics a hoard of more than 2000 silver coins of Kumaragupta I, the well-known Imperial Gupta king who ruled in the 5th century AD, was also unearthed. The work, when completed, will be described in a separate monograph.

Mula-Dvaraka is a small port of Baroda, which lies on the west coast of India some 30 miles to the south-east of Veraval, the chief port of the Junagarh state. The current tradition is that it occupies the site of the Dvaraka of Krishna. It has an extensive rock lying just on the sea-shore, and is marked by a solitary deserted shrine, which is dedicated to Vishnu and goes by the name of Dvarakadhisa. I considered it desirable to explore the site and see if any remains of the Mahabharata period could be traced. Several trenches which were dug showed the remains of buildings of the early medieval period, mostly foundation walls of large stone blocks interspersed with bricks, belonging to different structures which were evidently built one after the other. Including the temple now standing, four strata have so far been found at this site. Some foundations are seen in the sea itself. On one side of the extant temple some iron pieces which appear to be connected with warfare were secured. No coin or sculpture or any other antiquity has been recovered except one image of Maruti and another of Ganesa. These finds appear to be early medieval, but it is not unreasonable to hope that earlier remains will turn up when excavation is carried further and deeper.

Another interesting site taken up for exploration lies in the district of Navasari outside the village of Kamrej, the headquarters of a local subdivision of that name, lying on the left bank of the river Tapti. Kamrej was known to Ptolemy, the ancient geographer, who was a native of Egypt, and lived about the first half of the 2nd century. He called it Kamane in his geographical account of India and southern Asia. Here I was able to secure very interesting coins, some of which were ancient *Karshapanas* or *Puranas* dating back to several centuries before Christ, while others were Avanti or Ujjain coins with hitherto unknown symbols. Unfortunately the site is largely under water, the Tapti having changed its course, and excavation has become difficult.

Yet another important site, though not so old, has also been selected for exploration. This was done chiefly at the instance of Sir V.T. Krishnamachariar, the enlightened Dewan of Baroda. Here the

excavations have given very substantial results. This site belongs to Anahillavada, the old capital of Gujarat, which was founded by Vanaraja, the Chapotkata king, in the 8th century AD. This capital became so rich and prosperous that foreigners considered it to be incomparable in prosperity. Muhammadan writers—Alberuni, Masudi, as well as Idrisi—were some of the eyewitnesses of its great prosperity. Jinamandana (*c.* AD 1436), in his Kumarapalaprabandha, gives a vivid account of it. His description would show that there were several colleges on which enormous sums were lavished during the reign of Kumarapala. Led by a very valuable though fragmentary stone inscription, built into a wall of a modern shrine in Patan, which alludes to a canal which was dug by Siddharaja, the powerful and successful king of medieval Gujarat, I selected a site lying some two miles away from the present town of Patan. On one side of the site I opened remains of a Siva temple which was largely built of white marble, carved as well as plain, including a profusely carved stone pillar. On the other side, towards the north, I succeeded, after removing a huge amount of debris to a depth of some twenty feet below the present ground level, in opening the basement of two pavilions and some 48 stone columns with their lintels or parts of the entablatures. In all probability these remains form part of the water-works or aqueduct constructed by the skillful engineers of Siddharaja, as can be inferred from the inscription alluded to above. I am very hopeful of disclosing to view these water-works. No vestige was to be seen on the surface when I started the excavations.

The department has also undertaken the compilation of an inventory of the monuments in the state. So far more than 300 monuments of different dates have been registered. They are of about the 12th century AD. Some of them may well be called architectural gems.

Inscriptions

About 150 inscriptions have so far been secured. The earliest of them, which is a sepulchral record, as mentioned above, belongs to the reign of Rudrasena I, the Kshatrapa king. Two hitherto unpublished copper-plates of the Silahara ruler Aparajita, dated in the Saka year 915, are also in the collection. These charters are preserved in the State Museum at Baroda. Several old coins have been secured by the department in addition to those mentioned above. They include coins of Kshaharatas, Kshatrapas, Guptas, Traikutakas, and others. Their inventory is given with necessary details in my Second Annual Report.

Among the works of old Jaina art, I have brought to light two interesting metal pieces, both bearing dated inscriptions. Their representations are given in my First Annual Report. Both of them are undoubtedly fine specimens of the work of the metallurgic craftsman of Gujarat in the 15th and 16th centuries, to which they belong.

Besides the Annual Reports, I have issued two Departmental Memoirs with which I have started a fresh series connected with the name of our illustrious ruler, the Maharaja Gaekwad. One of them is entitled *Indian Pictorial Art as Developed in Book-Illustrations*, and covers new ground in that with the aid of suitable examples it proves that pictorial art in India developed in book illustrations as it did in other ways. The second memoir is on the Asokan Rock at Girnar. It is intended to be a guide for the study of the three important records incised on the famous rock at Girnar: the first forms one of the well-known rock edicts of Asoka the Great; the second gives the important Sanskrit inscription of Rudradaman, the Mahakshatrapa king; and the third the well-known epigraph of Skandagupta, the great Gupta monarch who very successfully routed the Huns and was perhaps the most successful of the Gupta emperors of India in that respect. This memoir gives the text of these highly valuable inscriptions in Devanagari with transcript and translation in English. The introduction supplies all useful information in a collective form; and a table of contents and an index are also provided.

Chapter Four:
Jammu and Kashmir

Ram Chandra Kak

The first systematic survey of the archeological remains in Kashmir was made by Sir Alexander Cunningham, who published an account of what he called the Aryan Order of architecture in the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* (1848, September: 242). He was followed by a number of scholars who devoted much care and research to the study of the Kashmir monuments. As these scholars and explorers came to Kashmir as visitors for short periods only, their work was necessarily not exhaustive. On the reorganization of the Archeological Survey of India in 1902 under the guidance of Sir John Marshall, the state also established an Archeological Department, and constituted it as a part of the Sanskrit Research Department, whose main function was to publish Sanskrit texts bearing on the Kashmir School of Saivism. Experience, however, showed that the arrangement did not yield satisfactory results, as the state officers concerned paid more attention to the editing and publication of Sanskrit texts than to the exploration and care of ancient monuments, which, though as important for the study of the old civilization as the texts, required a different kind of technical training and field operations of a varied character. Accordingly, the state constituted in 1912 a separate Archeological Department, with the sole function of excavating such monuments as were under the ground and preserving those that were above the ground, and an officer of the Archeological Survey of India, Daya Ram Sahni (later Rai Bahadur Daya Ram Sahni, C.I.E.) was appointed the first superintendent of the new Archeological Department in the Jammu and Kashmir state. He was followed in 1917 by Pandit Hirananda Sastri, and in 1919 by the present writer, who held charge of the department for ten years. In 1931, owing to financial stringency, the Archeological Department ceased to exist as an independent department, but happily it has recently been found possible to revive it. During the period beginning with Daya Ram Sahni's tenure of office and ending with 1929, a considerable amount of excavation work was done by the department, which threw much light on the past history of Kashmir, and a number of monuments which had suffered heavily on account of the ravages of time and of the vandalism and callousness of successive generations was conserved.

The most notable achievements of the Archeological Department in the sphere of excavation are the operations at Avantipur, Parihasapura, Ushkar, Pandrethan, Martand and Harwan. Kashmir is fortunate in that it possesses a continuous history written centuries before the Muslims set foot in the country, and containing an accurate and chronologically correct account of medieval Kashmir. The period preceding the 6th century AD is not described in such great detail, and its chronology is not very accurate; but it cannot be said that the first chapters of the *Rajatarangini*, (The River of Kings), as Kalhana (*c.* AD 1148) named his history of Kashmir (2 vols., Stein, ed., 1900), are for that reason devoid of value.

Apart from the very interesting light which the excavations mentioned above have thrown on the contemporary arts and crafts, it is of special importance to note that they have, in the main, corroborated Kalhana's historical account in respect of matters in which his history mentioned the places and events connected with them. As an example the case of Harwan might be cited; in the *Rajatarangini* there is a brief reference to Shadarhadvana, 'The Grove of Six Saints,' as a Buddhist religious settlement where Nagarjuna, the great Buddhist scholar, is said to have lived. Shadarhadvana was, on phonetic grounds, identified by Sir Aurel Stein with the modern village

of Harwan, but there were no ancient remains above ground which would establish its connection with the Buddhist site mentioned by Kalhana and implied by the name itself. As a result of a survey carried out by me in the neighbourhood, as has been described in Kak (1933), excavations were started on the mountain-side directly above, and at a distance of about half a mile from, the village of Harwan. These excavations have revealed what are in some respects the most interesting archaeological remains in Kashmir, unique in the character of their ornamentation and the style and the material of their construction. The monuments are all Buddhist, as is attested by their architectural character, as well as by the presence of a large assortment of fragments of Buddhist images and objects of worship discovered. Thus has conclusively been established the correctness of the assertion of Kalhana that there was a Buddhist settlement at Harwan, and as the monuments so far excavated form a series extending from roughly the 3rd century AD to the 8th century, it is probable that Kalhana's statement regarding Nagarjuna living at Harwan is correct. Another case is the most important of Kashmir's medieval temples, *viz*., Martand. But for the excavations carried out at this site, it would have been impossible to reconcile the statements made by Kalhana that a temple to Martanda, the Sun, was built by Ranaditya and that a similar temple was built at the same place by Lalitaditya, who lived in the 8th century, several centuries after Ranaditya. As a matter of fact, there has been considerable divergence of opinion on the subject, as there is only one temple in the locality, and there are no traces of any other building which could by the remotest chance be identified as the second temple mentioned by Kalhana. It was only after the present writer carried out excavations, which unfortunately are not yet complete, that it was discovered that in fact there were, and are, two temples, the earlier temple being built over, and completely enveloped by, the later temple, which closely follows the lines of the older temple, but is much larger. Apparently what had happened was that Lalitaditya, anxious to dedicate a temple to the Sun-God, found that the temple built by Ranaditya, having been in existence for centuries, would continue to attract more worshippers by reason of its antiquity and long-established sanctity. As he could neither deprive Ranaditya's temple of its sanctity, nor demolish it (which would have been a grievous sin), he adopted an ingenious device by which his temple bodily absorbed, as it were, the older temple, and, of course, appropriated its sanctity. In this case, too, the excavations carried out by the Archeological Department have corroborated Kalhana's history.

It may be worth while here to make mention of the preliminary exploratory surveys which, though not productive of results of a spectacular character, are necessary both as a foundation for serious antiquarian research, as well as for collection of what might be called floating material for the construction of history—to wit, folk tales and songs, myths and legends connected with shrines and mountains and valleys, and lakes and rivers. Kashmir, like most mountainous countries, is especially rich in such material, and some of it has been recorded. The departmental surveys carried out by the writer have been described in short monographs—e.g., *(a) Antiquities of Bhimbar and Rajauri*, published in 1923 by the government of India; *(b) Antiquities of Marev-Wadwan*, published in 1924 by the government of the Jammu and Kashmir State; *(c) Antiquities of Basahli and Ramnagar*, published in *Indian Art and Letters* (vol. VII, no. 2). These memoirs deal mainly with the monuments existing in these not very commonly known regions of the Jammu and Kashmir state, and establish the fact that in the past Kashmir proper—that is, the valley of Kashmir—had a political and cultural influence over the neighbouring regions quite disproportionate to its small size. Indeed, Kashmir and its people seem to have wielded a considerable influence over the cultural history of India, as from the earliest times the country was famed as a seat of learning and sanctity throughout India, and despite the smallness of its material resources, it was at times able to extend its political sway far beyond its natural boundaries. This has now been corroborated by the style of medieval monuments described in the monographs mentioned above, and by other monuments in northern Punjab, as well as by an important find of Kashmir coins in the United Provinces.

In regard to excavations, the principal sites explored are Avantipur (see *Annual Report* 1913–14), Martand, Parihasapura, Ushkar and Harwan. The history of the first three sites is well known both from the *Rajatarangini* and from local tradition. The remains excavated at Avantipur and Martand are Hindu, those at Parihasapura are partly Hindu and partly Buddhist, while those at Ushkar and Harwan are entirely Buddhist. Though it is possible to trace the growth of the medieval architectural style of Kashmir with a fair amount of accuracy, the divergence between the older and the later—roughly between the structures dating before and after the 6th century AD—is so marked, especially in regard to materials, that at first sight they appear wholly unconnected with each other. The later group of monuments, dating from the 6th century to the advent of Muslims into the country in the 14th century, form a homogeneous group built, with slight variations, on one plan, and of the same material, *viz*., ashlar-dressed grey and greenish limestone and granite. In plan each unit comprises a shrine built exactly in the centre of a rectangular courtyard, which in the case of large and important temples is cellular and colonnaded, and in the case of smaller ones, a more or less plain wall. It is remarkable how closely the same uniform plan was adhered to throughout the centuries, though the buildings vary in size and wealth of decorative detail. Generally speaking, the temples deteriorate in size as the power and prosperity of the country decrease, until at last the magnificent shrine of Martand or Avantipur is found to have dwindled into a miniature cube of three feet or so, cut out of a single stone, like a dwarf possessing all the limbs and features, but not the size of a full-grown man.

The excavations have yielded interesting evidence establishing the catholicity of the Kashmir medieval rulers, as vouched for by Kalhana. Take the case of Lalitaditya—who was probably the greatest king of medieval Kashmir, and a great conqueror. Though Hindu by faith, he was a great patron of merit, irrespective of religion. He is said to have established several townships and built religious shrines both Hindu and Buddhist. The best known of the structures attributed to him is the temple of Martand, but at Parihasapura we find a group of monuments of great magnitude and architectural beauty, built on one of the most picturesque sites in the country, dedicated to a religion not his own, *viz*., Buddhism. There is a large *chaitya* (cave temple), a large stupa, and a very spacious monastery built side by side on one plateau, while on a neighbouring plateau, though not occupying a site of the same grandeur, is the group of temples belonging to his own religion.

Lalitaditya was not a philosopher, but a soldier and administrator. Religion to him was a matter of faith, and not a thing to quarrel over. Hence his even-handed patronage of the two religions that existed in his time.

The medieval monuments of Kashmir have received greater attention than the older ones at the hands of scholars, for the reason, firstly, of their remarkable beauty, and, secondly, of the fact that practically all of them were more or less above ground and exposed to view, and their study did not entail much preliminary exploration (*Annual Report* 1915–16). The case is different with the more ancient monuments—e.g., Ushkar and Harwan. According to Kalhana, Huvishka, a Kushana ruler of Kanishka's dynasty, built a town in Kashmir and named it after himself. The modern village of Ushkar had been identified with Huvishkapura. It contained a large stupa, which unfortunately had suffered more at the hands of the ignorant explorer than at those of the deliberate vandal. The excavations, which were conducted by the Archeological Department under the guidance of Rai Bahadur Daya Ram Sahni, besides yielding a number of exceedingly interesting and beautiful terracotta heads of the late Kushana period (*c.* AD 30), have yielded interesting evidence showing that, like the temple of Martand, the stupa of Ushkar in all probability represents two stupas, one enveloping the other, the earlier and inner one being contemporary with the terracottas mentioned above, and the later one probably belonging to the 8th or 9th century AD.

In certain respects, however, the remains at Harwan are more interesting than any others in Kashmir, as the remains discovered there are in several respects unique. Though, over 40 years ago, some moulded tiles had been exhumed when the water conduit, which supplies the city of Srinagar with its drinking water, was excavated, no attempt seems to have been made to investigate the possibility of archeological remains in the neighbourhood. As described in Kak (1933), it was the existence of a barren field in the midst of cultivation that led the present writer to the conclusion that there might be such remains underground. This conclusion was strengthened by the fact that the field was full of potsherds. Excavations were started, and soon it became obvious that an exceptionally valuable archeological site had been discovered. The structures brought to light were built in different strata, and belonged to different periods, extending from the 3rd century to the 8th century AD, and showed, according to the difference in the period, divergence in style and material. The earliest, of which only a piece of walling of what presumably was a quadrangle remained, is built of small river pebbles, measuring not more than two or three inches in length and an inch or two in width. These pebbles are closely packed together, and make an effective, though not structurally sound, piece of work, as they are built in mud and not in lime. There is reason to believe that the face of the wall was covered with plaster, which was of mud, too, possibly decorated with a coloured clay wash. Apparently the reason why the wall was built of small pebbles was the old belief that the more the labour expended on a religious building, the greater the merit which accrued to the builder. Anyhow, either the faith declined, or the succeeding generations realised the structural defectiveness of a pebble wall; the 3rd and 4th century saw the 'pebble style' replaced by the 'diaper-pebble' style of building. The former consisted of structures built of large stones, the spaces between the stones being filled up with pebbles. The 'diaper-pebble' style is much coarser; soon it gave place to the typical ashlar-dressed stone building of medieval Kashmir. It is possible that the revival of art in India under the Guptas (AD 320–697) had something to do with the replacement in Kashmir of the more primitive style of the early centuries of the Christian era by the more ornate and infinitely more massive and durable architecture which is so characteristic of medieval Hindu Kashmir; the pediments and fluted columns and colonnades reminiscent of Greek architecture form a remarkable feature of this style.

So much for exploratory work.

The difficulty which the authority entrusted with archeological work has to encounter is the preservation after exposure of the monuments which were safely buried under the earth, so that in a climate which is highly variable they may not disappear in a few years owing to the inclemency of the weather and the depredations both of vegetable growth and hunters of antiques and souvenirs. The policy of the Archeological Department in the Jammu and Kashmir state has been not to expose to view what cannot adequately be protected. Thus at Harwan, where the remains are such that they can easily be removed, damaged, or disfigured, only a small portion of the tiled courtyard of the apsidal temple has been exposed, and the rest—by far the greater part—was, after it had been carefully excavated and photographed, reburied until such time as funds shall become available for the construction of suitable glazed sheds. With regard to monuments which were, so far as their superstructure was concerned, already exposed to view, the problem was different (for pre-Muslim monuments see *Annual Report* 1915–16). They had, through the centuries, been badly despoiled. In all except one or two cases, the entire roof had disappeared, and enormous trees had taken root in the masonry and pulled it to pieces. The first task was to cut down the trees—a by no means easy task, as in most cases the roots had penetrated the core of the masonry in such a manner that, though their insidious progress had undermined the structure, yet in the existing circumstances it was as dangerous to remove them as to let them remain as they were. This delicate task had to be carefully performed, and systematic work had to be carried on for several years before really satisfactory results could be achieved. The removal of the vegetation from the monuments was only

a preliminary measure in the task of actual conservation. In most cases this took the form of cement-grouting and underpinning and strengthening of masonry, since restoration was both impossible and undesirable, except in the case of such old edifices as were still in actual use—e.g., the Mughal Gardens, which in Kashmir are in a category by themselves, and the great Jami Masjid,[1] among others. The Gardens, which were originally laid out by Jahangir (1605–27) and Shah Jahan (1628–58) for their own use, have for generations been public property, and have played, and are playing, such an intimate part in the life of Kashmir, whether of the residents or of tourists, that it is impossible to think of the valley without Shalimar and Nishat, Chashma-i Shahi and Achabal. Accordingly, so far as the exigencies of the present-day conditions, and, of course, the funds, permitted, these gardens have been restored. The fountains and cascades play as they probably did when Jahangir and Nur Jahan held court and dispensed largesse on the smooth lawns of the Shalimar under the shade of the lordly *chinar* (oriental plane). It must, however, be admitted that all restoration is not strictly in accordance with the style of the period to which the buildings belonged. Nevertheless, whatever is new is unobtrusive, and the spirit that pervades the Mughal Gardens of Kashmir is that of the great emperors and their consorts and the nobles of their court, gracious and leisurely, reminding one of the spacious times that have passed away, perhaps for ever.

To the question, 'What has the Archeological Department done?' many replies are possible and have been given, but there is one reply, which was once given in my presence, which struck rather an unusual note, *viz*., 'It has given us our self-respect, and increased our national stature.' It seemed to me that this was a very true statement of the case from one, and a very important, point of view. As a result of the work of the department, new light has been thrown on the past of the country, and the heritage which we received from our forebears is being preserved and passed on to posterity in a more satisfactory condition than it was when it came into our possession.

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Annual Report, Archaeological Survey of India, 1913–14: 40–60, pls. 25–30, fig. 1.
Annual Report, Archaeological Survey of India, 1915–16: 49–73, pls. 35–47.

[1] Note by John Cumming: The reconstruction of the Jami Masjid in Srinagar was performed by the Indian Archeological Department in 1923 under the supervision of the director general.
The Jami Masjid is the most imposing of all the monuments of Kashmir in the 'wooden style.' Founded by Sikandar Butshikan (1390–1414) and extended by his son Zain-ul-Abidin, it was thrice burnt down and thrice rebuilt—once in 1479, a second time in 1620, and a third time in 1674. The original design, however, seems to have been repeated by successive restorers, and though little of the original fabric is left, the mosque is still an instructive specimen of pre-Mughal architecture. Its plan is the orthodox one: a rectangular court closed by colonnades on its four sides, with a spacious hall in the middle of each—the hall on the west, which is the largest, constituting the prayer-chamber, and the other three serving, as usual, for entrance gateways. The outer wall and the arched screen surrounding the courtyard were of brick or brick and stone combined, but all the rest was of wood. Supporting the roofs of the halls and colonnades were 360 columns of deodar wood, the tallest of which—in the halls—are nearly 50 feet in height, with their shafts hewn from single logs.
Over each of the four halls was a magnificent spire, also constructed of deodar wood, the tallest of which (over the prayer-chamber) rises to a height of 155 feet from the ground. The roof—carried on ponderous piers of logs piled up horizontally—was covered with birch-bark, turf and flowers. Since its third rebuilding in 1674 nothing whatever seems to have been done to keep the mosque in repair, and it can well be imagined into what an irreparable state of decay it had sunk after two centuries of neglect. As a fact, it was found necessary to rebuild three-quarters of the masonry walls and to renew the greater part of the woodwork, including a large number of the deodar columns. For this purpose special bricks of the requisite size and fabric had to be made, and the forests of Kashmir to be ransacked for deodar trees large enough to provide the great columns in the four halls.
The work of restoration was financed by a special cess levied by the state on the Muslim population of Kashmir, and was carried out by Mr L. Avery, under the control of Colonel H.A.D. Fraser, R.E., C.B., then chief engineer of Kashmir, both of whom for several years devoted infinite thought and care to the undertaking. A specially difficult part of their task was the fitting up of a lathe large and powerful enough to turn the great deodar pillars referred to above. How well they succeeded and how accurately the turning was done may be judged from the fact that when these forty-five-foot shafts were raised up on their stone bases they stood alone, without any support!
(For a recent reapparaisal of archaeology and politics in Jammu and Kashmir see, Rai 2009: 417–18. Editor)

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Chapter Five:
Gwalior

M.B. Garde

The territories of Gwalior state are rich in archeological remains covering a period exceeding 2000 years. Sir A. Cunningham, the great pioneer of archeological exploration in India, and his assistants visited a few places in the state between the years 1862 and 1885, and their notes appeared in his *Archaeological Survey Reports* (vols. II, VII, X, XX and XXI). Mr James Fergusson, in his *History of Indian and Eastern Architecture* (1876/1910), described and reviewed some of the monuments at Gwalior, Udaypur, Gyaraspur and Bagh. Rajendralal Mitra, Bühler, Kielhorn, Fleet and Hultzsch edited some of the inscriptions in the state, chiefly in the *Indian Antiquary* and the *Epigraphia Indica*. The *Gwalior State Gazetteer*, compiled in 1908 under the superintendence of Colonel Luard, contains brief references to some of the places of archeological interest. In the early eighties of the last [19th] century a good deal of clearance and repair work was carried out at the monuments on the Gwalior Fort by Major Keith, acting under the orders of Major H.H. Cole, the then Curator of National [Ancient] Monuments in India. Later on, part of Mansingh's Palace was repaired by the Gwalior Military Department. The tomb of Muhammad Ghaus and the Jami Masjid were partly conserved by Mr H.H. Lake, the superintending engineer of the state, who also made some desultory excavations at Besnagar in 1910.

In 1913, under the inspiration of Sir John Marshall, the then director general of Archeology in India, His Highness the late Maharaja Sir Madhav Rao Scindia of Gwalior instituted a regular Archaeological Department to explore and preserve the precious relics of the ancient art, architecture and culture in his state, and placed it in charge of the present writer, who was a pupil of Sir John Marshall and is the present director of Archeology in the state.

The main task of the department during its first six years was to compile a complete and accurate list of monuments. Every important monument was visited and notes were made regarding its history, the legends connected therewith, its architectural and artistic features, its inscriptions, if any, its present condition and the measures necessary to secure its preservation. Photographs were taken and drawings made, and mechanical estampages were prepared of all available inscriptions for permanent record. As a result of this exploration a number of ancient sites, buildings, sculptures and inscriptions which were hitherto unknown were discovered, and new light shed on many a monument regarding which the information already available was either inaccurate or incomplete. It was proposed to publish in book form the information thus collected.

The Gwalior territories include the sites of important ancient cities such as Ujjayini (near modern Ujjain), Vidisa (Besnagar, near modern Bhilsa), Kantipuri (modern Kotwal), Padmavati (modern Pawaya, and not Narwar as held by Cunningham), Tumbavana (modern Tumain), and Devagiri (modern Deva Dungari), which, when properly excavated, are likely to throw a flood of new light on ancient history.

Of these Ujjayini is the most ancient and perhaps the most important. It is mentioned in the religious books and literature of the Buddhists, the Jains and the Hindus. It is associated with the names of popular heroes like Udayana and Vikramaditya of hoary legend. It was a famous seat of religion, learning, commerce and culture, long before the beginning of the Christian era. It was the capital

of the western provinces of the Mauryan and the Gupta empires. The city of Vidisa is mentioned in the Hindu, Buddhist and Jain literature and the *Puranas*. It was the capital of Agnimitra, a Sunga prince immortalized by Kalidasa in his *Malavikagnimitra*. Kantipuri and Padmavati, two of the three capitals of the Naga kings who flourished in the 3rd and 4th centuries AD, are located in Gwalior state. Padmavati is vividly described by Bhavabhuti in his famous play *Malati Madhava*, the scene of which is laid in that city. The place also appears to have been famous for a university, which attracted students from far-off places. Coins, brick foundations and other relics referable to the early centuries of the Christian era have been traced here. Dasapura possesses a number of relics of the 5th and 6th centuries AD. Trial excavations were made here in 1923, which threw fresh light on the monuments of the place.

Tumbavana is mentioned in the Buddhist literature as a stage on the old road from Sravasti to Pratishthana, and is also referred to in some of the votive inscriptions on the railing of the Great Stupa at Sanchi. A Gupta inscription mentioning the ancient name of the place, some rock-cut cells and remains of structural monuments and sculptures of the Gupta and medieval periods have been found here. Devagiri, mentioned in the *Meghaduta* of Kalidasa, has been identified with Deva Dungari, a small hill in the Ujjain district of Gwalior state.

Coming to monumental antiquities, Buddhist remains have survived at Besnagar, Bagh, Gyaraspur, Rajapur and Khejria-Bhop. The city of Besnagar was a well-known Buddhist centre, with which the penance grove at Sanchi with its stupas and *viharas* (3rd century BC to 10th century AD) was closely related. Bagh possesses a series of large *vihara* caves (5th to 7th centuries AD) hewn out of rock and adorned with fine mural paintings, which, even in their present damaged condition, amply testify to the standard which the art of painting in India had attained in those days. Remnants of Buddhist stupas exist at Gyaraspur and Rajapur, while at Khejria-Bhop the inner face of a crescent-shaped hill is carved into a series of monastic dwellings with a *dagoba* in the middle.

Hindu and Jain relics are met with at several places. The earliest Hindu monument (2nd century BC) is a *Garuda* pillar at Besnagar, which, as an interesting Vaishnava inscription incised on it tells us, was erected by Heliodoros, a Greek who styled himself a Bhagavata and had apparently embraced Hinduism. The Brahmanical caves excavated in the Udayagiri hill near Bhilsa possess some fine sculptures and inscriptions dating from the Gupta period (AD 400 to 600). The colossal image of Varaha is perhaps the largest and best in India. At Sondni, near Mandasor, lie two huge monoliths bearing inscriptions which recite the glory of the powerful king Yasodharman, who expelled the Huns from Central India towards the middle of the 6th century AD. Hindu temples (AD 600 to 1400) are found at Gwalior and several other places. Perhaps the finest and best preserved is the Udayesvara temple at Udaypur, built in the 11th century AD by Udayaditya, a Paramara ruler of Malwa. Hindu monasteries (9th-10th centuries AD), rare specimens of massive stone architecture, exist at Surwaya, Ranod, Terahi and Kadwaha. Raja Mansingh's Palace and the Gujari Mahal on the Gwalior Fort (15th century AD) are fine examples of Rajput civil architecture. A large number of inscribed stones and memorial pillars, commemorating warriors who lost their lives on battlefields, have also been listed. The oldest of these memorial pillars (6th century AD) was found at Hasalpur.

Jain monuments in the state are equally numerous and interesting, although none of them go back beyond the 9th or 10th century AD. The rock-cut Jain statues on the fort rock at Gwalior are well known. Similar rock-cut figures, though smaller in size and number, are cut out in a hill at Chanderi. There are numerous other centres of Jain remains, which include temples and sculptures.

Specimens of Muhammadan art are found at Ujjain, Chanderi, Bhonrasa, Udaypur and Gwalior. The picturesque water palace known as Kaliadeh is pleasantly situated on an island in the Sipra river near Ujjain. Koshak Mahal, a noble four-storied edifice at Fatehabad (near Chanderi), the Jami

Masjid, Shahzadi-ka-Rozah and Battisi Baodi at Chanderi are other notable specimens of Pathan architecture in the Mandu style (15th century AD). The mausoleum of Muhammad Ghaus at Gwalior is a very fine tomb of the early Mughal period (16th century AD), showing varied designs of pierced stone-work of great elegance.

The state also possesses three great hill fortresses—Gwalior, Narwar and Chanderi—and numerous others of archeological interest.

Conservation was commenced in earnest in 1920–21, and since then many of the important archeological monuments in the state have been repaired and maintained; but several years will be required to complete the conservation programme. In particular the following have been repaired according to the latest principles:

The temples at Suhania and Padhavli, the Gujari Mahal Palace, the tomb of Muhammad Ghaus, the tomb of Tansen at Gwalior, the temples and monastery at Surwaya, the monastery at Ranod, some palaces and mosques on the fort of Narwar, Koshak Mahal at Fatehabad near Chanderi, the rock-cut gateway, the Jami Masjid, and the tombs of Bada Madrasah and Shahzadi-ka-Rozah at Chanderi, the Gadarmal temple, the Solah Khambhi hall, the Dasavatara and Satmadhi shrines and the Jain temple at Badoh, the great Udayesvara temple at Udaypur, the temples at Gyaraspur, the Bija Mandal mosque at Bhilsa, the Heliodoros pillar at Besnagar, the rock-cut caves at Udayagiri, the astronomical observatory at Ujjain, the Yasodharman pillars at Sondni near Mandasor, and the Nau-toran temple at Khor. The Buddhist caves at Bagh were freed from debris; new masonry columns were constructed; and the paintings were faithfully copied in colour and in outline.

At the same time the local public is being educated to appreciate and respect the ancient monuments; and measures are being taken to make them more easily accessible and better known to the travelling public.

The state possesses a large number of epigraphical records mostly engraved on stone. Most of these have been mechanically copied by the department and the impressions have been preserved, properly classified and labelled. The original stones bearing the inscriptions, which had been displaced from their settings and were lying loose and uncared for in the ruins, have been collected and exhibited in the Archeological Museum at the Gujari Mahal, Gwalior.

The inscriptions range over the last 2000 years and refer to various kings of over a score of different ruling dynasties. Some of the earlier important Prakrit and Sanskrit inscriptions up to the 6th century are mentioned here: the Besnagar inscription of Heliodoros (*c.* 150 BC); the Udayagiri inscriptions of the time of Chandragupta II and Kumragupta I (AD 401–25); the Pathari rock inscription of Maharaja Jayatsena (5th century AD); the Mandasor inscriptions of Naravarman (AD 404), of Kumaragupta and Bandhuvarman (AD 437–73), of Govindagupta and Prabhakara (AD 467–68), and of Yasodharman Vishnuvardhana (AD 533–34); the Tumain inscription of Kumaragupta and Ghatotkachagupta (AD 435); the Gwalior inscription of Mihirakula (*c.* AD 525); and the Bagh copper-plate grant of Maharaja Subandhu of Mahishmati (5th century AD).

All the epigraphical documents have been deciphered. Some of them have been published, and the publication of the rest will engage the attention of the department in the near future.

The numismatic work of the department consists chiefly of the examination of the treasure-trove coins found in the state. The coins thus examined during the last 12 years since the work was entrusted to this department numbered more than 30,000. The department has made its own collection of select coins, partly acquired from treasure-trove finds, partly purchased from coin

dealers, and partly received in exchange or as presents from antiquarian institutions from outside the state. Among the notable discoveries and acquisitions mention may be made of interesting punch-marked coins from Besnagar, Naga coins from Kutwar, Narwari and Pawaya, and an almost complete set of Scindia coins. Some of the Naga coins represent hitherto unknown kings—e.g., Vrisha Naga, Pun Naga, Bhava Naga, Vasu Naga, etc. Typical coins covering all the periods of history are exhibited in the museum.

The idea of having a Museum of Antiquities at Gwalior was conceived 24 years ago, simultaneously with the creation of the Archeological Department. The museum was actually opened to the public early in 1922. It was housed in the Gujari Mahal, an old Rajput palace of the 15th century, which makes an appropriate setting for the fragmentary antiquarian exhibits. The collections comprise excavated pottery, terracottas, beads, relic caskets, iron implements, coins, inscriptions, capitals of pillars, stone and metal images, railings and architectural pieces ranging in date from the 2nd century BC to the 17th century AD. The Sunga, Gupta and medieval periods are well represented and the exhibits are principally Brahmanic and Jain. The museum is particularly rich in Brahmanic images, which represent most of the principal gods and goddesses of the Hindu pantheon. Some of the sculptures are beautiful works of plastic art, and a few are such as have not been found elsewhere. Full-size copies of nine of the Bagh frescoes occupy one room, and another room contains a number of miniature paintings of the Mughal and Rajput schools and large photographs of important archeological monuments in the state. Every effort is being made to develop the museum steadily and to make it more and more useful and educative. It is now a well-known institution attracting annually a large number of visitors from various parts of the civilized world. It has evoked words of appreciation from many a visitor—especially from the representatives of the Empire Museums Association, who have mentioned it in their recent Report (London Museums Association, 1936) as one of the few well-kept museums in India.

The department has issued so far the following publications; all are available at the office of the department, Gwalior:— *Annual Reports*; *Archeology in Gwalior*; *The Bagh Caves* (in association with the India Society); *Gwalior Fort Album*; *A Guide to the Archeological Museum at Gwalior*; *A Guide to Chanderi*; *Sight Seeing at Gwalior*; *A Hand Book of Gwalior*; *Surwaya* and *Directory of Forts*, Part 1.

The department has hitherto directed its energies to the exploration and conservation of the archeological remains above ground and to the collection and exhibition of antiquities; but in the excavation of ancient sites Gwalior is rather behind the times. Yet it has not been altogether inactive in this useful field of research. Trial excavations have been carried out at Besnagar, Pawaya, Mandasor and Gyaraspur. Archeology in Gwalior is still a young department, and naturally the first claim on its attention and funds was that of the ancient monuments which were exposed to the devastating influences of rain, weather and jungle. Now that fair progress has been achieved in this field, the department can with good conscience, as in British India, take upon itself the additional responsibilities of the exploration of concealed monuments. Excavations and search of prehistoric sites will henceforward engage increasingly the attention of the department.

The activities of the department in the near future will be directed to the completion of the proposed programmes for conservation and publication, to the further development of the existing museum, to the establishment of a museum at Ujjain, the ancient capital of Malwa, to the formation of small local museums in the districts, to the search of prehistoric sites along the range of the Vindhya hills in the neighbourhood of the Narbada valley, and last, but not least, to the excavation and exploration of the sites of ancient cities, preeminently Ujjayini. Ancient Ujjayini is an extensive site, for the great city, like Taxila, seems to have occupied different sites at different periods. Not only are the excavations likely to solve the mystery of the personality of Vikrama and the epoch

of the so-called Vikrama era, which has been hitherto a matter of a long and almost interminable controversy among the antiquarian scholars of various shades of views, but they may even lead to other important discoveries.

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Chapter Six:
Travancore

R.V. Poduval

Travancore in the south-west is one of the most ancient Hindu states in India: its ruling house traces its descent from the old Chera kings, who are referred to as independent in the edicts of the emperor Asoka Maurya of the 3rd century BC. It has an area of nearly 8000 square miles, and is one of the most picturesque and thickly inhabited portions of India.

Archeological work in the state was first started in 1891 by the late P. Sundaram Pillai, an eminent scholar, who was then professor of Philosophy in the State College at Trivandrum. The Archaeological Department was actually started in 1896–97 by the government of Travancore 'with a view to the collection and investigation of the available data relating to the political and economic history and ethnology of the country.' Mr T.A. Gopinatha Rao was appointed the first archeological superintendent in 1908, while the present writer was appointed superintendent in 1928, and later director. The work of the department is found recorded in the *Annual Reports* and in the *Travancore Archeological Series*.

Travancore is rich in ancient temples: these are the oldest monuments in which are preserved much of the archeological, historical and artistic relics of the state. Two of the distinguishing characteristics of the typical Travancore temples are their wood carvings and their peculiar gable style of architecture. Wood carving is, indeed, one of the specialities of Travancore; and the temples and palaces, even the humble homes of ordinary villagers, once abounded in some kind of wood-work or other of great beauty and delicacy. The architecture of Travancore is very different from that of the rest of India. The circular central shrine surmounted by a conical dome, the square hall in front of the shrine, and the quadrangular walk round these, the small hall in front of the temple accommodating in it the sacrificial altar, the triangular gables, and the dormer windows, are all characteristic of Travancore.

Prehistoric antiquities exist in abundance on the hill-sides of Travancore. These are mostly dolmens, menhirs and cromlechs. No relics of the paleolithic age are found in the state; but megalithic monuments of the neolithic age are largely seen on the high ranges, up to 4000 feet. The dolmens are the most important monuments of the megaliths. An examination of five of them, some covered with earth, some not, shows them to be of dimensions sufficient to contain several tombs, and formed of various crude blocks of stone, the upper horizontal stone being supported on a level with the earth by two or more vertical ones. Certain of the dolmens have a summit cist; some have a single, some a double circle of stones surrounding them, with two stones generally protruding slightly through the surface of the tumulus. A noteworthy feature of these dolmens of Travancore is that in their erection certain architectural methods and proportions have clearly been employed. In the first place, by the use of orthostatic blocks of stone, a maximum wall area is provided with a minimum of thickness. Secondly, mortar has not been used in the masonry, which in itself is coarse and rugged. The dolmens so far discovered are situated on a rocky tableland, and are in groups of three, four or five, around each of which stone circles are seen. The majority of them lie in an east-to-west direction; a few are placed north-to-south. The floor of all the dolmens is paved with a flat stone slab; and rubble stone packing is seen on the side of a few. These dolmens are of two kinds, those consisting of four stones, *viz.*, three supporting stones and one cap-stone, leaving one side open;

and those in which the chamber is closed by a fourth stone. In the latter case, the fourth stone has invariably a circular opening.

Besides dolmens, stone cists or cistavans, called cairns by some writers, are also found on the Travancore hills, particularly at Kumili and Vandiperiyar, in association with stone circles, pillar stones and dolmens. These cistavans are found, not only singly but in twos and threes, and in groups. The elaborate nature of the grave and the labour involved in constructing it lead to the inference that only important persons could have been honoured by this form of interment. The stone circles vary in diameter, from about fifteen feet; and one important feature of the cists found in Travancore is that one of the slabs contains a circular hole on its side. The relics discovered in cists and dolmens are only crude and broken pottery, and no skulls or implements, sometimes characteristic of such hypogea in other countries. Bones are rarely found.

Burial urns are by far the most important relics of the prehistoric period seen in Travancore; and two specimens of these, excavated from Eraniel, are exhibited in the State Museum, Trivandrum, along with a few specimens of crude pottery and iron implements. These urns invariably contain small pots which are glazed inside and have either a bead or leaf pattern drawing on their exterior.

A systematic exploration of the country has brought to light the existence of ancient Jain, Buddhist, Hindu and Christian relics. In the temples at Chitaral, Nagercoil and Kallil, Jain images of Tirthankaras and Padmavati Devi, belonging to the 9th century AD, are seen. The only Buddhist vestiges so far discovered are four stone images of Buddha in meditation at Karumadi, Mavelikara, Maruturkulangara and Pallikal, the last of which has been placed in the State Museum. The Christian antiquities comprise mostly the Pehlevi crosses at Kottayam Valiapalli, Muttusira, Kadamattam and Alangad.

The ancient relics of the Hindus are found in old temples and palaces of the state, some of which have also a historical and architectural importance. The only Muhammadan monuments of special interest are the mosques at Quilon and Tiruvidangod. From the archeological point of view, by far the most valuable antiquities in Travancore are inscriptions on stone, copper and palm-leaf. A survey of the state has resulted in the discovery of about 1500 inscriptions. Over 1300 of these are engraved on stone, 160 on copper plates, and the rest on palm-leaf. Some of these have much historical and paleographical importance. They throw considerable light on the early history of the Chera, Pandya, Chola, Travancore and Vijayanagar kings and also of the Madura Naiks. The scripts employed in the inscriptions are Vatteluttu, Koleluttu, Grantha, Old Tamil and to a small extent Devanagari and Malayalam.

The epigraphs collected and deciphered are published by the State Archeological Department in the Travancore Archeological Series, of which seven volumes had been published up to September 1937. They furnish the historian of South India with a complete genealogy of the Chola kings, from the earliest times up to the time of Vira Rajendra (10th to 11th centuries AD), and also the missing link for the reconstruction of a continuous history of the Cheras from Rajasekhara (9th century AD) to Vira Raghava Chakravarti (10th century AD). The Travancore inscriptions make a substantial contribution to the history of the Pandyas; and for the first time a king, Jatavarman Parantaka Pandya (12th century AD), hitherto unknown to the epigraphical world, has been brought to light in them. The existence of a dynasty of kings called the Ays, long unknown to South Indian epigraphy, has also been established by the discovery of a set of copper plates in which two kings, Ko-Karunandakkan and Vikramaditya Varaguna (9th century AD), are mentioned.

Besides offering a sure and reliable basis for the reconstruction of the ancient history of Travancore, these inscriptions are invaluable for the light they throw on Dravidian philology and place-names,

and also on the ancient political, social and religious institutions of the country. A considerable number of the inscriptions record large grants to temples and charitable institutions; and a few relate to the conferment of privileges on religious bodies. It is seen from these records that a large number of villages had temples which were centres of civil life from early times, and were a powerful institution in the social, religious and political life of the country. These temples, constituting a corporation enjoying the generous patronage of ruling kings, and richly endowed by a devout people, were not only the repositories of the antiquities of the state, but a small state by themselves, administering varied kinds of civic functions.

In addition to their wealth of inscriptions, the temples of Travancore abound also in ancient works of art such as sculptures in stone and bronze, mural paintings and wood carvings. The paintings so far discovered go to establish a long pictorial tradition in the state. The earliest of the frescoes (9th century AD) are those on the walls of the rock-cut cave temple at Tirunandikkara in south Travancore, which consist of three figures—Siva, Parvati and a devotee. These have a surpassing finish of technique, and an ineffable expression of divine grace. Similar paintings belonging to the 11th and 12th centuries were in existence on the walls and ceilings of the Suchindram temple. Precious relics of a fourteenth-century painting, belonging to the reign of Aditya Varma Sarvanganatha, a king of Travancore, are found on the walls of the shrine of Krishna inside the Sri Padmanabhasvamin temple, Trivandrum. One panel of this mural, depicting a music party, is delightful in style and a marvellous accomplishment in pictorial art. The most striking of the murals in Travancore is the one representing the dance of Nataraja, painted on the gateway of the temple at Ettumanur, in North Travancore, belonging to a period not later than the middle of the 16th century. This painting occupies a wall space of about a hundred square feet and is, according to Dr A.K. Coomaraswamy, the only old specimen of Dravidian painting. Next in importance are the mural paintings on the walls of the topmost floor of the three-storeyed palace at Padmanabhapuram, the ancient capital of Travancore, belonging almost to the same period—i.e., 16th century. These are designed in a masterly manner and are wonderfully fresh and unmutilated. A later work of pictorial art belonging to the early eighteenth century is on the walls of the central shrine of the Sri Padmanabhasvamin temple, Trivandrum. All these paintings are executed in a purely native style; and the last is perhaps the latest record of indigenous painting of the best sort on a somewhat large scale.

The earliest sculptures found in the state date back to the 8th century AD and are seen at Kaviyur and Vilinyam. Fine bronzes of Siva, Parvati, Cheramanperumal and Saivite saints belonging to the 11th and 12th centuries are preserved in the Suchindram temple. These images are wrought carefully with due regard to their trappings and ornamentation, and show an elaborate elegance of workmanship.

The art of woodcarving existed in Travancore from early times; and its best specimens are found in the temples of Palur, Onakur, Tirumaradi, Chonakara, Vettikulangara and Padmanabhapuram. They have a marvelous intricacy and artistic finish, and are boldly designed and expressive of exquisite emotions. In them are illustrated scenes and episodes from the well-known Indian epics. The best specimens of woodcarving convey an impression of an intense inner life, in addition to the exquisite rhythm and beauty in their representation.

Travancore enjoyed extensive commercial relations from early times with the West; and a large number of Roman coins, dating from 30 BC to AD 547, have been found. There is in the palace of H.H. the Maharaja a very good collection of foreign coins, including Roman. Portions of Travancore were at various times under the sway of foreign powers such as the Cholas, Pandyas, and the Vijayanagar kings. The coins of all these dynasties and of Ceylon were current in the country. A

few coins belonging to the Chera kings have also been discovered, and are now preserved in the Trivandrum Museum. They are double-die coins, and have on each the symbols of the elephant, which is an emblem of royalty, the lotus, swastika, the crescent moon and the sun on the obverse; and an elephant goad, a bow, a filled pot, and a human figure on the reverse. With the advent of the Portuguese, the Dutch and the English, European coins were also introduced into the country, the most important of them being the Venetian sequins. The oldest indigenous coin, even now occasionally found, is the *rasi*, weighing 5⅝ grains. Sir Walter Elliot, the eminent numismatist, says that the Travancore mint is the only Hindu *thanka-sala* (mint) still maintained in its original form. Travancore has still the prerogative of its own coinage.

Of the ancient monuments in Travancore, the temples are by far the most important from a historical and archeological point of view. They have a distinctiveness of structure in their gable roofs. In the typical Travancore temples there is no difference in construction, up to the entablature, from the Dravidian style of architecture. The distinction becomes visible in the upper portion of the structure, where a wooden roof, covered most often with copper sheets, or with tiles, and ornamented with triangular gables, is found. It is worthy of note in this connection that spires are absent in a typical Travancore temple, and the inner shrine has a square or round base with a finial in pyramidal form. The earliest of the monuments in the state is the cave temple at Kaviyur, belonging to the latter half of the 8th century AD, if not earlier, as suggested by its close resemblance to early Pallava work. This cave has the usual orientation of a Siva shrine, its entrance facing west. Two pillars divide the breadth of the cave into three openings. The central shrine is a square cell enshrining in its middle a rock-cut *linga*, and devoid of ornamentation. The rectangular hall in front of this sanctum contains on either side of the doorway two niches, which are flanked by pilasters. Almost to the same period belongs the rock-cut Siva temple at Tirunandikara, with a hall and a cell reached by a flight of three steps. Precious traces of old fresco paintings and four inscriptions are all the ancient relics found in this temple. A monument belonging to a slightly later date (9th century AD) is the old Jain temple at the Tiruchanat Malai, in the village of Chitaral. Among other ancient edifices, the most important is the temple at Suchindram, which may rightly be called the Parthenon of the state. Though many of the early structures do not at present exist in this temple, there are parts in it which are attractive to a student of ancient history. The oldest among them is the rock on the south-west corner near the Kailasa shrine with many inscriptions of great historic value.

Like the temples, a few of the Christian churches in the state have also an archeological and historical interest. It was in the church at Udayamperur that the famous Synod of Diamper was held on 20 June 1599, presided over by Archbishop Alexius Menezes. The structures of all the churches are not earlier than the 16th century AD. The European monuments are by far the best conserved in the state. They are the old forts at Pallipuram and Kottapuram, and the chapel and tombstones within the Udayagiri fort in south Travancore. Of these, the fort at Pallipuram is the earliest extant European monument in India, built in AD 1507. There are three other forts preserved as historical monuments, dating from the 18th century.

Excavation is quite a recent development. The first attempt in this direction resulted in the discovery of the relics of an old Vishnu temple belonging to the 9th century AD at Naranattukavu, Perumpalutur, fourteen miles south-west of Trivandrum, the capital of the state. It is expected that, with the systematic exploration of ancient sites in the state, the work of excavation will yield valuable results, illustrative of the arts and handicrafts of the past, the temples in which the people worshipped, the houses in which they lived, and, above all, the setting in which their lives were spent.

Chapter Seven:
Jaipur

Daya Ram Sahni

The past rulers of the Jaipur state have enjoyed well-deserved fame for their deep interest in works of art and architecture and in the advancement of science and literature. The city of Jaipur, founded by Maharaja Sawai Jai Singhji more than 200 years ago, has remained a model of city planning in India to this day. The astronomical observatories, consisting of huge masonry instruments constructed by the same Maharaja at Jaipur, Delhi, Benares and Ujjain, are being maintained in good repair; and the valuable collections of manuscripts and paintings of the Mughal period are a priceless treasure, which attracts visitors to this historic city.

Some of the monuments of the Jaipur state were inspected by Sir A. Cunningham in 1864–65, others by his assistant, Mr A.C.L. Carlleyle, in 1871–72, and many of these again by Dr D.R. Bhandarkar during the year 1909–10. Repairs were occasionally carried out to some of the ancient monuments in the state, such as the palaces at Amber. The government of His Highness the Maharaja Sir Sawai Mansinghji Bahadur, G.C.I.E., ruler of Jaipur, has earned the gratitude of all lovers of ancient art and archeology by establishing in 1935 a State Archaeological Department. The writer of this chapter is the director, and is grateful to the finance minister, Rai Bahadur Pandit Amar Nath Atal, M.A., for enlightened interest in the activities of the department.

The most interesting of these tasks has been the exploration of an ancient site near Bairat, 52 miles from the headquarters, on the road leading to Delhi. Tradition identifies the town of Bairat with Viratapura, the capital of Virata, the king of the Matsya country, at whose court the five Pandava heroes and their spouse Draupadi passed incognito the 13 year of their exile. The present town stands upon a lofty artificial mound in the middle of a beautiful valley. This mound may be expected to reveal numerous strata of buildings ranging from early times down to the Mughal period. The only monument of interest that now remains intact in the city is a Jain temple, which contains a long and well-preserved Sanskrit inscription recording the construction in the Saka year 1509 (AD 1587) of this temple under the name of Indravihara, the consecration of which was performed by the well-known Jain saint Hiravijaya Suri, whose teaching induced Akbar to grant prohibition of killing of animals on 106 days in the year, amnesty to prisoners and gifts of books to the saint himself (see Sahni 1937).

The site selected for excavation in this valley was the hill known as Bijak-ki-Pahari, or 'the Inscription Hill,' because it was from this hill that the inscribed stone known as the 'Bairat-Calcutta edict stone' was removed to Calcutta by Major Burt in 1840. This edict recommends the study of select passages from the Buddhist scripture and supplies definite proof of Asoka's faith in the Buddhist religion. The remains on the summit of this hill are divided into two distinct terraces, the western one being about 30 feet higher than the other. The excavations on the upper terrace revealed the remains of a large Buddhist monastery, constructed on a more elaborate plan than those familiar to us from other Buddhist sites. The bricks used in the building of this monument are large and well dimensioned, like those on the Indus valley sites. In the east wall of this monastery was found a hoard of 36 silver coins, eight of which, of the punch-marked type, were wrapped in a piece of real cotton cloth. The remaining 28 coins represented issues of Greek and Indo-Greek kings, beginning with Heliokles (*c.* 140 BC), the last Greek king of Bactria, and ending with Hermaios (*c.* AD 20–45). The most noteworthy structural

remains brought to light on the lower terrace were those of a circular temple consisting of panels of large wedge-shaped bricks alternating with octagonal wooden columns which numbered 26. There is a broad circumambulatory passage of the same circular shape, and the temple had a wide entrance on the east. This is one of the oldest structural temples of the historical period found in India, and one of those which furnished models for the rock-cut cave temples of the type represented by the *chaitya* cave of the 1st century BC in the Tulja Lena group at Junnar. Like the latter, the newly discovered temple at Bairat enshrined a stupa, which was built of brick and crowned by an Asokan umbrella of polished Chunar sandstone. The stupa presumably contained a reliquary enclosed in a large stone bowl, fragments of which, together with those of the umbrella, were found; also bricks inscribed with early Brahmi characters, showing that this temple was the work of Asoka himself. The excavations also revealed thousands of polished and unpolished pieces of Chunar sandstone, which had remained to prove the former existence on this site of two Asoka pillars.

The wholesale destruction to which this site was subjected was probably the work of the Hunas in the 5th or 6th century AD. Other portable antiquities besides those mentioned above included terracotta figurines of Yakshis, numerous fragments of begging bowls of fine polished clay, which, like others of this early period found in Greece, had been repaired with fine copper rivets, a collection of ordinary saucer-shaped pottery lamps, with which the temple must have been illuminated on festive occasions, and other objects of daily use by Buddhist monks.

Another interesting site in the Jaipur state, which has been partially explored by the writer, is an ancient mound on the bank of a now dried-up freshwater lake a few miles from the well-known salt lake of Sambhar. Sambhar was one of the principal cities of the Chauhan (Chahamana) kings of Ajmer and Delhi in the 12th century. The earlier city, which lies buried in the mound referred to, must have perished at least three or four centuries before the present city was founded. Some trial excavations were carried out on this site by Colonel T.H. Hendley in the year 1884, and a number of portable objects found by him are preserved in the Jaipur Museum. One of these objects is a pottery sealing with one large and six smaller facets, each representing a sacrificial post surrounded by a railing and inscribed with the name of a certain Imdrasarman in early Brahmi characters. Colonel Hendley was in error in describing this as a Buddhist site. In reality, nothing of a Buddhist character was found either by him or in the course of the recent excavations.

This mound stands at a height of about 40 feet above the level of the bed of the freshwater lake. The writer's excavations penetrated to a depth of about 32 feet and revealed the existence of three strata of buildings. The latest of these levels is assignable to about the 8th century AD; the next one, occurring at a depth of ten or 12 feet, to the early Gupta or late Kushana period; and the lowest, about 20 feet below the surface, to the beginning of the Christian era. Remains of 45 separate houses were found on the different levels mentioned above. They were all built of well-baked bricks of varying sizes on the usual Indian plan of a central open court surrounded by rows of cells on three or all four sides. The foundations are composed of layers of ashes or sand, alternating with roughly laid courses of bricks. To the late period belong copper coins of the late Indo-Sassanian period. The Gupta level yielded the left half of a pottery plaque showing a man playing on a lute, like Samudragupta on his coins of the Lyrist type; pottery tablets depicting subjects like the chariot of the Sun god; a splendid series of bowls of remarkably fine light clay decorated with elegant patterns; many well-shaped pottery vessels, including oval or hemispherical drinking bottles with the neck, handle, and spout so designed as to represent the river Ganges flowing from the matted hair of Tryambaka Siva. The spout takes the shape of the river goddess pouring water from a vase. House IX yielded a circular copper coin of Huvishka, while small copper coins of early tribes were found in the lower levels.

From this lower level came interesting pottery plaques with two-armed figures of Ganesa, Agni and Siva in association with a coin of Antimachos Nikephoros (*c.* 130 BC), which rank among the earliest anthropomorphic representations of the deities in question.

Four punch-marked silver coins were also found on this site. A much more valuable addition to the known finds of such coins is a collection of 326 pieces of which the provenance is precisely known. The mound concerned is expected to yield other relics of great interest.

The uninterrupted continuity of Brahmanic institutions in Rajputana has been attested by early Brahmi inscriptions mentioning Vedic sacrifices and by several sacrificial stone posts (*yupas*) found in this area. Another pair of such monuments with Brahmi inscriptions has been recently discovered in a large tank at the village of Barnala. They are dated respectively in the Krita or Malava years 284 and 355.

An equally ancient site is that measuring about four square miles at Nagar in the territory of the Rao Raja of Uniara in the south of the Jaipur state. Mr Carlleyle picked up on this site over 6000 copper coins, which lay in some places 'as thick as sea-shells.' One hundred of this collection of coins are now preserved in the Indian Museum at Calcutta, and are believed, with the exception of a few, to have been minted at Nagar itself by the chiefs of a local Malava tribe, which may not necessarily have been the same as the Malavas of Dhar. These coins bear legends in Brahmi characters of the 2nd century BC to the 4th century AD, and include some of the smallest and lightest coins to be found anywhere in the world.

To the Gupta period belongs a mound on a hill known as Bundhwali Dungri near the village of Moroli in the Sikrai tahsil of the Jaipur state. Here a hoard of well-preserved gold coins was found a few years ago and identified as those of Samudragupta and Chandragupta II. The site does not appear to have been visited by any archeologist and requires special attention.

The town of Lalsot, 58 miles from the city of Jaipur, possessed an ancient Buddhist stupa of considerable antiquity. Six red stone pillars belonging to the railing of this monument have in modern times been utilized in the construction of a *chhattris* or cenotaph. These pillars are five feet high, square at the base and at the top, and octagonal in the middle portion. The central medallion on one of these pillars depicts a Buddhist gateway in front of a stupa crowned by an umbrella and surrounded by a railing.

Exploration of other ancient sites will no doubt bring to light numerous monuments of ancient date. At present, besides those revealed by the excavations at Bairat and Sambhar, the earliest monument is the ruined temple of Harshanatha-Siva on the Harasnath Hill near Sikar. In an inscription of the 10th century AD this monument is described as possessing a spacious *mandapa* (pillared hall) fronted by a *torana* (gateway). A subsidiary structure on one side of this temple contained colossal statues of the Pandava brothers and Draupadi, and these statues and other sculptures have been brought down and exhibited in a museum at Sikar. Another temple, which was nearly coeval with the one referred to, was the temple at Chatsu of Murari (Vishnu), which according to an inscription now in the Jaipur Museum was constructed by a Guhila Prince named Baladitya. The temple has long since disappeared; but the remains of another temple of about the 11th century AD, which was dedicated to Siva, have survived beneath a later temple of Chaturbhuja, which was constructed in AD 1620 during the reign of Maharaja Man Singhji. Two interesting pillars, found in a Jain temple on the top of the hill known as Dungri, are adorned with labelled figures of the first 95 Jain pontiffs beginning with Bhadrabahu.

The town of Amber dates from before the 10th century AD. A few of the pillars used in the construction of a temple of the Sun date from this period and a short inscription of Vikrama Samvat year 1011 (AD 955) has survived on one of them. An interesting stone inscription of the Vikrama Samvat year 1714, which was removed from a Jain temple, designates this city as Ambavati which was adorned with step wells, tanks and beautiful gardens replete with fruit-bearing trees, noblemen's mansions and temples with golden finials. The famous palaces in white marble on the summit of the hill on the west of the valley which encloses the city of Amber are built in excellent Saracenic style. The earliest among these palaces is the work of Maharaja Man Singhji I; the others were added by Mirza Raja Jai Singhji I and Maharaja Sawai Jai Singhji II, who transferred his capital to the present site. Other monuments at Amber include the temple of Kalyan Raiji, adorned with figures in high relief, which, according to an inscription found on the doorway of the sanctum, was built in the reign of Bhagavatdas, father of Maharaja Man Singhji I; and a fine white marble gateway constructed in the Samvat year 1702, as a swing (*dola*) in honour of Krishna, by the mother of Maharaja Jai Singhji I (Samvat 1678–1724). A group of fine *chhattris* or cenotaphs of the past kings of Jaipur is now receiving attention.

An interesting temple in typical Indo-Aryan style and in an almost perfect state of preservation was discovered by Mr Carlleyle at Bisalpur. An inscription dated in Vikrama Samvat year 1244 in the reign of the celebrated Chahamana king Prithviraja (III) of Sambhar, Ajmer and Delhi, designates the temple as that of Gokarna.

Numerous inscriptions pertaining to the reign of the Kachhwaha rulers have been collected, and will be published in a separate volume.

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Chapter Eight:
Bhopal, Nagod, Mayurbhanj

Ramaprasad Chanda

[Archaeologies of the three states of Bhopal, Nagod and Mayurbhanj have been discussed in this chapter. Interestingly, chapter 9 in this volume entirely deals with Sanchi in Bhopal while in chapter 10 quite a good space has been given to archaeological work in the state. Chapter 11 discusses Mayurbhanj's archaeology. Editor]

Bhopal: Sanchi Stupa

Where the GIP railway and the Betwa river cross the boundary between the states of Gwalior and Bhopal are the ruins of Besnagar (Vidisa) near Bhilsa on the Gwalior side, and the groups of Buddhist monuments in and near Sanchi on the Bhopal side, the latter having been named the Bhilsa Topes by General Cunningham.

The most important among the five groups of the Bhopal Buddhist stupas is the one at Sanchi-Kanakhera. The story of the exploration, exploitation, and restoration of these monuments at Sanchi is a long one, covering a century from 1819 to 1919 (Cumming 1939: 121–24). These stupas were discovered and first described by Captain Fell in a note dated 'Hasingabad (Hoshangabad) 31 January 1819,' published in the *Calcutta Journal* of 11 July 1819, and reprinted by James Prinsep in the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* (Fell 1834). Fell found the dome and the berm of the Great Stupa almost intact, and the great ground rail and three (northern, western and eastern) out of the four magnificent gateways still standing. He could not recognize the ruins of the smaller stupa to the north-east; but he discovered another stupa lower down in the north on a terrace of the hill. The dome with the berm of this stupa was 'in perfect repair, not a stone having fallen,' and the ground rail standing. Fell suspected that the huge dome of the Great Stupa was supported by internal pillars, and so 'apartments undoubtedly exist within, worthy of being examined.' This led Mr Maddock, political agent at Bhopal, and Captain Johnson, his assistant, to excavate the first and second stupas in 1822, when the whole solid brickwork was found 'without any appearance of recess or open space of any kind' (Spilsbury 1835).

Lieutenant F.C. Maisey, who had been employed by the government of India to carry on special archeological work in the Upper Betwa districts of Central India, prepared in 1849 an illustrated report on the stupas at Sanchi, their sculptures and inscriptions. Major (afterwards General Sir) Alexander Cunningham joined Captain Maisey at Sanchi in 1851. They sank perpendicular shafts down the middle, not only of one of the three big stupas at Sanchi, but also of 50 other stupas at Sonari, Satdhara, Pipaliya (Bhojpur) and Andher for recovering relics enshrined therein.

Before 1851 the western gateway had also fallen. In the preface to *The Bhilsa Topes* (1854: xi) Cunningham wrote: 'I would also venture to recommend that the two fallen gateways of the Sanchi Tope should be removed to the British Museum, where they would form the most striking objects in a hall of Indian antiquities.' Cunningham also added that 'their removal to England would ensure their preservation.' Evidently encouraged by this suggestion, Napoleon III requested H.H. the Begum of Bhopal to present one of the Sanchi gateways to be erected in Paris in 1868. The government of India did not approve the removal of any portion of the Sanchi remains, but deputed Lieutenant

H.H. Cole, superintendent, Archeological Survey, North-Western Provinces, to prepare plaster casts of one of the gateways. Full-size plaster casts of the eastern gateway are now exhibited in Paris, London, and Edinburgh.

Early in 1880 the political agent of Bhopal recommended the clearance of the vegetation at Sanchi and the erection of the fallen gateways of the Great Stupa. Captain H.H. Cole, who in 1880 was placed on special duty for the purpose of investigation of monumental buildings, visited Sanchi and reported in 1881 on the state of the stupas. In that year he was appointed curator of Ancient Monuments in India; and under his direction '. . . jungle was removed from the several ruins on the Sanchi hill, the carved stone fragments were collected, the great breach made in 1822 repaired, and creepers removed from the face of the mound, and the shaft that had been sunk in the tope filled in' (Cole 1885: 2). In course of the two following years much clearance was made and the railing and gateways were repaired.

About thirty years later Sir John Marshall started work in 1912, and devoted seven seasons to excavation and conservation of the monuments of Sanchi. The operations carried on by him may be summarized under the following heads: 1) clearance of the whole enclave; 2) excavation of the areas to the south and east of the Great Stupa; 3) complete repair of all the monuments; 4) rebuilding of the strong retaining wall between the central and the eastern terraces; 5) arrangement for the effective drainage of the surrounding area; 6) the improvement of the site by levelling, turfing and tree-planting; 7) building of a small museum on the site for the exhibition of loose sculptures, inscriptions and architectural fragments.

Among Sir John Marshall's great works of conservation of ancient Indian sites Sanchi is the most perfect in execution. This site had been most disturbed by the iconoclasts in the 19th century. Here he has not only revealed the past, he has nearly recreated the past. Sanchi is not held as sacred, and is not likely to attract as many Buddhist pilgrims as the other Buddhist sites in the holy middle country connected with the traditional history of Gautama Buddha. But only here are the students of the history of Indian architecture and sculpture able to review the whole course of their development, from Mauryan beginning to later medieval decline, on the basis of documents *in situ*.

The monolithic pillar of Asoka with its capital of four semi-lions is of more historical than artistic value. The edict on the pillar providing punishment for monks who cause division in the community indicates that there was already a monastery on the hill in the reign of Asoka, and the brick stupa within the stone envelope of the Great Stupa was probably erected in the same period. Though sculpture and architecture of northern India from the 3rd century BC to the 12th or 13th century AD are well represented on the hill-top of Sanchi in all their stages of development, the fame of the site rests on the sculptures that decorate the four gateways of the Stupa I and the one gateway of Stupa III. These reliefs mark the zenith of Sunga decorative sculpture. On the stones of the ground rail of Stupa II of Sanchi we witness the beginning of this school of art. Though the crude reliefs on this rail are the earliest known work of the kind, they cannot be recognized as marking a new birth, but rather the rebirth of an older decorative art in a new form. As the great ground rail of the Great Stupa shows, the Buddhists left the early railings round the stupas unadorned; but they decorated the monasteries with wall-paintings. As the bas-reliefs on the rails and gateways of the stupas of the Sunga period show, the prohibition by the Buddha of drawing figures of men and women (*Sacred Books of the East*, 172–73, pl. III) was observed so far as the figure of the master was concerned. In the early Buddhist period, when the Pali Pitakas were compiled, painting was the favourite art. Probably the Mauryan and the early Sunga monasteries and temples had their walls painted. The stones of the ground railing of Stupa I are not carved. When the ground rail of Stupa II was erected, the idea of decorating the railing in imitation of the wall paintings occurred to the patrons, and the painters

were evidently given chisels to decorate the stones. The groups of figures and flowers that are carved on the pillars of this railing are characterized by balance and unity, and there is movement in the flowers and the scroll-works. But the figures themselves are very crude. This crudeness is evidently due to the decorator's lack of experience in handling the chisel. Later on, when the gateways of the Great Stupa were being carved, a beginning was made to remove this defect in the decorative sculptures of the ground rail of Stupa II. We find two of the pillars of the eastern entrance of the ground rail recarved and redecorated with figure sculptures of superior artistic quality. Even when the left pillar of the south gateway of the Great Stupa was being decorated, the carving, according to the inscription above, was done by the workers in ivory of Vidisa.

The gateways of Sanchi show an all-round progress of decorative sculpture following a long course of development as compared to the sculptures of Bharhut, which are described below.

The well-balanced compositions together represent the harmonious unity that the Buddhist worship establishes among all creatures, including man. They visualize the Buddhist conception of universal brotherhood that is not confined to man, but include all creatures liable to birth, death and rebirth.

Bhopal has its own Department of Archeology, the present superintendent of Archeology being Mr Muhammad Hamid.

Nagod: Bharhut Stupa

Nagod is a state in central India, small in area (about 501 square miles), but rich in antiquarian remains. The remains of the old town at Kho had yielded several copper-plate inscriptions of the Gupta period before Cunningham visited the state in 1873 and discovered the great ground railing of the Buddhist stupa at Bharhut. In 1920 Rakhal Das Banerji (1924) discovered the remains of a fine Gupta temple at Bhumara. But the railing of Bharhut is historically and artistically one of the most important monuments of antiquity discovered in India (Cumming 1939: 119–21).

Bharhut is a small village nine miles south of Satna on the Allahabad-Jubbulpore railway line. At the northern end of the village is an ancient site now known as Kannu Makhar-ki-Akhar, or, briefly, Makhraha. A colossal seated image of the Buddha of red sandstone, assignable to the 10th or 11th century AD, is worshiped by the Hindus as the image of a sadhu, Kannu Makhar. Here Cunningham discovered in 1873 the remains of an ancient Buddhist stupa and its ground railing. At that time a large flat-topped mound, with the ruins of a small Buddhist cell and three pillars of a Buddhist railing with three connecting rails or bars of stone, and a coping stone covering them, besides a single gateway pillar which once supported the ornamental arch of the entrance, were visible. The three pillars were more than half-buried in the ground. Subsequent excavations at the site carried on by Cunningham and searches in the neighbourhood brought to light many more pillars, cross-bars and coping stones of the railing and fragments of the lintels and other pieces of the gateways. According to Cunningham the original railing consisted of 80 pillars, 228 cross-bars and a coping measuring 330 feet in length. He recovered about two-fifths of these materials, and in 1876 induced the Raja of Nagod to make a presentation of them to the Indian Museum, Calcutta.

The stupa of Bharhut, like other stupas of the Maurya period, was made of bricks. The railing and the gateway may be assigned to the second half of the 2nd century BC, somewhat later than the ground rail of the Great Stupa of Sanchi, and about three-quarters of a century earlier than the gateways of the same stupa.

This great ground rail of Bharhut is almost completely sculptured. An undulating creeper issuing from the mouth of a kneeling elephant and full of movement throughout runs over both sides of

the coping stone. On the outer side, in every loop of the creeper, there is a full-blown lotus. On the inside, bas-reliefs illustrating Jataka stories (events in the pre-births and the last birth of Gautama Buddha) alternate with representations of fruits, flowers, garlands, jewellery, and holly symbols. The bunches of mango are fine specimens of still life. There is unity, solidity, and movement in the composition. Bas-reliefs illustrating the legendry history of the different births of Gautama Buddha occur, not only on the inner side of the coping, but also on the pillars and the cross-bars of the railing. Some of these bear inscriptions giving the subject-matter of the scenes. According to the doctrine of transmigration of the soul, which is the basis of Buddhism, every being is liable to be repeatedly reborn, not only as man, but also as a lower animal. So a feeling of kinship with the animal kingdom is deeply rooted in the Indian mind. In course of his multitudinous rebirths, Gautama Buddha was born as man and as animals such as an elephant, a deer, a monkey, and so forth. Among the bas-reliefs of Bharhut there are some scenes in which animals figure prominently, and in others men monopolize the stage. Artistically the former class of scenes are definitely superior to the latter. The elephants, monkeys, deer and other animals are carved true to life. The poses and gestures of all these animals are characterized by individuality and movement. The composition is well balanced. Some of the scenes are humorous. Others strike a more serious note—elephants, deer and lions engaged in worshipping a holy tree or a holy terrace. In a compartment of the coping stone labelled 'the holy tree that perfectly gladdens the heart of the deer,' two lions and six deer are calmly lying down, sitting or standing round a holy tree with an empty throne below, the former forgetful of their thirst for blood and the latter of their fear. The bas-relief shows these wild animals attuned to the same emotional key. The majority of bas-reliefs consist of human figures. These are disappointing as works of art. The figures are crude, conventional and lifeless. The contrast between the human figures and the monkeys as carved by the craftsmen of Bharhut is best exemplified in a bas-relief in the medallion of a rail pillar, wherein the Buddha, born as a monkey prince, serves as a bridge to enable his followers to cross over to safety, and has his backbone broken by an enemy while performing his noble task. But exceptions are not wanting. Scenes showing heavenly nymphs playing on musical instruments and dancing to their accompaniment are full of movement.

The narrative and illustrative bas-reliefs of Bharhut are linear in pattern, though in some of the animal figures volume is clearly expressed. But on some of the rail pillars there are nearly life-size male and female figures in high relief. These are also crude and lifeless; though in high relief, there is no coordination of the planes in them. But even here there are exceptions. These are the female figures standing with the left arm and leg passing round the trunk of a sal (*Shorea robusta*) tree and breaking a branch with the right hand. This disparity between the types of figure indicates that the Indian sculptors of the period were more accustomed to carve female figures in relief breaking the branch of the *sal* tree, than other types of figures. To the same cause may be attributed the better execution of the figures of animals than of man in the bas-reliefs. In the better type of female figures we recognize the roundness and smoothness of all the members and limbs of the body that henceforward characterize all human figures carved and painted by the Indian artists. In Indian astrology roundness and smoothness are recognized as auspicious marks, and in art as marks of beauty, and as such are included among the 32 marks of the superman according to the Buddhist canon (Chanda 1936: 13–16).

Mayurbhanj: Khiching Temples

Mayurbhanj is one of the Indian states in the hill tracts to the west of Orissa [see chapter 11 in this volume]. In view of the rugged nature of the country and the backward state of an overwhelming majority of the population belonging to the aboriginal stock, the state may be said to be rich in antiquarian remains. The most important of the remains are found around a small village called Khiching at the south-west of the state, near the boundaries of the British district of Singhbhum and

the Indian state of Keonjhar. Khiching was visited by J.D. Beglar of the Archeological Survey in 1875. In his account of Khiching (Kichang) in the Report (vol. XIII) he rightly pointed out that the great group of temples near the village is of the 'greatest interest and antiquity.' In 1923–24 the present writer cleared the site of jungle and excavated the mounds.

The main object of worship in this village is an image of Chamunda or Kali, called Kinchakesvari. In deeds of gift granted to the officers of the temple by the Maharajas of Mayurbhanj in the 18th century the goddess is called Khijjingesvari. She is the patron goddess of the ruling house of Mayurbhanj. Khiching or Khijjing was the capital of Mayurbhanj till one of the ancestors of the present ruler of Mayurbhanj occupied the district beyond the hills to the east and transferred his residence to Hariharpur, from which place early in the 19th century it was removed to the present capital, Baripada.

From copper-plate grants dating from the 11th and 12th centuries, and from an inscription on the pedestal of an image of the Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara of about the same age, we learn that the kings Rayabhanja, Ranabhanja and Rajabhanja ruled from Khijjinga-Kotta, the modern Khiching. The oldest temples resembled in style the temples of Bhuvanesvar, dating from the 10th and 11th centuries. The sculptures that decorate the later medieval temples of Orissa are conventional in type and more or less stiff. But the great image of Siva with attendants that was enshrined in, and the life-size images of gods and goddesses and of females in different postures that decorated, the largest of the temples in the group within the compound of the modern temple of Kinchakesvari are of a different type. Though, like all Indian figure sculptures, they are characterized by auspicious marks like rounded and smooth limbs, yet the conventional type is modified and enlivened by the artist's observation of life and individual taste. These sculptures remind one more of the sculptures of the Gupta period than the contemporary later medieval sculptures of eastern India. It is evidently for this reason that Beglar was disposed to ascribe the finest and earliest sculptures of Khiching to the reign of Sasanka (early 7th century AD).

Another feature of the remains of Khiching also deserves the attention of the students of Indian archeology and art. The rulers of Mayurbhanj went on building temples within the same compound till they abandoned the place. So here it is possible to follow the decline of northern Indian architecture and sculpture from the 11th to the 16th century, stage by stage. The present ruler of Mayurbhanj, Maharaja Sir Pratap Chandra Bhanja Deo, K.C.I.E., has erected a small museum near the site for the exhibition of the sculptures, and is utilizing the carved architectural pieces for decorating a new temple of Kinchakesvari.

Antiquities collected from other parts of the state and a number of copper-plate grants are deposited in the museum at Baripada. These ancient monuments and the museums are under the charge of the Archeological Department of the state, which was constituted in the year 1924, but which was administered up till the end of 1930 under the guidance of the Archeological Survey of India. Mr Paramananda Acharya, B.Sc., is now the head of the Archeological Department of the Mayurbhanj state.

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Part II

Postcolonial Perspectives on Princely Initiatives and Interventions

Chapter Nine:
Sanchi
Colonial Archaeology and the Bhopal Durbar[1]

Nayanjot Lahiri

Sanchi forms the locale of a famous group of Buddhist monuments in Raison district of Madhya Pradesh. There are several impressive monuments there, clustered around an unremarkable whale-backed sandstone outlier of the Vindhyan hills, which are varied in their character and chronology. The hill itself is dominated by the 'great stupa' (tumulus or funerary mound), or Stupa 1, around which are memorial pillars, smaller stupas (of which Stupas 3 and 5 are most important), and shrines (chaityas). To the east and south of this central complex, there are a number of other imposing monuments, ranging from large and small monasteries (viharas) to an early medieval Buddhist temple, along with an important stupa (no. 2) midway down the hill, towards the west. Some of them, like the great stupa, were originally built by the Mauryan emperor Ashoka in the 3rd century BC, who also erected a monolithic inscribed pillar near it. Over the centuries, though, the royal connection was overshadowed by the patronage of hundreds of more ordinary devotees who enlarged the stupa, covering its brick core with a stone cladding, financed the construction of its balustrades and pavements, and also donated the elaborately carved gateways that are its most striking feature today. Such accretions are evident in many other structures as well and, in essence, these encapsulate the long history of the Buddhist community at Sanchi, stretching across roughly 1500 years, from the 3rd century BC till the 12th century AD.

Such themes have been the subject of several scholarly monographs and articles which, along with exploring the multiple histories that are contained in its epigraphs and structures, have also analyzed Sanchi's relationship with contemporaneous Buddhist religious establishments that dotted this part of central India and with the city of Vidisa, on the patronage of which it depended significantly (Marshall and Foucher 1940; Willis 2000; Shaw 1999; Singh 1996). The focus of this essay, however, is different. It is not concerned with Sanchi's ancient character; instead, it seeks to investigate its modern history. There is great deal that is known about this from the published literature, especially about the technicalities of the impressive architectural conservation that was undertaken there in the early twentieth century by John Marshall, director general of the Archaeological Survey of India (Marshall and Foucher 1940: vol. 1). This is not surprising since it was his work which made Sanchi the best preserved of all the Buddhist monuments in India.

However, as I shall argue, this sacred space has a tumultuous and messy modern history whose jagged edges get lost when the prism through which it is viewed remains limited to the story of Marshall's engagement with it. First, it is necessary to begin with Sanchi's nineteenth-century past because that makes it immediately evident that as this site was discovered and began to be documented, measured, and studied by modern explorers and archaeologists, this was done in circumstances and through means which disfigured and destroyed large parts of it. To put it another way, the conservation work, which began in the late 19th century and came to be vigorously pursued by Marshall from 1912 onwards, was as much concerned with rescuing stupas and viharas from accumulated debris and jungle as it was

[1] Published as chapter 2, entitled Sanchi: From Ruin to Restoration, in Nayanjot Lahiri's *Marshalling the Past: Ancient India and Its Modern Histories*, pp. 36–74, this chapter is reproduced with the kind permission granted by Permanent Black, Ranikhet. The author's generous cooperation is also appreciated.

with restoring and filling up structural breaches left behind by pioneer excavators. Secondly, in the Marshall era itself, apart from the director general himself, there are many other characters that make up the 'star cast' in the conservation and restoration of Sanchi. Among others, the Bhopal durbar in whose principality the monuments stood, is connected in a singular way with the site. This requires reiteration because in the available publications it is primarily the British presence and contribution that is highlighted. This connects up with the third aspect that this study highlights, which are the contradictions between the conceptual stereotypes about Indians that inform colonial discourse and the actual practical ways in which the British relied upon them. In the story of Sanchi, Marshall's deployment of a common stereotype, that of the unreliable and iconoclastic Muslim, is most forcefully challenged by Muslims themselves, especially by the Begum of Bhopal whose patronage and support, in fact, was to make possible Marshall's sprawling conservation work. Finally, if colonial stereotypes about 'native' could not, in actuality, be sustained at the practical level of archaeological research and conservation, British monument policy also can hardly be described as either watertight or always successful. Fluctuations and flexibility are visible in imperial policy decisions concerning Sanchi and these, as the chapter will argue, connect up with ideological differences among the British ruling class in India as also the changing political circumstances of colonial rule. This is not to suggest that British policy was not ideologically motivated but merely to underline that as an institutional practice it was neither unchanging nor monolithic in character.

Destruction through Excavation

But first, why was large-scale architectural conservation required at Sanchi? This Buddhist religious complex was apparently deserted from the 13th century onwards and yet had remained substantially intact through the medieval era. In fact, it was in a reasonably good state of preservation when it was rediscovered by General Taylor in 1818 (Burgess 1902: 33).

The first modern description of the monument, provided by Edward Fell in 1819, also underlines this fact. Fell was a captain in the 10th Native Infantry and also an Oriental scholar of sorts. As a member of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, he presented a number of papers to the Society, on a range of subjects including the *Raghuvamsha* and inscriptions from the fort of Hansi (cf. Nair 1995: 173). But, from the perspective of this study, it is his account of Sanchi that is of special relevance because it is the only one that pre-dates the first excavations there and, thus, tells us something about how the monuments appeared before they began to be opened up (Fell 1834).

While 'numerous stones lie strewed around in the vicinity of both monuments, being parts of columns, capitals, mutilated images of Buddha, pedestals, tablets covered with sculptured figures of horsemen, elephants, lions, and most obliterated inscriptions', the monuments themselves appeared to be intact. The dome of the great stupa (Stupa 1) was in one piece and solid, the mortar coating in perfect preservation, with the exception of a couple of places where it had been washed away. Three of the stupa's gateways—the northern, eastern, and western—were standing as was the outer railing. Stupa 2, the most important one after the main stupa, was also undamaged (Fell 1834: 494):

> About a quarter of a mile to the northward of this monument, is another, exactly similar to it in shape, but smaller, and built of free-stone, without any cement, each layer closely fitting, and not projecting over each other as in the former; neither has this been covered with a coat of mortar [. . .] It is in perfect repair, not a stone having fallen, and is surrounded by a colonnade of granite pillars; of the same description as that encompassing the large one [. . .].

Fell himself was keen on opening up the stupas, and it has not been possible to understand why he was forestalled. We do know that he went on to become secretary at the Hindu College in Banaras in June

1820 and continued to be so till 1824 when he is said to have died of fever in Bilaspur (Biographical Sketches 1817–32: 1948).

Even before Fell died, however, the stupas were opened up and in the process dismembered and half ruined. Shortly after Fell's observations were published, Sanchi was excavated by T.H. Maddock, the political agent at Bhopal, and his assistant, Captain Johnson (Spilsbury 1835). In the general system of British suzerainty in India then, such political officers were to be found in several princely states. Theoretically speaking, in the case of Bhopal, the political agent, resident at Sehore, was supposed to advise and assist the ruler and was also his sole channel of communication with British authorities. In fact, political agents did a great deal more. For example, H.C. Barstow, when he was the political agent in 1874–75, undertook to translate into English the history of Bhopal written in Urdu by Nawab Shahjahan Begum, the ruler of Bhopal (Begum 1876). The actions of some of Barstow's predecessors, though, had more destructive resonances.

In their search for hidden antiquities, Maddock and Johnson succeeded in splitting Stupa 1's dome, creating a large breach on its side (Fig. 1). Because the stones used in the construction were not cemented, substantial portions of the dome collapsed. The great stupa's western gateway was so shaken by this that shortly afterwards it collapsed. As for Stupa 2, the top section of its dome practically disappeared (Fig. 2). Clearly, these men regarded the stupas as a happy hunting ground for

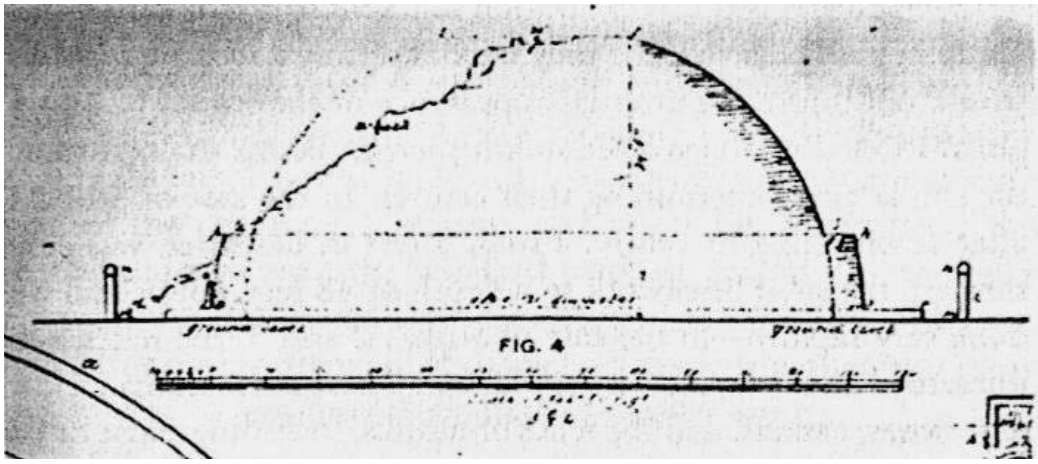

Figure 1: The breach in Stupa 1's dome created by the first excavation

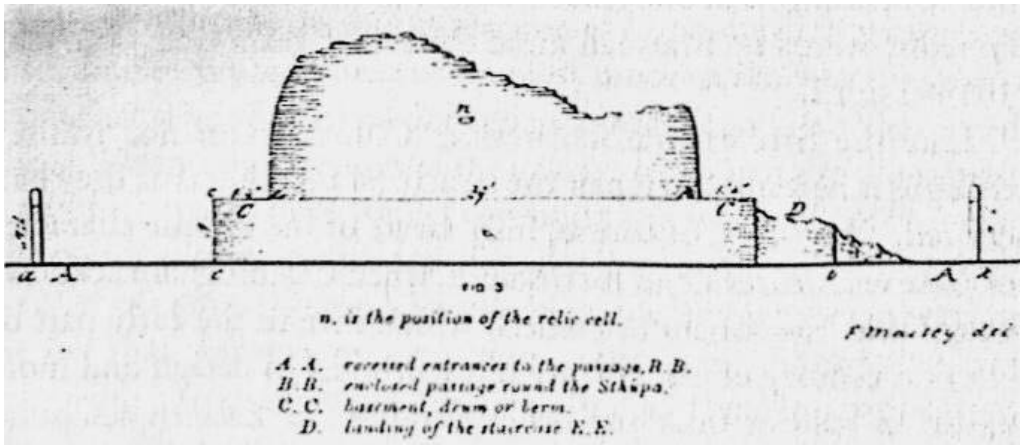

Figure 2: Stupa 2, after the first excavation. The drawing clearly shows that the top section of its dome had practically disappeared

antiquities and not having found them, they did not even think it necessary to document their foray. This, incidentally, was very much in the tradition of early discoverers. Apparently, when Alexander Cunningham was selecting specimens in the Lahore Museum to be photographed for an exhibition in Vienna, he could only ascertain the find-spots of five or six out of the 600-odd Gandharan pieces in its collection (Vogel 1902).

To continue with the Sanchi story, what did happen because of this excavation was that a third of one monument and fifth of the other was destroyed (Cunningham 1847: 746). It was such destruction that the next excavators claimed that they hoped to avoid. Conducted almost 30 years after the first one, in early 1851, the excavation was undertaken by Lieutenant F.C. Maisey and Major Alexander Cunningham. Maisey was deputed by the Court of Directors of the East India Company to document the antiquities at Kalinjar as also the Sanchi sculptures in 1849 and he was joined in 1852 by Cunningham, then serving as executive engineer of Gwalior state. Cunningham was by then already an investigator of some repute, having published a great deal on Indo-Greek and Bactrian coins, on Kashmir, as also on the ground level, identification of places mentioned in the itineraries of the Chinese travellers (Imam 1966: 28ff).

In which way was this excavation different from the earlier one? Cunningham believed that they were adopting a technique which would not injure the external appearance of the stupas (Cunningham 1854: 269). It involved sinking perpendicular shafts through the stupas after determining their centres. In the case of Stupa 1, after determining its centre, a well, 5 feet in diameter, was sunk through the solid brickwork to a depth of 48 feet. All of this was done very rapidly—in the case of Stupas 2 and 3, the relics were unearthed after just a few hours' labour. These excavations yielded relic boxes, caskets, and the relics of monks, including those of the Buddha's foremost disciples—Sariputa and Mahamogalana. While most of these treasures they took with them, the inscribed stone box containing Mahamogalana's relics was thrown away and would be rediscovered by Marshall more than 60 years later (Marshall 1913–14: 12).

Like the first excavators, neither Cunningham nor Maisey thought it necessary to repair the structural breaches that they had created. They were, of course, fully aware of the unique character of these remains, evident, for instance, when Cunningham acknowledges that 'the Sanchi bas-reliefs, which date in the early part of the first century of our era, are more original in design and more varied in subject than any other examples of Eastern sculpture that I have seen in India' (Cunningham 1854: viii); or when he writes that 'in illustration of the ancient history of India, the bas-reliefs and inscriptions of the Bhilsa topes are almost equal in importance to the more splendid discoveries made by the enterprising and energetic Layard in the mounds of the Euphrates' (Cunningham 1854: viii–ix). Despite such sentiments, the shafts that had been sunk into the stupas remained, as did the enormous quantities of earth excavated out of them. The extent of damage must have been considerable because, even 30 years later, Lepel Griffin was to angrily write that 'a thousand years of time and weather have not done so much injury to the invaluable Topes at Sanchi as was caused by the action of Major-General Cunningham, the director general of Archaeology, who years ago mined deep into the Topes in the vain search for coins or inscriptions, and never filled in his excavations' (Griffin 1882a).

The main difference was that unlike Maddock and Johnson who did not even think it necessary to publish the details of their foray, both Cunningham (1854) and Maisey (1892) did document Sanchi. In fact, Cunningham's work was the first systematic exposition of the character, sculpture, and inscriptional wealth of the stupas and remained the standard work on Sanchi till Marshall's volumes were published almost a century later. But from the perspective of the modern fate of ancient religious structures, this excavation was no less destructive than the earlier one.

The Great Stupa's Gateways

So, the main injury to Sanchi was caused by the vandalism of modern excavators. In fact, in reaction to Cunningham's excavation, a scheme to protect some of its most precious sculptural marvels from future vandalism of this type was suggested. This concerned the still-standing gateways of the great stupa, especially the eastern one which was in near-perfect condition and which H.M. Durand, the political agent, persuaded Sikander Begum, the ruler of Bhopal, to offer as a gift to Queen Victoria. He made this suggestion because he felt that this was the only way—that is, by dismantling and removing it from its original setting—it could be safeguarded from the aggressive excavations of British archaeologists. As he put it later (Durand 1868):

> If the Foreign Office turn up the records of that period, they will find that, at my own suggestion, the removal of the one perfect gateway at Sanchi Kaun Keree, for transmission to the British Museum, had been agreed upon by the Begum, and preliminary steps had been taken for their rather serious undertaking before I left Bhopal for England. Afterwards the project fell quietly into oblivion. I am not in favour of removing valuable pieces of antique architecture from the sites and buildings with which they are associated. But the Sanchi Tope had been subjected to such barbarous treatment that it seemed worthwhile to preserve this remarkable gateway. *I must add that the treatment to which I allude was that perpetrated by British, not by native authorities.* (Emphasis added)

Following Durand's advice, the Begum made this offer in 1853. Later, the patronage of Bhopal's rulers was to be crucial in Sanchi's restoration, but evidently, this was not a commitment that was consistently displayed by all rulers, certainly not by Sikander Begum. Fortunately for Sanchi, even though preliminary arrangements were made, the gateway was not transported to England. First, there was a delay because of the expense involved as also due to the absence of expertise required for dismantling so many tonnes of stone without injuring the sculpture (Hamilton 1856). This work had to be done with great care because of the instructions of the Court of Directors who were categorical about the necessity of taking down the gateway and reconstructing it without injury. In their dispatch, they specifically mentioned that 'no dilapidation of the Tope will be allowed to take place, more than is involved in the removal of the gates' (Court of Directors 1857). By the time the preparations were completed, rebellions against the British administration broke out in various parts of the country, including central India. In that atmosphere of turmoil, it is unlikely that the transfer of architectural relics would have been a matter of high priority.

The 1857 revolts did not, however, push into permanent oblivion the question of removing the gateways. In fact, within a decade, this question re-emerged as Sanchi was to again become the object of attention and discussion. This was in 1868, ten years after the administration of India was transferred from the Company to the Crown and seven years after the British Raj instituted an Indian Archaeological Survey for investigating the subcontinent's monuments with Alexander Cunningham as its first archaeological surveyor. However, by February 1866, the Survey's operations were suspended and the focus briefly shifted from archaeological exploration and excavation to description and documentation of extant architectural remains.

The occasion for a discussion on the possibility of removing one of Sanchi's gateways, however, did not arise in this context. It actually originated from a communication, in 1868, to Bhopal's ruler by the French Consul General at Calcutta. Once again, the Begum was requested to present one of the gateways to a European monarch, this time the emperor of France, Napoleon III, who wished to have it erected in Paris (Osborne 1868a). Before consenting to this, the Begum decided to offer it to the British Museum, and this was conveyed to the viceroy. This offer was to be finally declined. However, the notes of the various members of the Viceroy's Council on the subject are both relevant and important because they indicate not merely the range of opinions on the question but also

the fact that, in this instance, the sentiments of those who were in favour of *in situ* conservation prevailed. That this had not always been so needs emphasis. Only a few years before, the imperial government had, by contract, agreed to the removal of antiquities and art objects discovered in the course of archaeological surveys. Alexander Cunningham, after all, had been employed in 1861 to head the Archaeological Survey on terms which apparently included, apart from his salary and a field allowance, *a share in the antiquities* that were to be discovered by him (Roy 1953: 10).

In this case, however, a different attitude prevailed. There was unanimity in the Viceroy's Council about not allowing Sanchi's gateways to be dismantled and several members articulated the need to make a break with the antiquity removal and looting that had marked the early phase of British rule in India. John Strachey was one of them and he argued that 'it would be an act of vandalism little creditable to the British Government to let this gateway go either to London or Paris' (Strachey 1868). Similarly, Richard Temple thought that not only should the two standing gateways be preserved, but the fallen ones ought to be restored with the cost being borne by the Begum and the British government. Temple's (1868) denouncement of the British record in the field of monuments conservation in India is particularly damning:

> Individual officers laudably exert themselves to prevent what Mr Strachey truly terms vandalism. And the Government makes occasional efforts. But *nationally*, the modern English people and their Government cannot be got to attend practically and systematically to the preservation of Indian antiquities *in situ*.

And so, the Begum's offer was declined even while the 'loyal' spirit in which it was offered was suitably acknowledged. The communication from the Foreign Department which conveyed the viceroy's decision also mentioned that though the Sanchi gateway should not be removed to either the British Museum or any other place, a set of plaster casts would be prepared and sent to the French government.

Plaster casts of the eastern gateway were soon to be prepared and sent to Paris, London, and Edinburgh. At the same time, as a consequence of this correspondence, the government was, for the first time, to seriously consider restoring the two fallen gateways. R.J. Meade who was agent to the governor general in central India was asked to explore this possibility and to enquire about the probable cost of such work. It was soon to become evident, though, that the keenness of the viceroy would not be translated into action. This is evident from the letters that were exchanged, especially the reports of Willoughby Osborne, the political agent at Bhopal, and Brown, the engineer deputed by the Begum. As far as the gateways were concerned, Osborne (1868b) stated that 'it would be impossible to restore them, Mahomedan fanatics having destroyed all the human figures'. Brown's report (1868) is especially interesting because it forcefully states that the stones that made up the two fallen gateways had disappeared: 'Every search made by me in the neighbourhood for the missing stones was unsuccessful, and I conclude that they have either been used in building temples, or carried away by travellers as curiosities. It is a pity that such a rare monument of antiquity has been spoiled by neglect and want of appreciation [. . .]. It is impossible to repair them.' We know this to be both inaccurate and misleading because several years later, when the first phase of restoration work at Sanchi commenced, most of the carved pillars, lintels, and other stones from the ruined gates were found buried in the debris in the vicinity of Stupa 1. In any case, an opportunity to repair the great stupa's gateways was lost. Instead, the imperial government decided that one of them could be copied in plaster of Paris.

Before discussing the specific manner in which this came to be executed, the larger context within which such works were undertaken may be briefly pointed out. When the operations of the Archaeological Survey were suspended in 1866 (they were to be resumed in 1870), the focus

of government-sponsored work shifted from archaeological exploration and excavation to the documentation of India's architectural and art remains. This, incidentally, was intimately connected to the movement for the reformation of industrial design in England which owed its origin to a widespread dissatisfaction with the declining character of craftsmanship there, itself a feature of the Industrial Revolution (Mitter 1977: 221ff). As products came to be produced on a mass scale, little attention was paid to originality either in the conception of design or in its execution. Indian ornamental design was one stream, however, which reformist designers—Gottfried Semper, Owen Jones, and Henry Cole were some of them—believed could improve that state of arts in England. The Great Exhibition of 1851 had already showcased the wealth of Indian design and craftsmanship and, subsequently, the Museum of Ornamental Art was set up in Marlborough House in which a variety of Indian art objects were displayed. These were supposed to instruct students of practical art in good and aesthetic design. Plaster casts, incidentally, were to be prepared for the same reason, 'with a view of obtaining for the Department of Science and Art such illustrations as might be useful for the study of art in this country' (Secretary 1867).

As far as the Sanchi cast was concerned, the person chosen for supervising this task was Lieutenant Henry Hardy Cole. A member of the corps of Royal Engineers, Cole appears to have received some training in the various techniques of modelling. In 1868, when he was first considered by the government of the North Western Provinces for overseeing work pertaining to obtaining casts, photographs, and measurements of historic buildings in that province, he was serving as an assistant engineer in the public works department at Kanpur. Before undertaking the Sanchi project, he had been briefly deputed to do survey work pertaining to ancient buildings in Kashmir as also in the Agra-Mathura region.

The effort invested by him in preparing the Sanchi specimen is worth mentioning (Cole 1870). The entire operations were spread over more than a year. After four months of training in London, a core group of three sappers of the Royal Engineers returned to India and were to receive assistance from two *mistris* and several Indian modellers. Twenty-eight tonnes of material in 88 boxes—lined with tin so that the cast pieces could be carried back in them to England—arrived a little later. Of the two standing gateways, the eastern one was chosen for reproduction and elastic moulds using gelatine were prepared. These provided the base for making 112 cast pieces at the site. Only one cast of each section was prepared (other plaster copies were to be made in England) since the sharpness of the mould was destroyed because of the heat that was generated when plaster of Paris was poured into it. The pieces were then packed and transported back to England where they were fitted together. Approximately Rs 50,000 was spent on the whole operation.

As one sifts through the details concerning the preparation of the cast, the money and energy that went into creating it, the fact that enormous investments were made in such ventures in the name of archaeology at a point in time when the Archaeological Survey operations had been discontinued, seems at best ironical, and at worst, unfortunate and wasteful. That money had been wrongly spent was later articulated by Lord Mayo in his famous Minute of 30 May 1870. While suggesting that an Indian Archaeological Survey be set up again, he pointed out that the imperial government had 'spent as much upon desultory attempts at photography and casting as would have maintained a small Department of Government in full operation' (Mayo 1870).

Restoration: The Beginnings

The restoration of the Sanchi monuments, when such work was to finally commence, had an eventful history beginning in 1881 and continuing till 1919 or so. The period spans two qualitatively different

phases in the history of Indian archaeology, both in terms of the place of monument conservation within the institutions of the British Raj and the financial support that was available for it.

During the first phase, conservation remained outside the purview of the Archaeological Survey. Instead, in 1880, a curator of ancient monuments was appointed. This was H.H. Cole, the same who had earlier supervised the preparation of the cast of the Sanchi gateway. Appointed for a period of three years, his duties now included visiting the principal historic buildings of India as also prescribing remedies for their conservation. Sanchi was among the many monuments whose restoration he would oversee in those years.

In 1880, the suggestion to begin Sanchi's restoration emanated from the recommendation of Major Prideaux, political agent at Bhopal, and work commenced in 1881. This included removing the jungle that had overwhelmed several ruins, the collection of carved stone fragments and, most importantly, the repair of the great breach in Stupa 1 (Cole 1885). The latter task was rendered difficult by the enormous quantities of debris that had been washed out of it because of which the face of the great stupa in 1881 had got flattened. The width of the breach measured from 15 to 40 feet and its depth from the face towards the centre from 3 or 4 feet to 25 feet. Thick stems of creepers had also entirely filled the breach. These had to be removed gradually while the breach was built up with dry masonry. The deep shaft (5 feet in diameter and 48 feet in depth) sunk by Cunningham and Maisey was filled in as well. Austin Mears, the superintendent of public works who oversaw the work, was in fact reasonably pleased with the manner in which he had repaired the dome and he believed that 'there will be nothing to prevent it standing another 2000 years as it had hitherto done till wrecked by blundering archaeologists' (Mears 1883).

Part of the work undertaken by Mears, though, had to be undone in the following year by Major J.B. Keith who had been appointed as Cole's assistant in Central India (Cole 1885: 2–3). For one thing, the steps which had been built to the top of the plinth of the great stupa were made from a number of carved stones. Cole believed that these probably belonged to the upper railing and, therefore, had to be removed. Furthermore, the sculpture was cleaned, the approach road on the northern side of the hill opened out and restored, and the ancient causeway which led to Stupa 2 was improved and stepped. In addition, all vegetation from the great stupa was cleared, which must have also resulted in the removal of many small *in situ* stupas. Apparently, the area around the main stupa was cleared for a distance of some 60 feet around the ground balustrade which resulted in most of the stupas around it getting displaced.

The most important repairs related to the gateways. By 1883, Keith had succeeded in re-erecting both the southern and western gateways as also in repairing the gateway to Stupa 3 (Fig. 3). But several mistakes, were made, among the most serious being the reversal of the positions of the top and bottom lintels of the southern gateway (Marshall and Foucher 1940: II, plate 10). On the top lintel, for instance, it is the icons of the seven Manushi Buddhas which should have formed part of the front, rather than the representation of Maya (see Figs 4 and 5). Similarly, on the bottom lintel, the War of Relics which faces the back should have been on the front, rather than representations of potbellied dwarfs. This error was repeated in the case of Stupa 3 where, too, the upper lintel was set up back to front (Marshall and Foucher 1940: plate 95).

Figure 3: The gateway of Stupa 3 which was re-erected in the 1880s

Even while these repairs were in progress, a proposal to remove one of the oldest pieces of sculpture, the Ashokan pillar capital, was being seriously mooted by the very archaeologist who, 30 years ago, had conducted destructive excavations there. This was the suggestion of Alexander Cunningham, director general of the Archaeological Survey, and it was made by him when the larger question of disposing of objects that were discovered in the course of archaeological surveys was referred to him. The question itself had emanated from a memorandum of the Indian Museum, Calcutta. Apparently, in the 1860s and 1870s, the need to augment and expand on the existing collections of the museum in certain key areas was being increasingly felt. There was a perception that the museum's archaeological collection was incomplete; the solution that the trustees of the museum suggested was that it be made the permanent custodian of objects that were discovered during archaeological surveys. In his response to this memorandum, Cunningham submitted a long list of objects that could be sent to Calcutta and one of them was the Ashokan pillar capital at Sanchi. That this was an opportune moment for undertaking its removal was also stressed by him, since the stupas were being repaired under the superintendence of British officers who would, he believed, facilitate its transfer. The incongruity of removing archaeological objects from the vicinity of monuments that were being repaired had completely escaped Cunningham, but its inappropriateness was noticed by others. H.M. Durand, a member of the Viceroy's Council, was quick to observe that 'it is no good

giving Captain Cole a lakh of rupees to restore and preserve if we steal his treasures through other agency' (Durand 1882). But the incident reveals how archaeologists and conservators frequently worked at cross purposes as also the importance of the imperial government's intervention which ensured that some of its officers did not destroy with one hand what they were seeking to restore with the other.

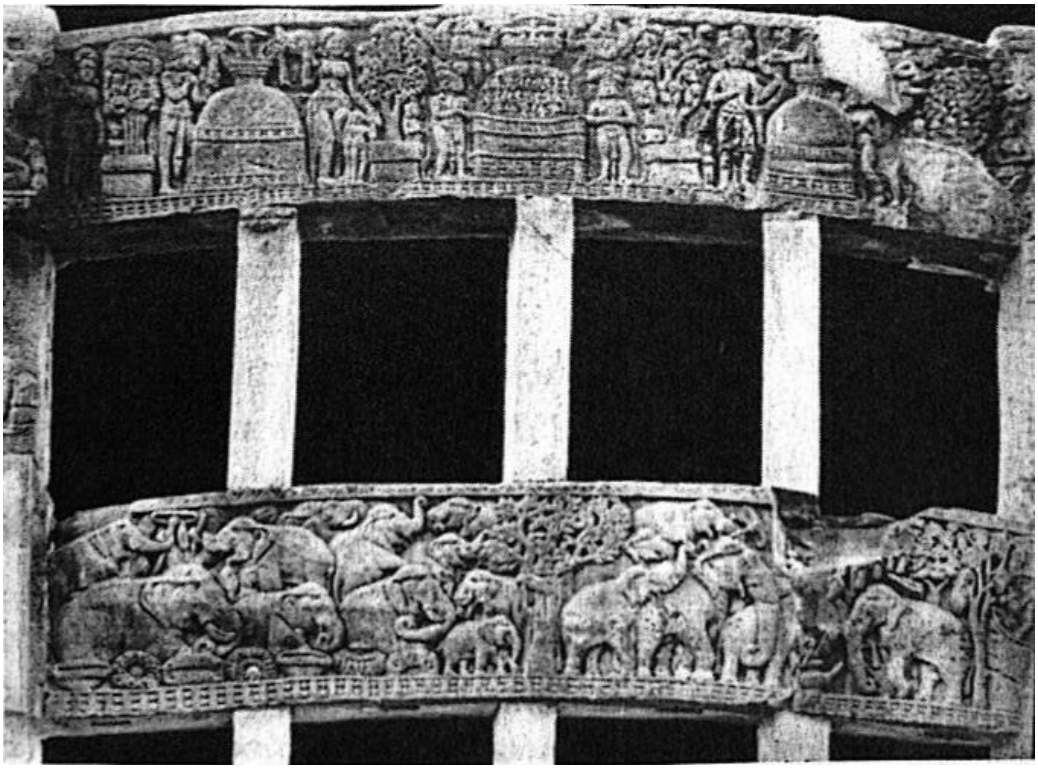

Figure 4: The top lintel, on the back of the southern gateway, with its icons of the seven Manushi Buddhas. This should have formed part of the front of the gateway

Before the restoration programme at Sanchi was completed, Cole's appointment as curator lapsed and was not subsequently renewed. In 1886, for the first time, conservation came to be placed, along with epigraphy and exploration, under a single executive head—the director of the Archaeological Survey, in this case, James Burgess. In the years that followed one hears very little of Sanchi. We do, however, know that in the 1890s, part of the procession path of the main stupa was destroyed when a buttress was erected to support the bulging wall of the terrace (Marshall and Foucher, 1940: I, 35). Possibly, the pace of work was slow because of major cuts in the archaeological budget. In fact, from 1885 onwards, if we must isolate a single recurrent imperative in government policy with regard to monuments and field research, it was the urgency to scale down expenditure. By 1895, the financial outlay for archaeology was just a little over Rs 60,000. Archaeological posts were also allowed to lapse or were abolished including that of the director general (in 1889). By 1898, Viceroy Elgin was even uncertain about whether archaeological work in India required state assistance at all! The reasons for this state of affairs need not detain us (Lahiri 1997), but what is reasonably clear is that it is only with the arrival of George Nathaniel Curzon (1899–1905) that a singularly desultory era of archaeological work came to an end.

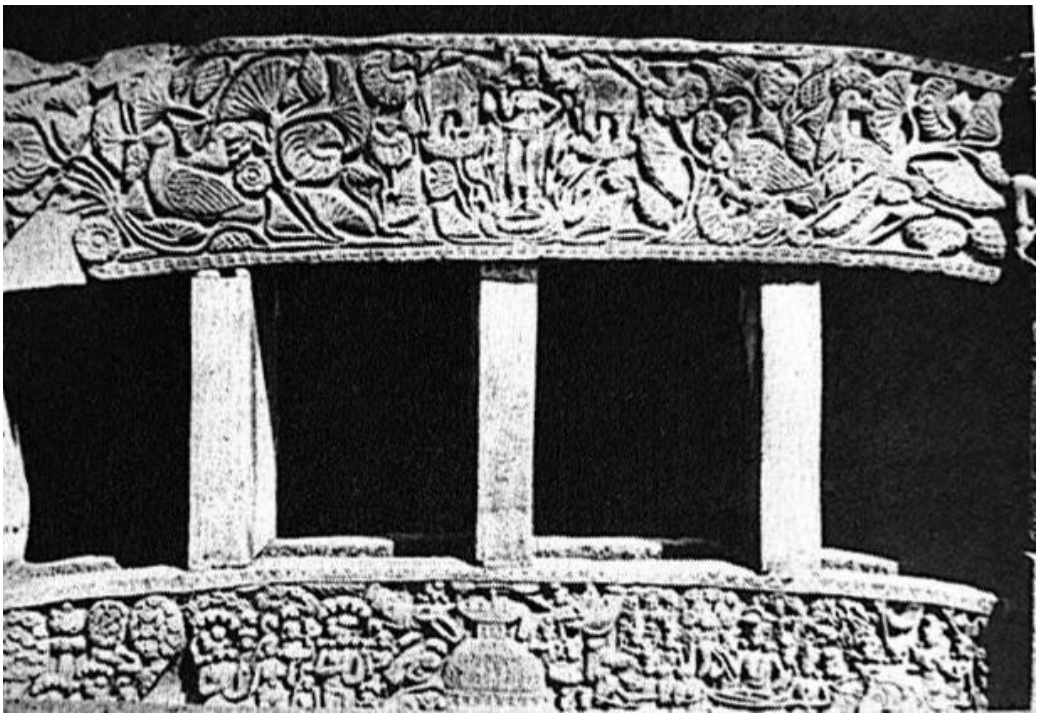

Figure 5: The top lintel, on the front of the southern gateway, with the representation of Maya which is currently there. This should have formed part of the back of the gateway

Restoration: The Marshall Era

From the beginning of his viceroyalty, buildings and their restoration were a high priority for Curzon. In fact, he was responsible for making conservation the main focus of the work of the Archaeological Survey as also for reviving the post of its director and appointing the young John Marshall in 1902 (Lahiri 1997). Ironically, it was during his viceroyalty that Sanchi became the site of some indiscriminate restoration.

Curzon visited Sanchi during the first year of his viceroyalty (November 1899) and, as elsewhere, he left a series of instructions that ranged from the filling up of the crevices on the outer surface of Stupa 1 to the manner in which loose sculpted and inscribed stones were to be collected and arranged (Curzon 1905a). Again, in the beginning of 1902, Henry Cousens, the archaeological superintendent of the Western Circle, had drawn the attention of the state engineer of Bhopal to certain measures that were necessary for the protection of the northern and eastern gateways, and for the conservation of Stupa 2 (Marshall 1905a). Work was started in 1904 by David Cook, the state engineer, and included various kinds of repairs, some of which were fairly straightforward like fixing an iron band around the dome of the main stupa, while other repairs were more difficult such as the rebuilding of Stupa 2's dome (Cousens 1905). This, in fact, was not very successful since the curve that he gave to it was that of an Islamic dome rather than the Buddhist hemispherical one. What was most damaging, though, was that Cook also began repairing the outer railing of the main stupa and, instead of trying to preserve and repair old and split pieces, he decided to replace them in large numbers—as many as 17 pillars, 12 railing pieces, and seven coping stones, several

of which bore the names of donors of the late centuries BC, were replaced. The new coping stones used by Cook were made up of two pieces instead of one and, in many cases, with straight and not sloping joints. The original pillars were monoliths but the new ones were mortar-jointed ones, in three sections. Greater damage would, no doubt, have taken place but for the intervention of C.E. Luard, the superintendent of gazetteers in Central India, as a consequence of which Cook was telegraphically ordered to suspend work.

Interestingly enough, Marshall, the director general of the Survey, had been absolutely unaware that repairs of any kind were going on at Sanchi until he received Luard's letter. He, however, did visit it shortly after this bungling became public knowledge. Apart from a few rectifications, he admitted that Cook's faulty restoration could not be altered because that would further damage the old work which was still *in situ* (Marshall 1905a). Quite aptly, therefore, Curzon described Marshall's report as the 'consecration of a desecration' (Curzon 1905a).

More importantly, this episode also illustrates the attitude of the colonial administration in relation to its own people as compared to 'other' groups, the caretaker, and the local princely family in this case. As far as Cook was concerned, he was exonerated from any blame since we are told that he had suffered a serious injury during this time and the communication to the Bhopal durbar was almost entirely purged of any references to Cook's culpability. Many decades later as well, in his Sanchi volumes, Marshall's summary of the history of conservation there, remained silent on this destruction. Treasure hunters and British archaeologists of the 19th century including Cunningham and Cole were mentioned, the harm done by 'Moslem iconoclasts' was also highlighted, but the destructive 'restoration' done during the first few years of his own tenure was excluded.

Going back to 1904, Cook's 'restoration' became the occasion for larger dialogue within the portals of the imperial government about ways to conserve Sanchi. From the correspondence it seems that in addition to poor restoration work, the caretaker arrangements with regards to the hundreds of sculptural elements that were lying around came to be viewed as highly unsatisfactory, and Marshall recommended the creation of a museum to ensure their safe custody. But what is most striking is that whereas poor restoration was explained away as an aberration resulting from personal injury, the religion of the caretakers came to be blamed for the laxity of superintendence, and this soon degenerated into framing the religion of the caretakers as the chief culprit. For Marshall, Muslim chowkidars (caretakers) were inherently incapable of looking after Buddhist monuments (Marshall 1905b). These, he suggested, required to be tended by 'devoted hands', those of Buddhist chowkidars whose services, he believed, could be arranged through the Maha Bodhi Society.

In making this suggestion, the director general had evidently not bargained for the powerful persona of Nawab Sultan Jahan Begum, the ruler of Bhopal (Fig. 6). She would later become Marshall's main benefactor and his Sanchi volumes are, in fact, dedicated to her memory. But the relationship did not begin on an optimistic note. The last in a dynasty of women rulers, Sultan Jahan (r. 1901–26) is much remembered for her pioneering work on education and on women's emancipation. An ardent reformer, she is known to have publicly abandoned purdah (veil) a couple of years before her death. Apparently, she was also a 'hands-on Begum' and was known to personally examine every file, inspect the treasury, look through the registers, and even appoint state employees herself (Khan 2000: 155). Quite naturally, Marshall's letter with his suggestion of replacing Muslim caretakers at Sanchi with Buddhist ones was referred to her. Almost immediately, she conveyed her distaste and opposition to his proposal.

Figure 6: Sultan Jahan Begum, with her granddaughter

Some of this opposition, it seems, stemmed from the well-known 'troublemaker' reputation of the Maha Bodhi Society's founder (Curzon 1905b). This was Anagarika Dharmapala, the scion of a wealthy Ceylonese family who, in 1891, had founded this society in Colombo. The timing of its founding was closely connected with Dharmapala's perception of another ancient Buddhist complex which he had then just visited. This was the Mahabodhi temple at Bodh Gaya in Bihar which stands close to where the Buddha had attained enlightenment. Over the centuries, though, it had become a religious place where a mass of both Buddhist and Hindu practices came to be inscribed, and since 1727, the legal proprietorship of the shrine had vested with a Hindu (Saiva) mahant. In the Indian context, this was not a unique situation (Lahiri 1999: 35). But in the latter part of the 19th century, there were some who regarded the multi-religious character of the shrine as evidence of its 'desecration', influenced by a revivalist wave to 'cleanse' Buddhism that was sweeping across large parts of Asia. We need not go into the details of this revival, but from Thailand to Sri Lanka various societies and wealthy patrons were attempting to re-establish a 'pure' Buddhism in consonance with the orthodox practices and attitudes contained in Pali religious texts, and Anagarika Dharmapala was the best representative of that movement in Sri Lanka (for a discussion of this, see Lahiri 1999).

By the time he came to Bodh Gaya, he had preached over large parts of his country, raised funds for his faith, and propagated his religious agenda through pamphlets and periodicals. For a religious crusader of this mould, Mahabodhi, where both Hindus and Buddhists worshiped at the same shrine, must have been abhorrent as was the presence of a Hindu legal proprietor. Therefore, one of the main objects of the Maha Bodhi Society that he founded was to 'reclaim' the temple at Bodh Gaya for the Buddhists.

No legal proprietor, especially one whose preceptors had enjoyed the fruits of religious patronage there for 150 years or so, was likely to give in to such demands without a serious fight. Consequently, a massive dispute came to develop around this shrine in the late 19th century, one that made national headlines and went on to become the subject of several legal cases. The Begum of Bhopal must have known about this and she must also have been aware of the parallels between her situation and that of the legal proprietor of Mahabodhi. Her personal faith, like that of the *mahant*, was not Buddhist. So, she probably anticipated that if the help of the Maha Bodhi Society was sought for the superintendence of the Buddhist monuments in her principality, Dharmapala would, sooner or later, make a claim for taking over Sanchi as well.

But the Begum was also incensed by Marshall's suggestion because, in effect, it meant that her capacity to look after Bhopal's monuments was being doubted. As she put it, Marshall's action was calculated to cast on her administration a slur which was not deserved. Marshall, on the other hand, (mis)understood her resistance to the appointment of Buddhist watchmen as relating to her personal religion and this soon came to represent to him a disinclination to preserve Sanchi itself. So, he seriously mooted the possibility of 'relieving' her of Sanchi, by arranging for the imperial government to take over its custody (Marshall 1906). The endeavour here, as in the case of the caretakers, was to exclude the local princely family from a monument in its own principality because of their personal religion. Fortunately, this was not to happen but, obviously, Marshall's interaction with Sanchi and the Begum of Bhopal began on a sour note.

Many years later, their relationship would take an entirely different and altogether more cordial turn. This was in the summer of 1912 when Sultan Jahan Begum let it be known that she was anxious to procure some monographs on the Sanchi stupa. There is nothing in the official records that can throw light on the timing of her request. We do, however, learn from her autobiography that Sanchi had figured in her public life on many occasions. Over the years, she had hosted viceroys, military commanders, and members of Indian princely families there. Even her son, Hamidullah Khan, and his bride were first brought there, before being taken to Bhopal (for this and other details in this paragraph, Begum 1922: 233ff, 272; also, Begum 1927: 203). This was in 1905 when the bridal couple's wedding party was returning from Peshawar and was received by the Begum with pomp and presents at Sanchi's dak bungalow. But it must have been her latest visit that was still fresh in her memory. In November 1911, when she returned from Europe, Sultan Jahan had stayed at Sanchi because of an outbreak of plague at Bhopal, and it was from there that she had proceeded to Delhi to attend the durbar of George V. It is possible that this last sojourn rekindled in her a desire to know more about the splendid Buddhist remains in whose vicinity she had so recently camped.

When Marshall privately heard that the Begum was trying to get the available publications on Sanchi, he decided to take the initiative and offered her the volumes on the subject in his library. Apparently, at some point in the recent past she had personally mentioned to Marshall that she was interested in getting a complete monograph published on Sanchi. So, he also used this as an opportunity to remind the Begum that the available publications on Sanchi were outdated and inaccurate. They ought to be replaced, as he put it, with a monograph more worthy of the famous monument and one that was financed by the Bhopal durbar (Marshall 1912).

To Marshall's delight and surprise, the Begum responded generously and enthusiastically. Since the writing of such a monograph required that the director general stay at Sanchi, she offered him all the necessary logistical and financial support (Fig. 7). This including reserving a bungalow for his wife, children, and their governess, arranging cows for his camp, agreeing to his suggestion about paying a large honorarium to Alfred Foucher (a French scholar and an established authority on Buddhist iconography) for his collaboration, and providing the coolie labour that was required for the actual survey work (Begum 1912a, 1912b).

Figure 7: John Marshall and his family in the Sanchi camp,
accompanied by liveried attendants and elephants for transport

At Sanchi, although Marshall had visualized his work only as a prelude to the preparation of a monograph on the monuments, he realized very soon after arriving there that before a monograph could be produced the site would need to be extensively excavated and its monuments repaired. When Marshall commenced his Sanchi programme in 1912, only Stupa 1 and a few other remains were visible. So, the first step was to clear the entire enclosed area of the thick growth of trees and brushwood in which it was enveloped. This was followed by the excavation of the eastern and southern sides of the central plateau where, in the first season of work itself, substantial remains—of temples, monasteries and stupas—were found. Important pieces of sculpture too were located as, for instance, the fragmentary umbrella of Mauryan date which crowned the summit of the great stupa (Marshall 1913–14: 5). The conservation and restoration of the main stupa was undertaken in 1916–17. Apparently, when the breach in the stupa was repaired in 1881, the random rubble and earth that was filled in had not been allowed to settle before being faced with masonry. Consequently, as the core began to settle, the part began to collapse inwards and the lower part slowly bulged outwards. The restoration of this section required 2500 cubic feet of new masonry. After it was

redone, the balustrade that had fallen from the stairway, terrace and summit were replaced and restored (Marshall and Foucher 1940, I: 40).

As for Stupa 3, to Marshall belongs the credit of painstakingly restoring a hemispherical form from the heap of stones which it had been reduced to (Marshall and Foucher 1940: I, 9). Major repairs were also undertaken at Temple 18 whose large leaning columns, in fact, were reset in a most novel way. Because timber for scaffolding was not available, walls were erected in two lines, parallel to one another, inside and outside the colonnade with short cross-walls between the columns (Marshall and Foucher 1940: I, 9). This made the task of lifting the columns to reset them in their correct positions easier. Several other temples (31, 32, 45) were also repaired and a small museum was erected at the base of the Sanchi hill where sculptures, inscriptions, and architectural fragments were catalogued and arranged. The architectural elements were divided between the site and the museum. While the stumps of the Ashokan pillar remained *in situ* and some broken lengths were placed by its side, the capital and crowning lions were placed in the museum. Similarly, in the case of pillar no. 35, near the northern gateway, while the remains of its shaft stand on the hill, Bodhisattva Vajrapani's statue, which crowned the capital, is in the museum.

There is little doubt that the large exposed and conserved monuments that we see and admire in Sanchi were largely the result of Marshall's massive programme of excavation and restoration that was finally completed around 1919. Even today, Marshall's stamp is writ large over Sanchi, on its monuments which he carefully uncovered and restored, among the foliage of *khirni (Mimusops hexandra)* trees that he planted all around them, and even on the house where he stayed which is locally still referred to as 'Marshall House'.

Ironically, what is not as well known is that the very persons whom he had viewed with such grave suspicion played a crucial role in Sanchi's restoration. For one thing, Sultan Jahan Begum was his main benefactor there. The cost of that work as also that of the construction of the Sanchi Museum and the publication of Marshall's definitive volumes on Sanchi was entirely financed by the Bhopal durbar (Begum 1912a, 1912b). Most strikingly, in sharp contrast to what Marshall had had to say in 1905 about the unreliability of Muslims, including those that he employed in the Archaeological Survey, a Muslim, Munshi Ghulam Qadir, was his excavation assistant and right-hand man at Sanchi. Marshall's preface to the Sanchi volumes acknowledges that Qadir 'did yeoman's service in the task of excavating and restoring its monuments', and, in fact, a whole paragraph is devoted to his contribution (Marshall and Foucher 1940: I, Preface). Incidentally, it was the same Ghulam Qadir to whom Marshall also entrusted the excavation of the Dharmarajika stupa, another Buddhist monument, at Taxila.

Return of the Relics

The story, however, does not end with the completion of Marshall's restoration programme. There is a third element in Sanchi's modern history which is worth discussing which concerns the 'return' or restitution of some of its relics.

Antiquities from Sanchi, as pointed out earlier, had been removed from the site when Cunningham and Maisey had excavated the stupas in the 19th century. This included the corporeal relics (in this case, tiny bone fragments) of the Buddha's direct disciples like Sariputa and Mahamogalana and later Buddhist teachers as well, along with the reliquaries or caskets in which these had been placed. Most of what they found eventually reached two London museums—the British Museum and the Victoria and Albert Museum. But, what is less well known is that once Marshall's conservation work was over, the Bhopal durbar made a serious move to get the British Museum to return its share of

the Sanchi antiquities. Today, there is large public debate about the 'movement' of cultural treasure and the necessity of their 'return' in situations where this did not happen legitimately, rendered more urgent by the recent instances involving large-scale looting of archaeological treasures from sites and museums in Afghanistan and Iraq. There is also a legal framework within which objects of various kinds have in fact been returned to their homelands (Greenfield 1989). But as Greenfield's overview of such cases shows, these were relatively rare in the early part of the 20th century, when the demand for Sanchi's relics was first made by the Bhopal ruling family.

The Bhopal durbar first discussed the possibility of bringing back the relics with John Marshall in or around 1919. Marshall spent the summer of that year in England and during that time he made a list of the antiquities from Sanchi in the British Museum, and he asked for casts of these objects to be made and despatched to Bhopal (Marshall 1920a). This must have become the occasion for also considering the possibility of bringing back the originals to Sanchi. Marshall's opinion was that even though Sanchi was the rightful and appropriate place to preserve the relics and caskets, it was unlikely that the authorities at the British Museum could be prevailed upon return them (Marshall 1920a). In spite of Marshall's scepticism, in July 1920, Nawabzada Iftikharulmulk (1920) decided to follow up the matter with C.E. Luard, the political agent at Bhopal, and his letter to him clearly stated the reason why the Bhopal durbar was seeking to bring back the objects to Sanchi:

> Some years back, a few relic caskets and other objects, of which a list is herewith enclosed, were taken away by Sir Alexander Cunningham from Sanchi to the British Museum. Sanchi now has got a Museum of its own and I trust you will agree with me in thinking that this Museum has a prior claim on these valuable objects. I should therefore be much obliged if through your kind offices the authorities of the British Museum London could be persuaded to return these artifacts.

Luard, in turn, referred this letter to Marshall, who repeated what he had communicated to the Bhopal durbar (Marshall 1920b). He wrote to Luard that he did not suppose

> [. . .] that the British Museum would contemplate for a moment, returning the original antiquities to Sanchi, nor do I imagine that the India Office would give any support to such a proposal, which is directly opposed to the accepted policy of the Museum. Indeed if such a precedent were once established the British Museum would quickly find itself despoiled of half of its treasures, which would be demanded back by Greece, Egypt and Italy and scores of other countries. In the circumstances, I suggest, therefore, that the best course would be to drop the matter.

The matter of repatriating the objects was then dropped. But it was to resurface once again after a lapse of several years and this time it would eventually lead to the transfer of some relics and relic caskets from England to Sanchi.

In this second impetus, to begin with, the initiative was taken by the Buddhist societies. Following a resolution passed at a meeting by the Buddha Society in Bombay in 1938, various societies made an appeal to the Government of India to request the return of the Sanchi relics from the Victoria and Albert Museum in South Kensington (Maha Bodhi 1991: 183). These relics, the resolution stated, should be handed over to the Maha Bodhi Society of Calcutta for being enshrined at Sarnath. This was followed by another request, six months later, this time by the Maha Bodhi Society itself that they proposed to enshrine the relics in a vihara at New Delhi. This demand, incidentally, was in line with what had been happening to Buddhist relics in British India where these were usually handed over to the Maha Bodhi Society. For instance, the Bhattiprolu relics, discovered by the Archaeological Survey in 1891 and since then kept in the Madras Museum, were made over to the Maha Bodhi Vihara at Calcutta in 1922. Again, some relics discovered by the Archaeological Survey at Taxila

(Punjab), Nagarjunakonda (Madras Presidency), and Mirpurkhas (Sind) were also presented to the Society for enshrinement at the Mulagandhakuti Vihara at Sarnath.

By 1939, the museum authorities agreed to return the Sanchi relics to India, but due to the outbreak of the Second World War, the transfer was postponed in view of the risk involved (Abbasi 1940). The decision of the museum, however, was widely reported in the Indian press and this, in turn, brought Bhopal back to the centre of the question of where the relics should be preserved.

A report in the *Statesman* of 3 February 1940 regarding the proposed handing over was seen by A.H. Haider Abbasi, political member of the Bhopal government. He immediately wrote to the political agent in Bhopal, strongly underlining the *locus standi* of the Bhopal government. Interestingly enough, it was the letter of Marshall which he cited where the director general had expressed his opinion that Sanchi was the place where such objects should be rightfully kept (Abbasi 1940):

> [. . .] I would invite attention to the correspondence ending with the Political Agent's D.O. letter No. 4079, dated the 28th August, 1920. The Government of Bhopal have always been most anxious to have these relics in the Sanchi Museum. They had some correspondence on the subject with the then Director General of Archaeology in India, viz: Sir John Marshall. In the latter's D.O. letter No. 335, dated the 5th February, 1920, the opinion expressed is that the most proper place for enshrining the relics, taken away from the Sanchi Stupas, will be the site of Sanchi itself. The question of the restoration of these relics etc. was not pressed in 1920, because the Political Agent did not see much chance of the British Museum agreeing to return them. Now, however, that the Victoria and Albert Museum in London have agreed to hand over these relics to the Mahabodhi Society, to be enshrined at the Buddhist temple in New Delhi, the Government of Bhopal, as owners of the relics, request that these may kindly be made over to them for preservation at the Sanchi Museum which is unquestionably the most suitable place for them. It is hoped that the wishes of the Bhopal Government in this matter would receive due consideration, and the relics, instead of being made over to the Mahabodhi Society, will be restored to them on the termination of the war.

A protracted wrangle then ensued about where the relics were to be kept once they were sent back. On the one hand L.G. Wallis (1940), political agent in Bhopal, strongly supported the Bhopal government's request. On the other hand, curiously enough, K.N. Dikshit who, as director general of the Archaeological Survey, headed an organization that favoured keeping objects at the sites to which they belonged, in this case maintained that 'the right of the community who holds them sacred should be given precedence over those of Sanchi' (Dikshit 1940). Eventually, the Bhopal government negotiated with the Maha Bodhi Society and its request prevailed (Maha Bodhi 1991: 184). The relics left England in February 1947 and were brought back to Sanchi, after travelling to Colombo and Calcutta (Maha Bodhi 1991: 184–5). It was the Bhopal government which donated land for constructing a vihara to house them and also contributed several thousand rupees for the building that was constructed there.

There is, though, a final point that is worth mentioning. Apparently, the relics—those of Sariputra and Mahamogalana—which were brought back and enshrined on the Sanchi hill, while admittedly those of the Buddha's two disciples, are the ones that Maisey and Cunningham had removed from the neighbouring Buddhist site at Satdhara. The Sanchi relics of these two disciples of the Buddha, in fact, are untraceable (Willis 2000: 68).

Constructing Difference: Some Implications of the Sanchi Story

Notwithstanding this final twist, at a purely personal level the modern history of Sanchi is important to me for at least two reasons. First, the Bhopal durbar's role in its architectural restoration and in the restitution of relics that were believed to be from Sanchi reveals the manner in which Indians

contributed to the maintenance of historic structures in British India. In this case, it was the rulers of the state that were instrumental but there are other examples where more ordinary individuals and groups of various kinds provided similar support and patronage. Such details are significant because as this little-known history is eventually developed and fleshed out, a more rounded picture of conservation in colonial India will emerge, one in which it is not just our former rulers who appear as the guardians of subcontinental monuments.

Secondly, this story about a famous Buddhist site in which one of the central protagonists is a woman ruler is important precisely because women rulers, especially those concerned with the upkeep of monuments, are not a particularly common phenomenon in modern India. In a larger sense, the fact that this ruler, Sultan Jahan Begum, does not appear in the familiar form of a victim, so commonly encountered in all sorts of historical situations, but as an active agent in the modern history of Sanchi, one who refuses to be intimidated by British notions about how she should function, is also relevant. This is relevant because it connects up the larger question of identity, on the one hand, with the manner in which cultural difference is inscribed into colonial discourse and its intersection with British monument policy and, on the other hand, with indigenous responses to the ascription of such identities. Perhaps it may be useful to spell out a few of these dimensions in this concluding section.

A recurrent theme that has been encountered throughout the Sanchi story concerns the different ways in which British scholars and officials constructed themselves and their 'native' others. There is Alexander Cunningham, for instance, in whose monograph, *The Bhilsa Topes*, Indians—generally described as 'bigoted Musalmans', 'avaricious zamindars' (landlords) and destructively rancorous 'fiery Saivas' (devotees of the Hindu god Siva)—are represented as vandals (Cunningham 1854). In contrast, British explorers who, as Cunningham was aware, in their search for antiquities were injuring Indian monuments at an alarming rate, are described very positively. He calls them 'curious Saxons, from a distant land' who held the keys to unlocking India's history. But what is equally evident is that Cunningham's superior image of British archaeologists was not shared even by his own contemporaries. H.M. Durand was one official who, as we saw, was convinced that Sanchi's most precious sculptural marvels needed to be protected against aggressive British excavators, and that the only way to do that was to carefully dismantle and remove them to England. Later, this sentiment was echoed by Lepel Griffin (1882b) who pointed out that 'the chief injury and the one most difficult to repair to the Sanchi Tope is that caused by the vandalism of the archaeologists themselves, whose path through India may be traced by the monuments irreparably injured by their hands.'

As we move into the Marshall era, fluctuations in British pronouncements can be similarly charted. John Marshall's first perception of the problems of upkeep of the monuments at Sanchi, which he had sought to link with the personal religion of the caretakers and the rulers, was to dramatically change and, eventually, as we saw, he dedicated his volumes to the memory of the very Begum about whom he had painted such a negative stereotype. This, incidentally, was not very different from the variations that can be charted in the views of Lord Curzon, Marshall's patron. Curzon, as the viceroy of India, was known to have linked monument destruction by Indians to genetic defects as when he pointed out that vandalism was 'congenital' in Indian rulers (cf. Lahiri 2001: 271). At the same time, the tenour of Curzon's statements is qualitatively different when confronted with those parts of India where several princely families were involved in conservation work. For example, while recommending that a reasonable sum should be given by the government for the conservation of monuments at Mandu in central India, Curzon acknowledged that the ruling princely family of Dhar had 'at different times within the past quarter of a century expended certain sums upon the upkeep of a possession of which it is intensely proud' (Curzon 1903).

At the same time, even as we acknowledge that within British colonial pronouncements there are multiple representations of themselves and of Indians, it is important to bear in mind that at the level of formal public policy, the picture is much more monochromatic. For instance, in the Ancient Monuments Preservation Act of 1904, a religious stereotype provided the template for the imperial government to categorize various historic structures and to decide on who could intervene on questions of their custody. In the case of religious monuments, only those owners could enter into an agreement with the government who were followers of the religion to which the monument belonged. A Clause 6.3 of the Act put it:

> Nothing in this section shall be deemed to empower any person not being of the same religion as the person on whose behalf he is acting to make or execute any agreement relating to a protected monument which or any part of which is periodically used for the religious worship or observances of that religion.

Ingrained in this provision is a larger colonial notion that the religion of a 'native' naturally prevented him from acting in the religious interest of 'natives' following religious practices other than his own, while the British, being a more superior race, ostensibly displayed an exemplary impartiality towards shrines and establishments of all religions and creeds. If such provisions had remained confined to the statute book, they could have been treated as mere theoretical formulations. But architectural conservation was, in fact, frequently sought to be premised on such assumptions (Lahiri 2001: 272).

British monument policy institutionalized existing difference in new ways and this, in turn, created new contradictions. The dispute that erupted around the Mahabodhi shrine, which has been briefly discussed earlier, highlights this connection. The pre-modern history of worship there was heterogeneous, evident in the various antiquities and inscriptions that the shrine complex had yielded as it came to be documented in the 19th century (Cunningham 1892). This had not created any problems for Buddhist worshippers until the creation of a pan-Buddhist axis towards the end of the 19th century. The contentious politics that subsequently came to surround the shrine, the nature of the pan-Buddhist agenda in which the historical evolution of the shrine was ignored, and the manner in which Anagarika Dharmapala, founder of the Maha Bodhi Society, spearheaded the movement to 'reclaim' the temple from Hindu forms of worship and a Hindu proprietor have been explored at length elsewhere (Lahiri 1999). But what is relevant is that this was seriously exacerbated by the imperial initiative undertaken by Curzon, which, contrary to the assertion that the government did not interfere in matters of religion, invested great prestige and energy in the dispute. Most significantly, he too ignored Bodh Gaya's archaeology and history as he attempted to convert it into an exclusively Buddhist shrine. This initiative was obviously premised on a classification of religious complexes which he later incorporated into the specific provision of the Ancient Monuments Preservation Act that has been quoted above, in which these were perceived as belonging to only one religion and its community of believers—the religion of the founders of the shrine. Any hybridity or blurring of distinctions among places of worship came to be seen as evidence of debasement and/or degeneration. This is a good example of how, within colonial policy, religious groupings were manipulated with very adverse results. Thus, even while we talk of the 'construction' of identities, with all the implications of artifice and contrivance that are evoked by such phraseology, it is necessary to remember that the impact of such social engineering could be very real and deleterious.

Sanchi, however, makes evident that, fortunately, this was not always the case. While the Begum of Bhopal's sense of identity as a good ruler was certainly connected with the question of safeguarding the monuments in her realm, she refused to fall in line with the crude religious paradigm based on which the imperial government visualized this issue. Eventually, she successfully demonstrated

to the British that personal faith—be it that of the humble watchmen or the ruling house—was irrelevant to the question of providing support for the ancient Buddhist heritage of her state. Considering that constructed difference was so frequently transformed into a very real inequality as it came to be institutionalized by the colonial state, it is this aspect—the resistance of a strong princely ruler to the British invocation of religious difference for structuring monument policy in her state—which, above all, stands out in this story of Sanchi.

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Chapter Ten:
Negotiations of Heritage between Princely and Colonial Authorities[1]

Upinder Singh

The colonial state in India saw itself engaged in a civilizing mission. The white man's burden included a retrieval of the lost history of a conquered land, the natives of which had little interest in their own past. Cast in the role of 'ignorant natives', Indians were generally considered as possessing neither the wisdom to promote historical inquiry nor the critical faculties required for engaging in it. This was the usual characterization of political and social elites, intellectuals, and ordinary Indians.

As the process of cataloguing and documenting India's historical remains got under way, and local governments started receiving circulars instructing officials to make lists and collect photographs of monuments and archaeological remains, one of the problems that presented itself was that many of these monuments and remains lay outside British territory. At its height, the British empire in India covered approximately three-fifths of the subcontinent, indigenous elites ruled over the rest. The princely states of nineteenth-century India varied greatly in size, population, and resources—from the numerous small principalities sprinkled through central and west India to the larger and more politically important ones such as Hyderabad, Mysore, Gwalior, Baroda, and Kashmir. Although the princes ultimately emerged as 'the most obvious and ostentatious bulwark' of British control in India, the relationship between the British and the traditional rulers of India always remained problematic (Jeffrey 1978:1).

Several major historical sites naturally lay in the princely states. These included Sanchi in Bhopal state, Bharhut in Nagod, Ajanta in the Nizam's domain, and Mandu in the principality of Dhar. The challenges posed by such a situation were recognized and highlighted early in the day by James Fergusson (1870), using language evocative of a military campaign:

> Apart from these operations in our own territory, it is even more important that photographic incursions should be made into the Nizam's territory. All our inquiries and all our speculations as to the ethnography and antiquities of India are stopped short by our utter ignorance of the great central plateau, where, if anywhere, the wrecks of the past may be expected to be found. What I would suggest, to remedy this, would be, that a party from Bombay should penetrate via Kallien and Kulbarga, and a party from Bengal via Wyaghur and Chanda.

On occasion, British officers concerned with conservation work observed Indians were more willing to make financial contributions towards structures that were part of contemporary religious life than for derelict ruins. Cole, when he became curator of ancient monuments, fresh from a visit to various monuments in the Madras Presidency in 1882, observed that natives of all religious denominations could be counted on to voluntarily contribute large sums of money for repairs to religious buildings (Home/Archaeology 1882). But there were certain aspects of current native worship which, according to the official British view, ran counter to the project of preserving ancient

[1] This part of the chapter, entitled The 'Ignorant Natives' and Archaeological Research, is republished here from *The Discovery of Ancient India: Early Archaeologists and the Beginning of Archaeology* with the kind permission of the author, Upinder Singh, and her publisher, Permanent Black.

monuments. Thus, at Karle, Cole found that the Buddhist stupa inside the shrine had been painted and converted into a Shivalinga. The wall and sculptures had been whitewashed and the lighting of cooking fires was damaging the cave. All this was clearly intolerable and had to be stopped (Home/Archaeology 1882).

In the long run, archaeological research and the conservation of historical monuments was not the monopoly of the British government of India and European scholars. Some of the princely states took initiatives in this regard, and some were willing to cooperate or collaborate with the British. Because of the complex relationship between the princes and the colonial state, this collaboration was not always smooth nor was it always positively acknowledged by the latter. Similarly, the role of indigenous scholars in the nineteenth-century discovery of India's past is something that needs exploration and acknowledgement.

Ancient Remains in the Princely States

An important role in interfacing between the British government and the princely states on various issues was played by residents and political agents, drawn from the Indian Political Service. The main job of the political agent was to 'advise' the rulers of his agency. The degree and nature of the interaction between political agents, residents, and princely durbars varied, depending on the size of the agency and the degree of subordination of the native state. So, for instance, the level of British interference in the internal affairs of large states such Hyderabad, Gwalior, and Baroda was less than in smaller states, as for instance many of the small states in the Mahi Kantha Agency of Gujarat, where the British exercised 'residuary jurisdiction' on the grounds that the rulers were incapable of discharging these duties properly. The political agent also functioned more or less as a district officer in states whose administration had been taken over completely on the grounds of gross mismanagement, or where the rulers were minors (Copland 1978: 283–84). The development of railway and telegraph networks eventually transformed the political agents from powerful 'men on the spot' who wielded considerable initiative and influence to mere post offices between the government of India and the Indian princes. But in the middle of the 19th century, this process was just beginning.

While some political agents were indifferent to the conservation of historical remains, others were passionately concerned. One of the best examples of the latter was Lepel Henry Griffin,[2] resident at Indore and agent to the governor general for Central India between 1881 and 1888. The best proof of his keen interest in the historical remains of this area is the book brought out under his direction in 1886. *Famous Monuments of Central India* was illustrated with 91 autotypes of original photographs taken by the pioneering and major Indian photographer Lala Deen Dayal. The illustrations included 27 plates of Sanchi, 20 plates of Gwalior monuments, 21 plates of Khajuraho, and 21 miscellaneous plates. The book was an official publication, and profits from its sale were earmarked for the preservation of the architectural monuments described in the book. Lepel Griffin's concern for India's monuments was also reflected in his relentless, outspoken critique of the destruction caused by the vandalism of railway contractors and archaeologists.

[2] Griffin had joined the Indian Civil Service in 1860, and went to a distinguished career as an administrator and diplomat. In 1871, as under secretary to the government of the Punjab, he sent out letters to all commissioners asking them to take steps to prevent unauthorized excavations, and to prevent the appropriation of coins and antiquities by private individuals. Deputy commissioners should furnish a list of all localities known or likely to contain ancient remains. Commissioners should ensure that all discoveries of antiquities should be immediately reported to the district officer, who should inform the curator of the Lahore Central Museum, who should in turn ask for instructions of the government (Circular No. 12–92 1871).

A few political agents and residents who interfaced between the British colonial government and the princely states gave a positive report, such as this: 'It is gratifying to be able to state that the Native Chiefs respond, in general, with good will, to the invitation of the political officers to consider the subject of protection to be afforded to the architectural remains scattered through their territories. The young Chief of Dhar is stated to be quite disposed to aid in preserving the ruins at Mandoo, some of the principal of which are well deserving of the expenditure that would be required with this object' (Extract from Political Administration Report 1867–68). The vast majority of political agents, however, described the attitude of the Indian princes towards the preservation of historical remains as one of dull indifference. Lepel Griffin attributed the financial contributions some of them had made towards conservation projects as the result of hollow sycophancy, an attempt to ingratiate themselves with the British. This in turn was part of Griffin's (1873: ix) larger perception of the calibre of the indigenous princes and the civilizing mission that the British had in India.

> But seriously to compare the British administration with those which preceded it, or with the majority of those which exist side by side with it today in India, is an insult to the intelligence. There have been, it is true, Muhammadan and Hindu Princes who have ruled with strength and justice, and whose names are still held in honour. But these have been very few. Native rule in India, in former days, signified oppression of the most terrible kind, insecurity of life and property, luxury and debauchery in the Prince, misery and want in the people [. . .].[3]

So it is not surprising that British administration routinely expressed scepticism about the support that the native princes could be expected to offer towards conservation. What is interesting are the arguments that they put forward to support this assessment. Griffin's explanation of why the Indian princes could not be expected to be really interested in the major historical monuments within their respective states was exactly the argument that Cunningham had put forward many years earlier, when he argued that the Hindu Raja of Nagod would be quite glad to get the 'heretical' Buddhist sculptures of Bharhut off his hands (Griffin 1882):

> Sanchi, the most important, is a Buddhist monument, its supremely important carvings being much concerned with the ceremonial of that creed. It is situated in a Muhammadan State, the predominant influence in which is at present fanatical and iconoclastic. I do not doubt that I can persuade Her Highness the Begum to subscribe Rs. 5,000 towards the restoration of the Tope; but I am still more certain that the Nawab consort and his party would see the building destroyed with the greatest pleasure [. . .].
>
> [. . .] Similarly with the [. . .] monument of Mandu. It cannot be expected that a Hindu Maharaja should specially interest himself in the preservation of a deserted city only associated with the memory of the Muhammadans who crushed and superceded his dynasty [. . .]. I trust, however, that the Government of India will not contract their liberality in the preservation of ancient monuments in these States within the narrow limits of the interest, and sympathy of the Native Princes, which is really non-existent.

In the same breath, however, Lepel Griffin indicated the contributions that had been made by the princes for conservation work. Maharaja Sindia had contributed Rs 5000 to the restoration of Jaina buildings in the Gwalior fortress, 'and both Dhar and Bhopal are ready to do what is reasonable, with reference to the interesting remains in their respective states [. . .].' The Begum of Bhopal had personally promised Lepel Griffin Rs 5000 towards the preservation of the Sanchi stupa, and the Maharaja of Dhar ('always ready to meet the wishes of the Imperial Government') could be expected to contribute half that amount towards repairs at Mandu (Griffin 1882).

[3] Griffin wrote two other books on the kingdoms of the Punjab (Griffin, 1909, 1911).

The next year Lepel Griffin (1883) reported that the Begum of Bhopal had already contributed much money and labour towards the repairs to the Sanchi stupa, and that she proposed to build a bungalow close to the monument for the use of travellers and visitors, a venture that would cost several thousands of rupees. At Mandu, restoration and conservation work was being carried out by the Raja of Dhar at his own expense, on the lines suggested by the curator of ancient monuments, and this support was likely to continue. In spite of all this evidence to the contrary, Lepel Griffin continued his refrain that the native princes had no desire to contribute towards the conservation of monuments located within their respective states, that any contributions they made could not be called voluntary, and that there was no point trying to elicit or to record these contributions on a regular basis.

The work of repair and conservation at Sanchi and Mandu was conducted under the supervision of British officers. The work at Sanchi was initially superintended by Austin Mears and later by Major Keith, who operated under the direct control of Cole. Keith also supervised the repair of buildings in the Gwalior fortress. The repairs to Mandu were likewise effected under the personal supervision of Colonel Biddulph, with the professional assistance of a Public Works Department officer. The funding was shared by the imperial government and the native states concerned. The Dhar grant for repairs towards repairs at Mandu was Rs 2000 and the British government's contribution was Rs 1200 (Thompson 1885).

The Begum of Bhopal and Her History

One of the nineteenth-century Indian rulers who belied the colonial stereotype of ignorant natives was the Begum of Bhopal, Shahjahan Begum (r. 1868–1901), second in a line of four women rulers of this state. The Begum was a learned woman, deeply interested in the history of her state. She was the author of a book on the history of Bhopal. Her *Taj-ul-Ikbal Tarikh-Riyasat-Bhopal* (The Crown of Prosperity, the History of Bhopal State; hereafter referred to as *History*) was translated from Urdu into English by C. Barstow, political agent of Bhopal between 1874 and 1875.

The text of the English translation of the Begum's *History* is sandwiched between the comments of the translator at one end and those of her husband, Nawab Wala Jah Amir-ul-Mulk Syud [Sayyid] Muhammad Sadik Hasan Khan Bahadur, at the other end. Both display their particular bias, one political, the other personal. Barstow notes that the only other works thus far that had touched on the history of Bhopal were Sir J. Malcolm's *Central India* and Colonel Malleson's *Essay*. In his opinion, the value of the Begum's work did not lie in its historical insights but in something quite different: 'It is to be hoped that the present work may not prove devoid of interest to the English readers as affording an insight into the genuine expression of Oriental feelings and mode of thought' (Begum 1876: iii [translator's Preface]). The Afterword to the book, on the other hand, bestows fulsome praise on the author, 'who, though she is a woman, can teach lessons of wisdom to great statesmen both in politics and finance' (Begum 1876: 231).[4] Muhammad Sadik Hasan Khan extols the veracity of the Begum's account of Bhopal's history and describes it as a textbook on the science of politics, a work of great value for princes and ordinary folk alike, young and old.

The project of writing the *History* was begun by Shahjahan Begum's mother Sikandar Begum (r. 1843–68). In 1852 Major Durand, the political agent at Bhopal, had suggested to her that she write a history of the state and its rulers 'after the example set by the Emperor Babar, who wrote the annals of his reign.' Such a book, Durand impressed upon the Begum, would spread her fame from Hindustan to England (Begum 1876: v). Sikandar Begum liked the idea and began collecting material for it from the

[4] Muhammad Sadik Hasan Khan is at pains to point out that his effusive praise of the author and the book is objective. 'I have no interested motives in thus writing and speaking of her; am I not her husband? I am no courtier seeking for a reward. God has been pleased to give me enough and to spare.'

state archives. She worked on the book for seventeen years, till her death. Her daughter decided to continue and complete the work her mother had begun.

Shahjahan Begum's *History* is a detailed and lively account of the history of Bhopal from the time of the foundation of the Bhopal principality by Dost Muhammad Khan in 1736 to the author's own time. The author was aware of other works on her area—those of Sir John Malcolm and Major William Hough. In the Preface of her *History*, Shahjahan Begum makes certain observations on the nature and utility of history: 'History is a science which engages the attention and study of rulers in every age, and claims votaries from every religion and sect, especially among the English, who are at great pains to collect and analyze facts and acquaint themselves with the customs and history of every country and society, regarding this knowledge as a key to understanding the revolutions of the world and the progress or decline of mankind. It is to historians too we should look to discern the signs of peace and war' (Begum 1876: iii–iv).

The book is divided into three parts. The first deals with rulers of Bhopal from the time of Dost Muhammad Khan up to the time of the death of the author's father, Jahangir Muhammad Khan. The second deals with the reign of the author's mother, Sikandar Begum. The third part deals with the early years of the reign of Shahjahan Begum herself. Battles, intrigues, treaties and ceremonies are described in detail. There is dramatic dialogue and long, sonorous speeches. There are quotations from official correspondence and references to financial accounts and expenses. Among the many things that emerge from the Begum's *History* is the utter abjectness of Bhopal's rulers vis-à-vis the British in matters ranging from policy to marriage and travel, all of which required the viceroy's prior sanction.

Shahjahan Begum's account of the early years of her own reign indicates a keenness to advertise her administrative reforms and progressive measures—in the areas of education, revenue, and welfare. Towards its end her book takes on the appearance of a sort of gazetteer—giving the extent of the state of Bhopal, a list of *parganas* and principal towns and forts, an account of the produce of the soil and its fruits, and a description of the city of Bhopal. There is also an account of 'some of the most deserving officers of the state and of the most learned of its servants'. The Begum's detailed accounts of her journeys to Lucknow, Agra, Fatehpur Sikri, and Delhi display her interest in historical monuments.

Looking for reference to Sanchi, one of the most important ancient historical sites in Bhopal state, the reader is initially disappointed by the very brief reference in the third chapter of the third part of the *History*: 'We visited Sanchi Khanakhera, and inspected the stone sculptures and statues of Budha [*sic*], and the ancient gateway [. . .]' (Begum 1876: 145). Further reading rewards us with a long account of the site of Sanchi, with which Chapter VI closes: 'The most wonderful ancient buildings in the State of Bhopal are at Sanchi Khanakhera, a small village under the brow of a hill some 20 miles north-east of Bhopal [. . .]' (Begum 1876: 219). The Begum goes on to describe the ruins of Sanchi. She refers to similar ruins at Sunari, Sandir, Satdhara, Bhojpur, and Andher nearby. The discoveries made at Sanchi by Cunningham are summarized, as are some of his views on the antiquity and style of the sculptures: 'The above ruins appear to be objects of great interest to European gentlemen. Major Alexander Cunningham [Fig. 8], brother of the late Captain J.D. Cunningham, formerly Political Agent of Bhopal, stayed several weeks in this neighbourhood and examined these ruins most carefully. He took drawings of the place, deciphered the inscriptions, and bored shafts down these domes. The results of his investigations were described by him in an English work' (Begum 1876: 220). The Begum had gathered from Cunningham's research that the domes at Sanchi were called 'topes' by the English and that they were associated with the Buddhist religion.

When Fergusson's *Tree and Serpent Worship* was published in 1868, the Begum expressed a desire to obtain a copy. The viceroy duly presented her with one. Shahjahan Begum went on to express her

interest in the ruins of Sanchi in more material terms as well, in providing assistance for Cole's casting project and money towards the preservation of the important ancient Buddhist site. This support was continued by her successor Sultan Jahan Begum (1901–26), to whom John Marshall's volumes on Sanchi are dedicated. The sustained interest, concern, and material support extended by the Bhopal durbar towards the historical remains at Sanchi go a long way in contradicting the constant British refrain that a Muslim ruler could not possibly have any interest in a Buddhist monument.[5]

Other Princely States

Clearly, not all native princes were indifferent towards the preservation of the cultural heritage of their dominions. The Nizam of Hyderabad was quite willing to cooperate with Cole and follow up his suggestions. Considerable amounts of money from the state exchequer were spent on conservation work during the ministry of Salar Jung I. In 1882 the Nizam's government took steps to provide doors for some of the Ajanta caves in order to protect the Ajanta frescoes (Home/Archaeology and the Conservation 1882). Subsequently, it communicated with the curator of ancient monuments regarding its plans for the repair of old monuments at Kalburgah.[6] Several years later (in 1894–95), the services of H. Cousens of the Archaeological Survey were lent to the Nizam's government. Cousens toured the state, surveyed its monuments, and prepared a classified list of these for conservation purposes.

At the same time, not all native princes were as interested in a close relationship with the British on preservation matters. In 1884 Colonel J.C. Berkeley, officer on special duty in Kashmir, gave the Maharaja's prime minister a list of the ancient buildings and ruins of Kashmir. 'Would the Durbar be willing to arrange for their conservation as they stand? The cost would be trifling, and the object of view is one that commends itself to all' (Berkeley 1884). The response was cool: 'With reference to your letter [. . .] I shall thank you to inform the Government of India that His Highness the Maharaja himself takes great interest in the preservation of all ancient buildings within his territories, and is fully alive to the importance of conserving the specimens of ancient architectural art. I may also state here that the Governor of Kashmir has been instructed to take particular care in conserving such buildings' (Ram 1884).

The Maharana of Mewar reacted similarly. At Cole's behest his attention was drawn to the need for repairs to structures at Chittor and Nagda. The Maharana informed the resident in the course of a discussion on the matter that he was himself deeply interested in their renovation and repair, but he was opposed to the supervision of such work by British officers (Walker 1882). The written response of the Mewar durbar (1882) was polite but firm:

> [. . .] the Fortress of Chittor represents the Crown of Meywar and the Rajputs, and its repair did of old engage attention. In fact repairs have been in execution during the past three years, while in the last Sambat work has been started on an extensive scale. The style of repair advocated by Captain Cole is deserving of approval, and regards will be paid to his recommendations. There is every determination to extend the scope of repairs.
>
> [. . .] With regard to what you write about the appointment of a British officer to draw up estimates and exercise supervision, there does not appear to be any necessity for this, and therefore the proposal should not be carried out [. . .]. The work of repairs at Nagda will also be effected from here.

[5] For a detailed account of the long-term role played by the Bhopal durbar in preserving the Sanchi remains and retrieving the Sanchi relics, see Lahiri in this volume.

[6] These plans included, much to Cole's irritation, the whitewashing and painting of the structures, dome and all.

Figure 8: Alexander Cunningham, Courtesy: Archaeological Survey of India

Although it refused British assistance in the matter of repairs, the Mewar durbar was willing to allow agents of the colonial government to survey major monuments in the state. Cole was given permission to arrange for a complete survey of the monuments in the Chittor Fort and at Udaipur, the only proviso being the Maharana should be informed of the name of the person who was going to do the job. The Jeypore and Sirohi durbars likewise gave permission to the curator of ancient monuments to survey the Amber Palace and the Jain temple at Mt Abu (Bradford 1883).

While most of the officials who interacted with the native durbars over these issues were aware of the need for delicacy, this variety of virtue was not, as we have seen, part of Cole's style as curator of ancient monuments between 1881 and 1883. While he sympathized with the princes' desire to maintain control over the preservation of monuments in their dominion, he insisted that with this sort of arrangement it would not be possible to achieve uniformity in approach or results (Cole 1883). He referred to the harm that could befall monuments due either to neglect—through vegetation,

damp, dirt, bees, bats, etc.; or to damage—through the improper use of paint, plaster, whitewash, etc. He pointed out that a glaring example of the latter sort of damage was the whitewashing of the Amber Palace in 1881 to prepare it for Lord Ripon's visit: this was the worst sort of vandalism possible. In short, native princes could not be left to their own devices when it came to the care of historical monuments in their territories. Cole's presupposition was always that art's needs were supreme—neither his colleagues nor the princes who owned these artefacts and monuments, in his view understood this as well as he did.

Cole's strident approach to this matter was fraught with problematic potential. For of course this was not merely a matter of how best to conserve ancient monuments, but an issue that impinged on the sensitive relationship between the colonial state and the princes, something that worried officials on the spot. This is what Major E.R.C. Bradford (1883), agent to the governor general in Rajputana, had to say on the matter:

> [. . .] it must be remembered that we have not to consider this matter only from our own point of view of what is appropriate and in good taste, and that we cannot arbitrarily force the possessors of these priceless treasures to do with them that which is against their inclination or their traditions. It therefore appears to me that the subject cannot be approached too cautiously. Much has been conceded by the Maharana of Oodeypore with some reluctance as the correspondence shows; by Jeypore and by Sirohi, and it is my belief that no Native State will oppose, or be indifferent to suggestions which do not trench on their prerogatives and preconceived ideas. As I have already stated, most of the Chiefs of Rajputana prefer to make their own arrangements for the preservation and repair of their ancient buildings and the feelings that prompt this expression of their wishes are thoroughly intelligible, as it cannot be supposed that the fate of structures, with which, as is frequently the case, the annals of their ancestry and their religion are intermingled, can be a matter of no concern to them [. . .].

Faced with the political factors involved, the government of India decided it was best to influence the princes without imposing any 'distasteful pressure' on them: 'in the opinion of the Government of India, the Chiefs cannot be expected to abandon their control over buildings, rendered precious to them by family associations in favour of a controlling department working under the paramount power. The objects of the Government of India, however, will be fully attained if the Durbars can be induced to make a real effort to carry out Major Cole's plans by means of their own agency [. . .]' (Grant 1883). It is noteworthy that almost all the ruling houses of Rajputana expressed willingness to take appropriate measures to repair and preserve a large number of historical monuments within their jurisdiction (List of Ancient Monuments and Buildings 1883). These monuments not only included temples, forts, and palaces to which the princes could be expected to have a sentimental attachment, but also several medieval monuments such as mosques, *dargahs*, and tombs. Thus, the monuments in and near Dholepore included the sixteenth-century dargah and tomb of Sayyid Raj Bukhari, a mosque and tomb of Mussamut Zarina, the tomb of Surafabdal, the tomb of Sadik Muhammad Khan (one of Akbar's generals), and the ruins of a hunting lodge built by Shah Jahan. The Maharaja of Dholepore was willing to undertake steps to repair these and any other monuments deemed worthy of similar attention in his state, and reported that as a matter of fact yearly sums were now devoted to this end. The fact that the ruler of this state was in principle agreeable to undertake such measures belied, in some measures, the frequently expressed British view that the interest Indian princes took in the conservation of historical monuments was necessarily limited by communal or sectarian prejudice.

During the post-Cole years, the government of India dutifully sent out to the princely states copies of its resolution of 26 November 1883, which emphasized the necessity of compiling list of historical monuments on a uniform plan. Attached to this were lists of monuments compiled by Major Cole. The princes were asked what precisely they proposed to do with regard to the repair and conservation of

monuments in their domain. The replies frequently stated that the princes were well aware of the importance of conservation and did not need the British to remind them about it (see, for instance, Mysore Residency 1885).

In subsequent years there was an increase in cooperation between the government of India and the princely states in survey matters. In 1889 Baroda state collaborated with the government of Bombay for an archaeological survey of Sidhpore, Suhilwada, and Madhera. The cost of the survey was equally shared by the British and Baroda governments, while the latter agreed to shoulder the expense of the subsequent publications. The Seventh International Oriental Congress held at Vienna suggested to the Nizam of Hyderabad that he organize a linguistic survey of the state. The committee set up by the Nizam's government to examine the issue decided to carry out an archaeological and linguistic survey simultaneously. In 1892 the Nizam's government applied to the British government for the loan of the services of Cousens of the Bombay Archaeological Survey, in connection with this project.

In spite of such instances of cooperation and in spite of the political subordination of the Indian princes to the government of India, the fact of the matter remained that, whether they liked it or not, the officers of the Archaeological Survey had restricted access to archaeological and monumental remains in a large part of the subcontinent. On occasion they chafed: in 1886 Burgess proposed to the government of India that he be allowed to conduct a survey of the Chalukyan temples in Mysore state, or that the purview of the Archaeological Survey be officially extended to include Mysore. The Foreign Department did not think it politic to even suggest the latter course of action to the Mysore durbar (Home/Archaeology 1886). The crux of the matter was that although the native princes were generally willing to collaborate with the colonial government on specific tasks of survey and conservation, certain limits of propriety and decorum could not be transgressed even within this unequal relationship.

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Chapter Eleven:
Mayurbhanj State
An Account of Archaeological Research (1905–49)[1]

Rajasri Mukhopadhyay

The history of archaeology in India has witnessed a fair amount of progress in recent times. But even here the British initiative vis-à-vis the Archaeological Survey of India and Marshall, Cunningham, Beglar or Wheeler is highlighted, while the contributions made by the 'native states' like Hyderabad, Mysore, Travancore, Gwalior, Bhopal, Baroda, Mayurbhanj and Jammu and Kashmir have been foreshadowed. A comprehensive study of the role of the princely states is yet to be made and a few short accounts and information given in the annual reports of the departments are all that remain as mute testimonies to their involvement and remarkable work done.

In some princely states royal patronage led to the establishment of the Department of Archaeology as early as 1890 and 1896–97, in case of Mysore and Travancore respectively.[2] These departments carried out archaeological surveys and excavations, undertook conservation work, established museums and also conducted numismatic and epigraphic studies. They published reports, memories, monographs and further disseminated knowledge about the past through illustrated maps, guidebooks and radio talks.

This paper proposes to highlight the archaeological researches undertaken by the Mayurbhanj state from 1905, the year of establishment of the Department of Archaeology, till its merger with Orissa on 1st January 1949.

Advances in Orissan archaeology in general and Mayurbhanj in particular have had its roots in the romanticism of the nineteenth century India. It was an age of awakening and in the process attempts were made to rediscover what was India and what India should be as well (Chakrabarti 2000: 77). The late nineteenth century and the opening years of 20th century saw the pre-eminence of the orientalist canon being challenged at two levels. The first was the growing modernist sensibility and a waning belief in Europe's invariable superiority and the other came from the rise of Indian nationalism. Nationalism also meant reconstruction of the various regional identities that together formed what one called 'India'. Moreover, Bengal was in the grips of the Swadeshi Movement of 1905 and everything indigenous appeared to be endowed with a special aura of importance. Mayurbhanj which is geographically more near to Bengal than the coastal region of east Orissa, naturally came under the infectious passion of Swadeshi of going back to the roots. The search for the Oriya identity was on and nationalist Oriya poet Madhusudan Das started a movement called the Utkal Sammelani for the amalgamation of the Oriya speaking tracts. It gathered momentum and culminated in the creation of the separate province of Orissa in 1936. It was precisely in this background that a quest for 'Bhanja bhumi', that is, the Land of the Bhanjas and the glories of 'Suprachin Bhanja Vamsa', that is, the ancient Bhanja dynasty, began. These sentiments found a true vanguard in Maharaja Shriram Chandra Bhanja, the then chief of Mayurbhanj state. He was a ruler with a vision and practical

[1] Originally published in *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, entitled History of Archaeological Research Under the Mayurbhanj State (1905–49), vol. 63, 2002: 1301–06, this article is reproduced with the kind permission of the Indian History Congress.

[2] Lecture delivered by Richa Jhaldiyal at Centre for Archaeological Studies and Training, Kolkata, on 20 September 2002.

wisdom. He endeared himself to the people of Orissa when he gave an impassioned presidential address as the first president of the Utkal Sammelani at Cuttack in 1903. During his rule the state witnessed manifold developments (Senapati and Sahu 1967: 78). His progressive dynamic bent of mind coupled with an urge to trace back the dynastic roots to hoardy past led to the establishment of the Department of Archaeology of Mayurbhanja in 1905–06. This was the first concrete step taken for the systematic recovery of rich past of Mayurbhanj. Till then except for some stray and incidental accounts, archaeological researches in Orissa starting from Stirling in 1825, to Kittoe (1838), Fergusson (1845–80), R.L. Mitra (1875–80) were confined to coastal Orissa, hovering around Puri, Bhubaneshwar, Konarak and Jajpur only. From the Indian point of view, the lack of interest in this hilly region of northwestern Orissa, may be traced to the overwhelming tribal character of the region, and thus 'less important' for the caste Hindu dominated eastern coastal region and for the colonial British, researches in their 'own' territory deserved more attention than the princely states.

The first reference to the archaeological treasures of Mayurbhanja can be found in an article by Tickell. He visited the area soon after formation of Kolhan in the Singhbhum district and noticed two living temples at 'Kiching' and vast amount of ruins consisting of architectural fragments and sculptures (Tickell 1840: 708). In 1871 two copper plates from Bamanghaty, of Ranabhanja and Rajabhanja, were published in the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* (1871: 161–69). The first one was dated in Bhauma Era 188 (AD 924). Thus it appeared that the Bhanjas were ruling as important feudatories right from 10th century AD. In 1875–76 J.D. Beglar, Cunningham's assistant, visited the site which has been described as 'Kichang' in Cunningham's reports of 1874–75 and 1875–76, published in *Archaeological Survey of India Reports*.

After the formation of the Archaeology Department, Nagendra Nath Vasu was appointed as the state archaeologist. He writes in the Preface of his book that he was 'struck with the earnestness' of the chief of Mayurbhanj, the way he promoted the 'cause of antiquarian researches in Orissa' and that some work had already commenced. In 1911, Vasu's report *The Archaeological Survey of Mayurbhanj*, Part I, was published from Calcutta which contains the result of the work done in 1907–09. He discussed the archaeological remains of Mayurbhanj by giving brief summary of the religious developments supported by the findings, especially the account of modern Buddhism with its followers in Orissa. We come to know from Vasu's acknowledgement that stalwarts like Mahamahopadhyay Haraprasad Shastri and Dinesh Chandra Sen helped with their observations and remarks while the volume was being compiled. N.N. Vasu's chief credit lies in identifying modern Khiching, 21.50 degree north latitude and 85.50 degree east longitude, a village lying to the northwest of Simlipal forest in the Panchpir subdivision, with the 'Khngakotta' mentioned in the copper plates, the capital of the Bhanja kings. Vasu emphatically stated that 'Mayurbhanj hitherto interested the geologist and the mineralogist only, although it promises an even richer field to the archaeologist and historian. The picturesque land bears its silent history of ages on its temples and images.'

Apart from N.N. Vasu, another man played an extremely important role in unearthing the past. He was Kamakshya Prasad Bose. A law graduate from the University of Calcutta and a student of history, he had a keen interest in archaeology. In 1908, during his posting as S.D.O. of Panchpir subdivision, he accidentally discovered a fragmentary inscribed Avalokiteshvara image while on a tour. The inscription revealed that the image of Lord Lokesa was made by Shri Dharani Varaha, assisted by Kirtti, for King Shri Raja Bhanja Deva. This fuelled his curiosity and he excavated Itamundia, a Buddhist mound, Viratgarh, Kichackgarh, Sankhuarajgarh, Chandisal—all in the vicinity of the main temple complex or Thakurani compound. From Viratgarh remains of a ruined palace, beads, weights and measures, potteries, coins and elephant goad were recovered and at Kichakgarh four monolithic pillars were discovered. K.P. Bose built up a huge collection of sculptures, mostly Buddhist. In 1908, he collected an inscribed image of Marichi, a large image of the Buddha in the Bhumisparsha mudra, an image of Tara,

a beautiful image of Arapachana Manjushri, wrongly identified by him as Padmapani Bodhisattva, etc. The major part of his collection is now in the Baripada Museum, while some are retained at the site museum of Khiching.

Maharaja Shriram Chandra Bhanja died in 1912. His death was followed by an unstable period. A tribal uprising led mainly by the Santhals took place in May 1917. The immediate cause of the rising was the attempt to recruit tribals for a Labour Corps in France for World War I (1914–18). The Mayurbhanj state administration gradually returned to its normal rhythm after the accession of Maharaja Purna Chandra Bhanja. Like his father, he was an enlightened and generous ruler and took up the cause of archaeology in right earnest. Now that Khiching had been identified, he wanted the site to be explored by a professional archaeologist. At his request, Sir John Marshall, the then director general of the Archaeological Survey of India, deputed Rai Bahadur Rama Prasad Chanda to explore and report in detail about the site. Chanda at that time was heading the Archaeology Section of the Indian Museum. In November 1922, Chanda visited Baripada, Khiching, Haripur, Badsahi, Mantri, etc. He was accompanied by K.P. Bose, photographer Munshi Sher Muhammad and Pandit Tarakeshwar Ganguly. He explored and excavated for three consecutive seasons and reports appeared in the Survey's Annual Reports in 1922–23, 1923–24 and 1924–25. He also published an article entitled Note on the Ancient Monuments of Mayurbhanja (Chanda 1927). A small monograph entitled *Bhanja Dynasty of Mayurbhanja and Their Ancient Capital Khiching* was published by the Archaeology Department in 1929. Chanda also wrote in various Bengali magazines, creating an awareness about the subject in the contemporary intellectual circle of Bengal.

The excavations conducted by Chanda have disclosed the remains of a group of old temples, of which two were very elaborately ornamented. The bigger one of these two temples, which occupied the central position in the group, had a base 35 feet square and may be designated the *bada* deul or the great temple of Khiching (Chanda 1927: 133). In 1922, the site of the great temple was represented by a mound. The excavation work was started in the working season of 1923–24 and was finished in 1925. These excavations yielded a large number of carved architectural pieces and more or less mutilated sculptures that once decorated the great temple (Chanda 1927: 133). The life size image of Shiva, identified with 'Hara' of Ranabhanja's inscription, indicated that Khiching was a centre of Shaivism in the early medieval period. Chanda (1927: 136) dated the sculptures to 11th or 12th century AD by paleographic analysis of the inscribed Avalokiteshvara and crossed-referring it with the images excavated from the mound on the basis of style and technique. He pointed out another remarkable feature of the Khiching temples—the absence of the typical Orissan porch or *jagamohana*. The figure sculptures, according to Chanda, betrayed definite *Gaudian* (Bengal-Bihar) influence and he designated them as 'masterpieces of new type'.

After the excavation a need was felt to preserve the excavated material and the Mayurbhanj administration came forward with interest and a site museum was built in the Thakurani compound in 1928 (Mohapatra 1986: 152). Once the display work was complete, the repair and conservation work of Kutai Tundi (Nilkantheshvara) and Chandrashekhara temple was taken up. Under the supervision of Paramananda Acharya, who was now the state archaeologist, Sailendra Prasad Bose, the curator of the Khiching Museum carried out the work. But the most ambitious project was yet to come. The then Maharaja Pratap Chandra Bhanja, who had succeeded his brother Purna Chandra in 1928, wanted the great temple to be rebuilt in its original location for Kichakeshwari (Chamunda), the patron deity of the Bhanja family. The construction work started in 1929 and it was completed in 1942. The old architectural fragments were used as far as possible and in case a particular portion could not be located at all, a new uncarved stone of the same measurement was used just to fill in the gap and keep the overall balance right. Although P. Acharya remained the official supervisor, it was chiefly a product of S.P. Bose's arduous hard work and tremendous devotion (Mishra 1998: 46, 52,

64, 68, 86; Acharya 1933; Visitors' Book 1937–39). A critical examination of the newly constructed Kichakeshwari temple will reveal certain deviation and anachronism vis-à-vis the typical Orissan *rekha* deul of 10th century AD, which it is supposed to emulate (Dhaky n.d.: 398), but the sheer hard work and magnitude of the venture remain unparalleled in the Orissa history.

Apart from these historical remains, prehistorical tools have also been discovered at Mayurbhanj. In 1876, lower palaeolithic tools were discovered by Valentine Ball (1876: 120–21). The quest for prehistoric past continued and P. Acharya discovered ground and polished stone axes at his native village Baidipur (Acharya 1926). In 1939, a lot of palaeolithic sites were discovered at Baripada town, Kuchai, 4 miles north of Baripada and Kuliana, 10 miles north of Baripada. Acharya in a letter, dated 30 March 1939, to Nirmal Bose mentioned that these were 'better than any other in South India or Central Province'. The 1939 discoveries gave a new dimension to palaeolithic archaeology of Mayurbhanj and laid the foundation of scientific archaeology of India at Kulina—the first excavated palaeolithic site in India (Chakrabarti 2000: 77).

The merit of the work done by the Archaeology Department of Mayurbhanj can be easily understood in the light of two comments—one from none other than R.C. Majumdar and the other by K.N. Dikshit, the director general of the Archaeological Survey of Inida. Majumdar wrote in the Visitor's Book, dated 31 January 1939, 'The museum, the restored temple, Kutai Tundi, and the big temple now being restored speak highly of the great efficiency of the Archaeology Department of Mayurbhanja'. Dikshit (1939) was similarly generous with praises in his note. 'Among the States included in the Eastern States Agency, Mayurbhanj is the only one that has taken keen interest in Archaeology. Thanks to the initiative of the Late Maharaja Purna Chandra Bhanja Deo, which is still being carried on by the present Maharaja [. . .] the most striking piece of archaeological work done in Mayurbanj is in the field of conservation and restoration.'

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Chapter Twelve:
Swat and Beyond
Giuseppe Tucci, IsMEO in Pakistan and the Gilgit Manuscripts[1]

Luca M. Olivieri

Over the past few decades, archival research has added a socio-political, legal and historical context to archaeological and epigraphic studies in South Asia. A long bibliography, covering a variety of subjects, can be presented. However, works related to Buddhist literature, history and archaeology continue to receive special attention in global academia. In this study, we are primarily dealing with the discovery and acquisition of a group of Buddhist manuscripts, part of a collection later popularly designated as 'the Gilgit Manuscripts'. The data comes from the Italian archives related to the Italian scholars' work in Pakistan, particularly the ex-princely state of Swat.[2]

Gilgit Manuscripts are essentially valuable from a theological and literary perspective. Much has been said in this respect. However, they are also fascinating in another sense: the history of their discovery and the subsequent itineraries. Before the partition of India in 1947, the state of Kashmir dominantly figured in matters of their discovery and ownership, something which adds a princely aspect to our study. The part of the Manuscripts subject to discussion here, on the other hand, belongs to the modern state of Pakistan. The legal aspect of our study, therefore, primarily relates to Pakistani antiquities legislation. In order to make the discussion more comprehensible, references to Swat state and preliminary Italian archaeological activities in Pakistan have been made.

It is in this context that the role Giuseppe Tucci played, i.e. his treatment of oriental heritage, should be seen as exceptional. It is to be argued that he was very conscious to carry out his scholarly and research work within the parameters of Pakistani legal mechanism about antiquities. Tucci came to know that a part of the Gilgit Manuscripts was in the hands of a Pakistani army officer who had taken it from a repository in Bunji (not far from Gilgit). It happened when his troops raided the building during the military events of the First Kashmir War in 1947–48. Tucci bought the manuscripts from the Army officer in 1956 and handed them over to the Department of Archaeology (Karachi National Museum). Later, following an agreement, he received the rights from the department to study and publish the manuscripts before they were made available to other researchers. The manuscripts were published in their entirety in the *Serie Orientale Roma*. However, I have not been able to ascertain the circumstances of their discovery and, more importantly, the related legal issues. In particular, it is unclear whether, or not, the manuscripts taken from Bunji were originally the property of the princely state of Kashmir (according to the law in force at the time).

It should be noted that the material presented here be considered both as an outcome and the prosecution of a study which started with the author's 2008 discovery of material at the Malakand

[1] Luca M. Olivieri's kind cooperation enabled the reproduction of this largely revised and expanded version of the original article from *East and West*, vol. 4, no. 1 (63), 2023, pp. 37–64, ISMEO, Italy (see fn 3).

[2] Swat as a princely state emerged in the second decade of the twentieth century. Ruled by Sayyid Abdul Jabbar Shah (1915–17), Miangul Abdul Wadud (1917–49) and his son, Miangul Abdul Haq Jahanzeb (1949–69), it ceased to exist when it was merged in Pakistan in 1969.

Fort (Fig. 9), in north-west Pakistan, not far from the border with Afghanistan.[3] In order to make full sense of the matter, it would be useful to elucidate that scholarly background in the first place. Second, the story of the purchase of the manuscripts from the Pakistani army officer, as is found in correspondence between Tucci and Italian diplomats in Pakistan, is presented. Moreover, our discussion expands to take account of the 1931 and 1938 discoveries of the Gilgit manuscripts through which the princely and legal matters come to the fore. All this, however, takes a new turn, as 1947 revolutionized political, administrative and legal landscape in South Asia, in the context of state and politics in the newly emerged Pakistan. Finally, the potential lessons, warranted by the example Tucci set forth in 1956, have been stressed upon in view of proper management of heritage and its studies in the future.

Figure 9: The Malakand Fort (1933), Courtesy: Miangul Archives

The Historiography of Heritage in Pakistan

The Malakand papers were published in 2015 (Olivieri 2015a, 2015b, 2019), while a study focusing on a specific set of documents, Harold Arthur Deane's manuscript of his *Note on Udyana and Gandhara*, appeared in 2022 (Morgan and Olivieri 2022). Harold Deane was the first British political agent at

[3] These notes were originally presented at the online symposium 'Giuseppe Tucci: His Adventurous Life, His Scholarly Legacy' co-organized by the University of Hong Kong and Istituto Italiano di Cultura on 8 August 2022, and I am thankful to its organisers Florian Knothe and Yunfei Bai. Later, a different version of that contribution was published in 2023 with the title 'Physical Repatriation: Tucci, the Gilgit Manuscripts, and the Beginning of IsMEO Archaeological Work in Swat' in *East and West*, 4 (1) [63]: 37–64. We thank the journal's editorial board for granting us permission to publish this revised and substantially expanded version of this article. I would also like to thank the editorial revision and contextualization painstakingly carried out by Rafiullah Khan. Thanks to him, this study has definitely improved in many respects.

Malakand in 1895 and the first chief commissioner of the North-West Frontier Province in 1901 (renamed as Khyber Pukhtunkhwa in 2011). The first set of the Malakand papers, three folders containing 344 documents of various kinds, refers to an exchange of notes and correspondence on archaeological activities and on the protection of cultural assets between 1896 and 1937 in the area under the jurisdiction of the Malakand Agency, including the neighbouring native states of Dir, Chitral, and Swat. The papers include the early exchange of views between the Calcutta's headquarters and the British outpost of Malakand, including the 1899 crucial report of James Burgess, director general of Archaeological Survey of India (1885–89) which first posed the need to suppress what later on Marc Aurel Stein dubbed as the 'nefarious traffic' of antiquities from Swat (Olivieri 2015a: Document 113). Subsequently, while I continued working on the archival documents related to first years of the Italian Mission in Pakistan (Olivieri 2025a, 2025b), Rafiullah Khan widened the scope of archival research about the archaeology of Pakistan, especially that of the Swat valley and other parts of Gandhara, by working in various archives in England and Pakistan (Khan 2020, 2023, 2024). Other scholars are also working in the same direction in Pakistan. We hope that this pursuit of archaeological and heritage historiography on Gandhara will fare well in the future so as to enhance our understanding about issues such as fieldwork, legal considerations, political and diplomatic aspects of activities done by explorers and archaeologists.

The Ancient Monuments Preservation Act and Swat

Among other things, one of the more interesting aspects of the Malakand papers is the description of how the extraordinary legislative instrument of the Ancient Monuments Preservation Act (VII, 1904) (hereafter Preservation Act) came into being and its successive amendments up to 1932 (discussed in detail in Olivieri 2015a). Actually, the British Malakand outpost played a very active role in the creation of this legal instrument, thanks to the status and position of the Malakand Agency. It was located at the border with the free zone where illegal digging was carried out and from where came most of the material smuggled into British India. There is one important detail that we should note in this regard: in the Preservation Act, control of illegal excavations in the native states was thought to be possible if the import of antiquities into British India was made illegal. Aurel Stein noted this in his 1913 letter to the Malakand political agent (Olivieri 2015a: Document 113).[4] This clause implied that legally the 'Preservation Act' was not applicable to the princely states. This would have had important consequences for the legality of future archaeological activities in Swat.

One of the issues found in the Malakand papers relates to the ways in which plans for archaeological excavations in native states such as Chitral, Dir, and especially, Swat could have potentially be worked out. The basic question was whether the Preservation Act 'could have been considered valid outside the settled territories of British India'. In other words, was the Indian law applicable outside of British frontiers, especially in the native states? As we have opined above, the answer is—legally speaking—not in affirmative.[5]

In 1931, Stein was planning his second (later aborted) archaeological campaign in Swat, this time for excavation purposes. He repeatedly asked the British authorities in Malakand as to what the status of the native states was in relation to archaeological matters (Olivieri 2015a: e.g. Documents 136, 312). He never received a written reply. Even if Stein had received permission from the ruler of Swat, under what legal procedure would he have been able to export his finds from Swat into the British territories? Legally, perhaps, it would have been impossible. In 1938 Evert Barger and Philip Wright carried out archaeological excavations in Swat. As Rafiullah Khan has recently demonstrated, on the

[4] In this and the following pages, 'Document [no.]' means the material from Malakand published in Olivieri 2015a, while 'document [no.]' means the letters in the Folder Swat 1955–56, which are the object of this article.
[5] See for example Stein's letter to political agent at Malakand (Olivieri 2015a: Document 312).

basis of new documents from Malakand, these excavations were not licensed by the Archaeological Survey of India. Here again the simple reason seems to be the fact that British law did not extend to princely Swat.[6]

When Giuseppe Tucci (Fig. 10), in 1955, was devising his plan for archaeological work in Swat, he was already cognizant of this legal conundrum. Pakistan had already adapted the Preservation Act to function in the country (later replaced by the 1975 Antiquities Act). Tucci in 1955 obtained a licence from the Department of Archaeology, which had inherited the functions of the Indian Archaeological Survey. But Swat was still an autonomous state and the Pakistani law on archaeological matters was not applicable in the area. Both the Italian and Pakistani laws hold that archaeology needs to have a legal framework, which should inherently be represented by the role of the state and the presence of civic museums as repositories of every legally excavated object. Finally, in March 1956, as attested by documents in the National Archives of Pakistan (see below), the government of Pakistan extended the Preservation Act to Swat which its ruler, Miangul Abdul Haq Jahanzeb, accepted.

Figure 10: Giuseppe Tucci (left), Courtesy: IsMEO

On the basis of newly studied IsMEO archival data,[7] we know that Giuseppe Tucci's attempt to carry out an archaeological expedition to the Swat valley started as early as 1949–50, just two years after the opening of diplomatic relations between Italy and Pakistan. Such an early date, compared to what we previously knew (1954–55), confirms what Tucci himself had said many times. It was that the idea of an expedition to Swat had occurred to him as early as when he was studying the manuscripts of Tibetan travel reports on Swat. Tucci's attempt to enter Swat, planned for the autumn of 1950, did not materlialize, and he had to wait for another five years before realizing his long-coveted project (Olivieri 2025b).

[6] Rafiullah Khan presented his notes as a communication to the 2021 Gandhara Connections Conference in Oxford (which was dedicated to 'The Rediscovery and Reception of Gandhāran Art': Rienjang and Stewart 2022). His notes appeared in *Modern Asian Studies* (Khan 2023).

[7] Folder 'Spedizione Valle dello Swat' 1949-1951 in the Archivio Storico Diplomatico, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Rome). Giuseppe Tucci at the time was the President of IsMEO.

In another folder from the IsMEO and Italian Archaeological Mission Archive (whose copy is now in the Mission House at Saidu Sharif), a group of letters dates back to 1954. It concerns the correspondence between Tucci and Raul Curiel, the latter at that time was director in-charge of Pakistan's newly established Department of Archaeology (published in Olivieri 2023 and Olivieri 2025a).

From the 1954–55 correspondence between IsMEO (Tucci), the Department of Archaeology (Curiel), and the Pakistani Embassy, it is clear that Tucci was anxious to obtain the licence with 'official permission' before arriving in Pakistan, while the Pakistani authorities were delaying it. The reasons were the indirect consequences of article 12 of the General Rules attached to the licence, which provided for the *partition* findings, and their export for that matter, between Pakistan and the IsMEO.[8] Although given for certain, the issuance of the excavation licence (and annexed Rules) was postponed several times for formal details. Meanwhile, Tucci, Curiel, D. Faccenna and F. Benuzzi (then First Secretary in Italian Embassy in Karachi) went to Swat for a week in early December, 1955. Interestingly the licence was finally received by Tucci upon his return from Swat on 8 December: 'The Government of Pakistan is pleased to grant a [five-year] licence for archaeological excavation to the Istituto per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente [IsMEO], Roma (Italy).' The area chosen for the reconnaissance was from Barikot to Manglawar whereas the areas for the excavation were mainly Udegram and Manglawar (later dismissed in favour of Butkara I). Moreover, if authorised surveys were to be conducted at other sites.

So how was the issue dealt with? The key document is a demi-official letter, dated 13 March 1956 from the folder Misc. General (List-1), Serial No. 165, Bundle No. 18, now kept at the Directorate of Archives and Libraries in Peshawar. The file is entitled "Starting of a Museum in the Jehan Zeb College, Saidu Sharif, Swat State and connected correspondence therewith. File no. 3/75-Stas". Tahira Tanweer (2011) was the first to report on that document. The document contains the consolidated minutes of a meeting held in Malakand two days earlier. 'It seems that Tucci during his visit to Swat in 1955, had convinced the Wali to introduce AMPA 1904 [Ancient Monument Preservation Act] in Swat because after the visit of Tucci, in March 1956, Mr. Sher Afzal, the then Political Agent of the Malakand Agency (at that time including also Swat, Chitral and Dir States), in his letter to Mr. Raoul Curiel, Director (Advisor) of Archaeology in Pakistan, wrote that the Wali has no objection if the Act 1904 [AMPA] is made applicable to the Swat State. It was decided in the meeting held between P.A Malakand Agency and Wali on 11-3-1956. With the introduction of this Act in Swat State the archaeological activities found more strength and freedom. In this sense, when the Italian Mission to Swat started, their activities were carried out on firm legal footing' (Tanweer 2011: 43).[9] This decision not only set the stage for the start of legal excavations in Swat (and the export of archaeological artefacts from Swat and Pakistan as provided for in the excavation licence granted to Tucci), but also for the foundation of the future Swat Museum.[10] In my opinion, we must give credit for this, first to the Wali—who decided to limit his power with respect to this jurisdiction—certainly also to Tucci—who needed it—but above all to Curiel. Not only was Curiel the recipient of the letter, not only does the date of this letter precede Tucci's return to Swat (August 1956), but

[8] As clearly stated in the excavation licences, article 12 stipulates that the objects exported as a result of this partition would remain, as they are still today, the property of the Pakistani Government, and housed in Italian State Museums under the terms of a *sine die* loan.

[9] At the meeting was present the chief secretary of the Swat State Ataullah Khan as representative of the Wali. The meeting is reported in Tanweer (2011: 42, fn. 3), 'Endorsement addressed to the Chief Secretary Swat State, Saidu Sharif'.

[10] There are some additional notes to add here to make the document dated 13 March 1956: antiquities in the possession of the Wali with the exceptions of those in *malkhana* would have been moved to the future Swat Museum ('Wali Saheb [WS] Collection') *chowkidar*s or watchmen were appointed at the two sites which were mentioned in the first request of License made by Tucci. The antiquities in the political agent's office/residence were later transported to the Swat Museum, where they are registered as the 'Malakand [M] Collection').

above all it refers to a previous letter from Curiel dated 20 January 1956. We know that Tucci left Swat on 2 December 1955 with Curiel and the last time the two spoke to each other was in Karachi on 8 December, which is the day Tucci received his licence (Olivieri 2025a: Figure 7). This simple administrative fact has important legal implications. Once the licence had been issued there, Curiel wrote to Malakand on 20 January of the new year. My reconstruction, therefore, is as follows: in Swat Curiel, Tucci (with Faccenna and Benuzzi), met the Wali of Swat Maj. Gen. Miangul Jahanzeb, and the Chief Secretary of the Swat state (Ataullah Khan): a photograph bears witness to this (see Olivieri 2006: Fiure. 1). Probably, if not certainly, on that occasion Tucci's future plans and especially the legal question were discussed. Simultaneously, Curiel must have received sufficient reassurance from the Wali that the issue would be resolved. In fact, once they returned to Karachi, Curiel finally issued the longed-for licence to Tucci. At the beginning of the new year (1956) the matter was finally formalized at Malakand.

The law must have come into force for the export of split pieces with Italy in 1957-1958 and was repealed in 1975, when AMPA was abolished and the new Antiquities Act of 1975 (which no longer included the 'partition' system) was enacted.

The issue of the legal legitimacy of the excavations, which had stalled British archaeological efforts in Swat, was thus tactically resolved by Tucci and Curiel with the prudent consideration of the Wali. Everyone, thus, benefitted from it: the Italians started exporting sculptures from the excavations that were earmarked for loan to the then established Museo Nazionale d'Arte Orientale in Rome (now transferred to the Museo delle Civiltà, Rome); the Pakistani Department of Archaeology, which formally entered Swat even ten years before the Swat state was merged into Pakistan in 1969 and set up the Swat Museum in Saidu Sharif; and the state of Swat itself. The rulers of Swat not only made a good impression on an ultimately not very thorny issue but also turned their territory, known for its natural beauty, to become more attractive vis-à-vis heritage tourism. Moreover, Tucci's name, as stated above, is also historically associated with a part of the Gilgit manuscripts which he acquired in Pakistan in 1956. Since then, some misunderstandings have evolved about the acquisition and subsequent treatment meted out to these documents. It is argued here that Tucci acquired the manuscripts from its possessor and, in pursuance to Pakistan's antiquities legislation, made them available to scholarly investigation first by his colleagues from Italy and, subsequently, by scholars from across the world. This chapter, for the first time, provides new archival evidence on the issue so much so that a reappraisal of the story has been formed.

A New Archival Source and the Gilgit Manuscripts

In January 2022, a search among the late Domenico Faccenna's, the first Director of IsMEO's Italian Archaeological Mission from 1955 to 1996, papers unearthed a binder of documents marked "Swat 1955-1956. Spedizione arch[eologica] valle dello Swat Pakistan. Arch[ivio] Gen[erale] Pratiche Varie. Sp./6" (henceforth Folder Swat). It contains photostatic or carbon copies of the originals, including documents dealing with the Gilgit manuscripts, which are housed in the archives of IsIAO, the body that continued from 1996 to 2011 the work and purposes of Giuseppe Tucci's IsMEO. Today the original archive is part of the IsIAO archives.[11]

The Folder Swat covers a period from 19 April 1955 to the end of 1956 which includes documents from Italy, Pakistan and the state of Swat, all concerning the events that led to the establishment of the Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan.[12] It consists of several subfolders dealing with various

[11] The originals are now in possession of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, where the IsIAO Archive is presently kept.
[12] On the basis of the Folder Swat, autumn 1955 marks to be the beginning archaeological season of the Mission.

different matters. One relates to the granting of the Mission House, at Saidu Sharif, by the Swat state, the base of the Italian archaeological activities up to the present time. Another one, named 'Archaeological expedition 1955', with other two on 'Excavations in Swat 1955' and 'Excavations in Swat 1956', holds all documents related to logistics, legal issues, the excavation license, etc. The Folder Swat closes with a thick subfolder with the press review updated to the end of 1956.

Twenty-nine documents out of the entire Folder are of concern to us here. They comprise letters exchanged through diplomatic courier, from April to September 1956, between the secretary of the commercial attaché of the Italian Embassy in Pakistan, Edmondo Anderlini, and the President of IsMEO, Giuseppe Tucci. Anderlini, whom Tucci already knew, was also the IsMEO correspondent at the Embassy, which Ambassador Alberto Calisse headed at that time. Anderlini was deeply devoted to Tucci, whom he sometimes addressed in the correspondence as his 'Master', and 'Guru'.[13] Almost all correspondence, except two letters (documents 30 and 19), was in Italian; the passages quoted in this chapter have been translated into English by the author.

The 29 letters relate to the sensitive issue of manuscripts found in Gilgit. The manuscripts were in the possession of a senior Pakistani army officer. The numbering of the letters (document no.) follows the order in which they were stored in the binder.

The story begins with a letter from Tucci, dated 17 April, a copy of which is not preserved in the binder (protocol IsMEO 2371). He asked Anderlini for the address of the major in possession of manuscripts from Gilgit. It can easily be guessed that Tucci had got wind of these manuscripts the year before when he went to Swat for a preliminary reconnaissance. But it is more probable, as we will see, that news about them was already circulating in Europe and India.

Anderlini immediately started to find out the officer's name and address. He was able to locate him. After some initial correspondence, both met at the latter's home in Rawalpindi. On 30 April (document 26) Anderlini wrote that the officer, whose name was Agha Muhammad Ali Shah, had been promoted to Lieutenant Colonel and transferred to Rawalpindi. This is followed by a second, and more detailed, letter, dated 12 May, from Anderlini (document 30), appended by a copy of a letter on Embassy letterhead he had sent to the Colonel on 4 May (document 29): 'I have not had the pleasure of personally meeting you but I have heard you spoken of as a person well acquainted with Pakistan's archaeological zones and an admirer and connoisseur of antiquities.'

In his reply, dated 11 June (document 12), Tucci explained his plan of action. He clearly expressed his intention that the manuscripts should not leave Pakistan and that they should be photographed. He was thinking of its possible purchase and subsequent donation to the Pakistani government. The possibility of the travel of the manuscripts' possessor to Italy, in order to produce good photographs of them, was aired: 'What must definitely be achieved is that the photographs of the manuscripts come into our possession and that these fragments be published from Italy, by Italian scholars, in the Serie Orientale Roma.'

The matter continued to be discussed. Anderlini sent a handwritten letter, dated 18 June, which arrived at IsMEO on 21 June. He ruled out the possibility of the owner's trip to Italy, due to its formal irregularity. On the other hand, it was proposed that an Italo-Pakistani study centre, supported by IsMEO, be created. While not exactly a section of IsMEO in Pakistan, the proposed centre could be

[13] After 1942 Edmondo Anderlini was taken as prisoner of war to northern India. Along with his companion Luigi Gia, he managed to escape to the then Portuguese possession of Daman (see his memoirs in Anderlini, Gia 1978). In 1947, he was repatriated and joined the Italian Foreign Office. In 1955, he was at the Italian Embassy in Pakistan in administrative position, but he managed to achieve promotion and finally became Consul General at Bombay (Mumbai) until 1976, when he retired.

given legal status in the country and the manuscripts could perhaps be purchased by it. Tucci could hardly concede to this suggestion. He reiterated what he had already exchanged with Anderlini: first and foremost, the manuscripts should remain in Pakistan, an intention which, as expressed in a demi-official letter, must be considered entirely genuine. So far as the proposal of the establishment of a centre (which Tucci called the 'Italian-Pakistani House') was concerned, it seemed to him as of imminent but not immediate concern.[14]

The correspondence continued to evolve. Anderlini (document 6 which arrived IsMEO on 3 July 1956), agreed with Tucci and suggested the direct purchase of the manuscripts in Pakistani rupees with immediate gift of the same to the government of Pakistan, acquiring in return permission for IsMEO to be able to publish them in Italy. Anderlini appended the most relevant legislative background to his letter (summarized below):

1. Export Control Act XXXI of 1947 prohibits the export of artefacts and manuscripts save with the government's permission.
2. Ancient Monument Preservation Act VIII of 1904 prohibits the sale of artefacts and manuscripts if it would cause harm to Pakistan but which, in fact, subject to this caveat, does not hinder their sale.[15]

Anderlini again dealt the matter on 13 July (the letter is mentioned in document 2) when negotiations for manuscripts were postponed until Tucci's arrival. On 19 July, Anderlini wrote a long hand-written note to Tucci from Saidu Sharif on Swat Hotel paper (document 19). He presented a list of the manuscripts by reporting what the colonel himself had written to him:

1. Manuscripts written in old Prakrat [*sic*] which script is undecipherable and are written on birch bark leaves
2. Serial no. 1 dates back to 300 BC
3. Serial no. 2 dates back BC [*sic*]
4. Serial no. 3 dates back 100 AD (on coarse paper)
5. No. 2, which is 20 inches x 5 inches, is the book "Vinayavastu" this was revealed by the late sir Auriel Stien [*sic*] the budhist [*sic*] scholar of international fame who was the curator of the british Museum [*sic*].[16]

[14] This idea of Tucci's was never realised, but it never died out. For a few years, until its closure in 1964, Tucci transferred this idea of a 'Casa' to the Istituto Italiano di Cultura in Karachi (whose direction at a certain point was proposed to Giorgio Manganelli) (Salvatore Nigro recalls this in his afterword to Manganelli 2013). The idea of the 'Casa' was later taken up in the project to create an Italian-Pakistani study centre into which the Italian Archaeological Mission should be transformed in the near future (first as part of the 'ACT Field School' project [2011–16] financed by the Pakistani Italian Debt Swap Agreement (PIDSA) programme; now in the new 'Heritage Field School' proposed by the KP government to the Italian government's soft loan programme; the project process is currently underway).

[15] Details on these two legal instruments can be found in Olivieri (2015a: 178–82; see also Olivieri 2025a, 2025b).

[16] We know that Tucci purchased all three manuscripts (I thank here Francesco Sferra for confirming this in a personal communication on 3 September 2022). Following the list provided in Hinüber 2014, manuscript serial no. 3 corresponds to nos. 24, 25, 28: *Prajñāpāramitā*: 'Folios 218–263 were in the possession of Agah Mohammad Ali Shah and handed over to Giuseppe Tucci. They have been edited by E. Conze (1962) [and 1974] together with some unspecified fragments' (Hinüber 2014, 102); no. 2 was 'the second extensive part of the Vinayavastvägama manuscript is from Gilgit. It comprises 182 leaves from the last three vastus, the Śayanāsana-, Adhikaraṇa- and Saṅghabhedavastu (leaves 323–97 and 406–512) as well as a leaf fragment from the Bhaisajyavastu [*Bhaiṣajyavastu*] (sheet 228). This part has been edited by R. Gnoli [Id. 1977-1978, Id. 1978]' (Wille 1990: 25, transl. Olivieri; titles are not in italics in this text). The third manuscript was of the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra*: 'Twenty additional folios of this manuscript were edited later also by H. Toda: Gilgit Manuscripts (Tucci's Collection) Group C, in: Tokushima Daigaku Kyōyōbu Rinrigakka kiyō 15. 1988. This transcript is based on photos preserved in Rome and published by Raniero Gnoli [1987: 533, pls I–XX]' (Hinüber 2012: 53) This corresponds to manuscript serial no. 1 (seven folios of the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra* were sent by Stein to the British Museum).

To these were added some clay seals contained in a cigarette tin. The manuscripts were said to be not in good condition. Anderlini referred to the possibility of fragments having been included from other manuscripts as well. Manuscript 1 was in very poor condition. Manuscript 2 contained 250 folios. The value of the manuscripts was estimated by the colonel at 30,000 Pakistani Rupees, which then matched up to the value of a house in Rawalpindi. In the past, as the colonel claimed, an offer of 1000 pounds sterling had been made by an agent of the British Museum.[17] He also said that even intermediaries from the Indian government, if only by correspondence, had also been in touch with him. The colonel, who boasted Azerbaijani family ancestry and claimed to be pro-British, expressed that he would never ever want to sell his treasures either to India or a Communist country.[18]

This letter is followed by Anderlini's long type-written letter which he wrote upon his return from Swat (document 17 which arrived at IsMEO on 17 July 1956). Various issues were succinctly discussed in it. These included: the issue of accommodation, in which the Mission House building later chosen as the headquarters, and still used by the Mission at 31-32 College Colony in Saidu Sharif, is identified; the temporary rental of two rooms at the Swat Hotel (now the Swat Serena Hotel) for archaeologists in preparation for the imminent first excavation campaign (scheduled to begin on 18 August); the issue of banking, clothing, medicines, workers and their insurance, even the availability of coffee at the bazaar in Mingora. Most importantly, with this letter Anderlini also sent a set of photographic negatives and prints of details of the manuscripts.[19] Our documents stop here. As planned, on 18 August, Tucci with F.A. Khan, the first director general of Pakistan Archaeology, arrived in Swat. Along with them and the other Pakistani representatives (see Nadiem 2020: 37–106), the Italian team arrived: archaeologists D. Faccenna and G. Gullini, photographer F. Bonardi (then Bonardi Tucci), and assistant G. Graziani (Fig. 11). Having the initial survey been done by Tucci, Faccenna and Bonardi in 1955,[20] the first official excavation campaign finally started: Faccenna at Butkara I, and Gullini at Udegram—but this is history now.

From Princely Kashmir to Postcolonial Pakistan

The story of the discovery and acquisition of the Gilgit manuscripts is elusive owing to many reasons. Issues such as legal ownership of the documents make it rather more complicated. A major part of the collection first surfaced in 1931 from Naupur, Gilgit Agency. The area was part of the British Indian empire but was largely possessed by the Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir. And this makes a princely context of the manuscripts' collection. This very fact certainly placed them beyond Indian legal and political jurisdiction. On the other hand, the part of the manuscripts which Tucci purchased in 1956 comes from Rawalpindi in Pakistan. And it simply adds a different legal and political dimension to the story of the literature. In order to better appreciate Tucci's part of this

[17] It is estimated that today the amount should correspond, without considering purchasing power, to about **£**23,000.

[18] Wille investigated the possible presence of fragments of the colonel's collection (aka the 'Sammlung Shah') in Pune at the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute in the past. Wille writes: 'Among some leaf fragments that belonged to the Shah collection and were sent as specimens to the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute (O. von Hinüber 1979, p. 334–35) are two leaf fragments of the Vinayavastu-āgama that were found by P.V. Bapat (1949) were edited. These are fragments from sheets 228 and 512, which supplement the fragments in the Shah collection' (Wille 1990: 25, trasl. Olivieri). It is possible that the colonel had sent a few samples just to assess interest and value. In document 19 Anderlini writes: 'L'idea del grande valore gli è venuta [al Colonnello] perché molti indiani gli hanno scritto perché donasse i manoscritti al Governo Indiano e lo hanno colmato di lodi e di gentilezze' ('The idea of great value came to him [the colonel] because many Indians wrote to him to donate the manuscripts to the Indian Government and showered him with praise and kindnesses'; transl. Olivieri). The next sentence where Anderlini says that the colonel absolutely did not want the manuscripts to go to India, seems an *excusatio non petita* on the part of the colonel.

[19] As 'allegato 2' and 'allegato 3'. It is possible that these photographs correspond to the set of 15 6 x 6 cm photographs taken in Rawalpindi, cited as 3.3 in the 'Annotated List' (Sferra 2008; see also p. 25).

[20] In 1955 Tucci and the team were introduced to the authorities of the then state of Swat by Felice Benuzzi, the Italian diplomat, and Raoul Curiel, the advisor in-charge of Pakistan archaeology (see Olivieri 2006: 26, fns 7, 9, fig. 1).

historical saga, we would need to contextualize it against the princely archaeology of Jammu and Kashmir. However, an important historical correction, as follows, should be made in the first place.

Sometimes the history of the discovery and acquisition of these manuscripts has been unintentionally recalled in a hazy manner. That Tucci had purchased the manuscript "from a street vendor", an account which can still be read on the Internet, and which is not substantiated by original and reliable sources, including Tucci's own testimony, is therefore in needs of reappraisal.[21]

Figure 11: 1956: At the Mission House (front verandah), from left: G. Gullini, R. Graziani, D. Faccenna, G. Tucci, H.A. Miangul Aurangzeb aka Wali'ahad, F.A. Khan (D.G. Archaeology), F. Bonardi, Courtesy: Miangul Archives

It is no more unknown that the manuscripts were purchased from a military man (see above) who must have been in Gilgit in the turbulent months leading up to Partition in 1947. This part of the story was already known to Karl Jettmar. Jettmar, who had a deep and first-hand understanding of Gilgit affairs, wrote in his article (1990: 307), published in Pakistan Archaeology, the official journal of the Department of Archaeology:

> Digging down in a hurry under the suspicious eyes of the British Political Agent, Shastri found manuscripts and other objects as reported in his article (1939). He brought them to Srinagar. Manuscripts which had already been discovered before [in 1931] *remained in the house of the Wazir-i-Wazarat posted at Gilgit and were finally taken to Bunji. By chance they escaped destroyment during the fighting there in 1947. Some attentive man realized that they were worth a fortune and took them with him, when the files*

[21] Many of us have heard the 'street vendor' version directly from Raniero, Gherardo Gnoli, and Maurizio Taddei. (Francesco Sferra and Adriano V. Rossi, pers. comm.). The story is still mentioned in an interview published in the magazine of the Italian newspaper *La Repubblica* (Antonio Gnoli, 'Interview with Raniero Gnoli', *La Repubblica -Robinson* 22 July 2018: 64–65).

> *and records were burnt after the conquest by the Gilgit Scouts. Finally they were acquired by Tucci who handed them over to the Government of Pakistan after publication*. (Italic mine)[22]

The words 'after publication' in Jettmar's sentence need to be corrected. As discussed below, the manuscripts were returned to the Pakistani authorities before their publication (which started with Conze 1962).[23] Jettmar's words spread notwithstanding the fact of the matter being different. Some attentive scholars, starting with the work of Oskar von Hinüber (and Wille 1990), reiterated them. Recently Noriyuki Kudo gave more detail on the chain of events following Tucci's acquisition of the manuscripts. Kudo, on the basis of the catalogue published by Francesco Sferra in 2008 as well as his own pre-2014 investigations at the Karachi National Museum, wrote these lines in 2019:

> Some of the manuscripts were in the possession of Agah Mohammad Ali Shah, Captain, Northern Command, Pakistan Signals, Rawalpindi. Giuseppe Tucci successfully brought back a majority of them to Italy (1956) and later returned them to the government of Pakistan (now deposited at the National Museum of Pakistan, Karachi). (Kudo 2019: 174)

As we shall see, this latter information is only partially correct. Francesco Sferra, who has been just referred to, wrote in 2004:

> Lastly, we are justified in saying, at least in one case, that Tucci's photos are more useful to scholars than the original manuscript. I am referring specifically to a photograph and a microfilm of a portion (about 200 folios) of a manuscript from Gilgit (Pakistan) written on birch bark leaves and containing uniquely preserved Buddhist texts. Tucci acquired this manuscript in Rawalpindi in 1956, gave it to the Pakistani Government, brought it to Italy for restoration by the Istituto Centrale per la Patologia del Libro (Italian Office for the restoration of Books) and for publication, and then returned it to the Museum of Karachi. The latter manuscript was laminated, a technique that subsequently proved inadequate. (Sferra 2008: 29)

Leaving aside the 'street vendor' story, what needs to be understood is as to how and when Tucci came to know about the existence of these manuscripts. The report of Anderlini's interview with the colonel (document 19) tells us that Aurel Stein knew about the manuscripts: at least, he saw manuscript serial no. 2, which he identified.

The history of the events and excavations that led to the discovery of the manuscripts in Naupur, near Gilgit, in 1931 and 1938, has been the subject of much attention among scholars.[24] Nonetheless, the facts are still not entirely known.[25] We owe to Aurel Stein and Joseph Hackin the first (and first-

[22] Madhusudan Kaul Shastri was the Indian archaeologist who excavated there in 1938. S. Baums writes: 'In 1938, Madhusudan K[a]ul carried out a more formal excavation of the Naupur building and brought to light further manuscripts on birch bark and one on palm leaf (now kept at the Central Asian Museum of the University of Srinagar)' (Baums 2017: 495).

[23] C. Ishida writes (2016: 486): 'In a separate development, Giuseppe Tucci (1894–1984) located in 1956 a group of SP [*Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra*] manuscripts in the northern part of Pakistan. The background of these manuscripts has not been fully determined—they may represent an entirely new discovery, or, since it has been established that they belong to text C, they may have been part of the original 1931 find that was examined by Stein and later lost track of. After their discovery (or perhaps rediscovery), Tucci identified them, and they were published by Raniero Gnoli in 1987, and in a romanized edition by Toda in 1988.' See also Baums (2017).

[24] In addition to the works mentioned in this paper, G. Fussman and G. Schopen (references in Kudo 2019). The most detailed research on the various parts of the Gilgit library scattered in various collections in Europe and Asia was initiated by Oskar von Hinüber (1979), with updates. A general analysis can be found in Wille 1990, more recently in von Hinüber 2012 and 2014.

[25] This seems to be a common fate of Buddhist manuscripts from Pakistan and Afghanistan: that of always being shrouded in a cloud of uncertainty regarding their discoveries, locations and vicissitudes. Think also of the various collections that have appeared in recent times. These have sometimes been the subject of controversy, most of which has quickly died down. Much more frequently, however, everything that is passed on about these collections (the shared *tradition*) is accepted as factually true, including their supposed provenance.

hand) information on the accidental first discovery of the Gilgit manuscripts.[26] In May 1931 Aurel Stein, on his way back from his unsuccessful Fourth Central Asian Expedition, stopped in Gilgit, before reaching his *buen retiro* in Srinagar. It was then that he saw the manuscripts and acquired some folios that were later obtained by the British Museum.[27] S. Baums (2017: 495) added:

> Soon after the [1931] discovery, Aurel Stein (returning from his last Central Asian expedition) and Joseph Hackin (as part of the Mission Citroën [= Haardt-Citröen Expedition (La Croisière Jaune)]) passed through Gilgit and acquired some manuscript leaves that the villagers had retained (now kept in the British Library in London and in Paris – note Lévi 1932: 16).

This is obviously intriguing not only in terms of itinerary of antiquities but also with reference to jurisdictional sovereignty in colonial South Asia. Stein's deed can be better used as a reference point here. We should leave aside J. Hackin's role for the reason being that he was neither a British citizen nor a former official of the Archaeological Survey of India. He was also not as an outspoken champion of India's archaeological heritage as Stein was. Considering, therefore, Stein's former role, fame and position, two more questions arise. On what legal basis could Stein export such protected material? Why did Stein not simply hand over those manuscripts to the Archaeological Survey of India, then headed by John H. Marshall?

These questions direct our attention to the princely aspect of the Gilgit manuscripts. The area of the Gilgit Agency belonged to the Dogra rulers of Jammu and Kashmir but had been leased out to the British for 60 years in 1935. No doubt, it happened in view of border issues with China and Soviet activities in Central Asia. However, the relations between British political agent and Dogra rulers had also been strained. A diarchy system had already been introduced. It was a 'dual administration in which matters of defence, foreign relations and communications were the concern of the British, but the Maharaja still had responsibility for civil government which he exercised through a Governor, the Wazir-i-Wazarat, who also acted as the Maharaja's representative in matters arising from the tributary relationship between the Dogra Dynasty and states like Hunza and Nagar' (Lamb 1992/2017: 60). Ever since the lease, the state of affairs between Indian government and Kashmir durbar was marred by mistrust and intrigues.[28] The Gilgit area still largely remained part of the Dogra state and the Maharaja 'continued to receive certain public honours there; and he retained all mineral rights' (Lamb 1992/2017: 63).

Now, coming to our second question first, we should reiterate that the area of discovery did not, legally speaking, make part of British India. In fact, the manuscripts were later put under the control of the state of Jammu and Kashmir.[29] 'The manuscripts discovered in 1931 were placed under the control of the state government on the orders of Raja Hari Singh of Kashmir in 1933' (Kudo 2019: 170).[30] Hence, it can be argued that Stein probably did not consider himself under legal obligation to hand over the documents he had purchased to the Survey.

[26] Stein reported on 24 July 1931 in *The Times*.

[27] Whether or not an economic transaction was involved is unknown, though to my mind it seems likely. 'Eleven folios [of] a magnificent and well-preserved birch-bark manuscript, written in Gupta majuscules of the sixth or seventh century [. . .] Presented by the Executors of the late Sir Aurel Stein, K.C.I.E., and published by Sylvain Lévi in *Journal Asiatique*, tome 220 (1932), pp. 22–44, 66 by 12 cm. [Or. 11,878. A.]' (Barnett 1951: 68–69). 'The British Library: Or. 11878A–G. Eleven folios of the Mūlasarvāstivādavinaya (Pravrajyāvastu), folio nos. 43–53 (= A) and seven folios of the Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra. These folios were acquired by Stein and sent to the British Museum' (Kudo 2019: 173). (Titles are not in italics in the text).

[28] This also explains Jettmar's words, as occur in the long quote above, that Shastri was '[d]igging down in a hurry under the suspicious eyes of the British Political Agent [. . .].'

[29] Gilgit was a territory ruled by the Raja of Kashmir, put *pro tempore* under the vigilance of a British Political Agent, but legally not under direct British colonial jurisdiction ('Leased Area' in Wreford 1943: 2).

[30] That is after Stein bought the folios.

However, the problem posed by the first question (the acquisition and export issue) remains unresolved. We have already pointed out the suzerain relationship between Indian government and Kashmir which was characterized by a system of mutual political and administrative obligations. Nevertheless, one crucial fact which should be noted is the Maharaja's uncompromising attitude concerning the historical and literary heritage of his realm. Mridu Rai has illustrated all this in a comprehensive way. The Dogras used to capitalize upon Kashmir's pre-Islamic monuments and remains. They were viewed as an ideological lexicon for dynastic politics. The Maharaja even took exception of the Indian Archaeological Survey's intervention in the state's heritage affairs. In order to go their own way, many laws were promulgated for the management of princely literary and archaeological heritage (Rai 2009). An elaborate legal and institutional dispensation had particularly been in force since 1920: 'The Jammu and Kashmir Ancient Monuments Preservation Act, 1920'. Here, Section 17, Clause 1 reads as follows: 'If His Highness [the Raja] apprehends that antiquities are being sold or removed to the detriment of the State or of any neighbouring country, it may, by notification in the Government Gazette, prohibit or restrict the bringing or taking of any antiquities or class of antiquities described in the notification into or out of the State or any specified part of the State.'[31] In view of all this, it becomes all too important to find out whether Stein obtained princely permission first to acquire and then to export the documents. It is more likely that he did not. And this is evident from other circumstantial evidence and historical instances in the 1930s. The durbar remained vigilant to Helmut de Terra when he was busy in his work in Kashmir in 1932 and 1935. He was not allowed to remove anything in whatever situation (Shaheen 2024). Similarly, it did not allow Stein to republish *Rajatarangini* which he had first published in 1900 (pers. comm. with Rafiullah Khan). This mechanism of ownership and sense of history also shaped the trajectory of the discovery and study of the Gilgit manuscripts in the 1930s. It is, therefore, to be argued that Stein did not obtain and export pieces of the manuscripts following any understanding with the Kashmir authorities. He certainly contributed to the 'nefarious trafficking' of Kashmir's antiquities, something he seriously wanted to be curbed in the case of Swat (Olivieri 2015a: Document 28).

The history of the Gilgit manuscripts takes an interesting turn with the partition of the subcontinent in 1947. The Kashmiri authorities had transferred the 1931-manuscripts to Srinagar in 1933, although 'a substantial part of them seems to have been dispersed during this period [1931–33]' (Kudo 2019: 170),[32] while the 1938 manuscripts were transferred there later (Baums 2017: 495). Not all the manuscripts were transferred: some were dispersed or taken abroad, others remained in Gilgit. Theoretically, the manuscripts acquired by Tucci and later deposited at the National Museum in Karachi could be part of both lots, i.e. the 1931 lot and the later one. The fact, however, that these, according to Jettmar (1990: 307), were put under the control of the state, first stored at the Wazir-i-Wazarat in Gilgit, and later in a state depository in Bunji (an administrative centre along the Indus between Gilgit and Chilas), would suggest that they were found after 1931–33. This is only speculation. Others, hopefully, will be able to shed light on this in the future. In any case, it was from Bunji that our colonel took 'his' manuscripts before the Maharaja's buildings at Bunji were set on fire during the turmoil that occurred at the time of the partition.[33]

But the question is that when did Tucci first come to know about the manuscripts? We cannot exclude the possibility that he might have been aware of the existence of this group of manuscripts since his trip to Ladakh in 1931, owing to the inevitable fanfare surrounding the Citroën Expedition,

[31] See also Section 18 (1), (4). Sanctioned by H.H. the Maharaja Sahib Bahadur on 11 September 1920, Chief Minster endorsement no. 8732; notified on 8 April 1925, no. 14.L/81, integrated later in the Jammu & Kashmir State with the same title as Act V, 1977.

[32] Including the folios at the British Museum?

[33] Bunji was the scene of a key event in the First Kashmir War. In November 1947, the Gilgit Scouts took possession of the site which, as I understand it, was part of the *wazarat* of Astore, a portion of Gilgit-Baltistan (previously called the Northern Areas), that was directly administered by the state of Kashmir.

or from local rumours. Tucci passed by Srinagar in early July when Stein also happened to be there,[34] but the two never met each other before 1935. Stein visited Rome in 1935. He wrote to Helen Allen from the Hotel Elysée: 'Then yesterday [27th February 1935] I enjoyed a delightful lunch at Prof. and Mrs Tucci's charming flat [. . .]. They had been in Kashmir for some months and knew all about my ways.' From these lines we understand that Tucci and Stein had never met before.[35] The other question is when Tucci got information that the manuscripts were in the colonel's possession. The obvious answer is that this should have happened in 1955. He, therefore, made enquiries on the whereabouts of the documents, known to him ever since 1931, with his new Pakistani and Italian friends in Karachi (including the architect and art collector Emanuele Lizioli). The other possibility could be that rumours of British and Indian attempts to contact the owner had reached Tucci through the network of his colleagues and friends prior to his first visit to Pakistan in 1954 (see Olivieri 2025a, 2025b). Whatever the answer to this question might be, it is certain that Edmondo Anderlini emerges as the main protagonist in the rest of the story. It was, no doubt, his sagacity which proved decisive in relation to Tucci's successful negotiation with his Pakistani colleagues in 1956.

The End of the Story and What It Teaches Us

What is certain is that Tucci later travelled to Pakistan in August 1956. Evidently, he concluded successful negotiations, acquired the group of manuscripts and donated it to Pakistan's Department of Archaeology who deposited it at the Karachi Museum.[36]

The handwritten accessions register of the Karachi National Museum helps us to understand the final sequence of events. It says that the three manuscripts entered the Museum on '29.XI.56 no. NM395 Dr. E. Anderlini for the President of ISMEO c/o Embassy of Italy in Pakistan Karachi (he purchased [them] from Agha Mohammed Ali Shah, Rawalpindi).' The record includes a note that says, 'Rs 10,000. With Dr. Tucci vide <Sl.> No. 102 <. . .> 24/3/59 & Movement Register duly signed by Mr. Fazal <Qader> Mr. S.A. <Napri>.'[37] This evidence leads us to conclude that the manuscripts were delivered to the museum by Anderlini on behalf of Tucci on November 29, 1956. They were then loaned to Tucci for study and publication. March 24, 1959 as is found in record of the Karachi Museum, with reference to him, might be viewed either the date of the loan or its return. The indication of 10,000 rupees could refer to a security deposit.

The publication schedule planned by Tucci was maintained: Conze (1962), (1974); Gnoli (1977–1978, 1978, 1987); all but the last published in the *Serie Orientale Roma*. The list of publications was enriched with other texts attributed to Gilgit (Chakravarti 1956; Conze 1957). Thus, until the early 1980s the *Serie Orientale Roma*, after Dutt's edition of the Gilgit Manuscripts (1939–1959), remained the second most important point of reference for editions of the Gilgit manuscripts as a whole.

The important thing that should be noted here is Tucci's foresight in establishing the foundations of the Italian Archaeological Mission's activities in Pakistan, first and foremost with the diplomatic and legislative solution that extended Pakistan's archaeological laws to the Swat state. This was certainly a solution that resolved a conundrum that had plagued early British archaeological research.[38] The

[34] Combining the information contained in Wang, Perkins 2008: 49; Klimburg-Salter 1994: 14; Nalesini 2011: 25.
[35] I have not found any written correspondence between the two. The letter is from Stein's papers at the Bodleian Library, University of Oxford: MS Stein 26/ff. 69–70, noted by Susan Whitfield.
[36] Tucci writes 'in 1957' in the Introduction to his *Il Trono di Diamante*.
[37] I thank Muezzudin Hakal here for bringing this information to my attention. Angle brackets indicate uncertain transcriptions.
[38] For legal complexities in the early 20th century colonial archaeological work in Swat and its adjacent areas, see (Khan 2024: 182–85).

second issue was the prudent management of the acquisition of the manuscripts. Tucci purchased them in accordance with current legislation and, in pursuance to a mutual agreement, gifted them to the Pakistani authorities subject to the condition of IsMEO's rights to publish them first. Today, seventy years later, when the issue of important and recent manuscript collections stored outside Pakistan is vehemently being discussed, we cannot but look at the example set forth by Tucci with admiration.[39]

It is also pertinent to refer to a third issue, which is somehow connected to the previous two. The export of archaeological material to the Rome National Museum of Oriental Art, characterised by loans of sculptures and other materials, continued until 1976, the year when it was unilaterally stopped by the Italians. This fact is also interesting: Tucci was certainly aware that the then forthcoming legislative instrument, the Antiquity Act of 1975, no longer provided for the 'partition' of finds permitted in the previous piece of legislation (Ancient Monument Preservation Act, 1904 as adapted in Pakistan). He, therefore, took the very wise decision to anticipate the times, unilaterally renouncing the partition of finds as early as 1975 a year before the new law (discussed in the National Assembly in 1976) came into force (Olivieri 2025a: 173ff.). The decision certainly contributed to the continuity of Italian archaeological work in Swat, and 2025 marks 70th anniversary of its uninterrupted archaeological activities.

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[39] Perhaps it is beyond the scope of this article, but I believe there are two aspects of Tucci's actions in the 1950s that in retrospection, at least for some, would not be considered ideal. First, it can be argued that by giving money to the illegitimate holder of the manuscripts, Tucci would have indirectly endorsed his 'ownership' and his very act of pillage. Second, there is the idea that one might rather have thought of having the authorities move directly. As for the first point, let us remember the historical context in which these things occurred. Indeed one might also think that as compared to Tucci's time, things have not changed for better in this respect. As for the second point, if one reads between the lines of the documents presented here, it is in fact clear that the entire purchase procedure was certainly coordinated with the Department of Archaeology.

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Part III

What Next?

Chapter Thirteen:
The Loss of Innocence
Princely Archaeologies vis-à-vis South Asian Historiography

Rafiullah Khan

The mention of princely states evokes our imagination to work out numerous themes for historical investigation. So far much has been done in this regard resulting, finally, in the recent trends concerning regional, interactive and connected historical developments. The present volume has figured out as to what constitute princely archaeologies and how they have been studied till date. In this chapter, the matter has been taken ahead in the context of broader historiographical considerations.

South Asian historiography is a terrain marked by a diversity of sorts. It includes the presence of various regions, climates, political and administrative units, groups of people and so on. All this assumes an interesting character when it comes to deal with the last two centuries or so. A singular development in this respect, especially in the context of the present study, is the emergence of modern European colonialism. The East India Company gradually accumulated the power and capacity to temper with the local socio-political disequilibrium, or equipoise for that matter. Its exquisite illustration is to be seen in the existence and maintenance of more than five hundred Indian states under the British protection. They are said to have formed two-ninth of the population inhabiting two-fifth of the area of the Indian subcontinent. Notwithstanding the nuanced systemic complexities and dialectics involved, South Asian historical scholarship, until recent times, could hardly go beyond the British and princely divide in which the former served as the primary, direct or indirect, agent of change and reforms. The defects of this restricted approach have now been rightly realized. Relational entailments and mutual sways operated not only between British India and Indian states but among durbars as well, although in the latter case it is rather an understudied matter. The present volume may be considered as a preliminary response of its kind from the field of princely archaeologies.

In this chapter, some issues, which surface from the previous two parts, have been further pursued. Observations have been made in such a way as to work out historiographical configurations in relation to princely archaeologies. And by doing this, the purpose is to raise, and, if possible, address, some vital questions. In this pursuit, we would like to investigate selective instances from the histories of heritage and archaeologies in princely states.

Why did local durbars take interest in archaeological work and what did they do in the field? Here both internal factors, such as political expediencies of claiming antiquity, and external determinants, consisting of the British self-taken responsibility to archaeological remains and the related colonial constructs, would be pondered upon. How were negotiations between colonial authorities and durbars worked out and realized? This question relates to a legal-institutional dispensation which British India had in the form of the Archaeological Survey of India (hereafter ASI) and elaborate antiquities legislation while regarding princely realms we have yet to broach the subject. Only passing references in published works regarding states' archaeologies, except for some details concerning Swat and Kashmir, are available on this. It is to be reiterated that these issues need to be seen with the new historiographical awareness and insights in mind.

Princely States and Historiography in Context

Scholars have tried to devise a classification of the 500 or so princely states (Ramusack 2004: 12–40; Bangash 2015/2017: 28ff.) and to determine the course of their histories in relation to whatever policies had the Indian government adopted towards them (Ashton 1982). Still recent studies, including Ramusack, have moved away from an elitist approach, focusing only on the unequal relationship between the British and local royalties, to one in which various local/regional and dominant/ordinary actors have been viewed in relational processes (see for example Ernst and Pati 2007).

From political point of view, in the latter 18th century the British had not yet reached the pinnacle of power which they became destined to with their 1818 victory over the Marathas. And it is here that the commencement of their paramountcy be established. Treaties were effected with many states, especially in Rajputana and central and western India. Since then many states were either extinguished or subjected to deposition or enthronement. This policy continued until the 1857 uprisings brought home the fact of princely states being a sort of bulwark for British power in India. This was a defining moment in the British princely policy which turned the royalties to be treated as friendly and protected allies. The story is still not so much simple as instances of conflict are available to contradict this understanding. And this is what may be called a gap between theory and practice. An interesting argument is also made that princely power immensely diminished over the course of five decades since 1858. This loss resulted from the British-determined process of good governance, westernization, modernization and civilization (Keen 2013/2017).

All this should be also related to princely variation in terms of area, population, resources, history and so on. Particularly noteworthy in this regard are small and big states, something which determined their relative power and importance and hence the treatment the British meted out to them. A negligible number of them, such as Travancore and Hyderabad, could be found in economically advantaged areas. 'Most of the states were situated in the dry expanses or in the hilly and mountainous regions of India: the former kingdoms of Rajasthan (Jaipur, Jodhpur, Udaipur, Bikaner), clusters of states in Central India that emerged in the wake of the dismemberment of the Maratha empire, Sikh states on the Himalayan border and the confines of the Punjab, principalities of the hills of Orissa and the peninsula of Saurashtra, powerful kingdoms of the Central Deccan (Hyderabad, Mysore), Himalayan kingdom of Kashmir' (Markovits 1994/2002: 387). Irrespective of these sheer impediments, situations would arise in which durbars would assert themselves against a British move or advice, no matter whatever consequences it would have triggered up.

Recent historiographical interests, however, go much beyond this narrow focus on high politics. Chitralekha Zutshi (2009: 302) suggests that in order to comprehensively relate Indian states to South Asian historiography they 'need to be re-visioned not simply as counterpoints to British India, but rather as entities that participated in more complex and far broader social, political and economic networks.' A similar argument is also made by Waltraud Ernst and Biswamoy Pati (2007: 2–3):

> A more nuanced and sophisticated assessment that avoids essentialist stereotyping and undue generalizations is clearly called for. Furthermore, if the history of the Indian states is to be more adequately integrated with existing scholarship on South Asia in general, it needs to address more than nationalist endeavours and the states' roles in the political and economic policies and rhetorical designs of British colonialism. Rather social, political and economic developments in the Indian states require analysis both on their own terms and at the same time in relation to colonial government and resistance in British India.

In this regard, Zutshi's review article presents many interesting insights and departure points. She precisely concludes this historiographical turn in the following excerpt (2009: 311–12):

> Finally, princely states can play a role in informing other debates, for instance on ideas of history and practices of history writing, issues of vernacularisation, language and script, as well as print and popular culture. For if we are to decolonise princely states, as so many of its scholars make a call for, we have to cease the British India versus princely states approach and study them as part of wider regions, movements and ideas, where the negotiations between a diverse cast of characters and multiple influences brought into existence distinct political entities and social responses. This will allow, in the age of transnational and global historiographies, for the particular histories of these entities to shape our production of the complex past of South Asia and its interconnections with the rest of the world.

Keeping all this in view, it is, no doubt, useful to embrace this approach in the field of princely archaeological historiography.

Issues in Princely Archaeologies

If princely historiography has gone a long way over the last few decades, its branch of archaeological historiography is yet to receive scholarly attention. The publications appeared until now in this connection, although appreciable, almost seem to be devoid of a conscious scholarly orientation. In order to address this problem, this volume aims to represent a new beginning. Informed by the above mentioned insights, two themes—a connected view of princely archaeologies and pluralistic sovereignties in South Asia, both entailing some crucial aspects—have been elaborated below.

The trajectories of archaeologies in princely states were determined by different factors and motivations. These were internal, British Indian and even transnational. Part I of this volume demonstrates that local durbars initiated work in the field of exploration, excavation, conservation, numismatics and palaeography. They also sponsored publication of the results of archaeological fieldwork. Moreover, institutional apparatus was also in place in some of the states. Related to this is the construction of museums and collecting activities. On the other hand, instances of princely interests in archaeology are also known to us. Communal motivations can also be seen to have been active at times. The British factor seems to be the most dominant one in princely archaeological practice. Studies included in Part II present a striking illustration concerning some of these issues.

The excavations at Sanchi under John Marshall better illustrate the political and dynastic aspects of princely archaeologies. Princes always made donations to religious establishments. Barbara Ramusack (2004: 141) points out a number of such instances in the late 19th century. Hyderabad, Bhopal, Patiala and Rampur contributed money to the two very famous Muslim educational institutions in British India, viz. the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College at Aligarh and the Deoband Madrasah. The latter 'imparted rigorous instruction in Muslim religious texts and socialised its graduates to foster a reformed Indian Islam among all classes of Muslims.' This example leads us to infer that Nawab Sultan Jahan followed in the footsteps of her predecessors to sponsor Marshall's work at Sanchi. The only difference was that this time it was, unlike Muslim institutions, a Buddhist sanctuary which she invested in. Ajanta and Ellora received similar sponsorship from the Muslim rulers of Hyderabad. But this should not be astonishing as both the states were known for their non-communal policies. Still, 'the patronage of these Muslim rulers implied a pluralist, Indian cultural heritage' with an obvious consideration for dynastic legitimacy (Ramusack 2004: 146–47). In the same vein, many Hindu and Sikh rulers contributed to the upkeep of Muslim monuments and structures. However, this engagement with history by princes had not everywhere been positive or prompted by a spirit of inclusivity. A stark contrast can be seen in the state of Mysore. After Tipu Sultan's defeat and the revival of Wodeyar dynasty, the historic city of Srirangapatna met a fateful end. In other words, it

was unmade by the new princely authority with the connivance of the British for political reasons. Instead, Mysore was embellished as a royal city in order to reinscribe the new princely grandeur in opposition to the systematic deinscription of Srirangapatna, the city of defeat (Nair 2012: 101–63). So much so that a historic image of Sweta Varahaswami, which a late seventeenth-century Wodeyar, Chikkadevaraja, had acquired somewhere from Arcot and consecrated in a temple at Srirangapatnam, was removed in 1809 'to a newly constructed temple in the Mysore fort' (Nair 2012: 128).

The most critical issue seems to be communal one which contradicts the pluralistic vision and policy of appeasement as were generally pursued in these states. Connections with 'communal associations' were more visible in the context of the early 20th century's broader political phenomena. It needs to be determined as to what extent it turned disastrous to princely archaeologies. Mridu Rai's (2009) investigation of archaeology and politics in Jammu and Kashmir shows how the fatal communal conflict took its toll on the state's archaeology, specifically the Muslim monuments. Part I in this volume can be read to get some sense that archaeological fieldwork was at times tinged by communal considerations. It will be useful to provide a contextual aspect here. The Maharaja of Baroda, Sayaji Rao, presided over a meeting of the Arya Samaj, dated 26 February 1911, held at Ranoli, and admired its activities. Similarly, rulers of other states, such as Patiala, Bikaner, Kashmir and Alwar, 'endorsed' the Kshatriya Mahasabha which represented a radical form of Hindusim along with support for Kshatriya lineage to which many of the princes themselves belonged (Ramusack 2004: 142). Keeping in view the communal orientation of Arya Samaj and its heir Hindu Sabha, this should not be taken lightly. At a later stage, the situation turned into a disaster in some areas. Alwar's Jai Singh and Tej Singh and Kishan Singh of the Bharatpur state vehemently fostered the Sanatan Dharma Sabha and Hindu Mahasabha not only in their own territories but also outside their borders (Ramusack 2004: 142). Both the states 'supported the Hindu Mahasabha and the RSS during the trauma of partition' (Ramusack 2004: 143). What a havoc it did cause to archaeology and heritage will always remain irreparable. Nayanjot Lahiri, while discussing the division and loss of archaeology at the time of partition, also sheds light on what was going on in Alwar and Bharatpur. She writes (2012: 143):

> [. . .] several mosques, graveyards, and tombs [in Alwar] were either damaged or demolished. The singular Gumbad Fate Jang's brackets and balcony *chajjas* (projecting eaves) were pulled down and the mosque situated in its northern enclosure was dismantled [. . .]. That it happened to survive at all was because refugees came to its rescue. Apparently, the premises were occupied by refugees from Pakistan who persuaded the contractor that they be allowed to stay there till they got suitable living accommodation elsewhere. As in the case of Alwar, in the princely state of Bharatpur as well, [Shankar] Das' [of the ASI] visit revealed a similar story. Mosques and tombs were broken under the orders of the state with specific contracts being given for demolition.

Alwar and Bharatpur were intricately connected to pan-Indian socio-political, more especially communal, developments. According to Shail Mayaram, they capitalized upon modern state apparatuses, unlike traditional ways, to gain legitimacy and control. The rulers of Alwar envisaged 'the articulation of nationalist moral renewal and the concomitant framing of a national community through the state's collaboration with pan-Indian movements such as the Arya Samaj, cow protection and Hindi' (Zutshi 2009: 306).

To have our perspective changed, the above discussion helps us explain the British Indian factor in princely affairs, especially archaeology. This is also true to intra-states and trans-South Asian relational positions. Many of the studies in Part I in this volume clearly show that Indian officials as well as various European explorers and experts had been busy in antiquarian and archaeological operations in princely territories, more continuously since the later 19th century. Its most obvious and vital instance can be found in Hyderabad's hiring of two Italian experts to work on preserving Ajanta's frescoes in the early 1920s. R. Narasimhachar, who headed the Mysore Archaeology

Department after B.L. Rice, cordialy responded to John Marshall's suggestion and undertook architectural studies and digging of sites. Similarly, under Marshall's influence, Maharaja Madhav Rao Scindia permanently established the Archaeology Department, in 1913, for archaeological and cultural researches in Gwalior. M.B. Garde, Marshall's student, was appointed to head it. This prompts us to guess that he would have devotedly followed the ASI's model in doing archaeological work. In the case of Mayurbhanj, its Archaeology Department was constituted in 1924 and its operations were guided by the ASI in the remaining part of the decade. In many other situations, Marshall's influence or assertive vigilance, which may positively be termed as negotiation, gave concrete results. Not only have these but many other developments revealed how crucial the British presence was to princely archaeologies (see especially Singh's study in this volume). Jaipur presents a good case in point here.

Jaipur, located in northern India, was one of the important Rajputana states, the others being Udaipur, Jodhpur and Bikaner. During the disintegration of the Mughal empire in the 18th century, around one and a half dozen states survived in Rajputana. Their suzerain relationship with the British more properly began in 1818, the year of the last decisive Anglo-Maratha war in which the East India Company prevailed (Markovits 1994/2002: 406). The history of the Jaipur state is considered to be a thousand years old. It was allied to the Mughal dynasty and the relationship remained so under Sawai Jai Singh (r. 1699–1743). His death led to a ruinous war of succession which striped the state of many of its wealthy possessions. The situation changed for better during Jagat Singh's reign (1803–18). Like other Rajputana states, Jaipur also signed a treaty with the British on 2 April 1818. The British government took the protection of the state upon itself and the durbar, in return, acknowledged British supremacy. The state was prohibited from having any contacts or negotiations with other princely states without a prior British approval. In case of disputes with other principalities, arbitration of the paramount government was also accepted. The British were to refrain from any interference in Jaipur's internal matters. The state was to pay a fixed annual tribute and provide troops if required (Majumdar et al. 1963/1970: 26).

Barbara Ramusack (2004: 146) while discussing princely contributions to literature and history also refers to museums and archaeological sites. She writes that in 1886 Maharaja Madho Singh II 'opened the Jaipur Museum in Albert Hall, an Indo-Saracenic structure built specifically to be a museum. It contained Indian industrial exhibits as well as arts and antiquities.' This prompted me to delve into the matter and explore the princely and trans-princely dimensions of archaeological and heritage practice in Jaipur (the following analysis and exposition, unless indicated otherwise, are based on Tillotson [2006: 138–85]).

The Maharajas of Jaipur, Ram Singh (r. 1835–80) and Madho Singh (r. 1880–1922), embarked upon grand architectural and industrial projects. The Mayo Hospital was one of the first Indo-Saracenic buildings in the state. As far as the Albert Hall is concerned, its very genesis relates to the foreign factor of colonial aura. It was Albert Edward's, the Prince of Wales, visit in 1876 that the idea of laying foundation of a building was conceived without even slightly envisaging that one day it would turn into a state museum. It was, nevertheless, in the initial years of Maharaja Madho Singh's reign, who had succeeded Maharaja Ram Singh, that the need to house Jaipur's industrial arts as well as excavation material was felt. And this brought home as to what purpose the Albert Hall could better serve. Two departments and their heads were essential to all this, a situation which entails aspects for further elaboration.

The Public Works Department (PWD) and the Jaipur School of Art (JSA) were established in 1860 and 1866 respectively. The former was designed after its British Indian counterpart while the later was considered in a rather different way. The focus of the JSA remained to be the promotion of local

technical and industrial arts and crafts. Dr de Fabeck, a Residency surgeon, headed PWD whereas Colonel Price, a British (Bengal) military engineer, directed the JSA. Both of them were succeeded by Dr Thomas Holbein Hendley and Major Samuel Swinton Jacob. They were convinced that local arts and industry needed to be preserved and promoted.

It was on Hendley's suggestion in 1880 that Maharaja Madho Singh sanctioned the establishment of an industrial museum for exhibiting local crafts. It was soon opened in a temporary building and collecting started for the purpose. To take the work ahead, Hendley conducted a splendid Jaipur Exhibition in the first two months of 1883. It was held in a newly built large administrative building situated in Jaleb Chowk. Local arts and crafts, including loans from other Indian states, were displayed. It attracted enormous audience and the cost was borne by the Maharaja. In its published form the exhibition appeared in four volumes, also sponsored by Madho Singh, entitled *Memorials of the Jaipur Exhibition*. All these developments, and more specifically the idea to make the exhibition permanent and to integrate its objects with the contents of the Economic and Industrial Museum, led to define Albert Hall as the most suitable space for the Jaipur Museum.

The saga of the Jaipur Museum better illustrates the concept of networked princely relations. The very presence of colonial officials as experts, such as Hendley and Jacob, represents a sort of connection with British India, and Europe for that matter. Similarly, the Jaipur Exhibition used for most of the 7000 objects cases prepared by the Wimbridge of Bombay. To have a broadened sense of these connections, we should also note that these cases were copied from the South Kensington (now Victoria and Albert) Museum, London. What is equally worth-noting is the fact of intra-states contacts. Treaties with the British had categorically prohibited princes to have any mutual relationship and negotiations, as we have referred to above regarding Jaipur. But it seems that this condition was not invariably so much stringent. Objects were loaned for the Jaipur Exhibition by various states in Rajasthan, Malwa and the Punjab. But still one of the most significant aspects of the Jaipur Museum at Albert Hall is illustrative of transnational contacts.

The regional, and beyond, considerations in the designing of the Jaipur Museum reflect in Jacob's explanations. 'The endeavour has been to make the walls themselves a museum, by taking advantage of many of the beautiful designs in old buildings near Delhi, Agra and elsewhere. In some cases designs have been followed, or have inspired the workmen here' (quoted in Tillotson 2006: 155). Local artists accordingly added details which show 'the collaborative process'. Their names have been preserved in an inscription at an entrance of the Albert Hall. Reproduction of illustrations from *Razamnamah*, *Mahabharata's* Persian translation for Mughal emperor Akbar, were also added to a wall and to contrast them with the western genius classical European art, based on the contents housed in the South Kensington and other museums, was depicted. Moreover, facsimiles of the Ajanta Buddhist fresco, based on a drawing rendered available by the Bombay School of Art, were added as well. Gandharan sculptural art was also represented, which Giles has retrospectively, and prudently, commented upon. 'One hopes that the opportunity presented for making comparisons benefitted some of the visitors more than it did Hendley himself, as he was tempted to regard the *Razamnama* images as "formal and rather childish" by comparison with the "almost pure and refined Greek art" represented by some casts of Gandharan figures' (Tillotson 2006: 156).

All this embodies an intriguing example of local modernity which contradicts the view that princely territories received everything admirable from the paramount British in India. Many ideas and developments seem to have independently originated. Sometimes they inspired work and policy both in other states and British India. The JSA, with a focus on imparting local skills of craftsmanship, represents an undeniable instance of this. It inspired the Maharaja of Mysore. Chamarajendra Wodeyar toured not only to discover his own territory but visited, beside India, a

number of princely states, something which added to his vision of rule. 'The idea of an industrial school was taken from his visit to Jaipur, a zoo was started on the lines of what he had seen at the Ayodhya Nawabs' bungalow in Calcutta, and in 1888 an exhibition of industrial crafts and arts of the state was inaugurated to coincide with the revived Dasara pageant' (Nair 2012: 135).

All this helps us direct our attention to ways in which future research in the field of princely archaeologies would potentially be done. But this should not make us oblivious to another, as referred to above, crucial fact: importance of the local agency.

The above discussion about archaeological and heritage work in princely states makes us think about the second dimension we have posited at the start of this chapter. Issues related to territorial and jurisdictional sovereignty, administrative setup and legal structure are vital to ponder upon with the help of empirical and archival evidence. This is an important issue to investigate especially in view of the fact that the paramount British authority, more often than not, was sparsely interested in the internal affairs of the vassal territories. Their primary focus was on regulating external relations, defense, currency and communications of Indian states. All things of interest used to be channeled through the political authorities, i.e. political agents and residents, posted in states or agencies. It simply means that the British held their outer peripheries in indirect control. To put it differently, there was a kind of internal self-rule, save occasional British interventions in unavoidable circumstances, in Indian states. In this context, what intrigues us is to problematize princely archaeologies with a question of sovereignty which entails the concept of operating political, jurisdictional and administrative authority. Under what kind of princely, Indian or Anglo-princely legal-institutional understandings archaeologies would be done in princely realms? Did princely states have their own legal-institutional dispensations in place for doing archaeological work? We try to investigate these questions as there is a clear gap, especially empirical, in our existing state of understanding.

The studies in this volume tell us nothing substantial in this regard except that some states, such as Hyderabad, Mysore, Baroda, Travancore, Jaipur, Bhopal, Mayurbhanj, Kashmir etc., had established their archaeology departments manned by various officials and scholars. A few states, for instance, Mysore in 1924 and Kashmir in 1920, had promulgated their own archaeological laws. Only Luca Olivieri has elaborated some of the legal issues related to colonial as well as Italian work in Swat and the discovery of a part of the Gilgit Manuscripts. What follows is an attempt to illustrate the significance of the legal-institutional aspect of archaeologies in Indian states. And for this, I resort to Kashmir and Swat as the availability of data warrants some quite handsome insights here as compared to other states.

Some recently published studies, including chapter 12 in this volume, are revealing concerning the legal-institutional aspect of archaeological and literary studies in Jammu and Kashmir. As Mridu Rai shows (2009), archaeology first arrived into Kashmir as a colonial project which was manoeuvred in the best interest of the state and against it by the Dogras and Muslims respectively. It is pertinent to mention here that the Indian archaeological dispensation was revamped around the turn of the 20th century. Accordingly, Indian states were brought, at least normatively, within the fold of the new mechanism. We need neither to detail upon the 1902 appointment of John Marshall as the Director General of the Survey nor the promulgation of antiquities laws in 1904. In June 1901, however, a Foreign Department order attached princely states to the regional archaeological surveys. The Rajputana, the Punjab and the Malakand states including Kashmir came under the Punjab-Balochistan-Ajmer survey circle. To the Bengal and Madras regional circles were attached states in their respective areas while states in the Bombay region and central India together with Baroda were given to the Bombay-Berar survey circle (Chakrabarti 1988/2001: 123). It is in this

context that the viceroy's 1901 invitation to the Kashmir durbar to establish its archaeological department should be understood. The durbar 'promptly brought into being the Kashmir state's own Archaeological and Research Department in May 1904' (Rai 2009: 410). In 1910, the department was divided into two bodies each responsible for archaeological activities and research work. The former was mainly concerned with conservation work on the British pattern. The latter's domain was historical and literary research which was the sole prerogative of the state's scholars, mostly pundits. We also cannot ignore the establishment of the Dharmarth Trust in 1857 which was to serve only Hindu faith and maintain Hindu shrines (Rai 2009: 413–15). Concerning rules and laws, a notification, issued sometime in 1910s, comes to mind. It categorically announced the durbar's 'primary title to objects of archaeological, historical or literary interest in its territories' (Rai 2009: 411). All this, in fact, matured in the coming into being of the Ancient Monuments Preservation Act of 1920 (later adapted as Act No. V of Samvat 1977).

Mostly on the pattern of the Indian legislation, the Ancient Monuments Preservation Act of 1904, this law intended to strengthen and ensure Dogra's hold on the state's archaeological, historical and literary heritage. It dealt with issues related to protection and preservation of monuments and sites, endowments, ownership, penalties, antiquities trafficking and its control, archaeological excavation and its regulation and so forth.

On the whole, this vigilance and assertion on the part of the durbar may primarily be seen in the context of Dogra's appropriation of archaeology and literature under political expediencies. However, this elaborate state dispensation also proved crucial in other respects. It created a conscious control, sense of ownership and custodianship of the state's literary, archaeological and historical assets. A 1910 British-sponsored expedition to Laddakh was disallowed to take antiquities with itself, although John Marshall insisted upon the expedition's rights to the acquisitions. The authorities responded through issuing the above mentioned 1910s' notification proclaiming the state's ownership to all the past relics. Another example in this regard is the discovery of the Gilgit Manuscripts in 1931. The durbar immediately took control of the manuscripts and did not let them leave the state even for scholarly investigation by well-known European savants. Moreover, Aurel Stein, who had discovered *Rajatarangini* and published its English translation in 1900, was not permitted to republish the book at the end of 1920s (see Olivieri in this volume). All this was clearly in line with the logic behind the establishment of the Research Department. This body was responsible for directing historical and literary research on the state's heritage. The durbar also asserted itself against the famous name in South Asian archaeology and geology, Helmet de Terra. He made two significant visits to Kashmir in 1932 and 1935 for geological and archaeological investigations. Both the times he obtained license from relevant authorities. While preparing his expedition for the second fieldwork, de Terra even faced an awkward situation. He was accused of not having returned an object he had taken with himself in 1932 for proper study. It was not until he cleared up the misunderstanding which had occurred between them that he was permitted to undertake his 1935 work in the Dogra territory (Shaheen 2024: 241–42).

This illustration is noteworthy, albeit insufficient. We have to go a long way to further investigate these and other such cases through extensive archival research. Princely Kashmir had an elaborate legal-institutional apparatus and contextualizing archaeological work and literary research against it can potentially solve many questions. All this can, hopefully, also direct scholarly attention to the exploration of the legal-institutional dimension of South Asian archaeology in the future. Luckily, our understanding in this respect has been somewhat enhanced by historiographical research concerning the colonial archaeology in the Malakand Agency.

The Malakand Agency, constituted in 1895, comprised the three princely states of Swat, Dir and Chitral, various tiny chiefdoms in Bajawar and the directly British-controlled Malakand Protected Area (MPA). Colonial archaeological and antiquarian missions, however, mainly focused on the Swat valley which was politically and administratively divided between the Swat state (1915–69) and the upper part of MPA. Excluding the first two years of its formation, the Swat state was ruled over from 1917 to 1949 by it first Wali, Miangul Abdul Wadud, and since then till its merger into Pakistan in 1969 by his son, Miangul Abdul Haq Jahanzeb. Exploration and research in the Malakand Agency go back to the 1890s as it is evident from the influential paper published in 1896 by its first political agent, Major Harold Deane. Upper Swat, including Buner, was not conducive for exploration until the Wali was able to strengthen his hold after his accession to the throne. In March 1926, the British recognized Abdul Wadud as the Wali of Swat and in the meantime Aurel Stein was engaged in the first ever archaeological reconnaissance of the area (Stein 1930). Archaeological excavations in Swat were done by the Barger team in 1938 and a huge collection of Gandharan artifacts was taken to England (Barger and Wright 1941). It should not go unnoticed that Stein had made another unfinished foray in 1933 (Olivieri 2015b). The British withdrawal from India did not made archaeological activities cease in Swat as it is evident from the Italian work here. It was Giuseppe Tucci who arrived into Pakistan in 1956 and, as argued by Olivieri (2019, also in this volume), coordinated, prior to starting his fieldwork, the introduction of Pakistani archaeological laws into the Swat state (Swat had acceded to Pakistan soon after its creation in 1947). All these archaeological expeditions to Swat entail the legal aspect which is to be put in two perspectives. How did the metropolitan research teams and bodies treat the legal question of their works? How did the Walis of Swat respond to it?

Before coming to 1926, the genesis year in the story of the Swat archaeology, it would be fruitful to start with the final few years of the nineteenth century. Harold Deane was one of the recognized scholar-administrators of his time. We have already referred to his 1896 article about Gandhara and Uddiyana. He is also known for his discoveries in Mardan towards the end of the 1880s: excavation at Sikri and the discovery at Shahbazgarhi of the 12th Asokan Rock Edict. In 1895 and 1896 two missions were sent to him by the Bengal government for acquiring Gandharan sculptures for the Imperial Museum of India, generally known as the Indian or Calcutta Museum. It was Laurence A. Waddell, a doctor in the Indian army, who brokered a deal with Deane in which the latter conceded to provide his collection at Mardan, along with Maisey's at Dargai, to the Calcutta Museum. In pursuance to this, Alexander Caddy arrived into Malakand to receive the material. In the meanwhile, however, the Lahore Museum, which by dint of being the provincial museum should have housed its local antiquities, seems to have put its own claim to the ownership of Gandharan objects. The matter was, therefore, treated in the light of the existing Indian legal mechanism for archaeology and antiquities. It was that antiquities found in a particular province should go to its own local/provincial museum. Furthermore, the Calcutta Museum had the prerogative to claim any unique object or a set of antiquities for its own practical uses. Deane was, no doubt, constrained to consider these legal requirements. As a result, some of the objects of the Maisey collection went to the Lahore and the remaining lot to the Calcutta Museum. It makes sense to presume that major part of the collection, coming from the Malakand Agency, was deposited to the latter destination. If this is a correct reading of the matter, it would clearly imply that the outer Malakand periphery was not at all subject to Indian archaeological legislation. Hence, its antiquities were provided to the Indian Museum. In continuation to this, Caddy took another expedition to Malakand in 1896 with the permission of Deane. He surveyed the surrounding area, photographed sites and landscape features and excavated the now-famous Loriyan Tangay. A huge collection of Gandharan art was amassed and taken to Bengal to be housed in the Calcutta Museum (Khan 2020: 146–47; Morgan and Olivieri 2022; Olivieri 2015a).

Between Deane's work and Stein's 1926 visit, we have little information about field activities and the protection of antiquities in Swat. Stein expressed his worries about trafficking in Gandharan objects, majorly from Swat, to the Malakand political agent in 1913 in which colonial personnel themselves were involved. Most importantly as Luca Olivieri observes (2019: 228):

> The framework of the relations between the colonial government and Swat State included also the question of control of illegal digging. In a letter written in June 1926, the Political Agent Metcalf informed the [W]ali of Stein's views of the wretched state of antiquities in Swat, as well as of the existence of unlawful traffic, asking him to exert the necessary control [. . .]. One phrase in Metcalf's letter introduces for the first time the possibility of extending the 1904 Ancient Monuments Preservation Act to Swat: "The Government of India passed an order in 1924 making it a formidable offence to remove antiquities from the N.W.F. province or adjacent territory." The reference to 1924 is clearly indicative that the decisions were taken after the conclusion of the Stewart affair. The [W]ali's response was polite but frigid.

The Wali did not like the type of colonial assertion which could restrict him to exercise sovereign power. Ironically, he, unlike the Kashmir durbar, did not bother to devise his own legal-institutional mechanism for managing the state's archaeology. Still he was not made irrelevant by the colonial authorities whenever his cooperation would be needed for archaeological activities. Abdul Wadud was formally approached to give his permission for fieldwork by Aurel Stein in 1926, 1933 and 1941. He was also asked to allow the Barger expedition to make excavations in Swat. The Wali always granted permission without asking anything in return (Olivieri 2015a; Khan 2023). And this was owing to the fact that no state laws and institutional apparatus were in place which could restrict his authority or enjoin limitations on research teams (cf. Kashmir). The same is true with respect to Tucci's commencement of his work, during the reign of the second Wali, except for, as Olivieri maintains (chapter 12 in this volume), his efforts to coordinate the extension of Pakistan's antiquities laws into the state. Olivieri also argues that all this makes the Italian tradition of archaeology distinct in the area. Overall, it is to be inferred that the first Wali was indifferent to the state's historical wealth except for what it could promise in the context of his local political endeavours and relationship with the paramount power (Khan 2023: 887–88). His son and successor, however, was a man of somewhat different bent of mind.

But all the times watchdog bodies for archaeology remained actively, or passively, present. I mean the role of the ASI and subsequently Pakistan's Archaeology Department. Stein obtained the ASI's permission for his first two archaeological visits to Swat (Olivieri 2015a). He, however, did not care regarding it for his third tour. It should be pointed out that in the first instance it was John Marshall who did not brook any institutional indifference towards princely archaeologies. Since the early 1930s the ASI's assertion had waned. And even before Stein's 1941 trip, Evert Barger had successfully connived to neglect any relevance of Indian legal-institutional dispensation to his archaeological excavations in Swat.

Barger led a survey team to India in anticipation that they would have the opportunity to visit Chinese Turkistan. On the failure of this original scheme, he requested the Afghan government's permission to make explorations in northern Afghanistan. No success again. In the meantime, the team had arrived into India and the Indian government was first requested to allow them work in the NWFP and then in Chitral. But both the requests, owing to security reasons, were declined. Finally, Barger campaigned to win the Frontier government over to his, so-called, research tour. They, therefore, localized the expedition by allowing him to make excavations at specific sites in the Swat state. The 'localized' here means that both the central government and its legal-institutional apparatus were kept out of the entire business. Major E.H. Cobb, another scholar political agent at Malakand, knew the Indian legal-institutional set up for archaeology very well. He wanted the Barger

team to work in collaboration with the ASI as it was laid down in the Indian antiquities legislation. Barger, however, did not like any sort of understanding which did impose institutional restraints on his operations. The result was that the ASI was kept aloof and the team made a huge collection of antiquities. It was transported, in contravention to the Indian archaeology laws, to England via India (Khan 2023). The collection subsequently dispersed as many individuals and institutions acquired pieces through gift-making or buying (some cases examined in, Khan and Peter 2025; Khan, Shaheen and Gohar forthcoming).

To sum up: the Swat case together with Jammu and Kashmir potentially illustrates the legal-institutional aspect of princely archaeologies. Both the states tell us different stories and their integration warrants satisfactory explanations of various issues involved. We also become aware of variations in princely response to the colonial discipline of archaeology. An interesting understanding of the approaches and interests of various stakeholders and actors, such as durbars, the ASI, scholars and explorers, colonial officials, to name but few, has also been formed. Such kind of archival investigations in the archaeologies of many other important Indian states can augment our historical understanding. Particularly Jaipur, as its case has been presented above, should be mentioned here as a potential candidate to contribute more and more to the evolving body of princely historiographical revelations. And all this would give numerous valuable results as aspired for in the context of broader trends in South Asian historiography.

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Archaeological explorations and research in colonial South Asia were carried out within the native and British political and administrative dispensations, and so far, the disciplinary histories have almost entirely focused on colonial institutions, legalities and individuals. As a result, a vital local element in the entire process of archaeological work has been neglected. The studies that are collected in this volume, with their focus on the princely states, provide an important alternative perspective.

There were more than 500 local royal houses in India, which together governed two-fifths of the entire subcontinent. Some were of considerable significance in terms of geography, resources and population. They also housed some remarkable antiquities and monuments. However, although politically and administratively divided, India was crisscrossed by the explorers, antiquarians and officials of the Archaeological Survey of India. *Princely Archaeologies and Plural Sovereignties in Modern South Asia* collects the small group of vitally valuable studies that have been published to date, with the aim of streamlining the study of the princely past through princely archaeologies and wider South Asian historiographical considerations. The 13 papers range from the first narrative of princely archaeologies, which appeared in 1939, to postcolonial investigations from the beginning of the 21st century. They deal with themes of exploration, conservation, legality and sovereignty. The crucial role played by princely durbars has been highlighted, but more significantly the colonial bias of conventional narratives is exposed. Concluding the volume, a newly written chapter by the editor explores further avenues for historical investigation in the field of princely archaeologies.

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