A Guide to Sanchi

John Marshall

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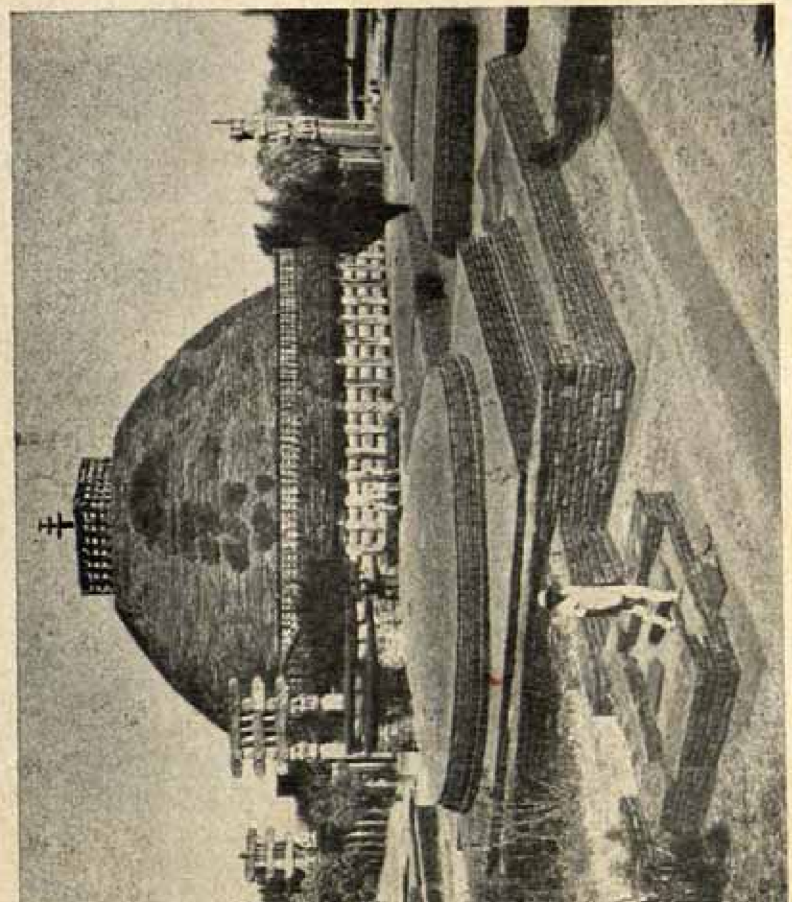

THE GREAT STŪPA, FROM S.-E

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A GUIDE TO SĀÑCHĪ

BY

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PREFACE

BY a strange coincidence it happens that the monuments of Sāñchī, the noblest of all the monuments which Early Buddhism has bequeathed to India, are those about which least information has been available to the public. Ancient Indian writers scarcely mention them; the Chinese pilgrims, who are such a mine of information regarding other Buddhist sites, pass them by in silence; and such modern literature as exists on the subject, is for the most part antiquated and misleading. How misleading and how antiquated, may be judged from the fact that of the best known books on Sāñchī—Fergusson's *Tree and Serpent Worship,* and Maisey's *Sánchi and its Remains*—the former, which appeared in 1868, treats the gateway reliefs mainly as illustrations of primitive Tree and Serpent worship; while the latter, which was

published in 1892, seeks to prove, among other fanciful theories, that Aśoka was much later than King Piyadasi of the Edicts, that Buddhism in India was approximately coeval with Christianity, and that in essence it was largely Mithraic!

Among the very few contributions that are really sound and reliable, a short lecture on the Eastern Gateway delivered at the Musée Guimet by M. A. Foucher stands *facile princeps*. On this brilliant lecture and also on a valuable manuscript note on the iconography of the other reliefs, with which the same distinguished scholar was generous enough to favour me, I have mainly based my description of the gateway carvings. Other authors to whom I am indebted, are my predecessor, Sir A. Cunningham, whose work '*The Bhilsa Topes*' has supplied me with the details of the discoveries made by him in the Second and Third Stūpas. Prof. A. Grünwedel, whose *Buddhist Art in India* is most helpful for the study of Buddhist iconography; and Mr. Vincent Smith, of whose standard work on Early Indian History I have made free use in the second chapter of this guide.

No guidebook can cater for all classes of visitors, and I am sensible that this one is likely to be found too long for some, too short for others. My aim (need I say?) has been to hit the happy mean, but how far I have succeeded in this aim, it is for the reader to judge. Those who would study the subject in greater detail, should turn to the three large folio volumes entitled "The Monuments of Sāñchī", in which he will find the whole series of these richly decorated monuments elaborately illustrated and described, with a full discussion of their art, their iconography and their inscriptions.[1]

JOHN MARSHALL

[1] "The Monuments of Sāñchī" by Sir John Marshall and Alfred Foucher, with translations and notes on the inscriptions by N. G. Majumdar, 3 vols. folio, Government of India Press, Calcutta, 1940. The detached sculptures and minor antiquities in the local museum are described in the *Catalogue of the Museum of Archaeology at Sanchi*, Superintendent, Government Printing, India,Calcutta, 1922.

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A GUIDE TO SĀÑCHĪ

CHAPTER I

TOPOGRAPHICAL

The stūpas of Sāñchī are one of several groups of such monuments situated within a dozen miles of Bhilsā and known commonly as the Bhilsā Topes.[1] One of these groups is on the hill above Sonārī; another is at Satdhārā; a third is at Pipalīyā (Bhojpur); and a fourth at Andher. But by far the most extensive and most interesting of the series is the group at Sāñchī,[2] a village in the Dīwānganj sub-division of the Bhopal State, about 5½ miles S.-W. of Bhilsā. The existence of so many Buddhist edifices in the neighbourhood of Bhilsā is not due to mere chance. It is explained by the fact that near by the modern town and at the junction

[1] The more important of these groups have been described by Sir A. Cunningham in his work entitled *The Bhilsa Topes*, where the reader will find a sketch map of the district and a full account of his exploration of some of the stūpas.

[2] Lat. 23° 28′ N. and long. 77° 48′ E.

of the Beś and the Betwā rivers there once stood the famous and populous city of Vidiśā, the capital of Eastern Mālwā (Ākara) and that in and around this city there grew up a flourishing community of Buddhists, who found on the summits of the neighbouring hills attractive and commanding spots on which to build their memorials and their monasteries—spots, that is to say, which were far enough removed from the turmoil and distractions of the great city, but sufficiently close to it to attract worshippers from its crowded thoroughfares. In the case of other famous Buddhist monuments, such as those at Bodh-Gayā, Sārnāth and Kasiā, the sites chosen for their erection were those which had been hallowed by the presence of the Buddha, and the monuments themselves were designed to commemorate some act in his life, as for example his enlightenment at Bodh-Gayā, his first sermon at Sārnāth, his passing away at Kasiā. But Sāñchī had no such connexion with the life or acts of the Master; the place is scarcely mentioned in Buddhist literature, and the Chinese pilgrim, Fa-Hien and Hiuen Tsang, who visited India between the fourth and seventh centuries of our era, though they tell us much about other ancient centres of Buddhism, have not a word to say about this one. It is a strange coincidence, therefore, that these remains should be at once the most magnificent and the most perfect examples of Buddhist architecture in India.

The hill on which these monuments are clustered is not in any way remarkable, nor is there anything in its general aspect to distinguish it from the many other eminences which girdle it close on the west and south. It is a low hill, less than 300 feet in height, of a whale-back shape, with a saddle near the middle, in which nestles the village of Sāñchī from which it takes its name. As with all the neighbouring offshoots of the Vindhyas, its formation is of sandstone, which slopes, layer upon layer, in shelving masses down its sides, wherein the Buddhist builders of old found a quarry for their stone ready to hand and easily worked. In the varied hues of this stone and in its rugged crags there is a wonderful charm alike of form and colour, and this charm is enhanced by the wealth of jungle shrubs and trees which spring from every nook and crevice among the giant boulders. The vegetation grows free and dense on all the steeper slopes around the hill, but most luxuriantly on its southern half, in places where the high and shady cliffs afford shelter against the sun. Here the ever-green *khirnī* tree[1], with its sombre foliage, and the wild custard-apple are especially abundant, and here in the early spring the *ḍhāk* or 'flame of the forest' as it has been so happily called, sets the hill-side ablaze with its clusters of gorgeous blossoms, affording a strangely gay and dazzling setting to the grey ruins that crest the ridges above. THE HILL OF SĀÑCHĪ

[1] Mimusops.

ANCIENT AND MODERN ROADS

The main road by which the hill is ascended, leads direct from the railway station, then passes up the rocky slope in the direction of the village of Sāñchī, and bends to the right near a small pond, the embankment of which is of ancient construction. From this point the road is paved and stepped with heavy stone slabs as far as the brow of the hill; afterwards, it runs south for a distance of about 80 yards and enters the enclave at its north-west corner. Most of this road is of modern construction, having, so far as is known, been first made by Major Cole in 1883 and extensively repaired by the present writer in 1915. At the time when Vidiśā was a flourishing city, the main approach came direct from the north-east, ascended the hill-side near the northern edge of the Purainiā tank (Pl. IX), crossed the Chiknī Ghāṭī, and wound round to the north of the plateau, passing about 50 yards east of the modern gateway. A side path also branched off from it to the middle of the eastern side. Of the latter, a short section still exists outside the circuit wall, and two longer sections of the old main road are preserved at the Chiknī Ghāṭī, and immediately below the northern wall, the roadway in each case being constructed of long slabs of stone laid transversely on the rock and measuring as much as twelve feet in length. A third approach, described below at p. 147, ascended the western slope of the hill to Stūpa 2, and thence curved round to the western side of the enclave, which it entered close to Stūpa 7.

THE HILL-TOP AND CIRCUIT WALL

The hill-top to which these roads gave access, measures over 400 yards from N. to S. by 220 yards from E. to W., and originally sloped upwards in gentle gradient towards the east, reaching its highest point beneath the foundations of Temple 45 (Pl. X), whence there is a steep drop of nearly 300 feet to the plain below. How the artificial terraces into which the central part of the plateau is now divided, came to be formed, and when the retaining wall between them was erected, will be described later on. The solid stone circuit wall encircling the plateau appears to have been first constructed in the 11th or 12th century A.D., but was largely repaired in 1883 and again in 1914. Over the greater part of its length it is founded on the living rock, but a section of it on the eastern side is carried over the ruins of some of the late mediæval buildings. The present entrance at the north-west corner of this wall is a modern innovation due to Major Cole, the old entrance having apparently been located at a little distance towards the east, at a point where the ancient road had passed prior to the construction of the circuit wall.

In the description which follows of the monuments on the hill-top, I shall start with the Great Stūpa and the buildings immediately around it on the same terrace, dealing first with the stūpas, then with the pillars, and lastly with the shrines. Afterwards, I shall conduct the visitor to Temples 40 and 8, and to the three monasteries 36, 37 and 38 to the south of the Great

Stūpa; and, finally, I shall ascend with him the higher terrace on the east and examine the buildings numbered from 43 to 50[1]. But before embarking on this description, it is desirable to say something about the history of this site in ancient and modern times, as well as about the artistic character of its monuments.

[1] The numbers by which the various monuments are designated in the plan on Pl. X are not, it will be observed, arranged in regular sequence, the reason being that the numeration of the stūpas adopted by Sir Alexander Cunningham in the plan which he published in 1854 has been generally followed by subsequent writers, and it seemed likely to lead to inconvenience and confusion, if it were now to be abandoned. Accordingly I have, with one exception, retained Gen. Cunningham's numbers and added others to distinguish those monuments which I myself have discovered, arranging them in such systematic sequence as has been practicable. The exception referred to is the early shrine numbered 8 on my plan. In Gen. Cunningham's sketch a stūpa numbered 8 is shown to the north of Stūpa 3, but on the spot in question there is no vestige of any such structure; nor is any indication of its existence given in either of the plans prepared by Gen. Maisey and Mr. Thompson. On the other hand, Gen. Maisey, who was associated with Gen. Cunningham at Sāñchī in 1851 and in other respects follows his numeration, places No. 8 south, instead of north, of the Great Stūpa, at a spot where nothing appears on Gen. Cunningham's plan, but where I unearthed a stone basement of an early shrine. Accordingly, I conclude that Gen. Cunningham, whose plan in other respects is far from accurate, made the mistake of placing this monument to the north instead of the south of the central group.

CHAPTER II

HISTORICAL AND ARTISTIC

The history of Sāñchī starts during the reign of Aśoka in the third century B.C., and covers a period of some thirteen centuries, thus synchronising almost exactly with the rise and fall of Buddhism in India. The political story of Eastern Mālwā during these fourteen centuries is known to us only in the barest outline, and is beset with many uncertainties. Such as it is, however, it enables us to follow the chief dynastic changes and the chief religious movements which affected this part of India, and which are necessarily reflected in the changing character of the monuments.

To make this history and its bearing upon the architecture and sculptures of Sāñchī more easily intelligible, I shall divide it into three periods; the first extending from the reign of Aśoka to the overthrow of the Kshatrapa power, about A.D. 400, by Chandragupta II; the second from the advent of the Imperial Guptas to the death of the Emperor Harsha in A.D. 647; and the third embracing the later mediæval period.

Early period

The ancient name of Sāñchī, as we learn from inscriptions at the site, was Kākanāva or Kākanāya ; later on it appears as Kākanāda-boṭa, and still later (towards the end of the 7th century A.D.) as Boṭa-Śrī-parvvata. This last is perhaps to be identified with the Śrī-parvvata mentioned in Bhavabhūti's *Mālatīmādhava* ; and it is probable, too, that Sāñchī is referred to under the name Chetiyagiri in the *Mahāvaṁśa*—the Buddhist chronicle of Ceylon—where it is recorded that Aśoka, when he was heir-apparent and was journeying as Viceroy to Ujjayinī (Ujjain), halted at Vidiśā and there married the daughter of a local banker, one Devī by name, by whom he had two sons, Ujjeniya and Mahendra, and a daughter Saṅghamitrā. It is further narrated that, after Aśoka's accession, Mahendra headed the Buddhist mission, sent probably under the auspices of the emperor, to Ceylon, and that before setting out to the island he visited his mother at 'Chetiyagiri' near Vidiśā, and was lodged there in a sumptuous *vihāra* or monastery, which she herself had erected. Now, assuming that the story of Mahendra as told in the Sinhalese chronicle is correct, it would be reasonable to identify this 'Chetiyagiri' with the hill of Sāñchī; for it was at Sāñchī that Aśoka set up one of his edict pillars as well as other monuments ; and it is at Sāñchī alone in this neighbourhood that any remains of the Maurya age have been found. Unfortunately, however, there is another version of the legend, which makes

Mahendra the brother, not the son, of Aśoka, and which fails to connect him in any way with Vidiśā. It would manifestly be unsafe, therefore, to deduce from the *Mahāvaṁsa* version any conclusions as to the age or origin of the monuments of Sāñchī. But, be the story true or not, there is good evidence, as we shall presently see, to show that the Buddhists were established at Sāñchī before or during the lifetime of Aśoka, and it is clear also from the memorials which the emperor erected there, that the *saṅgha* at Sāñchī was an object of special interest and care to him.

Aśoka Maurya

Aśoka had probably become a convert to Buddhism early in life, and during the last thirty years of his reign (B.C. 274-237) he seems to have employed his almost unlimited powers in propagating his religious ideas throughout the length and breadth of his dominions (which comprised practically the whole of India except the Madras Presidency), and in sending missionaries of the faith to foreign lands [1] as far remote as Egypt and Albania. In fact, it is upon his zealous patronage of Buddhism that the fame of this great emperor mainly rests; and it is not surprising, therefore, that most of the monuments[2] of his reign

[1] It has been questioned whether the religion which Aśoka's mission sought to propagate was Buddhism. Most scholars take the view that it was.

[2] These monuments comprise the following:—A series of royal edicts inscribed upon columns or natural rocks at various spots throughout his dominions, from the North-West Frontier to Mysore; stūpas of brick at Sārnāth, Sāñchī and other places; the remains of a pillared hall at Patna, which probably formed part of a royal palace designed, apparently, on the model of the Achæ-

which have come down to us relate to that religion. Among these monuments are some of the most perfect and highly developed specimens of sculpture in India, but the particular specimens referred to, including the edict-bearing pillar at Sāñchī, are Perso-Greek in style, not Indian, and there is every reason to believe that they were the handiwork of foreign, probably Bactrian, artists. In the time of Aśoka indigenous art was still in the rudimentary state, when the sculptor could not grasp more than one aspect of his subject at a time, when the law of 'frontality' was still binding upon him, and when the 'memory picture'[1] had not yet given place to direct observation of nature.

THE ŚUṄGAS

On the death of Aśoka in 232 B.C. the empire of the Mauryas rapidly fell to pieces: the central power declined, the outlying provinces asserted their independence, and about the year 185 B.C. the throne of Magadha passed to the Śuṅgas. Of this dynasty our knowledge is meagre in the extreme. Its founder was Pushyamitra, who had murdered Bṛihadratha, the last of the Mauryas, and it appears from Kālidāsa's drama the *Mālavikāgnimitra* that during Pushyamitra's reign his son, Agnimitra, was ruling as Viceroy over the Western dominions, with Vidiśā as his capital.

menid palaces of Persia; a group of rock-cut shrines in the Barābar hills in Bihar excavated by Aśoka and his successors for the Ājīvika ascetics; a small monolithic rail at Sārnāth; a throne in the interior of the temple at Bodh-Gayā; and some portions of stone umbrellas at Sāñchī and Sārnāth.

[1] See E. Loewy, *The Rendering of Nature in Early Greek Art*, English Translation by J. Fothergill, London, 1907.

Pushyamitra himself is reputed by later writers to have persecuted the Buddhist church, but his successors must have been more tolerant; for an epigraph on the gateway of the Buddhist stūpa at Bhārhut records its erection 'during the supremacy of the Śuṅgas,' and it is to the period of their supremacy, also, that several of the most important monuments at Sāñchī probably belong, namely: the Second and Third Stūpas (but not the gateway or ground-balustrade of the latter), the ground balustrade and stone casing of the Great Stūpa, which had originally been of brick and of much smaller dimensions,[1] and pillar No. 25. The sculpture of these and other monuments of the Śuṅga period is full of promise, but still in much the same primitive and undeveloped stage in which the sculpture of Greece was at the beginning of the 6th century B.C. The influence of 'frontality' and of the 'memory image' continues to obtrude itself; the relief-work is lacking in depth; the attitudes of the individual figures are as a rule stiff and awkward, and are generally portrayed as sharply defined silhouettes against a

[1] Another very interesting monument of the Śuṅga age is in the old city of Vidiśā (now Besnagar), about 5 miles from Sāñchi. It is a stone column with Persepolitan capital and massive abacus, once crowned by a figure of Garuḍa. An inscription on the column records that it was set up in honour of Vāsudeva (Kṛishṇa) by a Greek named Heliodorus, the son of Dion, who had come to Vidiśā as an ambassador from Antialcidas, King of Taxila, to King Kāsiputra Bhagabhadra, then in the fourteenth year of his reign. The inscription is of special value as proving that Heliodorus, a Greek, had adopted an Indian faith, and as evidencing the contact which was then (end of 2nd century B.C.) taking place between this part of India and the Greek kingdoms of the Punjab.

neutral background; and there is rarely any effort made at bringing them into close mutual relationship one with another. On the other hand, a great advance is effected during this period in the modelling of the contours and interior details, and in many other respects, also, art begins to profit from the direct observation of nature. Here and there, the reliefs of the Śuṅga period at Sāñchī, as well as at Bhārhut and Bodh-Gayā, reveal the influence which foreign, and especially Hellenistic ideas, were exerting on India through the medium of the contemporary Greek colonies in the Punjab; but the art of these reliefs is essentially indigenous in character and, though stimulated and inspired by extraneous teaching, is in no sense mimetic. Its national and independent character is attested not merely by its methodical evolution on Indian soil, but by the wonderful sense of decorative beauty which pervaded it and which from first to last has been the heritage of Indian art.

THE ĀNDHRAS

The power of the Śuṅgas endured for a little over a century, *i.e.*, until about the year 70 B.C., but whether they were supplanted by the Kānvas or the Andhras, is open to question. The Andhras had long been dominant in the west and south of India, and there are reasons for inferring that they extended their sway over Eastern Mālwā at least two or three decades before the beginning of the Christian era. It was under their dynasty that the early school of Indian art achieved its zenith, and that the most splendid

of the Sāñchī structures were erected, *viz.*, the four gateways of the Great Stūpa, and the single gateway of the Third Stūpa, all five of which must have been set up within a few decades of one another. On the Southern Gateway of the Great Stūpa (the earliest of the five) is a donative inscription recording the gift of one of its architraves by a certain Ānaṁda, foreman of the artisans of the Andhra king Śrī Śātakarṇi. Unfortunately for the identification of this king, the title of Śātakarṇi was borne by many members of this dynasty, and it is not possible to determine which particular one is here designated. Hitherto he has generally been identified with the Śrī Śātakarṇi who was reigning in the middle of the second century B.C.[1] and who is mentioned in the Nānāghāṭ and Hāthigumphā inscriptions; but this view conflicts, not only with what is now known of the history of Eastern Mālwā (which in the second century B.C. was ruled by the Śuṅgas and not by the Andhras), but with the history also of early Indian plastic art, which has recently been established on a much firmer basis. It may now be regarded as practically certain that the king referred to is one of the Śātakarṇis who appear later in the Paurāṇic lists, and we shall not be far wrong if we assign his reign to the middle or latter half of the first century B.C.

[1] See Rapson, *Cat. of the Coins of the Andhra Dynasty, etc.*, p. XXIII sq.

Of the monumental art of this period the gateways of Sāñchī are by far the most important survivals. Between the times when the ground balustrade of Stūpa 2 and the earliest[1] of these gateways were erected, it is probable that not more than a few decades intervened, yet the advance made in relief work during this short period is most striking. In the decoration of the gateways there is little of the clumsy, immature workmanship that characterizes the balustrade. Though they exhibit considerable variety in their composition and technical treatment, their style generally is maintained at a relatively high level. They are manifestly the work of experienced artists, who had freed themselves almost entirely from the 'memory pictures' of primitive art, and had learnt how to portray the figures in free and easy postures, how to compose them in natural and convincing groups, how to give depth and a sense of perspective to the picture, and how to express their meaning both dramatically and sincerely. That Hellenistic and Western Asiatic art affected the early Indian School during the Andhra even more intimately than it had done during the Śuṅga period, is evident alike from the increasing number of foreign motifs and from the phenomenally rapid advance made in the matter of technique by the sculptors of Mālwā. But though western art evidently played a valuable role in the evolution of the early

[1] *i.e.*, the South Gateway.

Indian School, we must be careful not to exaggerate its importance. The artists of early India were quick, with the versatility of all true artists, to profit by the lessons which others had to teach them; but there is no more reason in calling their creations Persian or Greek, than there would be in calling the modern fabric of St. Paul's Italian. The art which they practised was essentially a national art, having its root in the heart and in the faith of the people, and giving eloquent expression to their spiritual beliefs and to their deep and intuitive sympathy with nature. Free alike from artificiality and idealism, its purpose was to glorify religion, not by seeking to embody spiritual ideas in terms of form, as the mediæval art of India was afterwards to do, but by telling the story of Buddhism in the simplest and most expressive language which the chisel of the sculptor could command; and it was just because of its simplicity and transparent sincerity that it voiced so truthfully the soul of the people, and still continues to make an instant appeal to our feelings.

THE KSHAHARĀTAS

The rule of the Andhras in Eastern Mālwā was interrupted for a few decades by that of the Kshaharātas, probably towards the end of the first century, but it was re-established about A.D. 125 by Gautamīputra Śrī Śātakarṇi, and survived until about A.D. 150, when it was finally overthrown by the Great Satrap Rudradāman, after which Sāñchī and Vidiśā remained

THE WESTERN KSHATRAPAS

in possession of the Western Kshatrapas[1] until the close of the fourth century, when both Mālwā and Surāshṭra were annexed to the Gupta Empire.

The Kshatrapas of Western India, including the family of the Kshaharātas as well as the later Satraps, were of foreign origin and, as their name[2] implies, were in the position of feudatories to a supreme power, that power being, first the Scytho-Parthian, and later the Kushān empire of the North-West. In Eastern Mālwā itself these Satraps do not appear on the scene until after the establishment of the Kushān Empire, and the only remains at Sāñchī in which any connexion with the suzerain power of the north can be traced are a few sculptures in the Kushān style from Mathurā, one of which bears an inscription of the year 28, in the reign of the King Shāhi Vāsishka.

The Gupta or early mediæval period

THE IMPERIAL GUPTAS

Although the rapid expansion of the Gupta power under Samudragupta had brought the Western Kshatrapas into contact with it as early as the middle of

[1] Coins of the following Kshatrapa kings have been found at Sāñchī: Vijayasena, Rudrasena II, Viśvasiṁha Bhartṛidāman, Viśvasena, Rudrasiṁha II, Rudrasena III.

[2] The title 'Kshatrapa' (=Greek σατράπης) signified in India, as in Persia, a viceroy of the 'King of Kings'. The higher title of *mahākshatrapa* or 'Great Satrap' was often borne by the ruling Satrap, while his heir-apparent was styled 'Kshatrapa'. The Western Kshatrapas appear to have been known commonly to the Indians as Śakas. *Cf.* Rapson, *op. cit.*, p. C. and p. CL f.

the fourth century, it was not until the close of that century that the actual annexation of Eastern and Western Mālwā was achieved by Chandragupta II. An echo of this emperor's conquest occurs in an inscription carved on the balustrade of the Great Stūpa, dated in the year 93 of the Gupta era, that is, in A.D. 412-13. It records the gift by one of Chandragupta's officers named Āmrakārdava, apparently a man of very high rank, of a village called Īśvaravāsaka and of a sum of money to the Ārya-Saṅgha or community of the faithful at the great *vihāra* or convent of Kākanāda-boṭa, for the purpose of feeding mendicants (*bhikshus*) and maintaining lamps.[1]

BUDHAGUPTA AND BHĀNUGUPTA

In A.D. 413 Kumāragupta succeeded Chandragupta II, and was himself succeeded by Skandagupta in 455. It was in the reign of the latter emperor that the Gupta Empire was overrun by invading hosts of White Huns, and shorn of parts of its north-western dominions. Eastern Mālwā, however, was still unconquered in the reign of Skandagupta's nephew, Budhagupta, and it was not

[1] *Cf.* Fleet, *C. I. I.*, III, No. 4; Allan, *Cat. Gupta Coins*, p. XXXV. The Gupta occupation of Vidiśā is also attested by two epigraphs in the caves of the Udayagiri hill, four miles from Sāñchī. One of them records the dedication made by a feudatory mahārāja during the reign of Chandragupta II in A.D. 401 (Fleet, *C. I. I.*, III, p. 25); the other commemorates the excavation of the cave by a minister of Chandragupta, who came here in company with the king, who was 'seeking to conquer the whole world.' Fleet, *ibid*, p. 36. *Cf.* Rapson, *op. cit.*, pp. CL ff.

until after A.D. 510 when a Gupta prince Bhānugupta is known to have held eastern Malwa that it became feudatory[1] to the Hun King, Toramāṇa.

THE GUPTA AGE

The rule of the Guptas lasted for little more than a hundred and fifty years, but it marks in many respects the most brilliant and striking of all epochs in Indian history. It was the age when the thought and genius of the Indian people awakened, and when there was an outburst of mental activity such as has never since been equalled. What precisely were the causes which underlay this sudden development of the national intellect, we cannot say, any more than we can say what brought about similar developments in the golden age of Greece or in Italy during the Renaissance. Possibly, contact with other civilisations may have had something to do with it; for during this epoch there was close intercourse with the Sasanian Empire of Persia, and there was intercourse also with China and the Roman Empire. Possibly, too, the invasions of barbarian races and the sufferings they inflicted may have been contributing factors; for Northern India had suffered long beneath the yoke of

[1] Bhānugupta is mentioned in an inscription of A.D. 510-11, which commemorates a chief named Goparāja, who fell in 'a very famous battle' while figating by the side of Bhānugupta. The battle referred to may be the one in which Bhānugupta was defeated by Toramāṇa.

the Kushāns, as well as of the Parthians and Scythians. Whatever the causes may have been, the effects of the new intellectual vitality were conspicuous and far-reaching. In the political sphere they resulted in resuscitating the Imperial idea, which had been dormant since the time of the Mauryas, and the outcome of this idea was the consolidation of an empire which embraced the whole of Northern India as far south as the Narmadā river. In the sphere of religion, the new activity found expression in the revival of Brahmanism, and along with Brahmanism, in the revival of Sanskrit, which was the sacred language of the Brahmans. It was during this period that Kālidāsa—the Shakespeare of India—wrote his immortal plays,[1] and that other famous dramas were produced; and during this period, also, that the Purāṇas were finally redacted, that the laws of Manu took their present form, and that mathematics and astronomy reached their highest perfection. Thus, the Gupta age marked a re-awakening—a true 'Renaissance'—of the Indian intellect; and the new intellectualism was reflected in architecture and the formative arts as much as in other spheres of knowledge and thought. Indeed, it is precisely in their intellectual qualities—in their logical thought and logical beauty—that the architecture and sculpture of the Gupta age stand pre-eminent

[1]The country round Vidiśā must have been well-known to Kālidāsa, some passages in whose dramas may well have been inspired by the monuments of Sāñchī.

in the history of Indian art, and that they remind us in many respects of the creations of Greece eight hundred years earlier or of Italy a thousand years later.

GUPTA ART

Of early Indian art the keynotes, as I have already noticed, were spontaneous naturalism and simplicity. In the more advanced and cultured age of the Guptas these qualities were brought under the constraint of reason, and art became more formal, more self-conscious and more complex. Necessarily it lost much of the naïveté and charm of the earlier work, but it gained in qualities which appealed to the conscious intellect as well as to the subconscious æsthetic sense: in symmetry and proportion, for example; in the structural propriety of its forms; in the reasoned restraint of ornament and in the definition of detail. In another important feature, also, the art of the Gupta period differed radically from all that had gone before. For, whereas the Early School had regarded the formative arts merely as a valuable medium in which to narrate the legends and history of its faith, in the Gupta age a closer contact was established between thought and art, and sculptor and painter alike essayed to give articulate expression to their spiritual and emotional ideas by translating them into terms of form and colour. The types of the Buddha which this age produced and in which it succeeded in combining beauty of definition with a spirit of calm and peaceful contemplation are among the greatest contributions which India has made to the World's Art.

The 'Renaissance' of India did not come to an end with the break-up of the Gupta power, nor was it limited by the geographical boundaries of that Empire. Its influence was felt, not only throughout the length and breadth of India, but in countries far beyond, and the strength which it had gathered in the fourth and fifth centuries did not exhaust itself until the close of the seventh. These three centuries of India's Renaissance (*circa* A.D. 350-650) are commonly known as the 'Gupta period,' though during the latter half of this period the Guptas themselves were reduced to a petty principality in Eastern India.

For two generations Northern India lay under the yoke of the Huns, and it was not until A.D. 528 that their power was shattered by the victories of Bālāditya and Yaśodharman over Mihiragula—the blood-thirsty and ruthless successor of Toramāṇa, who well earned for himself the title of 'the Attila of India.' Then followed a period of quiescence, while the country was recovering from the savagery of the barbarians. During this period, which lasted until the beginning of the 7th century, there was no paramount authority in Northern India capable of welding together the petty states, and the latter were probably too weak and exhausted by their sufferings to make a bid for imperial dominion.[1] The ideals, THE HUNS

[1] About A.D. 550 Sāñchī may have been included in the dominions of the Kalachuri dynasty. Coins of Krishṇarāja of that dynasty have been found at Bhilsā (*A. S. R.*, 1913-14, p. 214).

however, of Gupta culture, though necessarily weakened, were still vital forces in the life of the people, continuing to manifest themselves alike in their science, their literature and their art; and it needed but the agency of a strong, benevolent government to bring them once more to their full fruition. In Northern India, this agency was found in the government of Harsha of Thānesar (A.D. 606-647),[1] who within five and a half years of his accession established an empire almost coterminous with that of the Guptas, and for thirty-five years more governed it with all the energy and brilliancy that had distinguished their rule. The art of the 6th and 7th centuries is represented at Sāñchī mainly by detached images, which the visitor will find described in the catalogue of the local museum. For the most part, they are infused with the same spirit of calm contemplation, of almost divine peace, as the images of the fourth and fifth centuries, but they have lost the beauty of definition which the earlier artists strove to preserve, and, though still graceful and elegant, tend to become stereotyped and artificial. The sculpture of this age, as we know from the caves at Ajaṇṭā, was not on so high a level as painting, and as a means of decoration was probably less popular

[1] At this time Eastern Mālwā was held by the later Guptas, of whom Devagupta and Mādhavagupta are the most prominent. Devagupta met his death at the hands of Rājyavardhana, the elder brother of Harsha; Mādhavagupta became a feudatory of the latter.

than the sister art. At Sāñchī, unfortunately, no trace is left of the paintings which once adorned the monasteries and chapels, and only those who know the grandeur of the Ajaṇṭā decorations, can appreciate what a vast difference the presence of such paintings must have made to these buildings.

Later Mediæval Period

From the time of Harsha onwards, until A.D. 1023, when the Punjab was occupied by Mahmūd of Ghazna, Northern India was left practically immune from foreign aggression[1] and free therefore to work out her own destiny. During these four centuries no need was felt of a central power to oppose the common foe; there was no voluntary cohesion among the many petty states; and, with one single exception, no sovereign arose vigorous enough to impose his will upon his neighbours. It was a period, in fact, of stagnation, when the energy of the country was largely dissipated in internecine strife. The only ruler, so far as we know, who rose superior to his age and surroundings was Mihira Bhoja of Kanauj, who between the years A.D. 840-90 made himself master of an empire which extended from the Sutlej to Bihar and which was maintained intact by his successors Mahendrapāla and Bhoja II. In this empire, Eastern Mālwā, which was then ruled by the Paramāra dynasty, is known to

MIHIRA BHOJA OF KANAUJ

THE PARAMĀRAS OF MĀLWĀ

[1] *Cf.* Vincent Smith, *E. H. I.*, pp. 322 and 357.

have been included at the close of the 9th century, but the power of the Pratihāras of Kanauj rapidly declined during the early decades of the following century, and by the time that Rājā Muñja (A.D. 974-95) came to the throne, Eastern Mālwā appears to have asserted its independence and to have become the predominant state in Central India. Both Muñja and his nephew, the celebrated Bhoja, who reigned over Mālwā for more than 50 years (A.D. 998-1053), were liberal patrons of literature and art, and themselves writers of no small ability. A reputed monument of the latter king, that may have preserved his name, was the great Bhojpur lake to the S. E. of Bhopal, which was drained in the fifteenth century by order of one of the Muhammadan kings. With the death of Bhoja, about A.D. 1053, the power of the Paramāras declined, and, though the dynasty survived at Dhār, Mālwā passed during the twelfth century into the possession of the Chālukya kings of Anhilwāra.[1] With the subsequent history of this district we need not here concern ourselves, for at Sāñchī there are no Buddhist edifices of so late a date, and it is probable that the Buddhist religion, which had already been largely merged into Hinduism, died out in Central India about that time.

THE CHĀLUKYA KINGS OF ANHILWĀRA

LATER MEDIÆVAL ART

Of the architecture and sculpture of this Later Mediæval period there are various examples at Sāñchī, including the whole group of structures on the Eastern

[1] The province may have been afterwards regained for a time by the Paramāras; at any rate, it was in the possession of Devapāla of Dhār (A.D. 1217-1240).

terrace, numbered from 43 to 50, besides a vast array of detached carvings, small votive stūpas, statues and the like. One and all bear witness to the rapidly declining purity both of the Buddhist religion and of Buddhist art, but it is in Temple 45, which is by far the most pretentious monument of this epoch, that the visitor will most quickly recognise the overwhelming influence which Hinduism had exercised on Buddhism before the 11th century A.D., and it is in the same temple that he will best appreciate the wide gulf which separates this architecture from that of the Gupta age. During the later mediæval times architecture aspired to greater magnificence and display, but what it gained in grandeur (and the gain in this respect was undeniably great), it lost in its æsthetic quality. There is no longer the same sense of proportion and of balance between form and ornament, which was so conspicuous in Gupta work. The purely decorative impulse which the Gupta artist had kept under the control of reason, reasserts itself, and ornament is allowed to run riot, destroying thereby the unity and coherence of the design. Carving loses its plasticity and vitality, and cult images become stereotyped and lifeless—mere symbols, as it were, of religion, devoid alike of spirituality and of anatomical definition.

Sāñchī in modern times

From the 13th century onwards Sāñchī appears to have been left desolate and deserted. The city of

Vidiśā had fallen to ruin during the Gupta period and had been superseded by Bhilsā (Bhailasvāmin); but, though the latter town played an important part in local history during Muhammadan times, and though it was thrice sacked by Moslem conquerors and its temples destroyed for a fourth time in the reign of Aurangzeb, yet amid all this devastation the monuments of Sāñchī, in spite of their prominent position on a hill only five miles away, were left unscathed, and when rediscovered by Gen. Taylor in 1818, proved to be in a remarkably good state of preservation. At that time three of the gateways of the Great Stūpa were still standing erect, and the southern one was lying where it had fallen; the great dome was intact; and a portion of the balustrade on the summit was still *in situ*.[1] The second and third stūpas were also well preserved, and there were remains of eight minor stūpas, besides other buildings, in the vicinity of the Second Stūpa, but no record of their condition exists. The beauty and unique character of these monuments was immediately recognised, and from 1819 onwards there appeared various notes, illustrations and monographs descriptive of their architecture and sculpture, though too often marred by the fanciful ideas or inaccuracies of the authors.[2] Most notable among these works were

[1] See J. Burgess, *The Great Stūpa at Sāñchī-Kānākheḍā*, *J. R. A. S.*, Jan. 1902, pp. 29-45, where a succinct account is given of the history of the site since 1818.

[2] A list of these publications is given at the end of this guide-book.

Cunningham's *Bhilsa Topes* (1854), Fergusson's *Tree and Serpent Worship* (1868) and Gen. Maisey's *Sánchi and its Remains* (1892). But the widespread interest which the dscovery and successive accounts of the stūpas excited, proved lamentably disastrous to the monuments themselves ; for the site quickly became a hunting-ground for treasure-seekers and amateur archæologists, who, in their efforts to probe its hidden secrets or to enrich themselves from the spoils supposed to be hidden there, succeeded in half demolishing and doing irreparable harm to most of the structures. Thus, in 1822, Capt. Johnson, the Assistant Political Agent in Bhopal, opened the Great Stūpa from top to bottom on one side, and left a vast breach in it, which was the cause of much subsequent damage to the body of the structure and of the collapse of the Western Gateway and portions of the enclosing balustrade. The same blundering excavator was probably responsible, also, for the partial destruction of the Second and Third Stūpas, which until then had been in perfect repair. Then, in 1851, Major (afterwards Gen. Sir) Alexander Cunningham and Capt. F. C. Maisey together contributed to the general spoliation of the site by hasty excavations in several of the monuments, and, though they succeeded in recovering a most valuable series of relic caskets[1] from the Second and Third Stūpas, their discoveries scarcely compensated for the damage entailed in their operations. During all these years the idea of repairing and preserving

[1] See pp. 91 & 149, *infra*.

these incomparable structures for the sake of future generations seems never to have entered anyone's head, and, though in 1869 (as an indirect result of a request by Napoleon III for one of the richly carved gates) casts of the East Gate were prepared and presented to the principal national museums of Europe, it was not until 1881, when still more havoc had been wrought by the neighbouring villagers or by the ravages of the ever encroaching jungle, that the Government bethought itself of safeguarding the original structures. In that year Major Cole, then Curator of Ancient Monuments, cleared the hill-top of vegetation and filled the great breach in the Main Stūpa made by Capt. Johnson nearly sixty years before, and during the two following years he re-erected at the expense of the Imperial Government the fallen gates on the south and west, as well as the smaller gate in front of the Third Stūpa. No attempt, however, was made by him to preserve the other monuments which were crumbling to ruin, to exhume from their débris the monasteries, temples and other edifices which cover the hill-top around the Great Stūpa, or to protect the hundreds of loose sculptures and inscriptions lying on the site. These tasks, which involved operations far more extensive than any previously undertaken, were left for the writer to carry out between 1912 and 1919. The buildings which were at that time visible on the hill-top were the Great-Stūpa, Temple 31, and parts of Buildings 43, 45 and 46. For the rest, the whole site was buried beneath such

deep accumulations of débris and so overgrown with jungle, that the very existence of the majority of the monuments had not even been suspected. The first step, therefore, was to clear the whole enclave of the thick jungle growth in which it was enveloped. Then followed the excavation of the areas to the south and east of the great Stūpa, where it was evident that a considerable depth of débris lay over the natural rock, and where, accordingly, there was reason to hope (a hope which has since been abundantly justified) that substantial remains might be found. The buildings which have been exposed to view in the southern part of the site are for the most part founded on the living rock; but those in the eastern area constitute only the uppermost stratum, beneath which there still lie buried the remains of various earlier structures. These I was well content to leave to the spade of some future explorer, having satisfied myself by trial diggings at different points that they are mainly monastic dwellings similar in character to those already brought to light in other parts of the enclave and likely, therefore, to add but little to our present knowledge of the monuments.

The third task was to put one and all of the monuments into as thorough and lasting a state of repair as was practicable. Most important and most difficult of achievement among the many measures which this task entailed have been: first, the dismantling and reconstruction of the whole south-west quadrant of the Great Stūpa, which was threatening to collapse, and

the restoration of the stairway, berm and harmikā balustrades; secondly, the preservation of Temple 18, the ponderous columns of which were leaning at perilous angles, and had to be reset in the perpendicular and established on secure foundations; and, thirdly, the repair of Temple 45, which had reached the last stage of decay and was a menace to anyone entering its shrine. Other measures that are also deserving of particular mention, are the rebuilding of the long retaining wall between the central and eastern terraces; the reconstruction of the dome, balustrades and crowning umbrella of the Third Stūpa; the re-roofing and general repair of Temples 17, 31 and 32; the effective drainage (involving the relaying of the old fragmentary pavement) of the area around the Great Stūpa; and the improvement and beautifying of the site generally by roughly levelling and turfing it and by the planting of trees and flowering creepers.

Finally, there remained the question of protecting the numerous movable antiquities which lay scattered about the site. For this purpose a small but adequate museum was built, where sculptures, inscriptions and architectural fragments could all be duly arranged and catalogued, and where the visitor could find plans, photographs and other materials to assist him in the study of these unique monuments.

CHAPTER III

THE GREAT STŪPA[1]

The foregoing chapter will, I hope, have served to give the visitor such information as he needs regarding the history of Sāñchī, the character of the various schools of art represented here, and the measures taken in recent years for the exploration and preservation of the site. I shall now return to the summit of the hill and resume my description of the monuments, with the Great Stūpa as my starting point. Primarily, let it be explained, stūpas were funeral mounds or tumuli, and there is no reason to suppose that prior

[1] "Tope" is a corrupt Anglo-Indian word derived from *thūpa*, the Prākrit form of stūpa. In Burma, a stūpa is commonly known as a "*pagoda*", and in Ceylon as a "*dagaba*"—a Sinhalese word derived from "*dhātu*"=a "relic" and *garbha*="receptacle" or "shrine". In Nepal, it is called a *chaitya*, a word which, like stūpa, originally meant a heap or tumulus (*chitā*), but subsequently came to mean a sanctuary of any kind. In the country round Sāñchī a stūpa is known as *bhiṭā* (a mound) and the name of the Great Stūpa is *Sās bāhū kā bhiṭā* "the mound of the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law". For the details of the construction and dedication of a stūpa, see *Mahāvaṁsa*, p. 169 sqq; Divyāvadāna, p. 244; Cunningham, *Bhilsa Topes*, Ch. XIII; H. A. Oldfield, *Sketches from Nepal*, II, pp. 210-12; Foucher, *L'Art gréco-bouddhique*, pp. 94-98.

to the time of Aśoka they had acquired any specially sacred character among the Buddhists. From the time, however, that Aśoka divided up the body-relics of the Buddha and erected stūpas to enshrine them in all the principal cities of his realm (he is credited with having erected 84,000 of them!), the relic-stūpa became an object of cult-worship, and later on stūpas were erected to enshrine holy relics other than those of the Buddha himself or even to mark some specially sacred spot; and in no long time the mere dedication of a stūpa, with or without relics, came to be regarded as a work of merit which would bring its author a step nearer to salvation.

DESCRIPTION AND HISTORY

As it now stands, the Great Stūpa (Pl. I) consists of an almost hemispherical dome (*aṇḍa*), truncated near the top and surrounded at its base by a lofty terrace (*medhi*), which served in ancient days as a processional path (*pradakshiṇa patha*), access to which was provided by a double flight of steps (*sopāna*) built against it on the southern side. Encircling the monument on the ground level is a second procession path, enclosed by a massive balustrade (*vedikā*) of stone. This balustrade, which is of plain design unrelieved by carvings of any kind, is divided into four quadrants by entrances set approximately at the cardinal points, each one of which is adorned by a gateway (*toraṇa*) lavishly enriched with reliefs on both the inner and outer sides. It has commonly been supposed that the Great Stūpa was erected, just as it stands, together

with the column near the Southern Gateway, in the reign of the Maurya Emperor Aśoka, that the balustrade around its base was approximately contemporary with the body of the building, and that the gateways were erected in the course of the 2nd century B.C. These suppositions have proved to be erroneous. The original stūpa, which was most probably built by Aśoka a little before the column was erected, was a structure of brick of about half the diameter of the present stūpa, and it was not until about a century later that this original stūpa was encased in stone and brought to its present dimensions, and that the balustrade was built around its base ;[1] while it was not until the latter part of the first century before the Christian era that the four gateways were erected.[2] Of the form and construction of the original stūpa little is known, as it had evidently suffered much wanton damage between the time of its erection and the time when the stone envelope was added. It is noteworthy, however, that the bricks used in it measure $16'' \times 10'' \times 3''$, and thus correspond approximately in size with the bricks employed in other structures of the Maurya epoch. It may also be inferred that it was roughly hemispherical in shape, with a raised terrace encompassing its base and a wooden railing and a stone umbrella crowning its summit.

ORIGINAL BRICK STŪPA OF AŚOKA

[1] In the time of Aśoka, when the brick stūpa was built, the floor level was some 4 feet lower than in the Śuṅga period, when the balustrade was constructed.

[2] For the history of this stūpa in detail, see the writer's account in *The Monuments of Sāñchī*, Part I.

Several pieces of an umbrella, probably belonging to this stūpa, were found in the débris on the plateau. They are relieved by most delicately defined ribs radiating on their under side, the workmanship displaying all that exquisite precision which characterises every known specimen of the masons' craft in the Maurya age, and which has probably never been surpassed in the stone carving of any country.

ADDITION OF STONE ENVELOPE

With the addition of the stone envelope the diameter of the stūpa was increased to over 120 feet and its height to about 54 feet.[1] This later envelope to the dome was constructed by the simple and natural process of building a thick encircling wall at a given distance from the original structure, and, as it rose course by course, filling in the interval between the two with heavy rubble stones. Precisely the same process was, as we shall presently see, adopted in the enlargement of the Apsidal Temple 40, which was effected about the same time. Some writers have described the Great Stūpa as a dome resting on a lofty plinth, as if the plinth had been constructed before the dome was raised above it. This description is apt to be misleading; for the dome was first built in its entirety, with its sides carried down to the ground level, and the terrace was then added to it, without any bond between the masonry. Over the masonry courses of both dome and terrace was laid a thick coat of concrete,

[1] The word used in Pāli for enlarging a stūpa by the addition of one or more envelopes is *achchhāday*=" cover."

finished off, no doubt, with finer plaster and possibly embellished with swags or garlands in relief hanging from projecting horns. Broad patches of this concrete still adhere to the face of the stonework on three sides of the dome; on the fourth side (*i.e.*, in the south-west quadrant) it was broken away when the stūpa was opened by Captain Johnson in 1822.

Harmikā railing and crowning umbrella

When the body of the stūpa was complete, the first adjunct to be added to it was the indispensable railing and the umbrella on the summit, many pieces of which were recovered in the writer's excavations and have been restored to their original positions. They are of the same form but proportionately larger in scale than the balustrade and umbrella on the summit of Stūpa 3. Supporting the shaft of the umbrella was a pedestal (*harmikā*)[1] which in this case took the form of a heavy stone box, with a lid measuring 5 ft. 7 in. in diam. and 1 ft. 8 in. high, in which the relics were once preserved.

Ground balustrade

Following the crowning pinnacle and balustrade, the next addition to the stūpa was the massive balustrade (*vedikā*) on the ground level. As in the case of other balustrades and of the gateways, each of the stone posts (*thabha*), cross-bars (*sūci*), and copings (*ushṇīsha*) appear to have been gifts of different donors, whose names can still be seen incised in early Brāhmī characters upon

[1] *Harmikā*, a diminutive of *harmya*, lit. 'a small pavilion', in its technical sense means the pedestal on the top of a stūpa in which the shaft of the umbrella (*chhattrayashṭi*) was set.

them. From the fact that this balustrade was the gift of so many different people, Fergusson estimated that it must have taken at least a century to erect, but this estimate is wholly excessive; for there must have been large numbers of Buddhists flocking to the great city of Vidiśā and thence making pilgrimages to this sacred site, and it may well have been that the whole railing was completed in a single decade or less.

GUPTA INSCRIPTIONS

Although built of stone, the design of this balustrade is manifestly copied from a wooden prototype, and it is worthy of note that the joints between the coping stones are cut at the slant, as wood would naturally be cut, and not vertically, as one would expect stone to be. At the time when it was erected, architecture in this part of India was still mainly of wood, and the influence of wooden forms is visible in all the lithic construction of this age. Besides the many short donative records in early Brāhmī characters carved on this balustrade there are two later inscriptions of the Gupta period which possess considerable interest. The earlier of these is engraved on the top cross-bar (outside) in the second row immediately to the south of the East Gateway. It is dated in the Gupta era 93 (A.D. 412-13) and has already been noticed (p. 17 *supra*) in connection with the conquest of Eastern Mālwā by Chandragupta II. The second inscription, which is on the outside of the upper cross-bar in the fourth row to the south of the East Gateway, is dated in the year 131 (A.D. 450-51).

It records the gift by the lay-worshipper (*upāsikā*) Harisvāminī of certain sums of money to the Ārya-Saṅgha at the great vihāra of Kākanādaboṭa for the purpose of feeding one mendicant (*bhikshu*) day by day and of maintaining lamps in the "Jewel-house" and in the place where the images of the four Buddhas are seated, *i.e.*, in the *pradakshiṇa patha* of the Great Stūpa.

PROCESSIONAL PATH

The processional path (*pradakshiṇa patha*) inside this balustrade is paved with large stone slabs bearing votive records. It was around this path, as well as around the terrace above, that monks and lay-worshippers used to perform their *pradakshiṇa* or devotional walk, keeping the stūpa always on their right hand as they processed.[1]

STAIRWAY AND TERRACE BALUSTRADES

The third addition to the stūpa was the balustrade flanking the stairs and encompassing the terrace. This balustrade is relatively small and is distinguished from the ground balustrade by its more refined treatment and by the sculptures which decorate its upright pillars. The newel posts at the foot of the stairs, which were both imbedded in the ground and mortised to the kerb-stones, are longer than the other balusters and distinguished from them by relatively elaborate carving on three of their faces. The other balusters are fixed into a kerb-stone and are adorned on their outer face with one complete and two half medallions (*parichakra*),

[1] Buddhists usually process three times round a stūpa or shrine, but in obedience to vows or by way of penance they will perform 7, 14 or even 108 *pradakshiṇas*.

sculptured in relief with lotus and other floral or animal designs. The plainness of the inner face is relieved only at the top and bottom by two half discs devoid of carving.

It remains to add that in old days the balustrades and gateways of the Great Stūpa (to be described in the next chapter) were coloured red. The body of the Stūpa was probably white, with the garlands (if garlands there were) around the dome picked out in colour or gilt.

Who was responsible for the wanton destruction of the original brick stūpa of Aśoka and when precisely the great work of reconstruction was carried out, is not known, but it seems probable that the author of the former was Pushyamitra, the first of the Śuṅga kings (184-148 B.C.), who was notorious for his hostility to Buddhism, and that the restoration was affected by Agnimitra or his immediate successor. We shall see presently in connection with the Aśoka Pillar (p. 105) that hardly less than a century could have elapsed between the time when that pillar was erected (a few years after the stūpa) and the time when the ground balustrade was set up. On the other hand, it is clear from the style of the lettering employed in the early Brāhmī inscriptions on the ground balustrade that it must have been put up well before the close of the 2nd century B.C. We cannot, therefore, be far wrong if we refer it to the third quarter of that century.

CHAPTER IV

THE GATEWAYS OF THE GREAT STŪPA, ETC.

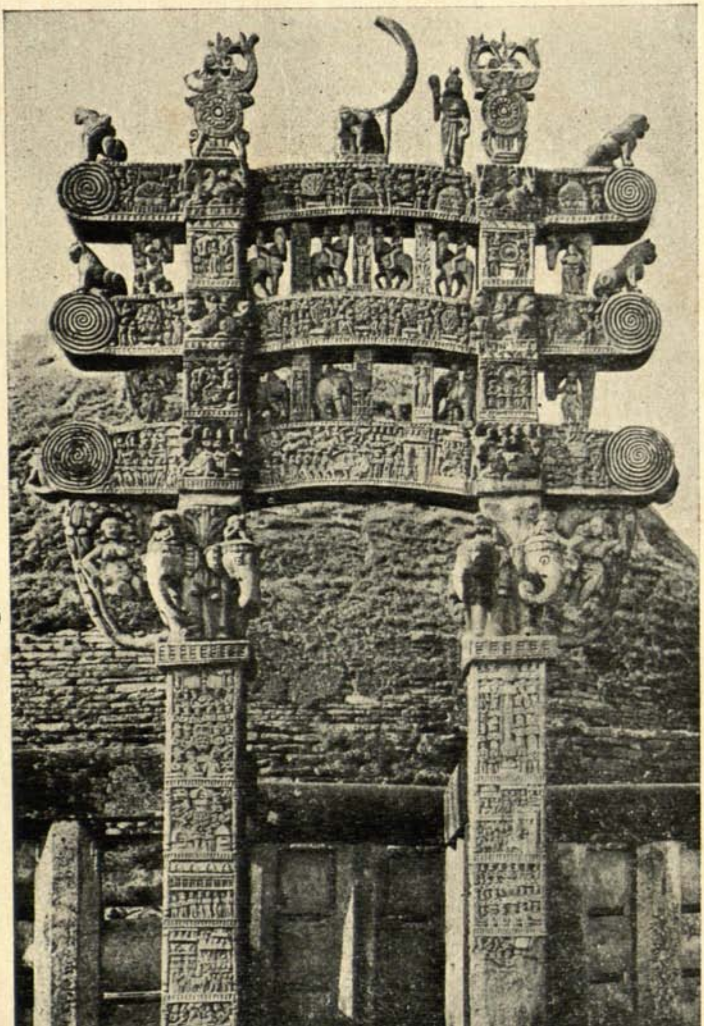
Chronological sequence and description

The last of the additions to this remarkable stūpa, and its crowning glory withal, are the elaborate and richly carved gateways or *toraṇas*, as they were called, which front the entrances between the four quadrants of the rail, and present a striking contrast with the massive simplicity of the structure behind them. The first of the four to be erected was the one at the South Entrance, in front of the steps by which the terrace was ascended, and then followed, in chronological order, the Northern, the Eastern and the Western.[1] It is

[1] At the time when the great balustrade was first constructed, each of its four entrances was screened by extending one side of the balustrade in front of it, like a barbican before a city gate. But when the *toraṇas* came to be erected, they could not with propriety be set sideways like the then existing gate, and accordingly a short balustrade of three pillars was added and another entrance formed at right angles to the former one. An examination of these four extensions reveals the significant fact that the two at the southern and northern entrances are in all respects similar to the original balustrade, the pillars being of the same height and cut, dressed and chamfered in the same way to a flat surface, while the two at the eastern and western entrances are not only less carefully adjusted and dressed, but are distinguished by their pillars being shorter and having a shallow concave chamfer.

probable, however that not many years intervened between the building of the Southern and Western gateways; for the right pillar of the latter was the gift of the same donor as the middle architrave of the former, *viz.*, of "Balamitra, the pulpil of Aya-Chuḍa" and the south pillar of the Eastern Gateway and the north pillar of the Western Gateway were also the gifts of the same donor: Nāgapiya, a banker of Achavada and resident of Kurāra. All four gateways were of similar design—the work of carpenters rather than of stone masons, and the marvel is that erections of this kind, constructed on principles wholly unsuited to work in stone, should have survived in such remarkable preservation for nearly two thousand years. The best preserved is the Northern (Pl. II), which still retains most of its ornamental figures and enables the visitor to reconstruct in his mind's eye the original appearance of them all. Each gateway was composed of two square pillars surmounted by capitals, which in their turn supported a superstructure of three architraves with volute ends. Separating the architraves from one another were four square blocks, or dies, set in pairs vertically above the capitals, and between each pair of blocks were three short uprights, the open spaces between them being occupied by a variety of figures in the round. The capitals were adorned with standing dwarfs or elephants or with the forefronts of lions[1] set back to back in

[1] The lions on the South gateway are manifestly copies, and very inferior copies, of the lions on the Aśoka column hard by. Observe that they are provided with five fully developed claws!



NORTH GATEWAY OF GREAT STŪPA

Persepolitan fashion; and springing from the same abacus as the capitals and acting as supports to the projecting ends of the lowest architraves were Caryatid figures of graceful and pleasing outline, though ill-designed to fulfil the functional purpose for which they were intended. These Caryatid figures were fairy spirits or *yakshiṇīs*, who played the part of guardians and were portrayed in the orthodox attitude holding on to the bough of a tree.[1] Similar fairies of smaller proportions stood on the architraves immediately above them, with lions or elephants set on the volutes at their sides, while in the other open spaces between the architraves were figures of horsemen, elephants and their riders, and lions, winged or otherwise. A curious feature of the horses and riders, as well as of one of the small *yakshiṇīs* mentioned above is that they were provided with two faces, so that they might look, Janus-like, in both directions. Finally, on the summit of the gateway, crowning and dominating all, stood the emblems so peculiarly distinctive of Buddhism: in the centre, the "Wheel of the Law" (*dharma-chakra*[2]) supported on elephants or lions and flanked on either side by a guardian (*yaksha*) holding a fly-whisk (*chaurī*) in his hand; and to right and left of the *yakshas*, the trident device (*triratna*)[3] which symbolizes the trinity of

[1] For this motif, *cf.* Vincent Smith, *History of Indian Art*, p. 380, where its western origin is discussed.

[2] For the meaning of *dharma-chakra*, see p. 45, *infra*.

[3] The origin of the *triratna* is to be found in the buffalo or bison horns which in prehistoric India, as in many other countries, were a symbol of divinity.

Buddhism—the *Buddha*, the *Dharma* (law) and the *Saṅgha* (religious order). For the rest, both pillars and superstructure were elaborately enriched with bas-reliefs illustrative of the *Jātaka* legends[1], or of scenes from the life of the Buddha[2], or of important events in the subsequent history of the Buddhist religion. Besides which, there are representations of the sacred trees and stūpas symbolical of Gautama Buddha and the preceding Mānushi Buddhas, of real or fabulous beasts and birds, of flying *Gandharvas*[3] (issuing from the ends of some of the architraves), and of many heraldic and floral devices of rich and varied conception.

[1] The doctrine of metempsychosis was a familiar one in India from very early times, and played an important part in the history of Buddhism. According to the Buddhist belief, Gautama had been born in all created forms (as man, god and animal) before he appeared on earth as the son of Śuddhodana. The Pāli work entitled the "Jātaka" contains 550 stories of these previous births. Each story opens with a preface setting forth the particulr incidents in the Buddha's life which led him to tell the birth-story, and at the conclusion of each the Buddha reveals the identity of the different actors in the story during their present births. Each story, moreover, is illustrated by one or more verses (*gāthās*) put into the mouth of Buddha either in his last life or when he was still a Bodhisattva in one of his previous lives. The Jātakas are an inexhaustible storehouse of fables, of the greatest possible interest in connection with Indian folklore and civilization. At what time they were reduced to their present systematic form, is not certain; but that they were widely known in the second century before our era, is evident from the many illustrations of them which occur among the Bhārhut sculptures. *Cf. The Jātaka*, Ed. by Cowell, Vol. I, preface; Grünwedel, *Buddhist Art in India*, p. 37; and Cunningham, *The Stūpa of Bharhut*.

[2] For a brief sketch of the life of the Buddha, see Appendix, p. 157.

[3] The *Gandharvas* (Pāli, *Gandhabba*) were the musicians of Indra, who joined with their master in serving and worshipping the Buddha. Grünwedel, *Buddhist Art*, p. 47 and note 2.

Most of the inscriptions carved here and there on the gateways record, like those on the balustrades, the names of the pious individuals or guilds who contributed to their erection, or take the form of imprecatory curses on anyone so impious as to appropriate the gateways to the use of an unorthodox sect. Not one of them says a word, unfortunately, of the scenes and figures delineated, the interpretation of which is all the more difficult owing to the practice, universal in the Early School of Indian Art, of never portraying the Buddha in bodily form, but of indicating his presence merely by some symbol, such as his foot-prints or the throne on which he sat, or the sacred tree associated with his enlightenment. Thanks, however, to the light afforded by the sculptures of Bhārhut[1] with their clear explicit titles, and thanks, also, to the brilliant labours of M. Foucher,[2] the meaning of the majority of these reliefs has now been placed beyond dispute, and it will probably not be long before the meaning of the few remaining ones becomes equally clear.

INSCRIPTIONS

INTERPRETATION OF SCULPTURES

Most of the scenes depicted in the reliefs are more or less elaborate compositions and differ considerably on the four gateways. These will be described, one by one, in detail. On the other hand, there are a number

RELIEFS FREQUENTLY REPEATED

[1] See Cunningham, *The Stūpa of Bharhut*.

[2] See Preface, p. iv. To M. Foucher I am indebted for a lengthy and most valuable note on the iconography of these reliefs, of which I have made free use in the interpretations which follow.

of simple decorative devices or symbolical objects and figures which are many times repeated but which it would be superfluous to describe more than once. These decorative or symbolical reliefs fall into four categories.

Four great events in the Buddha's life

In the first category are the reliefs relating to the four great events in the life of the Buddha, namely: his Birth, his Enlightenment, his First Sermon, and his Death. These occur mainly on the square dies and narrow uprights between the architraves.

The Birth.—The traditional symbol in India of all miraculous births is the lotus, and on the Sāñchī gateways this symbol is present on all the panels representing the Buddha's birth. In some panels the birth is symbolized simply by a bunch of lotuses set in a vase (*bhadra ghaṭa*). In other panels the figure of Māyā, the mother of the Buddha, is seen seated, Indian fashion, on one of the full blown lotus blooms. In others, again, she is flanked by the two Nāgas (here in the form of elephants), who, according to the Buddhist scriptures, bathed the new born babe, but are here shown pouring water over Māyā herself.[1] Finally, and in a manner still more in conformity with the Buddhist texts, Māyā is shown in a standing posture ready for the birth. It only remained for the artists of the Gandhāra school

[1] The figure of Māyā in these panels has usually been identified as that of Lakshmī, the Goddess of luck. That it here represents Māyā, though the type may have been equally that of Lakshmī, was first recognised by M. Foucher.

of the North-West to portary the infant Buddha issuing from her right side. In the Early Indian school this further development was precluded, since the Buddha himself, as stated above, was never portrayed in bodily form.

The Enlightenment.—The *Saṁbodhi* or "perfect enlightenment" of the Buddha, which took place beneath the famous tree at Bodh-Gayā is represented quite simply by a throne beneath a *pīpal* tree[1] (*ficus religiosa* : =Skr. *aśvattha*) or by the tree alone, with one or more umbrellas and streamers to denote its sanctity. In the more developed panels, worshippers are seen bringing offerings or in an attitude of adoration; and in the still more elaborate reliefs, as we shall presently see, Māra and his hosts of demons, or crowds of worshipping animals and Nāgas, are depicted.

The First Sermon.—The technical expression for Buddha's first sermon in the Deer Park (Mṛigadāva) near Benares is *dharma-chakra-pravartana*, which literally means "the turning of the Wheel of the Law." Hence the symbol of the first sermon became a wheel, which is sometimes set on a throne, sometimes on a

[1] The emblem of a tree serves in the Sāñchī reliefs to symbolize the Buddha on other occasions besides that of his enlightenment, and the seven previous Buddhas are also symbolized by their particular trees. It was these tree symbols, often repeated, that Fergusson mistook for examples of tree worship. See his *Tree and Serpent Worship, passim.*

column[1]—a copy no doubt of the lion column[2] which the Emperor Aśoka set up in the Deer Park. More specifically, the locality of the Deer Park is indicated by two deer.

The Death.—The Death or *mahāparinirvāṇa* of the Buddha is represented by his stūpa or "funeral tumulus," with attending worshippers, both human and divine. Stūpas too, as well as trees, are employed by the sculptor of Sāñchī as emblems of the Seven Buddhas of the past.

YAKSHAS

In the second category are the figures of "Yakshas" or guardians, the male counterparts of the Yakshiṇīs mentioned above. A pair of these Yakshas was carved in bold relief on each of the four gateways, one facing the other on the inner sides of the two pillars. These, probably, were intended to represent the Rulers of the Four Quarters (Lokapālas), each with an attendant Yaksha, namely: Kubera or Vaiśravaṇa, the god of wealth, on the north; Virūḍhaka, Chief of the Kumbhāṇḍas, on the south; Virūpāksha, Chief of the Nāgas, on the west; and Dhṛitarāshṭra, Chief of the Gandharvas, on the East.[3] Other reliefs of Yakshas, on a smaller scale, are found on the narrow uprights between the architraves.

[1] Sometimes a lion column is depicted without the wheel, and many also symbolize the First Sermon.

[2] Now in the museum at Sārnāth.

[3] *Cf.* Cunningham, *The Stūpa of Bharhut*, pp. 19-22; Grünwedel, *Buddhist Art in India*, p. 136.

The third category comprises figures of animals or birds, as a rule arranged schematically in pairs. The most conspicuous positions occupied by the animals are on the faces of the "false capitals" or applied panels, which are ranged in pairs vertically above the true capitals and have the effect of dividing each architrave into three sections. The animals with which these "false capitals" are adorned are both real and legendary, and are sometimes with riders, sometimes without, sometimes caparisoned, sometimes not. They include goats, horses, bulls, camels, elephants, lions and leogriffs; among them the leogriffs and winged lions are clearly traceable to a Western Asiatic origin. To the two riders on one of the false capitals of the East Gateway (lowest architrave: inner face: north end) a special interest attaches from the fact that they appear to represent people from a cold climate, perhaps from the North-West Frontier or Nepal. Figures of elephants and peacocks are also employed to decorate some of the projecting ends of the architraves (*e.g.*, East Gateway: outer face: middle and lowest architraves). Both of them no doubt possess a special religious or other significance; in the peacocks, perhaps, there is an allusion to Aśoka, since this bird was the emblem of the Maurya dynasty.[1] ANIMALS AND BIRDS

Fourthly and lastly, there are the floral designs, the richness and exuberance of which are among the greatest beauties of these monuments. Motifs taken FLORAL DESIGNS

[1] See p. 68, *infra*.

from the plant world have at all times been handled with exquisite taste by the Indian artist, but never more exquisitely than by the sculptors of Sāñchī. Among these motifs are some which may be traced to a foreign source: for example, the honeysuckle pattern on the capital of the South Gateway, and the grape vine on the West Gateway (right pillar: outer side); but most of the plant designs are purely Indian in character and, based as they are on the most careful and faithful observation of nature, far excel anything of which Assyrian or Persian art was capable. Most favourite among the subjects is the lotus (*padma*), the queen of Indian flowers, to which a special sanctity attached in the eyes of Buddhists and Hindus alike. Besides being the symbol of divine birth, the lotus was also the Tree of Life and of Good Fortune, giver of riches and blessings to mankind (*kalpa-druma* or *kalpa-latā*), and hence it came to symbolize the Buddhist Church and Faith, and perhaps the Buddha himself. Good examples of the variety with which it was treated are to be seen on the outer sides of the pillars of the gateways. The one on the right of the East Gateway for example, is formal and almost geometric, but well adapted for the position which it occupies; that on the left is bold, free and flowing, and, as a design, more pleasing to the eye but less happy from an architectural point of view, since the serpentine stalk of the plant has the effect of detracting somewhat from the strength of the pillar. Still more elaborate and conventionalized are the two

designs based on the lotus motif on the pillars of the Northern Gateway. On the left pillar, observe at the base the foot-prints (*pada*) of the Buddha with the wheel (*chakra*) beneath the sole. This wheel is one of the distinctive marks (*mahāpurusha-lakshaṇa*) of the Buddha—the Universal Monarch (*Chakravartin*)[1]. Observe, also, the *triratna* emblem at the top of the pillar, the significance of which has already been explained (p. 41), and the necklaces of curious amulets suspended from the two brackets next to the top on either side of the lotus tree. These, like the jewelled garlands and necklaces, stand for the material and spiritual blessings which the Tree of Buddhism has to confer on mankind. Most striking, however, and most exquisite of all these floral designs is the panel on the right pillar of the West Gateway (Pl. III). The presence of the grape vine in this relief suggests foreign influence, but the treatment of the lotus blooms and leaves and the disposition of the animals set heraldically in pairs among the branches are essentially and characteristically Indian.

I now proceed to describe the other and more elaborate reliefs on each of the gateways in turn.

[1] For the distinctive marks of the Buddh a, see Burnouf, *Lotus*, pp. 616-617; Alabaster, *Wheel of the Law*, p. 11 3 ff. and 312 f; Hardy, *Man, of Buddhism*, p. 382 f; *Lalita Vistara*, p. 93 f; Grünwedel, *Buddhist Art*, pp. 160-62.

South Gateway

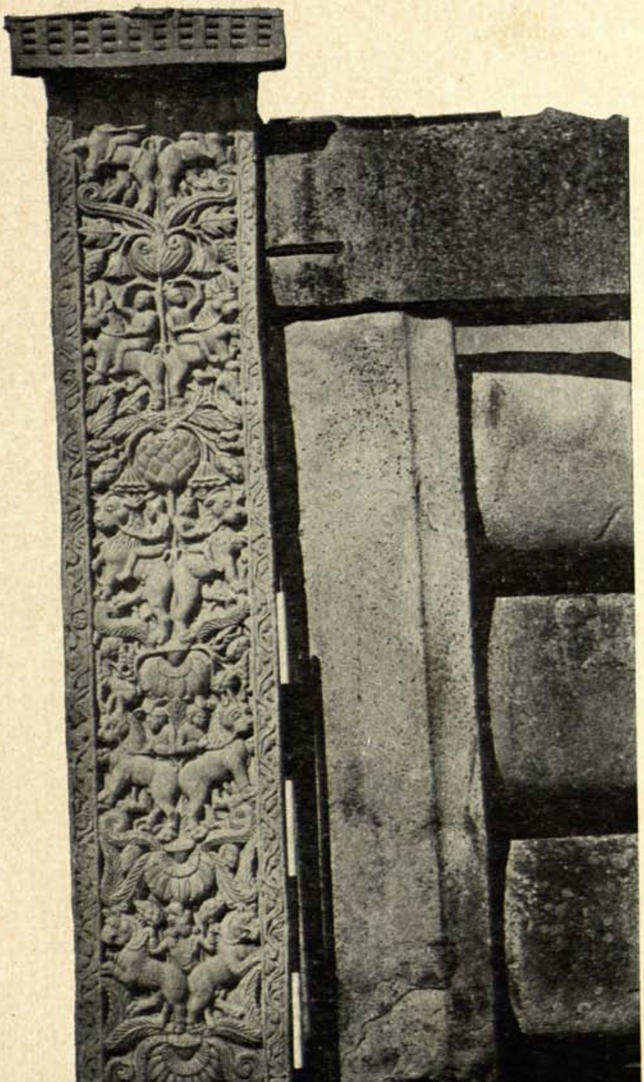
This gateway is one of the two which were reconstructed by Major Cole in 1882-83. The whole of the right jamb and half of the left are new, as well as the west end of the lowest architrave, the east end of the middle architrave, and the six vertical uprights between the architraves. When the gateway was restored, the top and the lowest lintels appear to have been reversed by mistake, since the more important sculptures on them now face the stūpa instead of facing outwards.

Architraves

Front: Top Architrave.—*The birth scene of the Buddha.* In the centre, the figure of Māyā[1] standing on a full blown lotus, with an elephant to right and left pouring water over her head. The rest of the lintel is occupied with a lotus Tree of Life and Fortune, among the leaves and blossoms of which birds are perched.

Middle Architrave.—*The visit of the Emperor Aśoka to the Stūpa at Rāmagrāma.* The relics of the Buddha were originally divided into eight portions and it is related that Aśoka took seven of these portions, divided them up, and distributed them among 84,000 stūpas, which he himself erected. He failed only to secure the relics of Rāmagrāma in the Nepāl Tarai, in face of the resolute opposition of their devoted guardians, the Nāgas. Here, in the centre of the architrave, is depicted a stūpa, with an inscription on its dome recording that the architrave was the gift of one

[1] See p. 44 *supra* regarding the identification of this figure with Lakshmī.



West Gateway: Lotus Tree of Life and Fortune on outer face of right pillar

Balamitra, pupil of Aya-Chuḍa (Ārya-Kshudra), the preacher of the Law. Above the stūpa are heavenly *Kinnaras* bearing garlands in their hands. To the right of it is the Emperor Aśoka approaching in his chariot, accompanied by a retinue of elephants, horsemen and footmen; and to the left, the Nāgas and Nāgis, in human form with serpent hoods, worshipping at the stūpa, bringing offerings, or emerging from the waters of a lotus-pond. On the projecting end of this architrave (l. hand) is an elephant in a lotus-pond with its master and some females on its back, and a second female scrambling up behind; in the background, a pavilion with female figures looking out. To what particular incident this relief refers, is not known.

LOWEST ARCHITRAVE.—Dwarf-like figures, known as *kīchakas* or *kumbhāṇḍas*, are holding garlands in their hands and spouting forth the Lotus Tree of Life and Fortune from their mouths. On the right end of the architrave is a decorative peacock with rocks and creepers in the background.

BACK: TOP ARCHITRAVE.—In the central section are three stūpas alternating with four trees with thrones in front of them, adored by figures both human and divine. These represent *the six Mānushi Buddhas of the past*[1] *and Gautama Buddha*—three symbolized by their stūpas, and four by the trees under which each respectively attained enlightenment. From l. to r. the trees

[1] Namely: Vipassī, Sikhī, Vessabhū, Kakusandha, Konāgamana and Kassapa.

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LEFT PILLAR

LEFT PILLER: FRONT FACE: TOP PANEL.—A Persepolitan column, rising from a stepped base and supporting a wheel with thirty-two spokes and an equal number of *triratna* devices on its outer rim. This is the *dharma-chakra* or "Wheel of the Law", the emblem of Buddha's first sermon.[1] On either side of the wheel are celestial figures with garlands; below them are four groups of worshippers, and below the latter, deer, to indicate the spot where the first sermon was preached, namely, in the "Deer Park" (*Mṛiga-dāva*) near Benares. In each of the groups of worshippers is a king with attendant females, who probably represent the four Lokapālas or Guardians of the world.

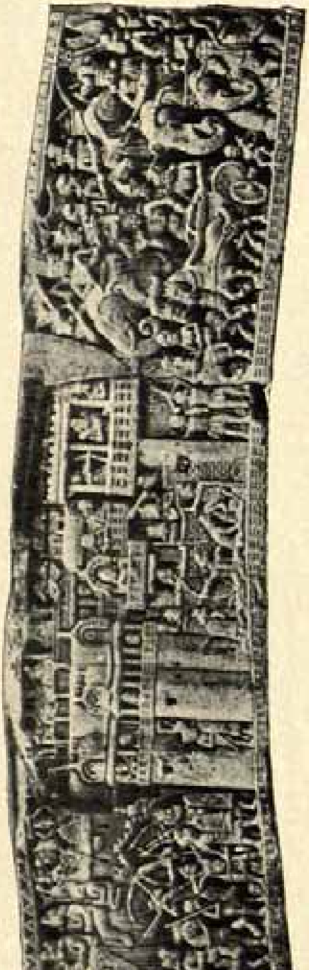
FRONT FACE: SECOND PANEL.—*The Emperor Aśoka in his chariot with his retinue around*, his viceroy riding on an elephant.

INNER FACE: TOP AND SECOND PANEL.—In the corresponding panel on the inner face of this same pillar we see the Emperor, again with his two queens, at the temple of Bodh-Gayā, which is depicted in the panel immediately above the royal group. This temple[2] was erected by Aśoka himself around the sacred *pīpal* tree, beneath which the Buddha had attained enlightenment. Here the sanctity of the tree is indicated by umbrellas and garlands, and on the throne inside the shrine are three *triratna* symbols. The peculiar attitude

[1] See above p. 45.

[2] The temple was hypæthral. Compare the olive tree of Athena in the Erechtheion on the Akropolis at Athens.

a. SOUTH GATEWAY: BACK: MIDDLE ARCHITRAVE. THE CHHADDANTA JĀTAKA



b. SOUTH GATEWAY: BACK: LOWEST ARCHITRAVE. THE "WAR OF THE RELICS"

of Aśoka is explained by the fact that he is fainting at the sight of the withering tree.

INNER FACE: LOWEST PANEL.—*Worship of the Bodhisattva's hair and head-dress* (*chūḍā*). In the lowest panel of the inner face is a company of deities in the *Trayastriṁśa* heaven, where Indra held sway, rejoicing over and worshipping the hair of the Bodhisattva.[1] The story told in the Buddhist scriptures is that, before embracing a religious life, Gautama divested himself of his princely garments and cut off his long hair with his sword, casting both hair and turban into the air, whence they were borne by the *devas* to the *Trayastriṁśa* heaven and worshipped there.

FRONT FACE: LOWEST PANEL.—On the corresponding panel on the front face of the pillar the deities are seen on foot, on horseback and on elephants, hastening to do homage to the Bodhisattva's locks. The chief figure on the elephant is doubtless Indra with his wife Śachī at his side. The delicacy of workmanship, the breadth and spatial effect attained in these panels are particularly striking, and we can well understand

[1]Bodhisattva means literally a 'being whose characteristic (*sattva*= Pāli *satta*) and aim are enlightenment (*bodhi*)'. Gautama was a Bodhisattva in his previous existences and also during his historical existence up to the time when he attained enlightenment and become the Buddha. By "The Bodhisattva" here and elsewhere Gautama himself is meant. But, according to the Northern or Mahāyāna School of Buddhism, there are, besides Gautama, innumerable other Bodhisattvas, both quasi-human and quasi-divine, among the best known of whom are Avalokiteśvara, Mañjuśrī, Mārīchī, Samantabhadra, Vajrapāṇi and Maitreya, the last of whom is the coming and last Buddha of this age of the world.

that, as the inscription[1] records, they were the work of ivory-carvers of Vidiśā.

BACK.—To the left of the panel, a royal figure seated beneath a canopy, holding a female by the hand; in the middle, another female seated on a low stool; to the right, two other figures standing, with a child behind bearing a garland(?). At the back of them is a plantain tree, and above, a *chaitya*-window with an umbrella on either side. The meaning of this scene is uncertain.

RIGHT PILLAR (fragmentary; in museum): FRONT FACE: TOP PANEL.—Buddha (represented by his throne) beneath the goatherd's banyan tree (*cf.* p. 161). In foreground, the Nāga King Muchalinda with his four queens and attendants. Observe that the Nāgīs have only one hood, while the Rājā himself has five.

MIDDLE PANEL.—Buddha beneath his Saṁbodhi tree; to right and left, the four Lokapālas or Guardian Kings of the World, each offering a begging-bowl to the invisible Buddha. With them are their viceroys, one of whom is playing the harp.

BOTTOM PANEL.—The merchants Tapussa and Bhalluka passing through Uruvilvā in an ox-carriage. These were the two merchants who made an offering of barley-cakes and honey to the Buddha while he sat under the Rājāyatana tree (*cf.* p. 161).

[1] *Vedisakehi daṁtakārehi rupakaṁma kataṁ.* See Lüders, *List of Brāhmī Inscriptions*, No. 345, p. 42.

Inner face : top panel.—The Saṁbodhi of the former Buddha Vipaśyin, not of Śākyamuni.

Second panel.—The throne of the Buddha in a shrine, possibly the jewel-house (*ratna-gṛiha*) built miraculously by the gods, wherein the Buddha spent his fourth week after Enlightenment.

Third panel.—The Saṁbodhi of the Buddha. To right, the grass-cutter Svastika (*cf.* p. 160) is bending down to cut with his sickle the grass which the Buddha needed for his seat; to left, the same figure repeated, holding the *kuśa*-grass in his arms and offering it to the invisible Buddha.

Fourth panel.—The same subject repeated, with male and female worshippers around the throne of the Buddha. The female figure, repeated twice, in the foreground may be intended for Sujātā, who gave him a meal of milk-rice before he attained Enlightenment (p. 160).

Bottom panel.—The *chaṅkrama* or promenade of the Buddha at Bodh-Gayā, with a line of worshippers in front and garlands suspended on curved hooks (*nāga-danta*).

North Gateway

Front : Top architrave—*The seven last Mānushi Buddhas.* Five stūpas and two trees with a throne in front of each, symbolical of the seven last Buddhas; Architraves

he takes up his abode in the hut which Śakra, king of the gods, had made ready for him, adorning its approach with plantain trees. A little later (towards the centre of the panel) he proceeds to make a gift of his children to the Brāhman Jūjaka, while, above, three gods, in the forms of a lion, a tiger and a leopard, keep the mother Maddī away from the hermitage. To the left of Maddī, the archer who had been set by the Cheta princes to watch over Vessantara, is threatening to shoot the Brāhman Jūjaka ; and, below, Jūjaka is seen driving the children away with a stick. (According to the Jātaka story, the archer should have been portrayed before the gift of the children was made.) Finally, to the left of the same panel, Vessantara is depicted giving away his wife, but, thanks to the intervention of Indra, who is wearing his characteristic cylindrical head-dress, both wife and children are restored to him after the children have been taken to their grand-parents by the Brāhman. The reunion of the prince with his wife is shown on the left (top) of the middle panel with Indra, wearing a high head-dress and holding a thunderbolt, beside them ; and (*e*) the children in the palace of their grand-parents at the left end of the architrave.

MIDDLE ARCHITRAVE: CENTRAL SECTION.—*The temptation of the Buddha.* Towards the left end of the panel is the *pīpal* tree at Bodh-Gayā with an umbrella and streamers above, and, in front, the diamond throne of the Buddha, whereon he sat when he withstood

the temptations and threats of Māra, the Satan of Buddhism, and when he attained to Buddhahood. The figure to the left of it is perhaps Sujātā, bringing the meal which she prepared for Gautama, before he began his last meditation prior to his enlightenment. Near the middle of the panel is Māra, seated on a throne with attendants around, and advancing from him towards the throne is one of his daughters, who sought by their blandishments to seduce Gautama from his purpose. The figures of Māra and his daughter are again repeated standing near the Bodhi tree. On his other side, *i.e.*, in the right half of the panel, are the hosts of Māra's demons, personifying the vices, the passions and the fears of mankind. The vigour and humour with which these fantastic beings are portrayed is very striking, and far more forceful than anything of the kind produced by the artists of Gandhāra.

TOP ARCHITRAVE.—*The Chhaddanta Jātaka.*—Compare the similar scene on the back of the middle architrave of the South Gate (p. 52, *supra*). Here the huntsman Sonuttara is omitted, and the execution of the relief is far inferior to that on the South Gate, of which it is but a poor imitation.[1]

RIGHT PILLAR : FRONT FACE : TOP PANEL.—*The descent of Buddha from the Trayastriṁśa Heaven*, where Māyā, his mother, had been reborn and whither he himself ascended to preach the Law to her. This miracle RIGHT PILLAR

[1] For the technical and stylistic character of these reliefs, see pp. 81-86,

is supposed to have taken place at Saṅkīsa (Saṅkāśya) in the Uttar Pradesh (*Cf.* p. 164). In the centre of the relief is the miraculous ladder by which the Buddha descended, attended by Brahmā and Indra. At the top of the ladder is the tree and throne of the Buddha, with the gods on either side in an attitude of adoration. Other *devas* attend on him as he descends, among whom the one to the right of the ladder waving aloft a scarf and holding a lotus may be Brahmā. At the foot of the ladder, the tree and throne are repeated with a trio of human devotees on either side, indicating that the Buddha has returned again to earth. Observe the smaller scale of the human beings.

SECOND PANEL.—The scene is analogous to the scene of Buddha's departure from Kapilavastu on the East Gate,[1] but here there is no umbrella above the horse to indicate the presence of the Buddha, and, there, there was no chariot behind the horse. Evidently this panel represents a combination of two episodes, *viz.*, the "Four Drives" (p. 159, *infra*) symbolized by the chariot, with the invisible Buddha beneath the umbrella, and the Great Departure (*Mahābhinishkramaṇa*) (*Cf.* p. 67), symbolized by the riderless horse.

THIRD PANEL.—*Conversion of the Śākyas and Miracle at Kapilavastu.* This panel is to be interpreted in conjunction with the corresponding panel adjoining it on the inner face of the same pillar. When Buddha returned to his native city of Kapilavastu,

[1]See p. 67, *infra*.

his father Śuddhodana came forth with a royal retinue to meet him, and a question of etiquette arose as to which should salute the other first—the father, who was king, or the son, who had become the Buddha. Thereupon the Buddha solved the difficulty by walking miraculously in mid-air. Here, in the panel on the inner face, we see a banyan tree, and, in front of it, the throne symbolizing the Buddha, while suspended in the air above it is the *chaṅkrama* or promenade on which the Buddha used to take his exercise and which here implies that he is walking* in the air. Above it are celestial beings (*gandharvas*) with garlands in their hands. To the right of the tree is king Śuddhodana with attendants, one of whom is holding the royal umbrella. The reason for the banyan tree (*ficus Indica* ; Skr. *nyagrodha*) is that king Śuddhodana presented a park of banyan trees to his son on his return, and the tree, therefore, helps to localize the incident. In the corresponding scene on the front face, the Buddha is represented in this park preaching to his father Śuddhodana and the assembled nobles.

INNER FACE : TOP PANEL.—Probably *the dedication of the stūpa* containing the Buddha's relics, by the Mallas. Observe the individual and realistic features of some of the figures who are celebrating the occasion with music and dancing ; and observe also their quasi-Greek dress (tunic, chlamys, taenia, etc.). It is likely that the Mallas came from the highlands of western Nepal, where a somewhat similar dress is still worn.

SECOND PANEL.—*The offering of a bowl of honey to the Blessed One by a monkey.*[1] Buddha is here represented by his *pīpal* tree and throne, to which devotees are doing obeisance. The figure of the monkey is twice repeated, first with the bowl and then with empty hands after the gift has been made. The incident is portrayed in much the same way on the reliefs of Gandhāra.

THIRD PANEL.—See above, front face, third panel.

BACK.—Tree and throne of the Buddha with attendant worshippers bringing offerings.

LEFT PILLAR

LEFT PILLAR : FRONT FACE.—Most of the scenes on this face appear to relate to Śrāvastī.

TOP PANEL.—*The Sermon under the mango tree.* In centre, a mango tree with the throne of the Buddha in front. Round the throne, a group of figures bringing garlands to the tree or in attitudes of adoration listening to his sermon. It was beneath a mango tree that, according to the Pāli texts, Buddha performed the great miracle at Śrāvastī, when he walked in the air, and flames broke from his feet and streams of water from his head. (See Third Panel, below.) The four figures seated in the foreground are probably king Prasenajit, his viceroy and courtiers. Above them, the four Lokapālas, and, beyond, a company of gods. The beating

[1] The incident is usually located at Vaiśālī, but other authorities place it at Mathurā or Śrāvastī. See Foucher, *L'Art gréco-bouddhique*, p. 512.

of the drums is to announce the performance of a great miracle.

SECOND PANEL.—*The Jetavana at Śrāvastī*, showing the three favourite residences of the Buddha—the Gandhakuṭi, the Kośambakuṭi and the Karorikuṭi, with the throne of the Buddha in the front of each. The *Jetavana* garden was presented to the Buddha by the rich banker Anāthapiṇḍika, who purchased it for as many gold pieces as would cover the surface of the ground. Hence the foreground of the relief is shown covered with ancient Indian coins (*kārshāpaṇas*), just as it is in the similar relief at Bhārhut,[1] where the details of the coins are more in evidence.

THIRD PANEL.—*The miracle of Śrāvastī*, indicated by the promenade (*chaṅkrama*) of the Buddha (here covered by an open pavilion) soaring over the heads of the assembled people—presumably Prasenajit and his court.

FOURTH PANEL.—*A royal procession issuing from a city gate*, probably Prasenajit of Kosala going forth from Śrāvastī to meet the Buddha at the site of the Great Miracle.

FIFTH PANEL.—The meaning of this scene, which is analogous to several others on the gateways, is not clear. Perhaps, like the scene on the gateway of the Third Stūpa, it may represent the *Paradise of Indra* (*nandanavana*), where pleasure and passion held sway,

[1] *Cf.* Cunningham, *The Stūpa of Bharhut*, pp. 84-87, pl. LVII.

INNER FACE—This face refers particularly to Rājagṛiha.

TOP PANEL.—*The visit of Indra to the Buddha in the cave near Rājagṛiha.* In the upper part of the panel is an artificial cave resembling in its façade many Buddhist shrines hewn in the rocks of Western and Central India. In front of the door is the throne which marks the presence of the Buddha. The animals, including human-faced rams, peering out from among the rocks serve to indicate the wildness of the spot. Below is the company of Indra in attitudes of worship, Indra himself being probably represented twice : first as the principal figure in the foreground, and then with his back to the spectator, against the rock.

SECOND PANEL.—*A king and his royal cortège issuing from a city.* As the panel on this side of the pillar relates particularly to Rājagṛiha, it is probable that the king is Ajātaśatru, on a visit to the Buddha in the mango-grove of Jīvaka.

THIRD PANEL.—*The Bamboo garden (Veṇuvana),* at Rājagṛiha, with the throne of the Buddha in the centre and devotees around. The identity of the spot is indicated by the bamboos on either side of the panel.

BACK.—*The death (parinirvāṇa) of the Buddha,* indicated by a stūpa or funeral tumulus and attendant worshippers.

East Gateway

Front face: top architrave.—*The seven last Buddhas*, the first and last symbolized by thrones beneath their appropriate Bodhi trees (p. 58), the rest by the stūpas which enshrined their relics. Around them are the usual worshippers, human and divine. Architraves

Middle architrave.—*Buddha's departure (Mahābhinishkramaṇa) from Kapilavastu*, the city of his birth. To the left is the city, with wall and moat, and, issuing from its gate, the horse Kaṇṭhaka, his legs supported by *devas*[1] and accompanied by other *devas* in attendance on the Buddha, and by Chhandaka his groom, who holds the umbrella symbolical of his Master's presence. In order to indicate the progress of the Prince, this group is repeated four times in succession towards the right of the relief, and then, at the parting of the ways, we see Chhandaka and the horse[2] sent back to Kapilavastu, and the further journey of the Prince on foot indicated by his sacred foot-prints[3] surmounted by the umbrella. The three sorrowing figures following behind Kaṇṭhaka at the right hand lower corner of the panel, appear to, be the Yakshas who accompanied Siddhārtha from the city, sorrowing for his loss. In Gandhāra sculptures,

[1] Cf. *Nidānakathā*, trans,. by Rhys Davids, p. 271, "Therefore the angels placed, at each step, the palms of their hands under his feet."

[2] According to the *Nidānakathā*, the horse Kaṭṭhaka died on the spot where the Buddha left him.

[3] *Cf.* p. 49 above.

the city goddess herself, portrayed in Hellenistic fashion, is represented sorrowing for the loss of Gautama. But they might also be the emissaries whom king Śuddhodana sent to bring back his son (see Foucher, *op. cit.*, p. 71). In the middle of the panel is a *jambu* tree (*Eugenia jambu*), placed there by the sculptor, apparently, as a reminder of the first meditation of the Bodhisattva and the path on which it subsequently led him. This meditation, it will be remembered, took place beneath a jambu tree, the shade of which moved not while he sat beneath it.[1]

LOWEST ARCHITRAVE.—*Visit of Aśoka to the Bodhi tree.* In the centre, the temple and tree of Bodh-Gayā ; to the left, a crowd of musicians and devotees with water vessels ; to the right, a royal retinue and a king and queen descending from an elephant, and afterwards doing worship at the tree. This is the ceremonial visit which Aśoka and his queen Tishyarakshitā paid to the Bodhi tree, for the purpose of watering it and restoring its pristine beauty after the evil spell which the queen in a fit of jealousy had cast upon it. In the pairs of peacocks at the ends of this architrave there may be a special allusion to Aśoka, since the peacock (Pāli=*mora* ; Sanskrit=*mayūra*) was the badge of the Maurya dynasty.

[1] Rockhill, *Life of the Buddha*, p. 23 ; Foucher, *L'Art gréco-bouddhique*, pp. 340-48.

Back : Top architrave.— *The seven last Buddhas*, represented by their thrones, and the Bodhi trees beneath which they attained enlightenment. Here they are shown from right to left, in chronological order, whereas on the middle architrave of the Northern Gateway (p. 58—*q. v.*) they are shown from left to right.

Middle architrave.—*Worship by the animal kingdom.* In the centre, the Buddha, represented by his throne and *aśvattha* tree. To right and left come animals, real and mythical, birds and Nāgas, symbolizing his newly won sovereignty over all creatures. The presence of the Nāga recalls the episode of Muchalinda, the tutelary deity of a lake near Gayā, who, shortly after the Illumination, spread his hood over the Buddha to protect him from the rain (p. 161).

Lowest architrave.—In the centre is a stūpa, to which elephants are bringing offerings of lotus flowers. It is probably the stūpa of Rāmagrāma, the Nāga guardians thereof, who prevented Aśoka removing the relics, being portrayed as elephants. *Cf.* p. 50 above.

Right pillar : front.—*The six inferior heavens of the gods* (*devalokas*) or Kāmāvachara heavens, in which the passions are still unsubdued. Starting from the base, they are as follows :—(1) The heaven of the Four Great Kings—the Regents of the Four Quarters (Lokapāla : Chaturmahārājika) ; (2) The heaven of the Thirty-three gods (Trayastriṁśa) over whom Śakra presides ; RIGHT PILLAR

(3) The heaven over which Yama, the God of Death, reigns, where there is no change of day or night; (4) The Tushita heaven, where the Bodhisattvas are born before they appear on earth as the saviours of mankind, and where Maitreya now resides; (5) The heaven of the Nirmāṇarati, who rejoice in their own creations; (6) The heaven of the Parinirmita-vaśavartin gods, who indulge in pleasures created for them by others and over whom Māra is king.[1] Each of these six heavens or devalokas is represented by the storey of a palace, the front of which is divided by pillars into three bays, the pillars in the alternate storeys being either plain or provided with elaborate Persepolitan capitals. In the central bay there sits a god, probably Indra, holding a thunderbolt (*vajra*) in his right hand and a flask containing nectar (*amṛita*) in his left. Behind him are his women attendants holding the royal umbrella (*chhattra*) and fly-whisk (*chaurī*). In the bay to his right, seated on a slightly lower seat, is his viceroy (*uparāja*); and to his left are the court musicians and dancers. With slight variations the same figures are repeated in each of the six heavens. Nothing, perhaps, could give a better idea of the monotony of pleasure in the Buddhist heavens than the sameness of these reiterations.

The topmost panel of all, with two figures seated on a terrace and attendants behind, is treated quite differently from the *devalokas* below and may represent

[1] See Grünwedel, *Buddhist Art in India*, p. 61; Foucher, *La porte orientale du stûpa de Sânchi*, pp. 48-50.

the lowest of the *brahmalokas*, which according to the Buddhist ideas rise above the inferior heavens. It may, however, be the abode of Māra, God of Love and Death and Sovereign of the world of senses, throned here at the pinnacle of his empire.

RIGHT PILLAR : INNER FACE.— This face of the pillar is devoted to scenes at Kapilavastu, the birthplace of Gautama.

TOP PANEL.—Either the gods in the Tushita Heaven entreating the future Buddha to come to earth and release mankind, or Indra and Brahmā with their retinues, beseeching the already accomplished Buddha to preach to the world the truth he had just discovered. The first alternative would fit in with the conception scene immediately below.

SECOND PANEL.—At the top is portrayed *the dream of Māyā*, the mother of the Buddha, otherwise called *the conception of the Bodhisattva*. Māyā, the queen, is seen lying in a pavilion of the palace, and on her is descending the Bodhisattva[1] in the form of a white elephant. This scene, which was well-known to all Buddhists, serves as a label to identify the city here represented as Kapilavastu. Below it is a royal procession threading its way through the streets of the city and issuing forth from the gate. This is the procession of king Śuddhodana, when he went forth to meet his

[1] See footnote p. 55, *supra*, and Appendix, pp. 157-8.

son on his return to Kapilavastu. Then, at the bottom of the panel, is portrayed the miracle which Buddha performed on this occasion by walking in mid-air (*Cf.* North Gateway, pp. 62-3 above); and, in the extreme left-hand bottom corner, is a banyan tree (*nyagrodha*) to signify the park of banyans which Śuddhodana presented to his son. The Buddha walking in mid-air is represented, as on the Northern Gateway, by his promenade (*chaṅkrama*); it is interesting to observe the upturned faces of the king and his retinue as they gaze wonderingly on the miracle.

BACK.—*The Illumination of the Buddha. Pīpal* tree in square railing with worshippers on either side and celestial beings above.

LEFT PILLAR

LEFT PILLAR : FRONT FACE : FIRST AND SECOND PANELS.—*The illumination and walk of the Buddha.* In the second panel from the top is the temple at Bodh-Gayā, built by Aśoka with the throne of Buddha within, and, spreading through its upper windows, the branches of the sacred tree. It is the illumination of Buddha, and to right and left of the temple are four figures in an attitude of adoration, probably the Guardian Kings of the Four Quarters (Lokapālas); while ranged above in two rows are groups of deities looking on at Buddha taking his "walk"—indicated by his *chaṅkrama* between them.

THIRD PANEL.—*The miracle of the Buddha walking on the waters.* The Nairañjanā river is shown in flood

and Kāśyapa accompanied by a disciple and a boatman hastening in a boat to the rescue of Buddha. Then, in the lower part of the picture, Buddha, represented by his promenade (*chankrama*), appears walking on the face of the waters, and in the foreground the figures of Kāśyapa and his disciple are twice repeated, now on dry ground and doing homage to the Master (represented by the throne at the right-hand bottom corner).

LOWEST PANEL.—*Bimbisāra with his royal cortège issuing from the city of Rājagṛiha*, on a visit to the Buddha, here symbolized by his empty throne. This visit took place after the conversion of Kāśyapa, which was brought about by a series of miracles, one of which is illustrated in the panel above.

LEFT PILLAR : INNER FACE.—This face is concerned with the miracles by which Buddha converted the Brāhman Kāśyapa and his disciples.

TOP PANEL.—*Visit of Indra and Brahmā to Buddha in the town of Uruvilvā.* Near the centre of the panel is the throne indicating the presence of the Buddha, surmounted by the umbrella ; behind it, Indra and Brahmā standing in an attitude of adoration ; in the background, the houses of Uruvilvā and the people at their daily tasks. To the left, a man and woman, the woman grinding spices on a "*carī* stone"; near by, to the right, another woman is at work at a table, while a third is pounding rice with pestle and mortar, and a

fourth winnowing the grain with a fan. In the foreground is the river Nairañjanā, with cattle on its banks and a woman drawing water in a pitcher. The whole makes up a charming peep into Indian village life two thousand years ago.

SECOND PANEL.—*The victory of the Buddha over the serpent in the fire chapel at Uruvilvā.* The story is that Buddha obtained the permission of Kāśyapa to pass the night in a fire chapel[1] at his hermitage, which was inhabited by a fearsome *nāga.* The *nāga* attacked him with smoke and fire but was met with the same weapons, and being overcome crept into the Buddha's begging bowl. In the middle of the panel is the fire temple with a fire alter in front and a throne, indicating the presence of the Buddha, within, while behind the throne is the five-headed *nāga.* Flames are issuing from the windows in the roof. On either side of the temple are the Brahmanical ascetics standing in an attitude of respect and veneration. In the foreground, to the right, is a leaf-hut (*parṇa-śālā*) and an ascetic at its threshold seated on a mat, with his knees bound up by a band and his hair (*jaṭā*) twisted turban-wise about his head. Evidently he is a Brāhman doing penance. Before him is another Brāhman standing and apparently reporting to him the miracle ; and nearby is a small fire altar and the instruments of Vedic sacrifice. To the left is the Nairañjanā river, in which another ascetic

[1] Or kitchen of Kāśyapa, according to the Burmese version.

is bathing and from which three young novices are drawing water, presumably to put out the fire.

THIRD PANEL.—*The miracles of the wood, the fire and the offering.* In the story of Kāśyapa's conversion it is related that, after the miracle of the fire temple, a sacrifice was prepared by the Brāhmans, but the wood for the fire could not be split, the fire could not be made to burn, and the oblation could not be offered, until in each case the Buddha gave his consent. In the relief, this triple miracle is dramatically represented. In the foreground, to the right, a Brāhman ascetic has his axe raised to split the wood, but the axe will not descend until Buddha gives the word ; then we see the axe driven home into the log. Similarly, a Brāhman is engaged fanning the fire on an altar, but the fire will not burn until Buddha permits it. Then we see the altar repeated and flames blazing upon it. The third phase of the miracle, that of the oblation, is indicated by the single figure of a Brāhman holding an oblation spoon over a flaming altar. The other figures in this panel, of two novices bringing wood and provisions, are mere accessories, while the stūpa in the background, decorated with shell designs and surrounded by a square railing, serves to give local colour to the scene.

BACK.—*Parinirvāṇa.* Stūpa with worshippers to either side and celestial beings above.

West Gateway

ARCHITRAVES

Front : Top architrave.—*Six of the seven last Buddhas and Maitreya, the future Buddha,* four represented by their appropriate *sambodhi* trees and thrones, and three by their relic stūpas with attendant worshippers, human and divine. The bodhi-druma of Maitreya (left end of architrave) is the nāga-pushpa tree (*michelia champaka*).

Middle architrave.—*The first sermon in the Deer Park (Mṛigadāva) at Sārnāth. Cf.* p. 45 above. The "Wheel of the Law" (*dharmachakra*) is here set on a throne, and there are numerous deer to indicate the deer-park in which the sermon was preached. Whether Kauṇḍinya and his four companions are intended to be represented among the figures on either side of the wheel, it is not possible to say.

At each end of the architrave is a tree with a throne in front and attendant worshippers. To the left, it is the pāṭali tree of Vipaśyin, with the four guardians of the World presenting their alms-bowls ; to the right, it is the nyagrodha of Kāśyapa. Observe the baskets of flower offerings in the right hand relief.

Lowest architrave.—*The Chhaddanta Jātaka. Cf.* South Gateway, middle architrave, back (p. 52), and North Gateway, top architrave, back (p. 61). In this case, as in the North Gateway, the hunter Sonuttara

a. WEST GATEWAY: FRONT: LOWEST ARCHITRAVE. THE CHHADDANTA JĀTAKA

b. WEST GATEWAY: BACK: MIDDLE ARCHITRAVE. THE "WAR OF THE RELICS"

is not brought into the scene. At either end of the architrave is a stūpa with attendant worshippers.

BACK : TOP ARCHITRAVE.—*The relic scene at Kuśinagara* (*Kusinārā*). After the death of the Buddha his relics were taken possession of by the Mallas of Kusinārā, whose chief is here depicted riding on an elephant and bearing the relics into the town of Kusinārā on his own head. The tree behind the throne in front of the city gate appears to be a Śāla tree (*shorea robusta*) and to label the town as Kusinārā, because the Buddha's *parinirvāṇa* took place in a grove of those trees. The two groups of figures carrying banners and offerings, which occupy the ends of this architrave, are probably connected with the central scene, serving to indicate the rejoicings of the Mallas over the possession of the relics.

MIDDLE ARCHITRAVE.—*The war of the relics. Cf.* the lowest architrave of the South Gateway (p. 53). Here the seven rival claimants, distinguished by their seven royal umbrellas, are advancing with their armies to the city of Kusinārā, the siege of which has not yet begun. The seated royal figure at the left end of the architrave may perhaps represent the chief of the Mallas within the city. The princely figures in the corresponding relief at the right end are repetitions of some of the rival claimants.

LOWEST ARCHITRAVE.—*The temptation of the Buddha.* This scene extends over the three sections of the architrave. In the centre is the temple of Bodh-Gayā with the *pīpal* tree and the throne of the Buddha within; to the right, the armies of Māra fleeing discomfited from the Buddha; to the left, the *devas* celebrating the victory of the Buddha over the Evil One and exalting his glorious achievements. The temple at Bodh-Gayā, which enclosed the Bōdhi tree, was built by the Emperor Aśoka. Its portryal in this scene, therefore, is an anachronism.

RIGHT PILLAR

RIGHT PILLAR: FRONT FACE: TOP PANEL.—*Mahākapi Jātaka.*[1] The story runs that the Bodhisattva was born as a monkey, ruler over 80,000 monkeys. They lived at a spot near the Ganges and ate of the fruit of a great mango tree. King Brahmadatta of Benares, desiring to possess the mangoes, surrounded the tree with his soldiers, in order to kill the animals, but the Bodhisattva formed a bridge over the steam with his own body and by this means enabled the whole tribe to escape into safety. Devadatta, the jealous and wicked cousin of the Buddha, was in that life one of the monkeys and, thinking it a good chance to destroy his enemy, jumped on the Bodhisattva's back and broke his heart. The king, seeing the good deed of the Bodhisattva and repenting of his own attempt to kill him, tended him with great care when he was dying and afterwards gave him royal obsequies. Down the panel of the relief flows,

[1]*The Jātaka*, No. 407, pp. 225-27.

from top to bottom, the river Ganges. To the left, at the top, is the great mango tree to which two monkeys are clinging, while the king of the monkeys is stretched across the river from the mango tree to the opposite bank, and over his body some monkeys have already escaped to the rocks and jungles beyond. In the lower part of the panel, to the left, is king Brahmadatta on horseback with his soldiers, one of whom with bow and arrow is aiming upwards at the Bodhisattva. Higher up the panel the figure of the king is repeated, sitting beneath the mango tree and conversing with the dying Bodhisattva, who, according to the Jātaka story, gave the king good advice on the duties of a chief.

SECOND PANEL.—The *Adhyeshaṇa*. See p. 162. The gods, led by Brahmā and Indra, entreat the Buddha to show mankind the way of salvation. From the rocks at the feet of the gods break tongues of flame, owing to their own or the Buddha's presence.

THIRD PANEL.—*Indra's visit*. The Buddha, represented by his throne, in a grotto, with hills and jungle around. In the foreground, a company of worshipping gods. The identity and meaning of the tree over the throne are not clear.

LOWEST PANEL.—The lotus Tree of Life and Fortune, with lions rampant emerging from its stem. Observe the curious turn in the upper leaves. This method of treating foliage is peculiar to the Early School and is

never found in later work. The inscription over this panel records that the pillar was a gift of Balamitra, pupil of Aya-Chuḍa (Ārya-Kshudra).[1] See p. 40.

INNER FACE: FIRST PANEL.—*The Enlightenment* (*saṁbodhi*) *of the Buddha.* Towards the top of the panel is the *pīpal* tree and the throne of the Buddha, and round them Māra, his wives and daughters, and the demon host (to the right), with which he sought to overawe the Buddha. The interpretation of the three sorrowing figures standing beside the throne in the foreground is problematical. In the *Mahābhinishkramaṇa* scene on the East Gateway we have already seen that the artist inserted a *jambu* tree in the middle of the panel, to remind the spectator of the first meditation of the Bodhisattva and the path on which it led him (p. 68 above). So, here, these three figures, which resemble the three sorrowing Yakshas in the *Mahābhinishkramaṇa* scene, may be a reminder of the Great Renunciation which led to the attainment of Buddhahood, the gateway behind being also a reminder of the gateway of Kapilavastu.

SECOND PANEL.—*The conversion of the Śākyas.* (*Cf.* p. 62.) The Buddha preaching in the Banyan Park at Kapilavastu to his father Śuddhodana and the assembled Śākya lords.

BACK.—*The death* (*parinirvāṇa*) *of the Buddha,* represented by a stūpa and attendant figures.

[1] *Cf.* Lüders, *List of Brāhmī Inscriptions*, No. 347.

LEFT PILLAR : FRONT FACE : TOP PANEL.—Probably *the paradise of Indra* (*nandanavana*) with the river Mandākini in the foreground. *Cf.* the scenes on the North Gateway (p. 65) and on the small gateway of the Third Stūpa (p. 93). LEET PILLAR

INNER FACE : TOP PANEL.—*The Śyāma Jātaka.* Śyāma, the only son of a blind hermit and his wife, who are entirely dependent on him for support, goes to draw water at the river and is shot with an arrow by the king of Benares, who is out hunting. Thanks to the king's penitence and his parents' sorrow Indra intervenes and allows Śyāma to be healed and his parents' sight to be restored. At the right hand top corner of the panel are the two hermitages with the father and mother seated in front of them. Below them their son Śyāma is coming to draw water from the stream. Then, to the left, we see the figure of the king thrice repeated, first shooting the lad in the water, then with bow in hand, then standing penitent with bow and arrow discarded ; and in the left top corner are the father, mother and son restored to health, and by their side the god Indra and the king, the former wearing his characteristic head-dress.

SECOND PANEL.—*The episode of the Nāgarāja Muchalinda.* In the centre is the throne of the Buddha beneath the *pīpal* tree, which is being garlanded by *kinnaras* ; in the foreground, with his wives and retinue, the snake-king Muchalinda, who spread his hood over the Buddha to shield him from the rain (p. 161).

THIRD PANEL.—Only the upper part of this panel remains.[1] It appears to depict the miraculous crossing of the Ganges by the Buddha when he left Rājagriha to visit Vaiśālī.

TECHNIQUE AND STYLE

On the execution of these sculptures with their multitudinous figures and elaborate details, some years of labour must have been exhausted and many hands employed. It is rarely that two panels, even among the smaller ones on the pillars, are by the same hand, and most of the larger panels on the architraves are the work of two or even more sculptors. It is inevitable, therefore, that there should be much diversity of style and inequality of workmanship among the sculptures. Some of them, like the *adhyeshaṇa* panels described on p. 79, show a strong archaizing tendency; others, like the lowest panels on the left jamb of the Southern Gateway, are as advanced as anything produced by the Early School. Some of them, again, like the "War of the Relics" on the Southern and Western Gateway (pp. 53 and 77) exhibit a fine sense of composition and modelling, but side by side with them are to be found examples such as the "Nativity" on the top architrave of the Southern Gateway (p. 50) or the return of the Mallas on the Western Gateway (p. 77), of strikingly crude and clumsy workmanship. Yet with all their diversity of style and inequality of techinque, these sculptures are essentially homogeneous and readily

[1] The lower part of the panel appears to have been cut away, when the gateway was restored by Col. Cole. The panel is shown complete in Maisey's illustration (Pl. XXI, fig. 2).

recognisable as the products of one and the same school. That school was the School of Mālwā, which had its centre in the great cities of Vidiśā and Ujjayinī, but exerted a widespread influence in Central and Western India and Hindustān. At the time when this school was first taking shape, the materials chiefly in vogue for sculpture were wood, ivory and clay, and when stone came to replace wood for building purposes, many technical difficulties were naturally experienced in carving the harder and more brittle substance. Once, however, the mastery over it had been gained, the headway made was rapid, and in no long time the sculptors were producing carvings in stone as excellent as those in the softer materials. This explains the phenomenal improvement that took place in stone sculpture between the time when the balustrade of Stūpa II and the gateways of Stūpa I were erected, and it also explains why some of the finest work to be found on the Southern Gateway was executed by a guild of ivory-carvers in Vidiśā. Another feature of these gateway sculptures that calls for notice is their strongly mundane character. The art of Mālwā was not, like the art of Gandhāra, an ecclesiastic art; it was developed and sustained by the patronage of the wealthy citizens of Vidiśā and Ujjayinī, who might or might not be Buddhists, and it was used for secular purposes. From time to time it was impressed into the service of the Buddhist Church, and on these occasions it was dressed out, as far as possible, in a Buddhist garb and labelled with the sacred signs and emblems that were familiar to the Faithful, such as the

dharmachakra, *triratna* and *śrīvatsa*, but for all that there was no real change in its essentially mundane character, and we must not, therefore, be shocked when we encounter erotic scenes among these reliefs and women whose nudity is accentuated rather than hidden by the transparency of their robes. Such scenes and figures were flagrantly opposed to every principle of the Śākya faith, and it is probable that there were few among the Buddhist sects of this period who were hardy or lax enough in their outlook to admit this worldy sort of art into their monasteries. One thing, however, is certain that, if they admitted it at all, they had to take it as they found it; they could not rid it of its worldliness or expurgate it at will to suit the pietism of the cloister. Whatever compromise there might have to be, must come from the Church itself not from art. Apart from its mundane and sensuous character, the keynote of this sculpture is its unaffected naturalness. Its aim was to follow nature as truthfully and simply as possible. At that early age its resources were necessarily limited. Of perspective it knew no more than is found on the Roman columns of Trajan or Marcus Aurelius; of foreshortening even less; yet, despite such limitations, it succeeded remarkably well in its aim. Compare it, for instance, with the sculpture of the Bhārhut School, which of all the schools of Early India comes nearest to it in style, and you will perceive at once that, while it misses the charm of refined elegance and precise definition that belonged to the older work, it goes far beyond it as a broad and simple statement of truth.

It is not that artifice is wanting in this sculpture, but that it never obtrudes itself. Consider, for example, the "War of the Relics" on the Western Gateway (Pl. V*b*). If we take the trouble to analyse this relief, we can see how the artist has made use of stereotype-*clichés* of men and horses, elephants, chariots and walled towns, and with what care he has composed his figures so as to carry the eye upwards from the right to the head of the biggest elephant and then down again to the city gate; nevertheless the dominant impression that he has succeeded in conveying is that of a great host surging forward and with a common impulse towards the city gate—a scene which we instinctively gaze at in it entirety not in its integral parts, and which, whatever its borrowings from traditional art, is still natural and convincing. Still more natural and more covincing is the "War of the Relics" on the Southern Gateway (Pl. IV*b*), because there the artist has depended more upon his own originality than upon the conventional treatment of such scenes, and has expressed his ideas with dramatic simplicity, varying at will the directions in which his figures are moving and diversifying the play of light and shade between them.

The only Gateway sculptures which exhibit marked stylization are those which architectural considerations required to be stiff and formal, or on which tradition imposed an archaic or conventional form. Among the former are the guardian Yakshas which stand sentinel inside the pillars of the gateways, and the smaller Yakshas

carrying fly-whisks which flank the Wheels-of-the-Law on their summits, both of which would have been out of keeping with the tectonic lines of the structure, had they been treated less formally. Among the latter are a few archaizing reliefs, like the *adhyeshaṇa* panel referred to on p. 79 and the Tree of Life and Fortune designs, like the one illustrated on Pl. III, though even here the tendency to naturalism comes out strongly in the modelling of the beasts and their riders.

BUDDHA IMAGES INSIDE THE GATEWAYS

Facing each of the four entrances of the Great Stūpa and against the terrace wall, is an image of the Buddha in alto-relievo, which was once protected by a carved canopy. These are the four images referred to in the Gupta inscription of the year 131 (A.D. 450-51) mentioned on p. 37 above. Each of the four images represents Buddha in the attitude of meditation (*dhyāna-mudrā*) with an attendant standing on either side, and behind his head an elaborate halo, across which two *gandharvas* are flying.[1] In the treatment of the groups, and particularly in the attitudes of the attendants, there are various minor differences, and in the case of the northern image there are three miniature figures sculptured on the face of the pedestal; but these differences are not such as to enable us to determine

[1]Dr. Burgess's statement (*J. R. A. S.*, 1902, p. 31) that the southern statue was a standing figure is without foundation. The sculpture referred to by him (*Cf.* Maisey's *Sánchi*, Pl. XIV, fig. I and Museum Cat. No. 9) was found near the South Gate; but had nothing to do with the pedestal opposite. It represents Buddha taming the elephant at Rājagriha, and is a work of about the 7th century A.D.

whether these images represent particular Dhyāni[1] Buddhas or not. In mediæval times it was the practice to place figures of the Dhyāni Buddhas in niches round the base of a stūpa facing the cardinal points, and it was usual to place Akshobhya on the east, Ratnasambhava on the south, Amitābha on the west, and Amoghasiddha on the north. Probably these are the four Buddhas intended to be represented here, but their identity cannot be established either from their attitudes or their attributes.[2] From an artistic point of view, the image at the South Gateway is the best, the modelling of the attendant figures being particularly graceful and pleasing. The south being the most important entrance, no doubt this image was executed by the best sculptor. Its style and workmanship recall to mind some of the reliefs, executed about the same time, in front of the Udayagiri Caves, four miles from Sāñchī.

Conservation of Great Stūpa

Considering the exposed position it occupies on the bare hill top, it is remarkable how well the Great Stūpa has withstood for over two thousand years the ravages of time and the elements. Many of the sculptured

[1]It was a doctrine of the Northern (Mahāyānist) School of Buddhism that each of the earthly Buddhas had his mystic counterpart (Dhyāni-Buddha) in one of the Dhyāni-heavens. Thus the Dhyāni of Kāśyapa Buddha is Ratnasambhava; of Gautama it is Amitābha, and of the future Buddha Maitreya it is Amōghasiddha. The doctrine appears to rest on the Zoroastrian theory of the "Fravashis," according to which every being has his "Fravashi," or genius, which joins itself to the body at birth and after death intercedes for it. The Dhyāni-Buddhas are anomalous, in that they have never been Bodhisattvas. *Cf.* Grünwedel, *op. cit.*, p. 195, Kern, *Manual of Buddhism*, p. 64.

[2]The head wearing a high *mukuṭa* or crown with a seated Buddha in front, which is figured in Maisey's *Sánchi*, Plate XV, 10, does not, as he imagined, belong to the northern statue.

reliefs, particularly those on the Western Gateway, seem almost as fresh to-day as when they left the chisel of the sculptor, and such harm as the others have suffered has been chiefly wrought in modern days by Moslem iconoclasts. Other causes which have contributed to the decay of the fabric of the stūpa were the ponding of water round its base and the reckless damage done by the amateur excavators in 1822, when a vast breach was made in the south-western portion of the dome. The former mischief was due, not so much to sinkage in the foundations, which for the most part rest on the living rock, as to the deposit of débris which from the Mediæval Age onwards went on steadily, century by century, and accumulated to a height of several feet round about the edifice, with the result that during each monsoon it was submerged in a sheet of water. Small wonder that in these conditions two of the gateways (South and West), together with considerable sections of the ground balustrade, should have subsided and collapsed. The wonder is that any gateway designed on such fragile principles should have survived at all. The two gateways referred to were re-erected by Major Cole in 1882, and during the operations carried out by the writer between 1913 and 1918 the whole area around the monument was cleared of the accumulated débris, and the remnants of the old stone pavement were relaid at a slope, so that the monument now stands high and dry. The whole south-western quadrant of the dome, moreover, which had been rebuilt with mere random rubble and earth in 1883 and was

bulging outwards to a perilous degree, was entirely reconstructed; and when by these measures the fabric had been once more rendered secure, the stairway, terrace and summit had their balustrades and other members restored to them, so that this unique edifice now stands complete in all its essential features.

STONE PAVEMENT AROUND THE GREAT STŪPA AND RETAINING WALL TO EAST

The stone pavement alluded to above, which is now in a very fragmentary condition, was originally composed of large rectangular slabs measuring between 6 and 8 ft. in length by 3 to 4 ft. in width. It dates from the same age as the stone envelope and ground balustrade of the Great Stūpa (*cir.* 150 B.C.). Beneath it is a succession of four other floors of concrete or other materials, the earliest of which lies at a depth of about four feet below the present surface and dates from the reign of the Emperor Aśoka. To this floor I shall refer again in connexion with the Aśoka column near the Southern Gate. The stone pavement now exposed to view on the surface originally extended, not only over the whole of the central plateau up to the limits of its present boundaries, but for a considerable distance beyond the long retaining wall on the east side, where it is still preserved in a good condition at a depth of some 16 ft. below the building No. 43. In this part of the site structure after structure was erected on the ruins of those which had gone before, and so the level gradually rose during mediæval times, when the roadway was made of which the beginning is still visible to the north of Building 19 (*vide* plan, Pl. X). Finally, about the twelfth century,

when the accumulated débris of all these monuments had risen to a height of some fourteen feet, a long wall[1] was erected from north to south across the plateau in order to retain it in position.

[1]See p. 121 below.

CHAPTER V

OTHER STŪPAS ON THE MAIN TERRACE

About 50 yards north-east of the Great Stūpa and at the edge of the level plateau is another monument of the same character and design but of smaller proportions.[1] This is the stūpa (Pl. VI) in which General Cunningham discovered the relics of Śāriputra and Mahāmogalāna, the two famous disciples of the Buddha, and which in old days must have been invested with peculiar sanctity. The chamber in which the relics were found was set in the centre of the structure and on a level with the top of the terrace. It was covered by a large slab upwards of five feet in length, and in it were two stone boxes, each of which bore a short inscription on the lid. On the one to the south was inscribed the name *Sāriputasa* "of Sāriputa," and on the one to the north *Mahāmogalānasa* "of Mahāmogalāna." Each box was a cube of 1′ 6″ with a lid 6″ in thickness.[2] In Śāriputra's box was a flat casket of white steatite covered by a thin saucer of black earthenware and by its side two pieces STŪPA 3

[1]The diameter of this stūpa is 49′6″; its height 27′.

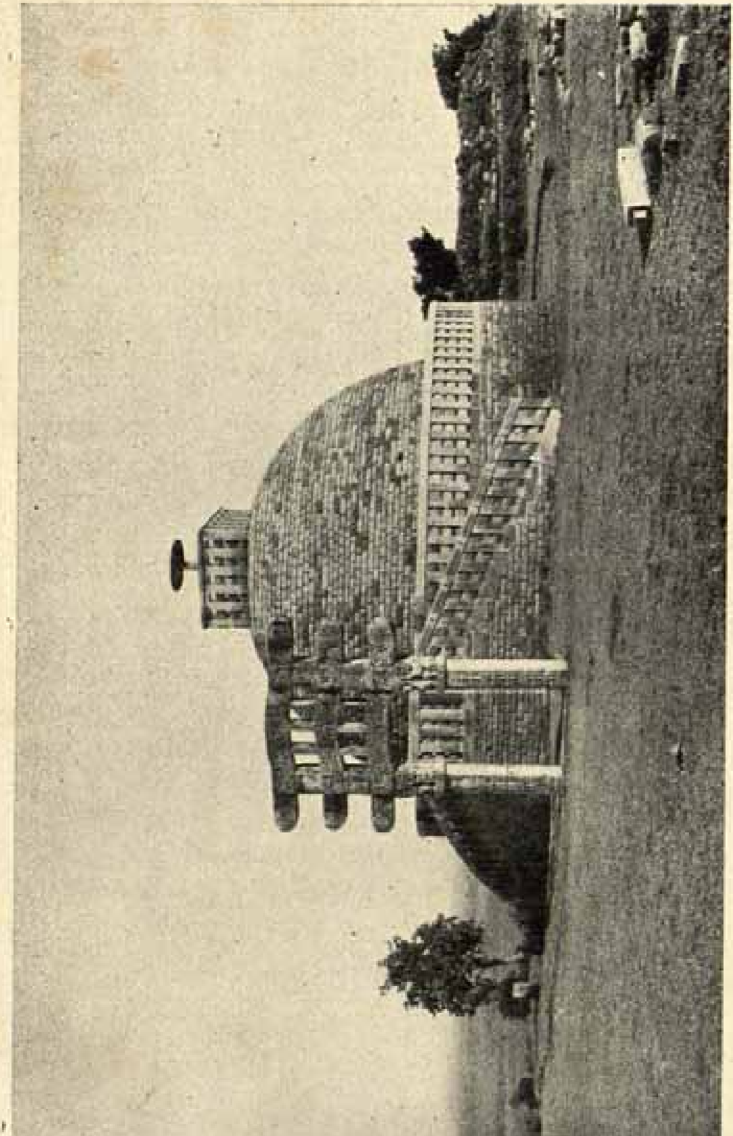
[2]Cunningham, *Bhilsa Topes*, p. 297; Mus. Cat. Nos. A67 and 68.

of sandal wood.[1] Within the casket was a small fragment of bone and several beads of pearl, garnet, lapis lazuli, crystal and amethyst. In the box of Mahāmogalāna was another steatite casket containing two small fragments of bone.

Apart from its size, the only essential points in which this stūpa differed from the Great Stūpa were the possession of one instead of four gateways, the decoration of its ground balustrade, and the more hemispherical contour of its dome, which was of a slightly later and more developed type. The ground balustrade has almost entirely disappeared, having been removed in ancient days for the construction of other buildings, but a few fragments of it were found *in situ* and others have been recovered from the foundations of Temple 45. They show that it was nearly eight feet in height and adorned with conventionalized but boldly executed lotus designs, varied on each pillar according to the fancy of the sculptor. The stairway and terrace balustrades are similar in design and style to those of the Great Stūpa. On the corner pillar on the landing of the berm opposite the gateway, the visitor should observe the interesting relief which is probably intended to depict this particular stūpa and which shows clearly the manner in which the railing and umbrella at the top were disposed. The stūpa, with the stairway, berm and *harmikā* balustrades, dates from the middle of the second century B.C., *i.e.*, it is approximately contemporary with the rebuilding of the

[1]Gen. Cunningham suggests that the two fragments of sandal wood may have been taken from the funeral pile.

Plate VI



Stūpa 3 from S.-S.-E.

Great Stūpa. The ground balustrade and the richly carved *toraṇa* on the south, which was the latest of all the five *toraṇas* on the site, were added probably about the beginning of the Christian era. By the time they were erected, some soil had collected in and around the processional path and the ground level had risen between one and two feet, thus concealing the original path and hiding from view the lowest steps of the ascending stairways. In order to expose the latter, it was necessary to remove this ancient accumulation of soil, but the digging was stopped short near the foot of the steps, so as to avoid endangering in any way the foundations of the gateway.

GATEWAY OF STŪPA 3

This gateway stands 17 feet high, and is adorned with reliefs in the same style as, but somewhat more decadent than, those on the gateways of the Great Stūpa. Indeed, the majority of these reliefs are mere repetitions of the subjects and scenes portrayed on the larger gateways, and need not be described again. The only scene which differs materially from those on the gateways of the Great Stūpa is the one delineated on the front face of the lowest architrave, which appears to represent the Heaven of Indra (*nandanavana*). In the centre is the pavilion of the god, with Indra himself seated on a throne surrounded by women attendants and with his harpist, Pañchāśikha, on his left. In the foreground is the river Mandākinī, which bounds the heaven of Indra, and to right and left of the pavilion are mountains and jungles forming a pleasance for the gods and demigods who

are taking their ease therein. On the left is a horse-headed fairy, apparently detaining a man against his will. She may be the Yakshiṇī Aśvamukhī of Jāt. 432, of whom the Bodhisattva was once born. In the corners next to the false capitals, are *nāga* kings seated, with their attendants, on the folds of seven-hooded *nāgas*, whose coils mingled with the waters of the river are carried through to the ends of the architrave, and go to form the spirals adorning its extremities. The sea monsters (*makaras*) and the heroes wrestling with them, which are portrayed on the false capitals of this architrave, are particularly appropriate in this position, where their coils combine effectively with those of the *nāgas*.

STŪPA 4 Immediately behind and to the north-east of Stūpa 3 is another stūpa of slightly smaller dimensions, which is now reduced completely to ruin. What remains of it is constructed in precisely the same manner as the neighbouring monument, with which there can be little doubt it was approximately contemporary. Remnants of the slabs with which the lower procession path was flagged still survive, but no trace has been found of any ground, stairway or terrace balustrade, and it seems unlikely, therefore, that these balustrades were ever constructed. On the other hand, an admirably carved coping stone forming part of a *harmikā*[1] balustrade was found not far to the south of this stūpa, and may well have belonged to it. It is 5′7″ in length, but broken at one end, and adorned on the outer face with an undulating garland of lotus blooms and leaves with birds seated among them.

[1]See p. 35 above and Mus. Cat. A69.

The only other stūpa on this plateau which dates from the early epoch is No. 6, situated to the east of Temple 18. The core of this stūpa, like those of Stūpas 3 and 4, is composed of heavy blocks of stone interspersed with chippings, and is manifestly of the same age as the latter, but the existing face masonry is much more modern, having apparently been added between the 6th and 8th century A.D., by which time it may be presumed that the original facing had collapsed. The later masonry is laid in small, even and well-dressed courses, additional stability being secured by the provision of footings (which are never found in the earlier structures) at the base both of the superstructure and of the plinth. Like the plinths of most of the mediæval stūpas on this site, the latter is square in plan and of no great height. As evidence of the early date of the core of this structure, it is noteworthy that the lower section of the walls[1] on the west and north sides of the court in which this stūpa stands, are also of an early age, being constructed of massive stones and descending many feet below the floor level of the small Gupta shrine 17 hard by. In mediæval times the upper parts of these walls, starting from the higher level, were rebuilt in smaller and neater masonry. STŪPA 6

The rest of the stūpas on the plateau belong to mediæval times. Most conspicuous among them is No. 5, which was erected probably about the 6th century STŪPAS 5, 7, ETC.

[1]These lower sections have now been covered in again.

A.D. Projecting from its south side is a statue plinth of Udayagiri stone, the design and construction of which indicate that it was set up about the 7th Century A.D. Whether the statue of the Budha, which has been set up on this plinth originally belonged here, is not altogether certain.

To about the same period as Stūpa 5 are to be referred also Stūpa 7 at the south-west corner of the plateau and the group of Stūpas 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16 which are ranged in two lines near Temple 17. The plinths of all these stūpas are square and constructed of rubble and earth faced with neatly dressed masonry and strengthened by footings round the outside. Some of them have a small square relic chamber in the centre; the others are solid throughout. No. 7, which was opened by General Cunningham but proved to contain no relics, is standing to a height of about six feet. On all four sides of it are the remains of what appears to have been a later terrace, which increased the dimensions of the base to a square of 29'. Projecting out, again, from this terrace on the northern side and probably contemporary with it, are the remnants of what may be assumed to have been a *chankrama* or promenade, over the western end of which two small circular stūpas of the ordinary type were built.

Stūpa 12

Of Stūpa 12, the relic chamber had been almost completely destroyed prior to its excavation, but amid the fallen masonry of its walls was discovered an in-

teresting statue pedestal of the Kushān period executed in Mathurā sandstone. The pedestal is unfortunately broken and nearly half of the relief which adorned its face, as well as half of the three lines of inscription engraved upon it, are gone.[1] What is left of the carving consists of a seated figure of the Buddha and, on his left, two female devotees bearing garlands in their right hands ; and what is left of the inscription reads :—

L. 1 . . . [*Bodhi*] *satvasya Maitreyasya pratimā pratishṭā*[*pitā*].

L. 2 . . . *sya kuṭubiniye Vishakulasya dhitu Vashi.*

L. 3 . . . *tāna*[*m*] *hi*[*ta*] *sukh*[*ā*]*rtha*[*ṁ*] *bhavatu.*

From this it appears that the statue represented the Bodhisattva Maitreya.

In Stūpa 14 was brought to light another statue, not lying in the débris, as in the case of the last mentioned stūpa, but set up against the western wall of the relic chamber, with a second wall immediately in front of its face to protect it from damage. This statue represents Buddha seated cross-legged in the *dhyānamudrā*, the familiar attitude of meditation. Like the pedestal described above, it, too, is of Mathurā sandstone STŪPA 14

[1]For a photograph of this pedestal see *A. S. R.*, 1912-13, Pt. I, Pl. VIII (*b*).

and a product of the Mathurā School, but the features of the face, particularly the lips and eyes, the highly conventionalized treatment of the hair and the no less highly stylized disposition of the drapery, proclaim it to be of the early Gupta, not of the Kushān, period. As this statue had already suffered much from wear and tear before it was enshrined in this stūpa, it affords additional evidence of the relatively late date of the building, which on other grounds is to be assigned to about the seventh century A.D. Probably the statue was taken from one of the many shrines of the early Gupta age which were then falling to decay, and entombed here as an object of special veneration. The burial of older cult statues, whole or fragmentary, in Buddhist stūpas is a practice which appears to have been common during the mediæval age; for I have found instances of it not only at Sāñchī, but at Sārnāth, Saheṭh-Maheṭh and other sites.

Time was when the Great Stūpa was surrounded, like all the more famous shrines of Buddhism, by a multitude of stūpas of varying sizes crowded together on the face of the plateau. The majority of these appear to have been swept away during the operations of 1881-83, when the ground around the Great Stūpa was cleared for a distance of some 60 ft. from the outer rail. Apart from those described above the only ones that have survived are a few clustered together near Stūpa 7, and a few more in front of Temple 31, where a deep accumulation of débris served to protect them from harm. In

this latter group two especially are deserving of mention, namely, those numbered 28 and 29 on my plan and situated to the right and left of the steps by which Temple 31 is approached. Each of these small stūpas is provided with the high square base, cornice and footings characteristic of the early Gupta age to which they belong, and each has the same outward appearance. Their interior construction, however, is not identical. The one to the west of the steps is built throughout of stone; but the one to the east has a core of large-sized bricks, which had no doubt been taken from some much more ancient structure. In the centre of this core and at a height of three feet from the ground level was a tiny relic chamber, and in it a casket consisting of a small cup of coarse earthenware with a second cup of similar fabric inverted over it as a lid. Inside this rough and ready receptacle was a small bone relic and the remains of a broken vase of fine terracotta with polished surface, such as was manufactured during the Maurya and Śuṅga ages. The presence of this early and fragmentary vase inside a casket which was itself quite intact, coupled with the antiquity of the bricks forming the core of the edifice, leaves little room for doubt that the relic had originally been enshrined in another and older stūpa, and that in the early Gupta period, when this stūpa had presumably fallen to decay, it was transferred to the small structure in which the writer found it, together with the fragments of the casket in which it had previously reposed and some of the bricks

STŪPAS 28 AND 29

belonging to the older edifice. From the size and fabric of these bricks it may be concluded that the older stūpa was erected during the Maurya epoch, but where it was situated, there is now no means of ascertaining.

CHAPTER VI

PILLARS ON THE MAIN TERRACE

Besides the stūpas there are two other classes of monuments on the main terrace, namely, pillars and temples. The number of the former must once have been considerable ; for fragments of many shafts and capitals have been found lying in the débris. Most of them, however, are small and insignificant memorials of the Gupta age, those which are deserving of notice being but five in number. The earliest of these, the pillar or *lāṭ* of the Emperor Aśoka near the South Gateway, is of particular interest, not only for the perfection of its workmanship and the royal edict inscribed upon its shaft, but for the light also which it throws on the age of the Great Stūpa adjoining. Many years ago this pillar was broken into several pieces by a local zamindar, who, so it is said, was endeavouring to cut up and utilize its shaft in a sugar-cane press. The stump, however, still remains *in situ*, and the larger sections of the shaft have been laid alongside it, while the crowning lions are in the museum. The pillar, when

Aśoka pillar

intact, was about 42 feet[1] in height and consisted of a round and slightly tapering monolithic shaft, with bell-shaped capital surmounted by an abacus and a crowning ornament of four lions, set back to back,[2] the whole finely finished and polished to a remarkable lustre from top to bottom. The abacus is adorned with four 'honeysuckle' designs separated one from the other by pairs of geese, symbolical perhaps of the flock of the Buddha's disciples. The lions from the summit, though now sadly disfigured, still afford a noble example of the sculptor's art. Let the visitor mark in particular the spirited vitality of the animals combined with a certain tectonic conventionality, which brings them into harmony with the architectural character of the monument, and let him mark, also, the tense development of the muscles, the swelling veins, the strong set of the claws, and the crisp treatment of the mane disposed in short schematic curls. If these lions are compared with the neighbouring lion-capitals of the South Gateway, their vast superiority will be at once apparent, and the question may well be asked, how this superiority is to be explained, seeing that Indian sculpture achieved such rapid development during the interval of two hundred years which separated them. The answer is

[1]Drawings of the pillar, approximately correct, are published in Maisey, *Sánchi and its Remains*, Pl. XIX, Fig. 2, and Pl. XXXIII, Fig. 4, and Cunningham, *The Bhilsa Topes*, Pl. X. A photograph of the crowning lions is reproduced in *A. S. R.*, 1912-13, Pt. I, Pl. VIII, *c*.

[2]In this capital the lions did not support a "wheel of the Law" (*dharma-chakra*), as they did at Sārnāth.

that, while the South Gateway is a product of the indigenous Indian school, which had only recently emerged from a primitive state, this pillar of Aśoka is the handiwork of a foreign, probably Perso-Greek, sculptor, who had generations of artistic effort behind him. Western influence is, indeed, apparent in every feature of the monument as well as in the edict incised upon it. It has long been known, of course, that the decrees of the Achæmenian monarchs engraved on the rocks of Behistun and elsewhere, furnished the models on which the edicts of Aśoka are based. It was in Persia, also, that the bell-shaped capital was evolved. It was from Persian originals, specimens of which are still extant in the plain of the Murghāb, at Istakhr, Nakshi-i-Rustam and Persepolis, that the smooth unfluted shafts of the Mauryan columns were copied. It was from Persia, again, that the craftsmen employed by Aśoka learnt to give so lustrous a polish to the stone—a technique of which examples survive at Persepolis and elsewhere. Lastly, it is to Persia, or, to be more precise, to that part of it which was once the satrapy of Bactria and was at this time asserting its independence from the empire of the Seleucids, that we must look for the Hellenistic influence which alone at this epoch of the world's history could have been responsible for the modelling of the living forms on this pillar at Sāñchī or on the still more magnificent pillar of Aśoka at Sārnāth.[1] The edict which is

[1]When these pillars were erected, little more than two generations had passed since Alexander the Great had planted in Bactria

engraved on the pillar in early Brāhmī characters, is unfortunately much damaged, but the commands it contains appear to be the same as those recorded in the Sārnāth and Kauśāmbī edicts. It relates to the penalties for schism in the church and may be translated as follows :—

" . . path is prescribed both for the monks and for the nuns. As long as (my) sons and great-grandsons (shall reign ; and) as long as the Moon and the Sun (shall endure), the monk or nun who shall cause divisions in the Saṅgha, shall be compelled to put on white robes and to reside apart. For what is my desire ? That the Saṅgha may be united and may long endure."[1]

The sandstone out of which the pillar is carved came from the quarries of Chunār several hundred miles away, and it says not a little for the skill of Aśoka's engineers that they were able to transport a block of stone over forty feet in length and weighing almost as many tons over so vast a distance. No doubt, they availed themselves of water transport, using rafts during the rainy season up the Ganges, Jumnā and Betwā

a powerful colony of Greeks, who occupying as they did a tract of country on the very threshold of the Maurya dominions, where the great trade routes from India, Irān and Central Asia converged, and closely in touch as they were with the great centres of civilization in Western Asia, must have played a dominant part in the transmission of Hellenistic art and culture into India. Every argument indeed, whether based on geographical considerations or on the political and commercial relations which are known to have been maintained between India and Western Asia, or on the happy fusion of Hellenistic and Iranian art visible in these monuments, indicates Bactria as the probable source from which the artist who created them drew his inspiration.

[1]See E. Hultzsch, *J. R. A. S.*, 1911, pp. 168-69.

rivers, but, even so, the task of shifting so ponderous a mass on to rafts and of hoisting it up the steep hill-side at Sāñchī was one of which any engineer might well be proud.

With regard to the evidence which this pillar affords for the age of the great balustrade and stone envelope of the Main Stūpa, it is based upon the stratification of the ancient floors laid round about the stūpa and the pillar. The pillar itself is founded upon the solid rock at a depth of about twelve feet below the present surface. For the first eight feet its shaft is approximately circular and hammer-dressed, and this portion of it is imbedded in a packing of heavy stones retained in position by massive walls built on a roughly rectangular plan about its base. Immediately on the top of these walls and packing is a floor of *bajrī* six inches in thickness, which meets the column at the junction of the rough-dressed base with the polished shaft and which coincided with the ground level at the time when the pillar was erected. This original floor is nearly four feet below the broken stone pavement now visible on the surface, and between the two there are three other floors with varying thicknesses of débris between.[1] Now, anyone familar with the excavation of ancient Indian sites knows well that such an accumulation, nearly four feet in depth, with three floors intervening, could hardly have been formed in less than a century; in all probability the process lasted longer, but in any case the laying of the stone pavement

[1]See *A. S. R.*, 1913-14, Pt. II, p. 3.

cannot be referred to an earlier date than the middle of the 2nd century B.C.; and as this stone pavement is contemporary with the ground balustrade and stone envelope of the Great Stūpa, it follows that the latter also must be assigned to the same age.

PILLAR 25 The next pillar in chronological order is that numbered 25 in the plan, which was erected about the same time as the Khām Bābā pillar at Besnagar, that is, towards the end of the second century B.C., not, as Maisey and others have supposed, during the age of the Guptas. At a height of about six feet from the ground on the south side are a few letters of a mediæval inscription, and near the base on the south-west side are some defaced characters apparently of the shell type; but both of these records were inscribed on the pillar long after its erection, and they afford therefore no clue as to its date. That it belonged, however, to the period of Śuṅga rule, is clear alike from its design and from the character of the surface dressing. The height of the pillar, including the capital, is 15 ft. 1 in.[1]; its diameter at the base, 1 ft. 4 in. Up to a height of 4 ft. 6 in. the shaft is octagonal; above that, sixteen-sided. In the octagonal portion all the facets are flat, but in the upper section some of the facets are fluted, others flat. This and a very effective method of finishing off the arris at the point of transition between the two sections are features characteristic of the second and first centuries B.C., but are not, so far as is known, found in later work.

[1] Measured from the old ground level.

The west side of the shaft is split off, but the tenon at the top, to which the capital was mortised, is still preserved. The capital is of the usual bell-shaped type, with lotus leaves falling over the shoulder of the bell. Above this is a circular cable necking, then a second circular necking relieved by a bead and lozenge pattern, and, finally a deep square abacus adorned with a railing in relief. The crowning feature, probably a lion, has disappeared.

The third pillar, numbered 26, stands a little to the north of the one just described and belongs to the early Gupta age. Apart from its design, it is distinguished from the other pillars on the site by the unusual quality and colour of its stone, which is harder than that used in the other pillars and of a pale buff hue splashed and streaked with purplish-brown. At Sāñchī, this particular variety of stone was used freely in monuments of the Gupta period. This pillar was approximately 22 ft. 6 in. in height and was composed of two pieces only, one comprising the circular shaft and square base, the other the bell-capital, necking, lions and crowning wheel. Unfortunately, the shaft is broken into three sections, which owing to the character of the breakages could not be fitted together again. On the north-west side of the lowest section, which is still *in situ*, is a short mutilated inscription[1] in Gupta characters recording the gift of a Vajrapāṇi pillar (*i.e.*, No. 35 below), two pillars of a gateway, the maṇḍapa of a monastery and a gateway, by one Rudrasena or Rudrasiṁha, PILLAR 26

[1] Cf. *Corpus Inscr. Indicarum* III, pp. 279-80.

son of Gośura-Siṁhabala, the superintendent of a monastery. As was usual with pillars of the Gupta age, the square base projected above the ground level, the projection in this case being 1 ft. 2 in., and was set in a small square platform. The lion capital of this pillar is a feeble and clumsy imitation of the one which surmounted the pillar of Aśoka, with the addition of a wheel at the summit and with certain other variations of detail. The variations referred to are observable in the cable necking above the bell-capital, which is composed of a series of strands bound together with a riband, and in the reliefs on the circular abacus, which consist of birds and lotuses of unequal sizes disposed in irregular fashion, not with the symmetrical precision of earlier Indian art. Like the grotesque lions on the Southern Gateway, these lions also are provided with five claws on each foot, and in other respects their modelling exhibits little regard for truth and little artistic feeling.

PILLAR 35

It is in the Gupta age also that the massive pillar near the North Gateway, numbered 35 in the plan, was erected, and there can be little doubt that this is the pillar referred to in the inscription on pillar 26 (see above). This pillar has repeatedly been described as the counterpart of and contemporary with the pillar of Aśoka near the Southern Gateway; but a very perfunctory examination is sufficient to show that its ascription to the Maurya epoch is wrong. Every

feature, indeed, whether structural, stylistic or technical, is typical of Gupta workmanship. Most of the shaft has been destroyed, but the stump still remains *in situ*, and the foundations are intact. The form, too, of the platform around its base is sufficiently clear, and the capital and statue which it is said to have supported, are both relatively well-preserved. What remains of the shaft is 9 ft. in length, 3 ft. 10 in. of which, measured from the top, are circular and smooth, and the remainder, constituting the base, square and rough-dressed. In the Gupta age, it was the common practice to keep the bases of such monolithic columns square, whereas those of the Maurya age were, so far as I am aware, invariably circular. Again, every known column of Maurya date is distinguished by its exquisite dressing and highly polished surface ; but in this case the dressing of the stone is characterized by no such lustrous finish. As to the foundations, which consist of heavy stone boulders retained by stout walls, they cannot in the absence of adequate data from other sites, be used as wholly reliable criteria of age, but it is noteworthy that they are constructed on a more uniform and regular plan than the foundations of the Aśoka column near the South Gate. On the other hand, the stone platform which enclosed the base of Pillar 35 is both designed and constructed in the characteristic manner of the Gupta period, and the iron chisels which were discovered wedged beneath the bottom of the shaft and which were used to maintain it in the perpendicular, have yielded on

analysis[1] almost identically the same results as other implements of the Gupta epoch.

The bell capital and square abacus ornamented with a balustrade in relief are cut entire from a single block of stone. So, too, is the statue which Cunningham and Maisey found lying alongside the capital and which is believed to have belonged to the same pillar.[2] This statue, which appears to represent the Bodhisattva Vajrapāṇi standing erect, is clad in a *dhotī* and adorned with bracelets, ear-rings, bejewelled necklace and head-dress. The hair falls in curls over the shoulders and back, and beneath it at the back fall the ends of two ribands. An interesting feature of the image is the halo, which is pierced with twelve small holes evenly disposed around its edge. Manifestly the halo, as we now see it, is too small in proportion to the size of the statue, and these holes were no doubt intended for the attachment of the outer rays, which were probably fashioned out of copper gilt, the rest of the statue itself being possibly painted or gilded. That this statue stood, as Cunningham and Maisey say, on the summit of the pillar, I see no reason to doubt, and that it is a work of

[1]This analysis, for which I am indebted to the kindness of Sir Robert Hadfield, F.R.S., is as follows :—

C	Si	S	P	Mn
·05	·09	·009	·303	·09

With this it is interesting to compare the analysis of the Iron pillar of Chandra at the Qutb, near Delhi, namely :—

C	Si	S	P	Mn
·08	·046	·006	·114	*Nil*

[2]*Cf.* Mus. Cat. A99.

the Gupta period, needs no demonstration to any one familiar with the history of Indian sculpture.

The fifth and last pillar to be noticed is No. 34, which used to stand in the recess on the south side of the East Gateway of the Great Stūpa. Nothing of this pillar is now left *in situ*, but a drawing of it, as it stood intact in 1851, is reproduced in General Maisey's work, and two pieces of it were found by the writer lying among the débris round the stūpa. One of these comprises the bell capital with its cable necking and a small section of the shaft beneath; and the other, the crowning lion and circular abacus on which it stood. These carvings clearly belong to the Gupta school, but compared with other contemporary works their execution is rough and clumsy, and the design of the double capital is singularly bizarre and degenerate. PILLAR 34

CHAPTER VII

TEMPLES ON THE MAIN TERRACE

TEMPLE 18

Of the several temples on the main terrace the most important in point of size and interest is the one numbered 18 (Pl. VII*a*) on the plan, which is situated on a low terrace directly opposite the South Gateway of the Great Stūpa. The plan of this temple, as revealed by recent excavations, turns out to be similar to that of the rock-cut *chaitya*-halls at Kārlī and elsewhere, with this noteworthy difference, that in this case the apse is enclosed, not by columns, as in the cave temples, but by a solid wall, the difference being due to the fact that in a free-standing building light could be admitted to the aisles through windows in the outer wall. How these windows were arranged and what were their dimensions and number, there is now no means of determining, since the outer wall is standing to a height of less than two feet above the interior floor-level; but we shall probably not be far wrong, if we assume that they were spaced at even intervals, to the number of about 8 in each side and 4 in the back wall. The inner and outer walls around the apse are constructed of dry stone masonry similar to that employed in the mediæval

stūpas described above. The older pillars and pilasters of the nave are monoliths, square in section and 17 feet high, slightly tapering towards the top. They are not sunk in the ground, but rest on foundations of stone, which in themselves are not very strong or secure, the architect having relied upon the wooden timbers of the roof to tie the pillars together and thus maintain them in position. This, no doubt, they did, so long as they were intact, but since their collapse three of the pillars at the north-west corner and the pilaster on the western side have fallen, and the others were found leaning at parlous angles, being saved from falling only by the heavy architraves above them. The curious and interesting design carved on the four faces of these pillars, which has the appearance of having been left in an unfinished state, was a favourite one in the 7th century A.D., and is found in buildings of the same age at places as far remote as Ellorā in the Deccan and Aihole in the Dharwar District of the Bombay Presidency, but is not, so far as I am aware, found in any architecture of a later period. These pillars indicate A.D. 650 as approximately the date when this temple was erected, and this date is confirmed by other considerations, notably by the structural character of the walls, by the subsequent additions which were made to the temple, and by the succession of earlier structures which had stood here before it was erected. Of the later additions referred to, one is the stone filling in the apse, and another the stone jambs of the inner doorway, of which the eastern

one was still standing a few years ago but is now lying prostrate on the ground. This jamb, which is of the same Nāgourī stone as the pillars of the interior, is adorned with sculptures in relief, the style of which proclaims it to be a work of the 10th or 11th century A.D.

Within the apse of the temple there once stood a stūpa, the remains of which were found by General Maisey in 1851, and among the remains a broken steatite vase,[1] which may be assumed to have contained relics. The stūpa appears to have stood well back in the apse, and, like the walls of the temple, to have been built on very shallow foundations, since all trace of it has now vanished.

Of the minor antiquities found in this temple the only ones that deserve mention are a number of terra-cotta tablets of the 7th or 8th century A.D., which were found in a heap on the floor of the aisle on the eastern side of the apse. They are of varying sizes but of an almost uniform pattern, each being stamped with two separate impressions and roughly adorned around its edge with a scalloped border. In the lower impression, which is the larger of the two and shaped like a *pīpal* leaf, is the figure of Buddha seated on a lotus throne in the earth-touching attitude (*bhūmisparśa-mudrā*) with miniature stūpas to the right and left of his head and the Buddhist creed in characters of the 7th or 8th century A.D. to the right and left of his

[1] *Sánchi and its Remains*, p. 74.

body. In the upper impression, which is oval or round in shape, the Buddhist creed is repeated.

EARLIER STRUCTURES ON THE SAME SITE

In speaking of the age of this temple I have alluded to the existence of earlier structures on the same site. The remains of these structures consist of a series of floors separated by layers of débris beneath the floor of the apse, of stone foundations beneath the walls at the back of the apse and aisle, and of stout retaining walls around the temple enclosure, which date back to an early period. The earlier floors[1] are three in number and, to judge by the remains in other parts of the site, the uppermost of the three, which is composed of lime concrete, is to be assigned to the fifth or perhaps sixth century A.D., the next to the first or second century B.C., and the lowest to the Maurya or Śuṅga epoch. Like the original *bajrī* floor around the pillar of Aśoka, the lowest floor is laid on a foundation of stone boulders extending down to the natural rock, but, inasmuch as it was intended for the interior of a covered building, it was composed, not of coarse *bajrī*, but of lime plaster over a layer of pounded clay. To the same age as this early floor belong also the early retaining walls on the east, south and west of the temple compound and along the edge of the main plateau to the west of it. On this side of the plateau the natural rock shelves rapidly away towards the south, and, in order to provide a level terrace for their structures, the architects had to erect

[1] The excavation which revealed these floors has now been filled in again.

massive retaining walls and then level up the enclosed space with a filling of heavy stone boulders and earth. These retaining walls are constructed of hammer-dressed blocks similar to those used at a later period for the enlargement of the Great Stūpa, and are between 2 feet and 3 feet in thickness by 12 or 13 feet in height. Seemingly, the retaining wall on the south side of the temple must have proved inadequate to meet the strain imposed on it; for a second wall was subsequently constructed on the outside of it and the space between the two filled in with stone boulders. This second wall, which appears to have been built very soon after the first and is also founded on the natural rock, has a thickness of over 4 ft. at the base, with several footings on its outer side. Whether it was as high as the first wall, cannot be determined, as the upper part of it has fallen.

TERRACOTTA ROOF TILES, ETC.

In the angle formed by the retaining wall on the west side of the temple and the wall at right angles to it along the south face of the plateau a deep accumulation of débris had formed, much of which must have fallen from the temple terrace above. Near the bottom of this débris were found large number of terracotta roof tiles and, along with them, a broken stone bowl of fine early workmanship.[1] The tiles probably came from the roof of the early building, the superstructure

[1] *Cf.* Mus. Catalogue, A 10 and Pl. VI. The bowl, which is a standard one of polished Chunar stone, appears to have been intended for the distribution of food offered to the Saṅghārāma.

a. TEMPLE 18

b. TEMPLE 17

of which, on the analogy of other edifices of that age, may be assumed to have been mainly of wood.

The heavy block of stone nearly four feet square and hollow in the centre, which is now lying on the surface in front of the apse, was found resting on the early stone foundations beneath the forepart of the apse, where it had probably been left last century by one of the earlier explorers; but however this may be, there can be little doubt that it was made in mediæval times as a base collar for the support of one of the pillars of Temple 18.

In my remarks in Chapter II on the evolution of Indian art[1] I noticed that the keynote of Gupta art is its intellectualism, and that in this respect it is reminiscent of the classic art of Greece. This intellectual quality is well illustrated in the little shrine of the early fifth century A.D., which stands a few paces to the east of the temple just described. A very unpretentious building, it consists of nothing more than a simple flat-roofed chamber with a pillared porch in front, but despite its modest size and despite, too, the absence of that refinement and clear definition which are the distinguishing features of Athenian architecture, the classical character of its construction, of its well-balanced proportions and its appropriate ornamentation are undeniable (Pl. VII*b*). Compare it for a moment with the stūpa gateways of the Andhra period, and mark how TEMPLE 17

[1] *Cf.* p. 20 *supra.*

the irrational and almost fantastic wooden forms of the latter have now given place to rational lithic ones; how each member of the architecture, whether plinth or column, capital or cornice, now performs a clear and logical function, well-suited to the need of the material; and how relatively restrained and simple decoration has become. On the other hand, compare it with a Greek structure, such as the temple of 'Wingless Victory' on the Akropolis at Athens, and consider the relatively close kinship between the two. The similarity between them, indeed, is such as to suggest the question, whether this and other structures of the same age were not copied from western prototypes. The answer to be returned to this question is a negative one. In the Gupta epoch Indian art was undoubtedly indebted to the Western World, and particularly to Western Asia, for some of its motifs and conceptions, but it is not to any mere superficial imitation that the 'classical' character of this and other contemporary buildings is due. The cause lies deeper, and it is to be sought in the fact, as I have already pointed out, that during the Gupta age the mentality and genius of the people underwent much the same broad and rapid development as the genius of Greece had done in the fifth and fourth centuries before Christ; and it is in no way remarkable, therefore, that her art like her thought found expression in the same intellectuality, in the same purposefulness, and in the same logical beauty as the art of Greece. This little shrine, in fact, reflects in its every stone the tem-

perament of the people and of the epoch which produced it, an epoch which was primarily creative and not imitative; and if we take the trouble to compare it with the creations of the Andhra period, we shall find in it an eloquent index to the change which had come over Indian culture during the first four centuries of the Christian era.

On the opposite side of the entrance of Temple 18 stood another shrine of about the same age but of slightly larger dimensions than the one last described. All that is left of it *in situ* consists of the rough core of the plinth, from which even the face stones have been stripped; but lying in the débris above the plinth were two large and two small stone pilasters, besides various other architectural members, the style of which indicates that the structure belongs to the Gupta age, though it is probably somewhat later than Temple 17. Both larger and smaller pilasters are adorned with fluted vase capitals, cable necking and shafts that pass from the square to the octagon and sixteen-sided above. SHRINE 9

A fourth temple in this area (No. 31) is situated at the north-east corner, immediately behind Stūpa 5. It consists of a plain pillared chamber with flat roof, standing on a broad plinth, and contains an image of the Buddha seated on a lotus throne opposite the entrance. The plinth was constructed for an earlier temple which stood on the same site, and to this earlier temple also belonged the pedestal beneath the lotus throne of TEMPLE 31

the cult statue, which is still in its original position at a slightly lower level than the floor of the present temple. This earlier shrine must have been built in the 6th or 7th century A.D., and it is not improbable, therefore, that two of the pilasters now standing in the later building, which are similar in design to the pillars of Temple 18, had originally belonged to it. On the other hand, two of the other pillars are of the early Gupta age, and must have been taken from some other structure—possibly from one of those of which the plinths have been exposed beneath the long retaining wall on the east of this plateau. The cult statue inside this shrine is of reddish-brown sandstone and represents the Buddha seated on a lotus. The hands and forearms, unfortunately, are missing, but to judge from the two marks of breakage on his breast, which indicate that both hands were raised, he must have been portrayed in the attitude of teaching (*dharma-chakra-mudrā*). Although referable to the same epoch as the pedestal on which it stands, *i.e.*, 6th-7th century A.D., it does not fit the latter, and we must, therefore, presume that, like some of the columns, it also was brought here from another shrine.

NĀGĪ STATUE A monument of interest which came to light during the excavations of the temple platform was a *nāgī* statue, 7 ft. 6 in. in height (including the tenon at the base), which used to stand in the angle formed by the approaching flight of steps and the face of the platform on its west. This statue was executed in the 4th or 5th century A.D., and must once have stood free on a spot where

it could be seen from all sides. Beneath its base is a tenon which was, no doubt, originally morticed into a stone plinth, but in late mediæval days, when it was set up in its present position, the plinth was discarded and the base of the statue imbedded in dry stone masonry. Subsequently the image was broken in two at a point a little above the ankles. The lower part was found still *in situ*; the upper lying a little distance away. From the indications afforded by the masonry it appears likely that there was a second *nāga* or *nāgī* statue in the corresponding position to the east of the steps.

Retaining wall between central and eastern areas

Before leaving the main plateau it remains to say a few words about the retaining wall along its eastern side and the remnants of the several structures visible beneath its foundations. When speaking of the open paved area around the Great Stūpa, we remarked that it had once extended on the same level for a considerable distance east of this retaining wall. That was in the second century B.C., and it is probable that for the next three hundred years or even longer the pavement was kept clear of débris. Then, as the buildings in this part of the site began to fall to decay, their ruins gradually encroached more and more upon the paved area, other buildings rose over their remains, and so the process of accumulation went on until, by the seventh century, an artificial terrace had been formed five or more feet in height and extending almost to the limits of the retaining wall. It is to this period that the structures 19, 21 and 23, as well as the road (No. 20)

Buildings 19, 21 and 23, and road 20

to the north of the first mentioned probably belonged. The road in question, which to judge by the worn condition of its cobble-stones must long have been in use, is 9 feet wide and rises eastward by a gradient of about 1 in 6. Of building 23 only the entrance, with a 'moon-stone' threshold, has been exposed, and the walls of buildings 19, which are standing to a height of between one and two feet only, are composed of the ordinary rough dry stone masonry. Building 21, on the other hand, is constructed of massive blocks of Nāgourī stone with a torus moulding at its base, from which it may be judged to belong to the Gupta age. The retaining wall over the ruins of these edifices, erected when the terrace to the east had risen as high as fourteen feet, can hardly be earlier than the 11th century A.D. Probably it was contemporary with the later Temple 45. At the time it was built, there must have been some accumulation of débris also on its western side; for its foundations did not descend more than nine feet from the top of the terrace. In repairing this wall it was found possible to underpin and bank up that section of it which is north of the modern flight of steps leading to the upper plateau. The rest had to be dismantled and rebuilt completely, the foundations being carried another seven feet lower down.

CHAPTER VIII

SOUTHERN AREA

Of the remains in the southern group the most important is the great temple numbered 40 in the plan, which, like all the other structures in this part of the site, was until recently completely buried from view. In its original form this temple was an apsidal hall, and is the earliest structure of this type of which any remains have been preserved to us. What is left of the original building consists of a rectangular stone plinth approached by a flight of steps on its eastern and western sides. In the outward aspect of this plinth there was nothing to indicate that the superstructure had taken an apsidal form, but when the core of the apparently solid masonry was examined, it was found to be composed in reality of two distinct walls with a filling of débris between, while the interior face of the outer wall proved to be curved at the southern end in the form of an apse, the inner wall corresponding to it in shape (see plan Pl. X). The masonry of these interior walls was strikingly rough, and it was clear that they were intended to do duty only as foundations; but the TEMPLE 40

plan of the foundations left no doubt that the superstructure had been apsidal in plan resembling in this respect the great *chaitya*-halls at Taxila, Ter, Chezārla and among the Cave Temples of Western India, though with this noticeable difference that, whereas the latter are provided with one or more entrances directly opposite the apse, this structural hall at Sāñchī had an entrance in each of its two longer sides—a feature which recalls to mind the Sudāma and other Maurya cave shrines in the Barābar Hills. That the superstructure was mainly of wood and was burnt down at a relatively early age, is evident from the fact that no vestige of it had survived except some charred remains of timber, which were found on the original pounded clay floor of the building. Of the approximate date at which this conflagration took place, some indication is afforded by the stone pillars which were subsequently set up on the same plinth. These pillars are ranged in five rows of ten each without reference, apparently, to the foundations of the original structure, and it is a reasonable inference, therefore, that by the time they were erected, the plan of the original had been forgotten. Seeing, however, that the pillars in question bear records carved upon them in the Brāhmī script of the Śuṅga period, it may reasonably be concluded that the original structure was erected in the preceding Maurya period and probably burnt down when Aśoka's stūpa was destroyed by Pushyamitra ; and that its reconstruction dates from the same time as the reconstruction of that

stūpa, *i.e.*, after the death of Pushyamitra (*circa* 148 B.C.).

At the time when the reconstruction took place, the original plinth was much enlarged by erecting a thick retaining wall on all four sides of, but at some distance from, it, and filling in the space between with heavy boulders and worked stones, probably from the earlier building, among which was the broken image of an elephant in the round, of superior workmanship.[1] The effect of these measures was to increase the length of the plinth to 137 feet and its width to about 91 feet. At the same time the height of the floor was raised by about 1 ft. 4 in., and a new pavement was laid of large slabs measuring from 6 to 8 ft. in length by 3 ft. 6 in. in width. On three sides of the enlarged plinth—that is, on the north, south and west—are projections of varying dimensions, and it may be surmised that there was a similar projection also on the eastern side, which has not been excavated. All of these projections appear to be contemporary with the retaining wall.

By this enlargement of the older plinth the two stairways that led up to it on its eastern and western sides were buried from view, and their place was taken by two new flights constructed in the thickness of the northern retaining wall, which was more than doubled for the purpose. Similar stairways have also been found in the end wall of the temple at Sonārī, which is to be ascribed to about the same age as this reconstruction.

[1] Mus. Cat. A 11.

We have said that the octagonal stone columns of this hall were disposed in five rows of ten each, ana this is the disposition shown in the plan. So far as these fifty columns are concerned, their arrangement is not open to question, since most of the broken shafts of the columns were found *in situ*. On the other hand, it seems probable that the number of columns in the hall was considerably over fifty, the extra ones having formed one or more rows at the sides or ends of the existing group. Indeed, at first sight, it appeared as if this must have been the case ; for in the débris round about the building were found a number of other broken pillars of a precisely similar pattern to those *in situ*, which might reasonably be assumed to have stood on the enlarged plinth and to have been thrown down, when the upper part of the later retaining wall collapsed and brought down with it some six or more feet of the boulder filling behind. This assumption, however, is not free from objection, for the reason that every shaft without exception is broken, and that most of the pieces are only three or four feet in length ; so that those which were found lying in the débris may in reality have been the upper sections of the pillars still *in situ*, and what appear to be their rough bases may actually have been nothing more than the unfinished tops of the shafts. I mention this alternative hypothesis, not because I regard it as convincing or even probable, but because the evidence is not such as to demonstrate conclusively that there were more than fifty columns ; and in default of

such conclusiveness I have thought it better to indicate on my plan only those pillars which were actually found *in situ*.

Besides the large octagonal pillars there were also found a number of smaller ones of about the same age, square below and octagonal above, with donative inscriptions in early Brāhmī engraved on some of the shafts. Some of these pillars were ranged in a row alongside the eastern edge of the old plinth, but this position could not have been the one which they originally occupied; for the dressed faces of their shafts proved, on excavation, to extend some distance below the level of the earliest clay floor, and, what is still more significant, broken pieces of the larger octagonal pillars were found built into their foundations, thus demonstrating that they had not been set up here until after the taller columns had fallen. What their original position had been, càn only be surmised. Possibly they were intended to support an open verndah around the main body of the hall, or possibly they had been employed in a subsidiary structure on the south side. Wherever they may have stood, it is clear from their rough bases that it was on the ground floor and not in an upper storey.

Whether this pillared hall was ever brought to completion or not, is questionable. To judge by the distance (about seven feet) between the octagonal pillars, it seems probable that architraves of stone rather than of wood were intended; but there was not a trace either

of architraves or of capitals or of any other architectural feature except the columns. If, therefore, the building was ever completed, the whole superstructure with the exception of the pillars must have been of timber, as it was in many of the early edifices of Ceylon. At a later date, that is, about the 7th or 8th century A.D., a shrine with a portico and entrance facing the west was constructed on the eastern side of the plinth, and it was probably at this time that the smaller square columns were set up in the position described above. The three steps which gave access to the portico of this shrine are placed directly over the eastern aisle of the original apsidal hall, the bases of the stone pillars in front of them having been cut off short at the floor level so as not to interfere with the entrance. The portico itself has an inner measurement of 24 feet from north to south by about 9 feet east to west. Behind it were a few remnants of the walls of the shrine.

BUILDING 8

Another early building in this area is that numbered 8 on the plan. It consists of a solid square plinth standing on its north side about 12 feet above the bedrock. In front of it, in the middle of the east side, is projecting ramp with a few steps at its base, the remaining steps together with a portion of their substructure having been destroyed. This lofty plinth was constructed of masonry similar to that of the early apsidal hall described above. But in this case the whole core of the plinth is filled in solid with rough boulders, and

there are no interior foundation walls. In the centre of the core of this plinth General Cunningham sank a deep pit and, finding only a filling of rough boulders, assumed, without discovering the plan of the building that it was another early stūpa. In the period to which this building belongs stūpas were never built with square bases, and there is no reason to suppose that this was an exception to the rule. Probably, it was a square shrine with a stone plinth and timber superstructure, such as is figured in several of the reliefs on the gateways. In the angle formed by the south side of the stairway ramp and the east side of the plinth, a rectangular space was enclosed in later times by a wall. This enclosure wall appears to date from the mediæval period.

MONASTERIES 36, 37 AND 38

The remaining buildings that have been exposed in the southern area consist of the three monasteries 36, 37 and 38. All three are built approximately on the same plan—a plan which has already become familiar to us on many other sites in India. They consist, that is to say, of a square court surrounded by cells on the four sides (*chatuḥ-śāla*), with a verandah supported on pillars around the court, a raised platform in the centre of it, and in some cases an additional chamber outside. The entrance passed through the middle chamber in one of the sides, and was flanked without by projecting turrets. The upper storey was probably constructed largely of timber, the lower storey being of drystone masonry.

All three monasteries belong to the mediæval epoch, No. 36, which is nearer to the centre of the site, being the earliest of the three, No. 38, coming next, and No. 37 last.

MONASTERY 36

In Monastery 36, the masonry is rough and carelessly laid. The square platform in the centre of the courtyard is covered with a layer of brick and lime concrete about 3 in. thick. Round the outer edge of this platform was a low wall on which stood the columns of the verandah. The staircase which gave access to the upper floor was in the north-west corner, but only one step, worn by the passage of many feet, has been preserved. Water from the court was discharged through an underground drain covered with stone flags, which passed beneath the passage at the south-west corner. The entrance to this monastery is on its eastern side, and in front of it was an irregularly shaped compound, most of the walls of which are still traceable.

MONASTERY 37

The plan of Monastery 37 is more spacious and developed than that of 36, and the masonry is neater and better laid than in the latter. It is probably assignable to about the seventh century A.D. Like the square stūpas of the same age, its walls are provided with footings on the outside. Built into the corners of the platform inside the courtyard are four square stone blocks, which served to strengthen the masonry and support the pillars of the verandah. The chambers at the back of the cells on the south and west sides

are unusual, and the specific use to which they were put is not clear.

Monastery 38 is not much later than Monastery 36, and, like it, is built of rough and uneven masonry. Apparently, there was an earlier building in this site, of which some of the stone foundations still survive; and in the central chamber on the north side there is also a brick wall which was subsequently added, the bricks of which it was constructed having been taken from some older building. Instead of the usual raised platform in the middle of the courtyard there was, in this monastery, a square depression, like that in a Roman atrium, with a raised verandah round it. The stairway leading to the upper storey is in the south-west corner. The ground about this building has not been excavated, but it may be assumed that, like Monasteries 36 and 37, it also had a compound, which probably occupied the ground on its western side, since the entrance of the monastery is in that quarter.

MONASTERY 38

Building No. 42 which is situated north of Temple 40, is standing to a height of about 6 feet, and, so far as it has been excavated, appears to be a shrine somewhat similar perhaps, to No. 44.

BUILDING 42

CHAPTER IX

EASTERN AREA

TEMPLE AND MONASTERY 45

We come, now, to the higher plateau on the east, the summit of which is crowned by the Temple and Monastery No. 45. This temple dates from the 10th or 11th century of our era, and it is 'therefore' one of the latest buildings on the site. Two or three centuries before this, however, another shrine had been erected on the same spot with an open quadrangle in front, containing several stūpas and surrounded by ranges of cells for the monks. These earlier remains are at a lower level than the later and readily distinguishable from them. To the later period belong the shrine on the east side of the quadrangle, together with the platform in front of it, and the cells and verandahs flanking it on the north and south; to the earlier belong the ranges of cells on the north, south and west sides of the quadrangle, the plinths of the three detached stūpas in the courtyard, and the low stone kerb which served to demarcate the edge of the verandah in front of the cells.

THE EARLIER TEMPLE AND MONASTERY

The cells of the earlier monastery are built of dry stone masonry of the small neat variety in vogue at the period, the foundations being carried down as much as nine feet to the bed-rock. Access to the corner cells was provided not, as was often the case, through the cell adjoining, but by an open passage between the two cells, while another open passage also led from the entrance into the quadrangle. The verandah in front of the cells was a little over eight feet broad, raised about eight inches above the rest of the court and separated from it by a stone kerb. This kerb is divided at regular intervals by square blocks which served as bases for the pillars of the verandah. A specimen of the latter has been re-erected in its original position at the south-east corner of the quadrangle. It is 6 ft. 9 in. in height, with its corners partly chamfered to the form of an octagon—the squared faces being intended for ornamental carving. The stone pavement of this earlier court consists of heavy stone slabs of irregular shapes and varying sizes. Of the three small stūpas which stood on it, two had apparently perished down to their plinths before the later building was started; the third looks as if it had been intentionally dismantled in part, in order to make way for the pavement of the later temple. It is of the familiar cruciform type, with niches in the face of each of the four projections, in which no doubt statues were aforetime placed. The remains of the early temple itself, as well as of the cells adjoining it on the eastern side of the court,

are completely buried beneath the later structures, but parts of the platform in front of the former have been exposed by dismantling the débris foundation beneath the corresponding platform of the later edifice. Apparently this earlier platform, though slightly smaller than the later one, was designed on much the same lines[1], and it may safely be inferred also that the plan of the sanctum itself was generally similar.

Like so many other buildings on the site, this earlier temple appears to have been burnt down and left for a long space of time in a ruined condition. This is evident from the quantities of charred remains that were found on the floor of the courtyard and the accumulation of earth that had formed above them. It might have been expected that, when the Buddhists set about rebuilding it, their first step would have been to clear away all this débris and utilise as far as possible the old materials; but, whether from religious or other motives, they preferred to level up the remains, lay a new pavement about 2 ft. 6 in. above the old one, and completely rebuild the shrine and cells adjoining it on the east side of the court. At the same time they repaired and renovated the cells on the other three sides of the quadrangle, raised their walls and roofs between five and six feet, and constructed a verandah of the same altitude in front of them, which was thus elevated about 3 feet above the new courtyard.

[1] The base of the earlier plinth is adorned with a simple *cyma reversa* moulding relieved with the "lotus and dart" pattern.

The later temple consists of a square sanctum (*garbha-griha*) approached through a small ante-chamber and crowned by a hollow spire (*śikhara*), the upper part of which has fallen. The temple stands at the back of a raised terrace ascended by steps from the west, and round three sides of it runs a procession path (*pradakshiṇā*) enclosed by a high wall. Like most of the temples of this date, it is constructed of massive blocks well dressed on their outer faces, but otherwise, very rough and loosely fitting together. Much of the material of which it is composed was taken, no doubt, from the earlier edifice on the same spot as well as from other structures, but the majority of the decorative carvings are in the later mediæval style and were manifestly executed expressly for this temple. Such are the sculptured threshold door-jambs, the ceiling of the sanctum, the statues in the niches in the outside walls, and the ornamental work on the spire and round the face of the terrace. To an earlier age, on the other hand, belong the corner pilasters in the sanctum and ante-chamber. The upper half of the former is richly decorated on both faces with the pot and foliage design set over a *kīrttimukha* head and surmounted by a band of floral ornament, with a border of palmettes above. The capitals are moulded and fluted and provided with a narrow necking adorned with a conventional garland pattern. Above them are Hindu corbel brackets of a simple type. The style of the carving on the pilasters, which is strikingly like some of the earlier carvings at

THE LATER TEMPLE

the temple of Bāro in Gwalior, proclaims them to be the work of the 8th or possibly 9th century A.D., and it is evident therefore that they were not originally designed for this temple. This conclusion is also borne out by the rough drafts at their inner edges, which prove that in their original position they must have been partly engaged in wall masonry. The ceiling of the sanctum is constructed on the usual principle of diminishing squares, and is carried on architraves resting on the Hindu brackets above the pilasters, and further supported by corresponding brackets in the middle of each wall. Of these brackets it is noticeable that the one in the back wall has been left in an unfinished state, and it is also noticeable that the architrave above it has been partly cut away for a space of about two feet, apparently to make room for some object in front of it. That this object was the halo of a cult image of the Buddha may reasonably be inferred, though whether it was the image which is now in the shrine and which may once have been elevated on a higher plinth, or whether it was a taller image, for which the present one was afterwards substituted, is open to question. Clearly the existing image does not fit and was not designed for the plinth on which it rests ; nor could it have been intended that the wall behind and the decorative pilasters should be half hidden by the masonry which it was found necessary to insert for the support of this statue. This image represents the Buddha seated in the earth-touching attitude (*bhūmisparśa-mudrā*) on a lotus

throne, with a second lion throne beneath, which, however, may not have belonged to the original statue. Across the lower row of lotus leaves is inscribed the Buddhist creed in letters of about the 10th century A.D. On a projection in the centre of the lion throne are two much mutilated figures, one lying prostrate on its back the other standing apparently in an attitude of victory over it. Similar figures are found in front of the throne of a Buddha statue in Cave XI at Ellorā, which dates from the 7th century A.D., and are probably symbolical of the victory which Buddha won beneath the Bodhi tree over the armies of Māra.

Unlike the pilasters of the sanctum, the two pilasters between the ante-chamber and the sanctum are roughly decorated with unfinished designs, one of which (on the north side) was cut through when the pilaster was adapted to its present position, and accordingly it may be inferred that the building from which they were taken had never been finished. The sculptures on the entrance door-way are strikingly rich and elaborate. Projecting from the middle of the threshold is a branching lotus with birds seated on the flowers, and on each side of it a half *kīrttimukha* head; then come little figures holding vases, conventional lions, and, in each corner, a seated corpulent figure of Kuvera. Much of the left jamb, as well as the lintel above, has fallen, but the right jamb is almost intact. On the outer band is a stylized female standing beneath a tree, with a flowing arabesque above. Framed within this

border are four vertical bands with a group of four figures at their base. Of these, the principal one is Yamunā (the river Jumna) with her vehicle, the tortoise, at her feet. Behind her, is a female attendant holding a parasol above her head, and between these two is a smaller figure, perhaps of a child, while a still smaller figure sits in the corner of the slab near Yamunā's right foot. Above Yamunā's head is the bust of a Nāga, and above her attendant's head a lotus supporting a tiny figure of the Buddha in the *bhūmisparśa-mudrā*. Of the vertical bands above, the innermost is covered with a scroll device; the next, which is supported by a demon dwarf (*kīchaka* or *kumbhāṇḍa*), with leogryphs and riders standing on elephants; the third, also supported by a dwarf, is divided into three panels, each containing a male and two female figures in erotic attitudes; the fourth is in the form of an ornamental pilaster. The decoration of the left jamb, so far as it is preserved, is an exact counterpart of the right one, with the single difference that Gaṅgā (the river Ganges), with her vehicle the crocodile, is substituted for Yamunā.

The plainness of the exterior walls is relieved only by three niches, sunk in the middle of their southern, eastern and northern faces. In the southern one of these niches is the image of a God, perhaps *Mayūra-vidyārāja*, seated on a lotus throne holding a lotus stalk in his left hand, with his *vāhana*, the peacock, beneath and a female attendant to either side. In the eastern niche is an image of Buddha seated in the attitude of

meditation (*dhyāna-mudrā*) on a lotus throne supported by two lions and accompanied on either side by an attendant, who holds a lotus stalk in the left and a flywhisk in the right hand. The other niche on the north is empty. Carved on some of the stone blocks of the temple walls are several names (perhaps of the masons who cut them), some of which are now upside down, thus proving that the writing, which is in characters of about the 10th century, was engraved on them before the building was constructed.

The spire (*śikhara*), with which this temple was roofed, was of the usual curvilinear type which distinguishes the Hindu temple architecture of the northern style. Its summit was crowned with a massive *āmalaka* and *kalaśa* of the usual form, many dismembered fragments of which were lying immediately to the north-west of the temple ; and from the multitude of other members discovered in the débris it is clear that the exterior was relieved on its four faces by repetitions of the same *āmalaka* motif alternating with stylized *chaitya* designs, but out of the confused mass of fragments it is now impossible to restore the original elevation with any degree of certainty. All of the spire that is still actually standing is a hollow chamber immediately above the roof of the sanctum, and the vestiges of a small porch in front of it, which extended partly over the roof of the ante-chamber.

In the outer wall which surrounds the procession path are two windows of pleasing proportion, provided

with heavy pierced stone screens decorated with rosettes and floral medallions and enclosed in a frame of conventional lotus leaves.

The raised platform in front of the temple was paved with architectural members taken from several earlier structures, among which were a number of broken pillars and cross rails belonging to Stūpa 3. The vertical faces of the platform are adorned with niches and further relieved by salients and recesses, as well as by deep horizontal mouldings, which produce an effect of light and shade almost as indeterminate as it is in Chālukyan architecture. In the niches are one or more figures—sometimes erotic—in the stiff conventional style of the period. Equally conventional are the decorative devices, simulating roofs, over the niches, and the lotus and other floral designs on the horizontal mouldings.

To the north and south of the temple are two wings, each containing three cells, with verandahs in front. The door-jambs of the two cells nearest the temple are enriched with carvings closely resembling those on the doorway of the temple itself, and, like the jambs of the latter, are spanned by lintels of a later and totally different style, the fact being that the building both of the temple and of the wings must have been suddenly interrupted—for what reason is not known—and not resumed again until many years afterwards.

In constructing the verandah of these wings some of the pillars belonging to the earlier monastery described

above were employed, and it is interesting to observe that the carvings on one of these pillars had also been left unfinished and subsequently cut away at the top in order to adapt the pillar to its new position. These carvings consist of a pot and foliage base and capital and three *kīrttimukha* heads on the square band between. They are in the same style as those on the pilasters in the corners of the sanctum.

PROSPECT OVER PLAINS TO THE EAST

From the open ground to the north of Temple 45, there is a fine prospect over the plains bordering the Beś and Betwā rivers. Between five and six miles away, following the line of the railway, is the bold and isolated rock of Bhilsā—the Lohaṅgi, as it is called—the citadel of Bhailasvāmin from the Gupta period onwards (see p. 26 above). Then, about two miles to the north west of Bhilsā is the hill of Udayagiri, in the sandstone cliffs of which are hewn many Brahmanical shrines with sculptures and inscriptions dating from the early mediæval epoch. Between these two eminences is a wide stretch of land covered by the remains of the ancient city of Vidiśā. It is in the midst of this buried city, in the hamlet of Besnagar, that the column of Heliodorus (see p. 11, footnote) stands; and here also have been found numerous other interesting relics of antiquity, many of which are kept in a shed on the site.

BUILDING 44

South of the temple described above is the structure numbered 44, which was erected probably about the same time as Temple 45, and which appears from the

disposition of its foundations to have been of a somewhat unusual type. It consisted of an ante-chamber stretching across the whole width of the building and of a rectangular hall behind it containing the remnants of a pavement, with what appears to have been a stūpa in its centre. On either side of the hall were foundations which seemed to indicate that a row of small chambers had been built above them; but the chambers were manifestly too small for the habitations of monks, and, assuming that the foundations correctly represent the plan of the superstructure, it must be inferred that the cells were intended for the reception of images, as in some of the Gandhāra chapels, and in many temples of the Jains. The building stands on a stone plinth, four feet high, ascended by a flight of steps in the middle of its western side. Its walls are constructed of rough rubble faced on both sides with small ashlar of local purplish stone and provided on the outside with footings which start immediately above the plinth referred to. In the rectangular hall stand three images of local purplish-brown stone, two of the Buddha in the *dhyāna-mudrā*, the third of Maitreya (?) seated in European fashion.

MONASTERY 46 AND 47

On to the northern and western sides of the court in front of Temple 45 abuts the Monastery 46-47. This monastery was not erected until after Temple 45 had been rebuilt, and it can hardly be assigned to an earlier date than the 11th century A.D. As will be seen from the plan, it comprises two courts, numbered respectively

46 and 47, the larger of which, including the verandahs and chambers ranged around three of its sides, measures 103 feet from north to south by 78 feet from east to west. On the south side of this court was a pillared verandah with a small cell and a long narrow chamber at the back; on the west is a closed colonnade; and on the north is a pillared verandah with a shrine, containing a small ante-chamber and sanctum at its western end, and behind it a corridor and five cells. The main entrance to this court is at the northern end of the western colonnade, and a second doorway leads by two steps from the eastern end of the northern verandah into the smaller court 46, which is on a somewhat higher level, and, like the larger court, provided with chambers on three sides. This monastery is still in a relatively good state of preservation, portions of the roof as well as many of the pillars being still preserved *in situ*. For the most part, the walls are built of neat regular masonry, but the construction of the verandah and chambers on the southern side, as well as of some of the interior walls of the smaller court, is somewhat inferior, and it seems likely that these were later additions. Probably both pillars and walls were intended to be covered with plaster, but no trace of the plaster has survived, and it is unlikely therefore that the intention was ever carried into effect.

The quadrangles of both larger and smaller courts were paved with massive stone slabs between 4 and 8 in. thick and considerably heavier, therefore, than those employed in and around the earliest stūpas and in Temple

40. Beneath the pavement in the larger court were found numerous architectural members of an earlier age, including a column in the Gupta style. Still lower down—at a depth, that is to say, of about 3 ft. below the pavement—was brought to light a stone floor of an earlier building; then a second *kachchā* floor 9 in. lower; and, again, a third floor of concrete 2 ft. 3 in. below the second. These floors belonged to earlier monasteries erected on the same site, but, inasmuch as the lowest of them was not more ancient than the Gupta period, it was not deemed worth while to continue the excavation.

BUILDINGS 49, 50 AND 32

The long boundary wall at the back of the structures 49 and 50, which abuts on to the north-west corner of the Monastery 47, appears to be older than the latter, since the western wall of the monastery is built on to it. It stands about 7 feet high and is built of somewhat loose masonry. Near its southern end was subsequently erected a small building of which only the raised plinth (No. 49) survives. Another building also subsequently erected is that numbered 50 on the plan, the construction of which necessitated the demolition of part of the boundary wall. All that now remains of this building consists of some stone pavements, walls and column bases, but these are sufficient to show that it was a monastery, and moreover, that it dates from approximately the same age as Monastery 47. Included within its precincts and situated apparently in the middle of one of its courts is the small Shrine 32. This structure,

which dates from the late mediæval period, is standing to a height of about eight feet above the ground level and consists of three small cells, with an ante-chamber in front and an underground cellar beneath the central room. It is entered by a doorway in the eastern side of the ante-chamber and there is another doorway opposite, leading into the central chamber, but the side cells, curiously enough, are provided only with windows through which anyone wishing to enter would have to crawl.

BUILDING 43

One of the last of the monuments to be erected on the site of Sāñchī was the massive structure 43, which stands partly on the high ground of the eastern plateau, partly on the lower ground to the south of it. In plan, this structure bears a striking resemblance to the famous stūpa of Kanishka at Peshawar, being cruciform in shape with a round bastion at each of its four corners; but, in the absence of any remains of a superstructure, it must remain doubtful whether it ever served as the base of a stūpa. As it stands, it is nothing more than an elevated court surrounded by low parapet walls, with traces here and there of a few interior walls, which appear to have been much later additions and have accordingly been omitted from the plan. The surrounding walls of this court as well as of the bastions are constructed of massive blocks of stone of varying sizes, among which are several that have been taken from dismantled buildings of the 10th or 11th century A.D., but as these particular blocks were built only into the

top of the wall, it is possible that they belonged to a relatively late repair.

Excavations carried out almost in the centre of this building revealed some cells with a courtyard on their northern side. These earlier remains belong to a monastery which was erected on this site probably in the 7th or 8th century A.D. The floor level of this monastery is twelve feet below the present level of the court, and its walls, which are built of ordinary dry stone masonry, are standing to a height of between 6 and 7 feet; so that their tops come within five or six feet of the present surface.

CHAPTER X

STŪPA 2 AND OTHER REMAINS

We have now completed our examination of the monuments on the hill-top and shall descend to the ledge of rock some 350 yards down the western slope of the hill, on which Stūpa 2 is situated. The pathway which now leads down to this ledge is reached by a steep flight of steps built against the retaining wall of the plateau opposite the western gateway of the Great Stūpa. These steps are of modern origin, the old road, which was paved with heavy slabs of stone, having gone further south and followed a more devious course. Apparently it started immediately to the south of Stūpa 7; then skirted the edge of an old quarry, subsequently converted into a tank, and swept round in a large curve to Stūpa 2, a little above which it is joined by the modern road. Along it, on either side, can still be traced the remains of various monuments, the most noteworthy of which is the ruined base of an apsidal temple about 61 ft. long and 32 ft. 6 in. wide, with its entrance towards

REMAINS NEAR THE OLD ROAD

the east. The other remains are mere ruined platforms of rough stone masonry from which the superstructures have disappeared. Three of these are situated to the west and north-west of the apsidal temple, and a fourth to the east of it; then there is a fifth, nearly 70 yards north of the last mentioned on the opposite side of the old road, and two more, close together, on the north side of the road some 80 yards higher up. North of these, again, and partly cut through by the modern road, is an extensive mound of stone rubble and brick which marks the site of a mediæval monastery; and near by, on the west, a smaller mound with a massive stone bowl on its summit. It was surmised by Cunningham that this bowl, which has an outer diameter of 8 ft. 8 in., once held a holy nettle which Buddha himself was reputed to have bitten off and planted.[1] There are no grounds, however, for this surmise, which depends in the first instance on the false identification of Sāñchī with the Sha-chi of Fa-Hien. Probably the bowl was intended, like the smaller one referred to on p. 116, for the distribution of food offered to the Saṅghārāma.

GIANT BOWL

STŪPA 2

In point of size as well as of construction and design, the Second Stūpa is strikingly similar to the Third, and the restoration which the latter has undergone will enable the visitor readily to picture to himself the appearance of the former when its crowning umbrella and balustrades were intact. The main difference between the two is that at Stūpa 2 there is no *tōraṇa*

[1] *The Bhilsa Topes*, pp. 180-82.

adorning any of the four entrances. On the other hand, the ground balustrade is in almost perfect preservation, and exhibits a variety of most interesting reliefs which more than compensate for the absence of a gateway.

This stūpa was opened and half destroyed by Captain Johnson in 1822, but it was reserved for General Cunningham, who continued the digging in 1851, to discover the relics and, unfortunately, also to complete the destruction of the dome. The chamber in which the relics were deposited, was not in the centre of the structure, but two feet to the west of it, and at a height of seven feet above the raised terrace. The relic box was of white sandstone, 11 inches long by 9½ inches broad and the same in height, and contained four small caskets of steatite, in each of which were some fragments of human bone.[1] On the side of the relic box was an inscription in early Brāhmī characters of which the translation is as follows :—

"(The relics) of all teachers beginning with the Arhat (?) Kāsapagota and the Arhat (?) Vāchhi Suvijayata, the teacher."[2] On the lids of the four steatite caskets were other inscriptions[3] recording that the bones contained within were the relics of various Buddhist saints and teachers, some of whom took part in the third

[1] *The Bhilsa Topes*, pp. 285-94, where a full account of the discovery is given.

[2] *Cf.* Cunningham, *loc. cit.*, and Lüders, *List of Brāhmī Inscriptions* (Ep. Ind., Vol. X), No. 654.

[3] *Cf.* Lüders, *op. cit.*, Nos. 655-64.

convocation held under the Emperor Aśoka, while others were sent on missions to the Himālayas, to preach the doctrines then settled.[1] The following is a list of the ten names inscribed on the caskets :—

1. Kāsapagota (Kāśyapagotra), the teacher of all the Hemavatas.[2]
2. Majhima (Madhyama).
3. Hāritīputa (Hāritīputra).
4. Vachhi-Suvijayata (Vātsī-Suvijayat ?).
5. Mahavanāya.
6. Āpagīra.
7. Kodiniputa (Kauṇḍinīputra).
8. Kosikiputa (Kauśikīputra).
9. Gotiputa (Gauptīputra).
10. Mogaliputa (Maudgalīputra).

Because Mahāmogalāna and Śāriputra, whose relics were enshined in Sūtpa 3, were companions and friends of the Buddha, it does not therefore follow that Stūpa goes back to the time of the Buddha ; nor because some or possibly all of the

[1] The 'Dīpawansa' names the four missionaries who accompanied Kāsapagota Kotiputa to convert the tribe of Yakkas in Himavanta, as :—Majjhima, Dudubhisara, Sahadeva, and Mūlakadeva. Of these Kāsapagota himself, Majjhima and Dudubhisara are named on the relic boxes from Sāñchī and Sonārī. *J. R. A. S.*, 1905, pp. 683 ff. Fergusson *I. E. A.* (1910) Vol. I, p. 68 ; Geiger, *Mah.*, Preface, p. XIX.

[2] The term 'Hemavata' has usually been taken to refer to the missions despatched to the Himālayas. But more probably it signifies the Haimavatas, who were a well-known branch of the Theravāda School.

teachers whose relics are deposited in Stūpa 2 were contemporaries of Aśoka, it is necessarily to be concluded that this stūpa was erected during the Maurya epoch. On the contrary, as these teachers could not have died at one and the same time, it is clear that their relics must have had some other resting places before they were transferred to this one, and we may suppose that this transference did not take place until the Śuṅga period, when there are other grounds for believing that this stūpa was erected.[1]

By this time relic-worship had been extended to include not only the relics of the Buddha and his disciples, but those of relatively recent church dignitaries as well. It is interesting, however, to observe that the latter were enshrined, not side by side with the relics of the Buddha and his disciples, but on a separate terrace lower down the hill side.

The several balustrades of this stūpa,[2] of which numerous members have recently been unearthed, are of the same pattern as the balustrades of Stūpas 1 and 3, and it is unnecessary to remark either on their construction or on the decoration of the smaller balustrades, since the latter is closely analogous to that found on the balustrades of the other stūpas. The reliefs of the large ground balustrade, on the other hand, are

[1] Gen. Cunningham, *op. cit.*, p 291, opines that the stūpa was at first intended only for the relics of Kāsapagota and of Vāchhi-Suvijayata, whose names alone are found on the outside of the stone box.

[2] See Mus. Cat. A 64, A 65 and A 66.

unique of their kind in India and invested with a particular interest, since with the exception of a few later panels which will be noticed presently, they exhibit to us the true indigenous character of Indian art before it had emerged from the primitive stage. The subjects portrayed are generally similar to those on the gateways[1] of the Great Stūpa, but they are treated in simpler and cruder fashion, though with a keen sense for purely decorative effect. Among them the four chief events of the Buddha's life are readily distinguishable: his Birth, his Enlightenment, his First Sermon, and his Death; each represented by the same emblems that we noticed among the later reliefs.[2] Then, there is the familiar figure of the *Yakshiṇi* or protecting fairy, the *nāga* with many hoods, and a host of real and mythical animals, sometimes with riders[3] sometimes without, like those which adorn the false capitals of the gateways; elephants, bulls, horses, deer, winged lions, *makaras*, and griffins, and other creatures of the fancy, also, that we

[1] For minor points of difference, see the writer's remarks in *A.S.R.* 1913-14, Pt. II, p. 28.

[2] See pp. 44 *sqq.*

[3] Observe that stirrups are used by some of the horsemen in these reliefs. This is the earliest known example by some five centuries of the use of stirrups in any part of the world. In Persia, stirrups do not appear to have come into fashion until Sasanian times. In China, I am informed by Mr. Sieveking, on the authority of Prof. Giles, that they are mentioned in the *Nanshih* (5th-6th century A.D.). In Greek and Roman classical literature there is no mention of them whatever, and it seems that they were not introduced into Europe until the early mediæval periods.

have not observed before, such as horse-headed and fish-tailed men or centaurs with women on their backs—forms which are not Indian at all, but had found their way hither from Western Asia. Among plants, the favourite one is the lotus, sometimes quite simply treated, sometimes in the most rich and elaborate devices; among birds, we notice in particular the peacock, the goose and the *sāras;* and among symbols peculiarly sacred to Buddhism, the Wheel, the '*triratna,*' and the so-called 'shield' or *śrīvatsa* symbol. From a stylistic and technical point of view what strikes the spectator most forcibly about these reliefs, is the crude treatment of the living figure side by side with the masterly handling of decorative design. Throughout the historic period the Indian artist has always possessed an innate aptitude for ornamental and particularly floral patterns, and nowhere is this aptitude better exhibited than in some of the lotus devices on this balustrade, like the exquisite one illustrated in Plate VIII *a*. On the other hand, the portrayal of the human form was never a strong point in the early Indian school, and it was not until he had come in contact with Hellenistic art, that the Indian sculptor became proficient in modelling it either in relief or in the round. The development which relief-work then underwent, is well illustrated by a comparison of the original carvings on this balustrade with the few at the eastern entrance which were added at a later date. Two specimens of the older carvings are reproduced in figs. *a* and *b* of Pl. VIII, two of the later in figs. *c* and *d*.

In these earlier carvings the designs are as a rule surprisingly decorative and well adapted to their purpose, but the technique is rudimentary to a degree. Thus, the figures are kept almost in one plane, with practically no effort towards spatial effect, and each is protrayed almost as a silhouette sharply defined against the separate plane of the back-ground, such modelling as there is being effected by rounding off the contours of the silhouette or the interior details. The forms, too, are splayed out and distorted, and the force of mental abstraction on the part of the artist—always a sure sign of rudimentary work—is evidenced, as it is so often in the Bhārhut sculptures, by the treatment of the feet, which, irrespective of anatomical accuracy, are turned sideways and presented in their broadest aspect. The same primitive workmanship is observable also in the semicircular designs at the top and bottom of figure *c* and at the bottom of figure *d*. But the remainder of the two latter reliefs are of quite a different order. They are the work of artists who were copying direct from nature and were all but free from the trammels of the 'memory image.' The designs are pictorial rather than purely decorative, and exhibit very considerable skill in the matter of spatial effects. The modelling of the figures is organically true, there is comparative freedom in their poses and composition, and a conscious effort to bring them into closer relationship one with the other. Of these later reliefs, those on pillar *d* were added at the time when the gateways of Stūpa I were

PLATE VIII

a

b

c

d

STŪPA 2: RELIEFS ON THE GROUND BALUSTRADE

being erected. The reliefs on pillar *c* may be slightly later.

MINOR REMAINS IN THE VICINITY OF STŪPA 2

To the N.-N.-W. of Stūpa 2 and jutting out from the hill-side towards the west, is a rectangular platform constructed of stone. This platform served as the plinth of a pillar, several broken pieces of which, together with part of its lion capital,[1] were found lying at the side. The shaft of the pillar is octagonal at the base and sixteen-sided above, each side being slightly fluted. Both pillar and platform appear to be of approximately the same age as Stūpa 2. On the same spot were a few cross-bars belonging to a small stone balustrade, and a little to the north of it the ruined base of a stūpa.

OTHER OBJECTS OF INTEREST AT SĀÑCHĪ

In conclusion, it remains to mention a few other antiquities of interest which are to be seen in the immediate neighbourhood of Sāñchī. A little to the south of the main hill is another smaller hill crowned by the village of Nāgourī. Near the base of the hill and north-west of the village, is a fine statue of a *nāga* set up on the rocks but not in its original position. It is 6 ft. 7 in. in height from the bottom of the pedestal and of grey-white sandstone. The *nāga*, which possesses seven hoods, holds an uncertain object (lotus ?) in the right hand and flask in the left. Its style proclaims it to be a clumsy work of the 1st or 2nd century A.D., and it is interesting to compare it with the Guardian

[1] Now removed to the museum.

Yakshas of the gateways on the one hand, and with later images of the Gupta period on the other. Near by the *nāga* is a smaller figure of a *nāgī* of the same age and style, 3 ft. 3 in. in height. Another object of interest on the same hill is what is locally called *Daṅg-hi-ghoṛī*, an unfinished statue of a horse which stands on the hill-side south-west of the village and half way between it and the foot of the hill. Its date is uncertain, but it probably belongs to the mediæval period.

The massive embankments (*pār*) which unite the main hill with the smaller hill to the south and the latter, again, with the hills on the west, appear to date from the pre-Christian era and to have been designed to form an extensive lake on that side of the hill.

Finally, about a hundred yards north-east of the Rest-house is a group of four *satī* stones dating from late mediæval times. The reliefs on them depict four different scenes, namely ; (1) the husband and wife worshipping at a *liṅga*; (2) the husband lying on a couch and the wife massaging his feet ; (3) the husband fighting in battle with his adversary ; (4) the sun and moon, to symbolize that the fame of the wife's devotion shall endure as long as the sun and moon themselves. The *satī* stone nearest to the bungalow bears a much defaced inscription in Nāgarī characters, dated in the year A.D. 1264-65.

APPENDIX

The life of the Buddha briefly sketched[1] *with particular reference to the sculptures of Sāñchī*

Gautama, the Buddha, was born about the year 562 B.C., near the ancient to n of Kapilavastu in the Nepāl Tarai. He became the *Buddha* (the 'Enlightened') only after his attainment of wisdom under the *pipal* tree at Bodh-Gaya. Up to that time he was the *Bodhisattva* [2] or potential Buddha. Other titles by which he was known were *Śākyamuni* 'the sage of the Śākyas', *Siddhārtha* 'he who has accomplished his aim', and *Tathāgatā* 'he who has arrived at the truth.'[3] It was by the last title that the Buddha invariably referred to himself. In the last of his previous existences[4] the Bodhisattva had been born in the Tushita Heaven, where he was entreated by the deities to become the saviour of mankind, but before consenting he had to determine the time and place of his appearance on earth, the race and family to which he should belong, the mother who should bear him, and the time when her life should end. The due time, he realised, had arrived and, like all other Buddhas, he must be born in Jambudvīpa (India), in the Madhyadeśa country, and in the caste either of the Brāhmans or Kshatriyas. His father, he resolved, should be Śuddhodana, a chieftain of the Śākya clan of Kapilavastu, and his mother Māyā or Mahāmāyā, who should die seven days after his birth. Accordingly, he left the Tushita Heaven and was conceived by Māyā in a dream, in which she saw the future Buddha descending from heaven in the form of a white elephant

[1] An excellent account of the Buddha's life is given in Kern's *Manual of Indian Buddhism* (Strassburg, 1896), pp. 12-46, where the reader can find full reference to the authorities for the various episodes. Of this and of a valuable summary by A. S. Geden in Hasting's *Encyclopædia of religion and ethics*, s. v. 'Buddha', I have made free use in compiling this brief sketch.

[2] P. 55 above, footnote 1.

[3] Or "he who has come as (his predecessors came)."

[4] P. 42 above, footnote 1.

(p. 71). When the queen told her dream to Śuddhodana, he summoned Brāhmans to interpret it, who declared that she had conceived a son destined to become either a Universal Monarch (*chakravartin* or a Buddha. During the period of pregnancy four celestials guarded the Bodhisattva and Māyā from harm. The birth (p. 44) took place in the Lumbinī Garden[1] near Kapilavastu, Māyā being delivered standing beneath a śāla tree, a branch of which bent down for her to grasp. The chief deities including Indra were in attendance, and the child was received from the right side of his mother by the Guardian Deities of the Four Quarters. On the body of the child were the thirtytwo major marks (*mahāvyañ jana*), which indicated his future greatness,as wel las lesser marks (*anuvyañjana*). Immediately after birth he stood erect, faced in all directions, and after making seven steps exclaimed " I am the foremost of the world.' At the moment of the Buddha's birth, there were born also his future wife, his horse), the mother of Rāhula, Chhanda (his groom), Kaṇṭhaka Yaśodharā, Kāludāyin (his playmate) and Ānanda (the best beloved of his disciples).

The birth of the Bodhisattva was the occasion of great rejoicings in the Heaven of the Thirty-three gods (*Trayastriṁśa*), and the Seer (*Ṛishi*) Asita, becoming aware of these rejoicings, predicted that the child would be the future Buddha. The same prediction also was made by the young Brāhman Kauṇḍinya. Other Brāhman soothsayers were doubtful whether he would become a universal monarch (*chakravartin*) or a Buddha, and the king, anxious that he should become the former rather than the latter, inquired what would induce the Prince to renounce the world. The answer was, four sights: an old man, a sick man, a corpse, and a monk. Thenceforth Śuddhodana took care that none of these sights should meet the eye of his son, and did all in his power to attract him to worldly things. During the childhood of the Buddha it is related that the king Śuddhodana went out one day to celebrate the ' Ploughing Festival', and the child Siddhārtha was taken with him and placed on a couch beneath a Jambu tree. There, when his nurses had left him, he rose up, seated himself

[1] The location of the Lumbinī garden was determined in 1895 by the discovery of a pillar of Asoka with an inscription recording that it was set up by the emperor at the birth-place of the Buddha.

cross-legged and performed his first meditation; while he meditated the shade of the tree remained miraculously fixed above him (p. 68).

In order to terminate the long-standing feuds with the Koliyas, Siddhārtha was married at the age of sixteen to the Koliya princess Yaśodhara, daughter of Suprabuddha. According to the legends, he was a young man of remarkable prowess, unrivalled in archery, possessed of immense strength and expert in every art. Mindful of the prophecy regarding his future, his father surrounded him with every sort of luxury and continued to keep from him the four sights which might lead him to adopt an ascetic life. On successive occasions, however, as he drove in the palace gardens, the gods caused to appear before him the visions of an old man, a sick man, and a corpse. Touched to the heart by these sights, the young man asked the meaning of them, and discovering the truth about old age, sickness, and death, was plunged in grief. Then followed a fourth vision—that of a holy ascetic—which made a deep impression on his mind and showed him how, by renouncing the world, he could rise superior to the ills he had witnessed. Accordingly, he resolved to forsake his home and take refuge in solitary meditation and his resolution being strengthened by the repulsive sight of the attendant women in the palace, lying asleep in all manner of uncomely attitudes, he bade farewell to his wife and child, Rāhula, while they slept, and silently left the palace. This was the 'Great Renunciation (*mahābhinishkramaṇa*) which he made at the age of twenty-nine (p. 67). On his steed Kaṇṭhaka he rode forth at night from Kapilavastu attended by heavenly beings, who silenced the neighing of the horse and bore up his hoofs, lest the city should be roused by the noise, while Māra, the Evil One, sought in vain to deflect Gautama from his purpose by the promise of universal monarchy.

On the further side of the river Anomā, Gautama gave his ornaments to his faithful groom, and then, cutting off his hair with a stroke of his sword, he cast it with the head-dress heavenward, saying as he did so: "If I am destined to become a Buddha, let it remain in the air, if not, let it come to earth again." The hair soared upwards and was borne away in a golden casket to the Heaven of the Thirty-three gods (*Trayastriṁśa*), where it became an object of worship

to the deities (p. 55). Then the Bodhisattva exchanged garments with the angel Ghaṭikāra, who appeared to him in the guise of a hunter and, having sent back his groom with the horse[1] to announce that he had forsaken the world, he went forward alone and on foot to Rājagṛiha (p. 67). There the king Bimbisāra came forth to greet him and to offer him his kingdom, and, on the Bodhisattva refusing this offer, he obtained from him a promise that, when he became the Buddha, he would revisit his realm. Thence Gautama pursued his way to Uruvilvā (Pali : Uruvelā), a village near Gayā, and there subjected himself to the severest penances, in the course of which his body was reduced to the last stage of emaciation. These austerities continued for six years, at the end of which time he realised that enlightenment was not to be obtained by mortification of the flesh, and accordingly he returned to his former mode of life as a mendicant. Thereupon his five companions lost faith in him and, leaving him, went to the Deer Park near Benares. The Bodhisattva wandered towards the bank of the Nairañjanā river, and received his morning meal from the hands of Sujātā, the daughter of a neighbouring villager (p. 61). Having partaken of it, he threw the golden vessel in which she had brought it into the stream, saying, as he did so, "If on this day I am to become a Buddha, let the vessel ascend the stream, if not, let it go down". And lo ! it went up stream and sank to the abode of Kāla, the Nāga king.

In the evening of the same day he went forward to the *pīpal* tree at Bodh-Gayā, which thenceforth was to be known as the Bodhi tree or 'tree of enlightenment' (pp. 45, 61, etc.). On his way he fell in with one Svastika (Sotthiya), a grass-cutter, from whom he took eight bundles of grass, and standing beneath the tree and surveying each of the four quarters, he cast down the grass on its eastern side, then, having seated himself upon it, he said, "Though my skin, my nerves and my bones waste away, and though my life blood be dried up, yet will I not leave this seat before I have attained unto perfect knowledge." Then followed the assault and temptation of Māra, the 'Evil One', who tried by every manner of violence to divert the Bodhisattva from his purpose (pp. 61, 78). So furious and terrible was the onslaught of his demon

[1] According to other accounts, the horse died of a broken heart on the spot where Buddha said farewell

hosts, that the very deities who attended the Bodhisattva fled in dismay. Alone the Tathāgata remained steadfast and immovable on his throne, undaunted by the violence of the winds which Māra caused to blow and by the showers of rocks, of weapons, of glowing ashes and of charcoal which were launched against him but which, ere they reached him, turned to flowers. Sure of his coming victory he called upon the Earth to bear witness to his right to remain where he was, and the Earth replied with so mighty a voice that the armies of Māra fled discomfited (p. 78). Then came the gods crying "Māra is overcome : the prince Siddhārtha has prevailed !", and the Nāgas and other beings came, chanting songs of victory. It was at sundown[1] that the Bodhisattva defeated his foe, and it was during the night succeeding that he became *Buddha* 'the enlightened one.' In the first watch of the night he attained to the knowledge of his previous existences, in the second, of all present states of being, in the third, of the chain of causes and effects, and at the dawn of day he knew all things.

After attaining enlightenment the Buddha fasted for 49 days, being miraculously sustained during that time by the food which Sujātā had provided for him. Those seven weeks he spent: first, beneath or near the Bodhi tree, where he enjoyed the fruits of emancipation and went through the whole Abhidharma-Piṭaka ; next, beneath the goatherd's Banyan tree, where the three daughters of Māra, 'Desire', 'Pining', and 'Lust', tried in vain to seduce him[2]; thirdly, under the Muchalinda tree, where he was shielded from the rain by the coils and hood of the Nāga king, Muchalinda (p. 69) ; and, lastly, beneath the Rājāyatana tree, where on the last day of the seven weeks two merchants, Tapussa and Bhalluka, made an offering to him of barley cakes and honey. The Buddha having no bowl in which to receive the offerings, four bowls of stone were brought by the Guardian Deities of the Four Quarters, and the Tathāgata, commanding them to become one, took the food and ate it. The merchants, having made profession of their faith, begged to be received as his disciples,

[1] Some accounts say at sunrise.

[2] According to the Tibetan version, the temptation by the daughters of Māra took place beneath the Bodhi tree on the same occasion as the assaults of Māra's armies. This version appears to be the one current among the sculptors of Sāñchī (p. 61).

and, their request being granted, they became the first lay-disciples (*upāsaka*).

From the Rājāyatana tree the Buddha returned to the goatherd's Banyan tree, and there debated with himself whether it might not be mere waste of time and effort to try and make known to others the profound and subtle truths which he himself had grasped. Then Brahmā and other deities and archangels appeared to him and appealed to his love and pity of mankind, who must be lost, if he did not show them the way of salvation. This was the *adhyeshaṇa* (p. 79). Prevailed upon by these prayers the Buddha pondered to whom he should first proclaim his gospel, and determined to seek out the five ascetics who had formerly been his companions. Accordingly, he proceeded to the Deer Park (*Isipatana*) near Benaras and there delivered to the five his first sermon, or, to use the technical expression of the Buddhists, 'set in motion the wheel of the law' (pp. 45, etc.). In this sermon he exhorted his hearers to shun the two extremes: on the one hand the pursuit of worldy pleasures, on the other, the practice of useless austerities, and to follow the middle course, the only one that could lead to wisdom and to Nirvāṇa, namely, the noble eightfold path: right views, right aspirations, right speech, right conduct, right living, right effort, right mindfulness and right meditation. Further, he explained the four truths as to pain, the origin of pain, the cessation of pain, and the path that leads to the cessation of pain. By this and other expositions of his doctrines he succeeded in converting the five ascetics, who were duly ordained and became the first members of the Buddhist order (*saṅgha*) of monks.

At this time the Buddha was 35 years of age and the remaining 45 years of his life were spent in journeying from place to place, mainly in the kingdom of Magadha, and in making an ever increasing number of converts. The rainy months of each year he spent, as a rule, at one of the gardens or monasteries which had been given him, and at the close of the rains he and his disciples went forth, hither and thither, to proclaim the pure and perfect life. Among his earliest converts were the three Kāśyapa brothers (Pāli: Kassapa), hermits with long hair (*jaṭila*) and fire worshippers who lived at Uruvilvā (Uruvelā). Of the several miracles by which the Tathāgata succeeded in converting them, namely: by walking on the waters, by

overcoming the serpent in the fire temple, etc., there are striking illustrations on the Eastern Gateway (pp. 72-75). Other famous converts whom he made shortly afterwards at Rājagṛiha and who were soon to become 'chief disciples' of the Buddha, were Śāriputra (Sāriputta) and Maudgalyāyana (Moggallāna or Mahāmogalāna), whose body relics were enshrined in Stūpa 3 at Sāñchī (pp. 91-92).

At the royal courts which he visited the Buddha appears to have found a warm welcome, and several reliefs at Sāñchī commemorate the ceremonial visits paid to him by Prasenajit, the King of Kosala, and by Bimbisāra and his successor, Ajātaśatru, of Magadha (pp. 65-66, 73). Many gifts, too, of gardens, groves, or monasteries seem to have been made to the Buddha himself or to the community (*saṅgha* of which he was the head. One of the most important of these was the Jetavana garden and monastery at Śrāvasti—the gift of Anāthapiṇḍika, who purchased it from Jeta, the king's son, at the cost of as many gold pieces as would cover the surface of the ground (p. 65). Another was the mango grove at Vaiśālī presented by the courtesan Āmrapālī, and a third was the Bamboo garden (*Veṇuvana*) at Rājagṛiha, which Bimbisāra presented to the Buddha personally on the occasion of his first visit to Rājagṛiha after his enlightenment (p. 66). This Bamboo garden afterwards became a very favourite residence of the Buddha, and many episodes are related of his sojourns there or at other spots in the neighbourhood. It was at Rājagṛiha that Devadatta, his wicked cousin, made three attempts to compass his death, first by hired assassins, then by hurling down a rock upon him, and again by letting loose a madden elephant—an episode which is illustrated in one of the mediæval sculptures at Sāñchī (p. 86, footnote 1). Needless to say, each attempt failed, the assassins being overawed, the rock being stopped, and the elephant bending meekly before the Buddha. It was near Rājagṛiha, too, when meditating in the Indraśaila Cave, that the Buddha was visited by Indra (p. 66). Bimbisāra the king of Magadha was, as we have seen, always a staunch supporter of the Buddha, but his son and murderer, Ajātaśatru, at first sided with Devadatta against him. Later on, however, he also became a convert.

In the second year after his enlightenment, at the earnest entreaty of his father Śuddhodana, the Buddha paid a visit to his old home

at Kapilavastu. According to his custom he stopped in a grove outside the town. There his father and the Śākya princes met him, and a question arose, whether father or son should be the first to pay homage to the other. The question was solved by the Buddha rising miraculously into the air, and then walking to and fro preaching the law (pp. 63, 72). Thereupon the king prostrated himself before his son, and presented him with the grove of banyan trees. Following this visit of the Buddha to Kapilavastu many converts were made among the Śākyas, the chief among them being Ānanda, afterwards his favourite disciple, Anuruddha, Bhaddiya, Bhagu, Kimbila and his cousin Devadatta, who subsequently proved the Judas Iscariot of Buddhist legend.

Among the most bitter opponents of Gautama were six Tīrthikas—leaders of heretical sects, namely , Pūraṇa Kassapa, Makkhali Gosāla, Ajita Kesakambalin, Pakudha Kachchhāyana, Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta and Sañjaya Belaṭṭhiputta, the last of whom had once been the teacher of Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana. In order to confound these heretics, who were then at the court of King Prasenajit, Buddha proceeded to Śrāvastī and, in accordance with the established practice of former Buddhas, performed there the greatest of all his miracles (p. 64). He created in the heavens a great road from the eastern to the western horizon and, ascending thereon, caused streams of water to issue from the upper part of his body and flames of fire from the lower , his body became resplendent and a golden light flooded the world, while he preached to the assembled multitudes and taught them the way of Truth.

After this miracle the Buddha vanished from among his disciples and went to the Trayastriṁśa Heaven, there to expound the Abhidharma to Māyā his mother and the *deva* hosts. For three months he remained in heaven, and then returned to earth again by a staircase of beryl which Śakra had caused to be made, while Brahmā and Indra accompanied him, the former descending a golden staircase on his right, and the latter a crystal one on his left (pp. 61-62). The spot at which he came back to earth was at Saṅkāśya (Saṅkīśya).

The death (p. 46) of the Buddha took place when he was in his 80th year[1] and is said to have been caused by over indulgence in a dish

[1]According to Dr. Fleet's calculations it occurred on Oct. 13th, 483 B. C.

of 'dried boar's flesh' at a repast which Chunda, a metal-worker of Pāvā, had prepared for him. He was then on his way to Kuśinagara (Kasiā), and when he realised that his end was near, he ordered a couch to be spread between two śāla trees (p. 77) in a grove near the town, and laid himself down with his head to the north, on his right side 'like a lion', with one leg resting on the other. His last moments were spent in giving advice and directions to his beloved disciple Ānanda and the assembled monks, and in exhorting them to adhere faithfully to the rules of the order. By his direction Subhadra, a wandering heretic, was admitted to his presence and, having heard his teaching became his last convert. Then he inquired whether there were any among his brethren who still entertained doubt about the Buddha, the Law and the Congregation, and, finding there were none, he bade them farewell saying "Decay is inherent in all things component. Strive, therefore, after salvation with diligence".

The death of the Buddha was attended by earthquakes and thunder. Tidings of it were sent to Kuśinagara, and the Mallas came to the Śāla grove and for a space of six days paid honour to the remains with processions and with music (pp. 63, 77). On the seventh the corpse was carried by eight of the chieftains to a shrine called *Makuṭabandhana* outside the city, and, having been enveloped in 500 pieces of cloth and placed in an iron coffin, was set upon the funeral pyre. The pyre, however, could not be ignited without the presence of Kāśyapa, who was then hastening with a company of monks to Kuśinagara. After his arrival and when he had done homage to the corpse, the flames burst forth spontaneously and, having done their work, they were extinguished again by a miraculous shower of rain.

The relics that remained after the cremation were taken possession of by the Mallas of Kuśinagara, but demands for portions of them were made by seven other claimants, namely: Ajātaśatru, King of Magadha; the Lichchhavis of Vaiśālī; the Śākyas of Kapilavastu; the Bulis of Allakappa; the Koḷiyas of Rāmagrāma, a Brāhman of Veṭhadīpa; the Mallas of Pāvā (pp. 53, 77). When the Mallas of Kuśinagara were unwilling to part with the relics, these seven claimants came with their armies to lay seige to their city and it was only by the intervention of Droṇa, a Brāhman, that further strife was averted.

At his suggestion, the relics were divided by him into eight portions and the vessel in which they had reposed was given to Droṇa himself as a reward.

Afterwards there came a messenger from the Mauryas of Pippalivana asking for a share of the relics, but, none being left, he took away the coals of the pyre and erected over them a stūpa.

Of the eight relic stūpas seven are said to have been opened by the Emperor Aśoka and the relics from them redivided and distributed in a multitude of stūpas throughout his dominions. Only the stūpa of Rāmagrāma (p. 50), which was guarded by Nāgas, is said to have been left intact.

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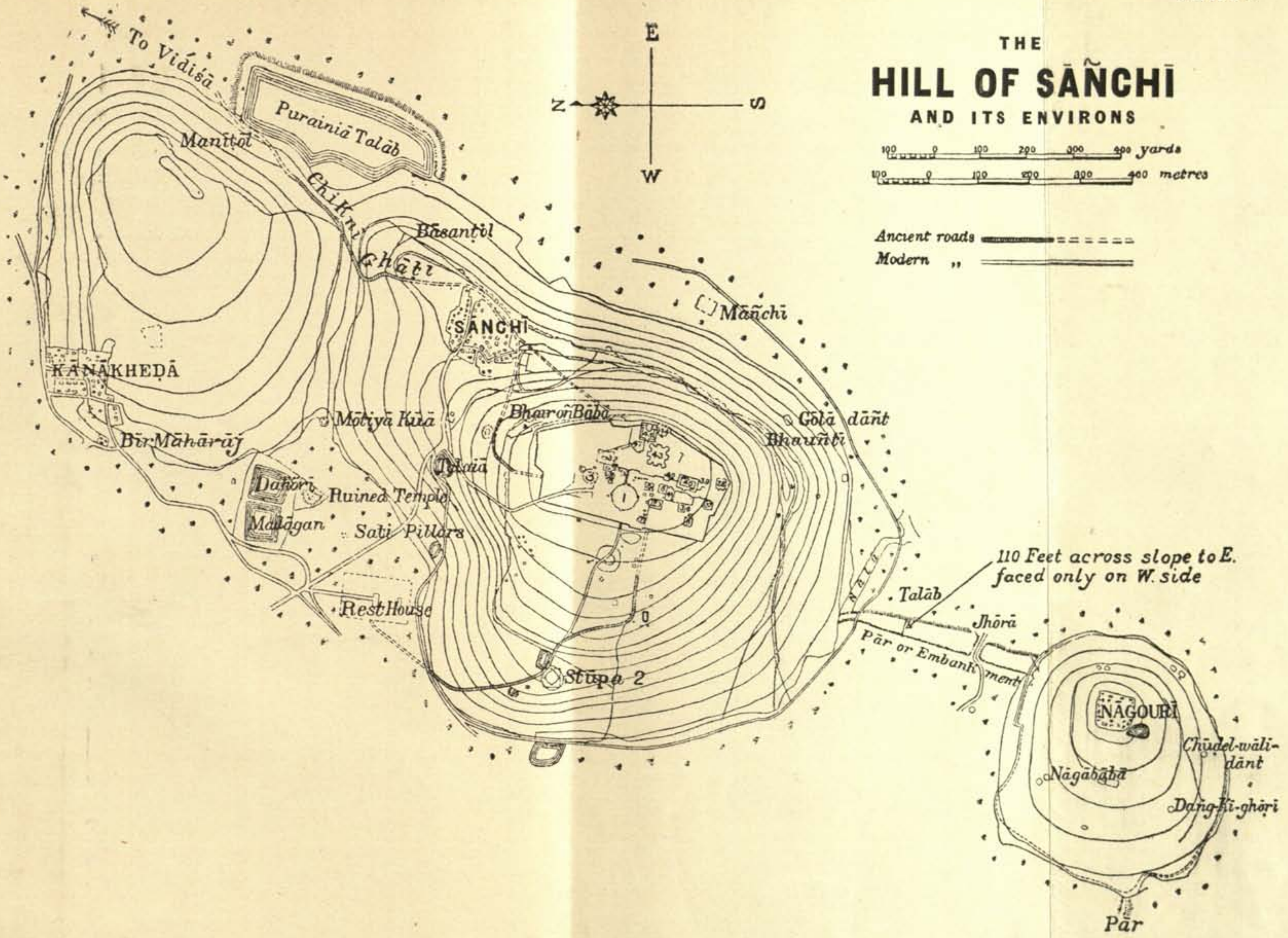
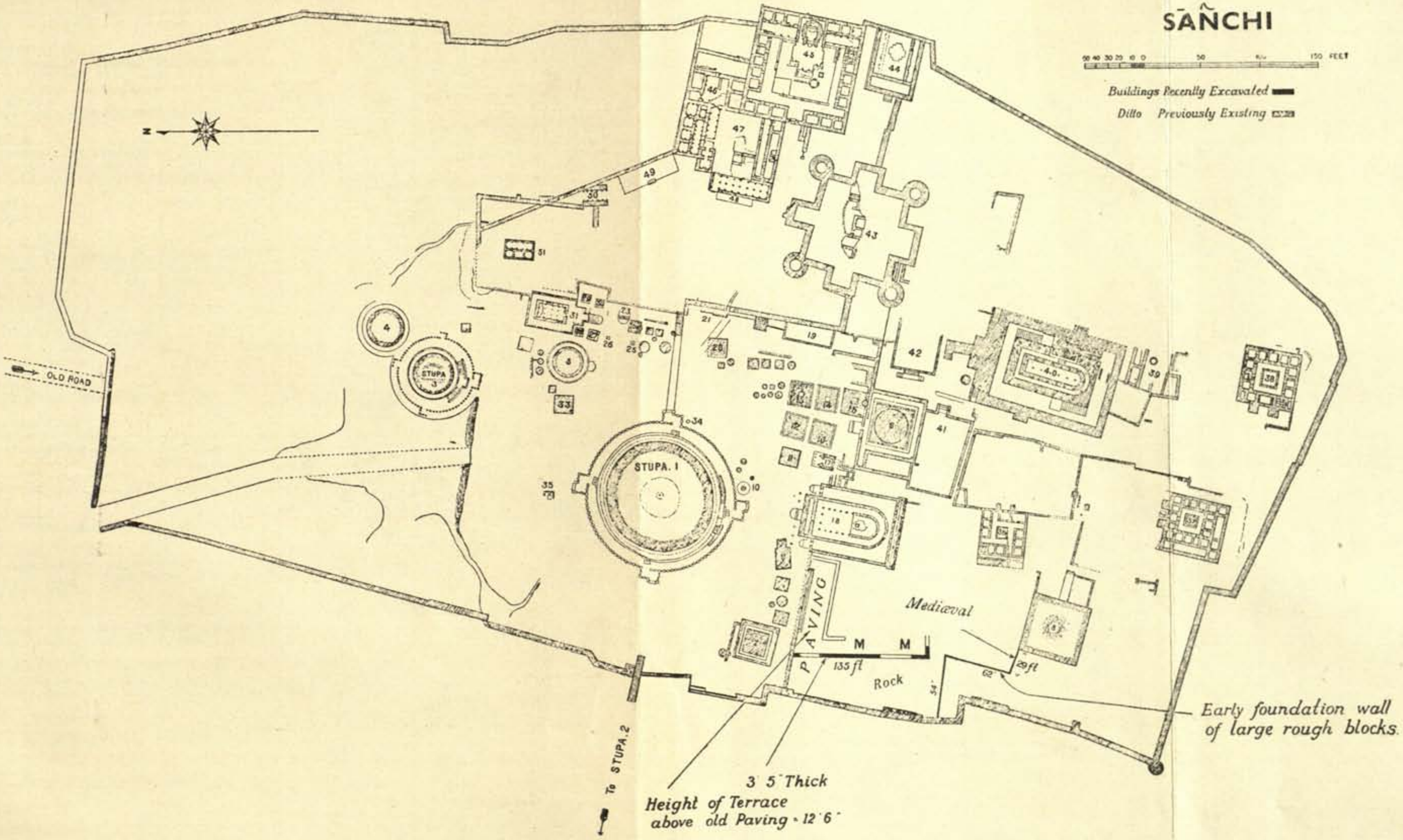

THE
HILL OF SĀÑCHĪ
AND ITS ENVIRONS
E
N
S
W
100 0 100 200 300 400 yards
100 0 100 200 300 400 metres
Ancient roads
Modern „
To Vidiśā
Purainiā Talāb
Manitol
Chikni Ghāti
Bāsantol
SĀNCHĪ
Mā̃chī
KANAKHEDĀ
Motiyā Kuā
Bhairon Bābā
Golā dā̃t
Bhaunti
Bir Mahārāj
Talaiā
Dahori
Ruined Temple
Malagan
Sati Pillars
Rest House
Stūpa 2
Talāb
110 Feet across slope to E. faced only on W. side
Jhōrā
Pār or Embankment
NĀGOURĪ
Chūdel-wāli-dānt
Nāgābābā
Dang-kī-ghōrī
Pār

EXCAVATIONS
AT
SĀÑCHI



Note Wall M M on same axis as original Stūpa

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