

# Archæological Survey of India.

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## REPORT

OF

## TOURS IN THE CENTRAL DOAB AND GORAKHPUR

IN

1874-75 AND 1875-76.

BY

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UNDER THE SUPERINTENDENCE OF

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“What is aimed at is an accurate description, illustrated by plans, measurements, drawings or photographs and by copies of inscriptions of such remains as most deserve notice, with the history of them so far as it may be traceable, and a record of the traditions that are preserved regarding them.”—LORD CANNING.

“What the learned would demand of us in India is to be quite certain of our data, to place the monumental record before them exactly as it now exists, and to interpret it faithfully and literally.”—JAMES PRINSEP.

COMPLIMENTARY

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1879.

but, although it stands on an undoubtedly ancient site, I do not think that the present temple is more than middle-aged—at any rate, it does not look old. There is no inscription of any kind about it.

The present town of *Ahâr* is about half a mile square.

The ancient city of *Ahwa-nagara*, or *Kundilpur*, is said to have included the site of the present town, and also a large extent of bare elevated ground, now partly intersected by ravines, which extends to the south-west and west-south-west from and beyond the present town. The whole extent of the ancient city may probably have been about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles square. Fragments of ancient bricks and pottery are scattered, here and there, over the bare ground to the south-west.

At *Ahâr* I obtained a mutilated stone, which was broken in two in the middle, 2 feet 9 inches in length, by 9 inches in breadth, and 5 inches in thickness, on which there was a *Kutila* inscription, which had been totally disfigured and defaced, with the exception of a few words,—the stone having been cut by a mason in order to form a water-spout; either for a well or for a temple. The inscription originally covered the whole of one side and one end of the stone. I could plainly see that there had been a date in the second line; which ran round both the end and side of the stone; but all that remained of it were the doubtful words “*S’ravan Samvatra 373*”? or “*S’ravan Samv 1037 ra? \* \* \* \** *nao Sudi 12 Samvatsra 1037 mâsa divasa 26.*” I could also read the words “*Mahipâl Dev*” in the first line. I think it is very probable that this “*Mahipâl Dev*” may have been the “*Raja Mahipâl*” of Kanauj, who lived in the eleventh century.<sup>1</sup>

#### 10.—INDÔR, OR INDRAPURA.

*Indôr Khera* is the name of a very large and lofty mound, with a small village perched on the east-north-eastern side of it, situated on the right bank of the eastern branch of the “*Choya Nadi*,” about 2,500 feet, or about half a mile, to the west-north-west from the Anûpshahar and *Koel Road*, and about 8 miles to the south-south-west from *Anûpshahar*; it is also about 5 miles to the north-west from *Dhubhai*, and about 7 miles, in

<sup>1</sup> I think it probable that the date may have been “*Samvat 1173*,” or A.D. 1116, during the reign of Mahipala, the Tomara Raja of Delhi and Kanauj, whose name is still preserved in that of the village of Mahipâlpur, near the Kutb Minar at Delhi.—*A. Cunningham.*

shaped, *chaupar* or *pachisi* pieces, made of burnt clay.<sup>1</sup> Of the fragments of ornamentally-moulded or carved bricks which I found at *Indôr*, some bore floral patterns, others lozenge-shaped figures, and some a series of small oblong squares, breaking bond.

I also found a good many sculptures in stone at *Indôr*, but most of these were of small size. The largest sculptures were the following:—

A gargoyle, or stone spout, terminating with an animal's head, with open mouth, like that of a lion or tiger. Length, 1 foot 5 inches; thickness, 7 inches; width, 8 inches; in red sand-stone. This must have belonged to some temple.

A dark-coloured stone, with some small human figures sculptured on it. Length, 2 feet 9 inches; breadth, 1 foot; thickness, 4 inches. Probably a fragment of some old temple destroyed.

A sculptured block of *kankar* stone, which, from its appearance, probably belonged to the side of an ancient gateway, as it was dug up at a spot where one of the gates of ancient *Indrapûra* must once have stood. This stone is ornamented with a handsomely-sculptured leaf and scroll pattern.

A figure of a female divinity, in a sitting position, with an attendant figure standing by her side, and in the act of presenting a vessel of water, to fill a cup which the sitting female divinity holds in her right hand. This sculpture is in bold relief, on a square slab of red sand-stone, 1 foot 2 inches in height, by 11 inches in width, and  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inches in thickness.

The bust of a female figure, in red sand-stone, which has lost the head and the lower portion of the body. This fragment of sculpture is  $6\frac{1}{2}$  inches in height by 8 inches in width across the shoulders.

Of the small sculptures in stone, it will be unnecessary for me to enumerate the whole, and I shall therefore only describe those which are in any way remarkable or interesting. The largest of these smaller sculptures represents a five-headed, four-armed divinity, sitting upon a goose. In the

<sup>1</sup> Since writing the above, I have obtained two other small curiosities worth mentioning, as they are both inscribed. One of them is a piece of glazed pottery, or rude China-ware, which is inscribed with six letters. The other is a fragment of a shell ornament, with two copper rivets run through it, and inscribed with a few characters. [The piece of white glazed crockery seems to me to be dated in the year 827. The two latter figures are quite certain. See plate VII, fig. 2.—A. Cunningham.]

with the statue to which it was attached, must have formed a large *bas-relief*, which was attached to the wall of some building by iron rivets.

I also obtained a small and much mutilated but interesting fragment of sculpture, in white sand-stone, which represented simply the fingers only of the left hand of a statue of *Buddha*, grasping a fold of drapery. Judging by the size of the fingers, the statue to which they belonged must have been at least one-third, or perhaps one-half, of life-size. There cannot be the slightest doubt whatever about the identification of this fragment as a portion of the left hand of an erect statue of *Bhuddha*, grasping a fold of the drapery of his dress, as the hand occurs exactly in this position in every statue that has ever been found which represents *Buddha* standing, in the attitude of teaching, with the right hand raised, and the left hand holding up the skirt of his dress. This mere fragment is therefore a perfectly sufficient proof that a large statue of *Buddha* must once have existed at *Indôr*.

I may also here notice two small flat fragments of sculpture, found at *Indôr*, each of which retained only the head portion of a human figure, very neatly executed, in what appears to be a kind of slaty limestone. One of these is very finely finished, and represents, apparently, a *Buddhist* head (or perhaps even a head of *Buddha*) under a sort of rounded canopy on which there is a sort of rayed figure, like the sun, very shallowly engraved. The face has very regular, straight features, and the head is surmounted by a round-topped head-dress, apparently representing folds of cloth, one above the other, and getting smaller and smaller towards the top, and three folds, or lappets, hang down on either side over the ears. The other small head has the half of a rayed disc, or glory, behind it; but the head-dress is peculiar, it having very much the appearance of a flat-topped fur cap, with triangular lappets hanging down over the ears. To the right, the head of some animal appears from behind.

Another small sculpture, in black slaty limestone, represents the figure of a *rhinoceros*.

Another fragment of sculpture, in red sand-stone, represents apparently a Hindu *Kumbh*, or water-vessel, with a bunch of undulating objects spreading forth out of the top, or mouth, of the vessel. The central portion of the bunch is almost like part of an ornamental floral Buddhist *trishûl*; but one of the outer portions, to the right, appears to terminate with the head of an animal.

altogether. This accounts for the number of old "beaver meadows," or dried up "beaver dams" which may be seen on new farm lands in North America, and which always constitute the best meadows, or grass patches, for the farmers who purchase new land. Now, it will be remembered that, in the early portion of this report, I mentioned that I had dug up some large ancient bricks at Indôr, one of which bore the impressions of the feet and claws of a leopard or panther, while another bore the impression of the feet of some large kind of deer. Now, neither leopards nor large deer would be found where there was no forest for cover. It is evident, therefore, that there must have been some large tract of forest in the neighbourhood of Indrapûra, in ancient times, and where there was dense forest of considerable extent there would also be a superabundance of water, such as pools and swamps, and numerous rivulets; and then, in that case, the Choya Nadi would be a perennially-running river of considerable size, instead of the miserable little dried up channel which it is now.<sup>1</sup>

The excavations made at Indôr Khèra during the cold season of 1874-75 consisted principally in the opening of three large mounds which lay respectively in the fields to the west and to the north of the great Khèra. Two of the mounds which lay to the west were known under the traditional names of Kundanpûra and Ahîrpûra, while the principal mound to the north bore the traditional name of Vardypûra. These I will now describe.

#### KUNDANPURA MOUND.

Kundanpûra mound, which I have also named the Great Temple Mound, on account of the remains of an extensive block of temple buildings which the excavations in this mound brought to light, is situated about 700 feet to the north-west from the great Khèra of Indôr. This mound measured originally about 175 feet across from south-east to north-west, by about 110 feet from north-east to south-west, or nearly 600 feet in circumference. When this mound was completely opened and thoroughly cleared by excavations, I found that I had laid

<sup>1</sup> My opinion as to the eastern branch of the Choya Nadi having formerly been the bed of a large river, or an ancient bed of the Ganges, has since received confirmation from a further personal examination of the bed higher up, as well as from the observation of others. At a village called Baktâri, about 3 miles to the north-north-west from Indor, the course of the Choya Nadi runs through quite a broad and deep valley, as broad as the main channel of the Ganges; and immediately to the east of that the surface of the soil is one mass of sand and sand-hills, as if left by some great river or sea.

bare a very extensive and intricate building containing a great number of chambers and compartments. I counted about 35 chambers. The whole block or mass of building measured about 160 feet from south-east to north-west, by about 100 feet from north-east to south-west. The building did not stand in accordance with any of the points of the compass; but the greatest length, and the general course of the majority of the walls, was from south-east to north-west. Some massive portions of the building, however, faced east-south-east by west-north-west, and one rather small but high square pile of masonry stood nearly in accordance with the four cardinal points.

This mass of building was composed entirely of brick, the bricks being of various sizes and of various ages, indicating a series of successive buildings of various ages, which I ascertained, from certain discoveries which I made, to date from about the time of the *upta* dynasty, or even earlier, up to about the 10th century.<sup>1</sup> Numerous sculptures were found in various parts of the building in the course of the excavations, but principally in an ancient well, which was discovered a little to the east of the centre of the mound.

From certain discoveries I came to the conclusion that the oldest building on this spot, to which the largest and lowest underlying bricks belonged, must have been a Buddhist establishment, or a Buddhist Vihâra. This would appear to have been succeeded by a fire temple, and a temple dedicated to the sun; and I believed that I could distinguish the remains of some receptacles for fire; and among the ruins I also found the remains of numerous *hom* vessels, or vessels which could only have been used in the ancient *hom* worship, or sacrifice of fire. But whether the fire worship or the worship of the sun was the older of the two, I found it difficult to decide. Fire-worship was introduced into India at two different periods, namely, first, by the earlier Sassanians, and secondly, by the later Indo-Sassanians (or Sassanianised Indians who practised the cultus of fire), while the fact of the actual founding of a temple dedicated to the worship of the sun was mentioned in an inscription on a copper-plate, dated in the time of *Skanda Gupta*, which was found at Indôr Khêra. I, however, found eleven silver Indo-Sassanian coins concealed in a small earthen-ware vessel, in an excavation in the midst of these very temple ruins.

<sup>1</sup> See Plate VI for a plan of a portion of these ruins.

(2) A bas-relief, in red sandstone, displaying six sitting human figures, of which the faces of five are broken away, but the head and face of the sixth figure is perfect and beautifully executed. There is a circular glory behind each head, and each figure has the right hand raised and holds a sort of bottle, or "*surai*," or a narrow-necked vessel of some kind, in the left hand. It is 1 foot 4 inches in length, and each figure is five inches in height. It was dug up in the same chamber in the temple in which the large head was found. It is certainly very ancient, and I believe it to be of the time of the *Guptas*.

(3) A curious head of an animal, in red sandstone. It looks much like the head of a crocodile, but may be that of a rhinoceros. It has the appearance of having been intended as a bracket of some kind. This sculpture measures  $6\frac{1}{2}$  inches in length.

(4) A sort of square stone pinnacle ornament, in red sandstone, shaped very much like a small Roman altar;  $5\frac{1}{4}$  inches in height, by  $4\frac{1}{2}$  inches square. This stone is much worn, and was fractured by the diggers; but I got a much finer and very beautiful, similar, altar-shaped, pinnacle ornament, in white sandstone, from the well, which will be afterwards described.

#### SCULPTURES FROM WELL IN TEMPLE.

(1) Two-thirds of an architrave of a doorway, with a portion of one of the jambs in white sandstone.

Present length ..	...	...	2'	7"
Width of stone	...	...	0'	6"
Thickness	...	...	0'	$4\frac{1}{2}$ "
Original length...	...	...	4	6"

At what was the centre of the stone, there is a half figure with large head and smiling face, with the hands held down in front, palms outwards. Immediately on the right of the central figure, there is a kneeling figure, worshipping, with hands joined, and body terminating with a serpent's tail coiled. To the left, there are six sitting figures, each with the right hand raised and the left hand placed downwards upon what appears to be a cup or pitcher, or vessel of some kind. In the left corner there is a squatting figure, holding up a small club-shaped object in each hand. I should be inclined to attribute this sculptured architrave to about the fifth century of the Christian era.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> From this description I take the sculpture to represent the Navagraha or Nine Planets.—A. Cunningham.