

Three Seasons of Excavations at Pir Manakrai, Haripur: Preliminary Report

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Abstract: It is a brief and preliminary report of the archaeological probing conducted at the important site of Pir Manakrai in Haripur District by National Heritage Foundation (NHF) headed by Late Prof. F.A. Durrani. The main aim of this report is to highlight the significance of the site and region and to understand the socio-religious and socio-cultural elements of early historic period society. The detail report will be published later on.

Keywords: Pir Manakrai, Haripur, Gandhara, Fortress, Eidgah, Indo-Greek, Scytho-Parthian

This study is dedicated to late Professor Dr. Farzand Ali Durrani (S.I.), the President, National Heritage Foundation (NHF) who always remained the sole spirit behind this program. Development of archaeology and tourism in Hazara Division was very close to his heart. He left no stone unturned for procuring funds for the project of archaeology at Pir Manakrai. It is unfortunate that he did not live long enough to see the results of his endeavors. His untimely death not only deprived us of the care, love and support of dedicated patron but also left the National Heritage Foundation without sufficient financial resources to continue his project at Pir Manakrai. But I still hope that some individual, institution or government department will come forward and provide necessary funds for the publication of a full report of this work which is almost ready for publication.

Introduction

Excavations at Pir Manakrai were started in March 1997 and, with some interruptions, continued until May 2001. The first season was supervised by Dr. Shah Nazar whereas the last two seasons were conducted by the Principal author. In 2001, the work was interrupted due to the sudden illness of Prof. Farzand Ali Durrani. His subsequent death deprived us of the financial resources needed for these excavations and hence

the Camp had to be wound up.

The Site

Located at about 73 degrees East and 34 degrees North, the site of Pir Manakrai is some 5 km northeast of Haripur city (Hazara) and some 20 miles / 32 km northeast of the ancient city of Taxila (Figure 1). It occupies a prominent place on the right bank of River Daur, which empties itself in the Tarbela Reservoir Lake some 7 km west of Haripur. The site can be approached either through the village of Pir Manakrai or by crossing the River Daur from either the town of Sarai Saleh or the small hamlet of Ali Khan both on Haripur-Abbotabad Road. In ancient times, this ancient settlement was located on the ancient road running between Taxila and Kashmir via Pannian, Pir Manakrai, Pind Hasham Khan, Sarai Naimat, Sherwan, Damtaur, Mansehra, Pakhli, etc. On the north of the site, there is a series of hills of medium-heights called Kagbattian. The site itself is scattered on three promontories named Kattian, Sattian, and Mattian (or Mathian) - named after the three daughters of Pir Manakrai, or some say of Raja Chitar, the legendary founder of the city of the same name and the Raja of Chitar Nagar of which the city of Pir Manakrai

was the capital¹. No one knows why and when the site and the adjacent village were so named or who was Pir Manakrai, when did he live and where was he buried? But still, the name appears to be considerably old as it can be traced back to the earliest record of Muslim occupation of the region when the settlement of Manakrai was declared to be the head-village of the strip of land occupied by the Turks and hence called *Turk-patti* or *Turk Manakrai*. It was certainly the main town of the valley before the town of Haripur was founded in the 19th century. All authors of books on local history agree that the present town of Pir Manakrai was founded in the 18th century after abandoning the old town at the present site. It is however, not certain which part of Manakrai site was last occupied.

The site at present is quite extensive (Figures 2 & Plate II). The site measures some 400 x 300 meters out of which a well defined strip (some 300 x 210 meters) is found along the western bank of River Daur opposite the village Ali Khan. It stretches from Garr (*Gar* of maps) in the east to the graveyard close to the present town of Manakrai on the west. A large area north and west of the Eidgah is still largely unmapped. From the riverbed on the south, the site gradually rises towards north and northeast till it reaches the maximum height at Mattian north of the fortress in Unit 'C'. Here, traces of an ancient observation post can still be seen. From the riverbed to the top of Mattian hill, there is a difference of about 300 meters. From the top of Mattian, one can have a commanding view of the whole valley of Haripur in all directions. From the Eidgah, the site extends northwards with a gradual slope till it reaches the

old graveyard beyond which flourishes the present town of Pir Manakrai. The area south of the graveyards is either under cultivation or is covered with fruit gardens. Among the four prominent points of this ancient site, the highest one is occupied by Unit "C" (2004 feet above sea level), followed by Units "B", "D" and "E", 1992, 1990 and 1980 feet above sea level respectively.

Unit "F", the Buddhist site of Garr Moriya (write in Urdu), occupies the lowest position. This site, usually miss-spelt Garh Mauryan (write in Urdu), is located at the southeast limits of the main site and is overshadowed by the northeastern and southeastern bastions of the Fortress. It is actually a part of a larger settlement of Manakrai but, still, excluded from it. This site was excavated in 1988-89 by a team from the Department of Archaeology, Government of Pakistan. The excavated remains were reburied soon thereafter and hence these are not visible above surface. However, the Excavator has published a preliminary report of his work (Mian 1990). It looks strange that excavation at this site was carried without a realization that it was a part of a larger complex and that this site is overshadowed by a fortified temple of no means dimensions.

Discovery of the Site

If Garr Moriya is considered to be an independent site, we can say that the site of Pir Manakrai was discovered in January 1994² when the villagers were dressing some land near the grave of a local saint *Sain Gulab*, son of Sardar (or: Sain Sardar son of Gulab) in order to celebrate his third death anniversary or *Urs*. During leveling of the

¹ . Different versions of the story of the founder of the settlement, his three daughters and names of the three promontories survive in local histories. See for example Sher Bahadur Panni, *Tarikh-i-Hazara*, Abbotabad.

² . As per verbal report of Mr. Bahadur Khan, Deputy Director (Projects), Peshawar Sub Regional

Office of the Department of Archaeology and Museums, it was he who visited this site for the first time in 1980s in his capacity as Curator, Archaeological Museum, Taxila and submitted a report to his department. Unfortunately, he could not locate the report.

ground, the blade of a bulldozer upturned a bronze jar full of thousands of silver coins - 2000 drachmas and 500 tetra-drachmas of Indo-Greek and Indo-Scythian rulers. As can be expected in such a situation, the sacred function of the *Urs* was temporarily suspended and all those present started demanding their shares in the spoils of the treasure. Once this was settled, the looters started looking for the buyers in the bazaars of Haripur, Islamabad and Peshawar. With the exception of a few, majority of the lot was eventually sold to the foreigners and thus went out of the country where it was introduced in the world market under the title of 'Sarai Saleh Hoard' (Bopearachchi and Aman, 1995).

Not content with this, the very next day the looters came back to the site - this time better equipped for ill-legal digging. They started pulling down that part of the mound which falls within squares I-VI. 17, 18 & 19 on our grid plan (Figure 2). But, before much damage could be caused to the site, the local administration intervened and further vandalism was stopped. They also invited a team of archaeologists from the Department of Archaeology, University of Peshawar that was then working on the site of Pannian, off Haripur – Tarbela Road.

In 1995, the National Heritage Foundation, then headed by Late Prof Dr. Farzand Ali Durrani, submitted a project proposal to the National Fund for Cultural Heritage asking for funds for excavating this site. The Project was approved but the funds were released in November 1996. The license for excavation was granted in February 1997 and the work on the site was started in March 1997 by Mr. Shah Nazar Khan, then Deputy Curator, SSAQ Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, University of Peshawar. It took the team almost three and a half months to clear the debris left behind by the looters of the site (Khan, 2003: 115). The team selected for excavation an area already gravely disturbed by the coins-hunters. Besides, the area

excavated was extremely limited and, for some reason, no section-study of various occupations could be made. Only a simplified plan could be procured by the author (Figure 3). With such record in hand, a true sequence of different occupations was not easy to reconstruct. However, an extremely brief note on this season's work is now available with a number of illustrations of the site, buildings and some antiquities (Khan 2003).

However, the team was better rewarded when it took up the work of clearance of fortress area some 300 meters east of the Settlement Area. Here, the outline of an ancient 'fortress' with a huge platform of a temple in the centre was cleared and hailed as the first such castle ever excavated in Hazara Division. Some sporadic excavations were also carried out inside as well as outside the fortress but without any conclusive results. On basis of a few badly preserved coins and the ceramic evidence, the excavator tentatively dated the residential area between 35 BC to 10th century AD (Khan 2003, 115) whereas fortress was assigned a much later date in the Hindu Shahi period with some sporadic finds of Islamic period pottery outside the Fortress. Later discoveries however, necessitated to change the later dating of the fortress.

Parenthetically, I must mention here that the site of Pir Manakrai is situated close to another site bearing almost the similar name i.e. Manakrai Dheri also called Pannian. The two may not be confused with each other. Manakrai Dheri has already been excavated and reported (Durrani and Others 1997).

When the work was resumed at Pir Manakrai in October 1998 under the supervision of the Principal author, no preliminary report of earlier excavation of 1997 could be made available to him. We were, therefore, forced to prepare a fresh grid-plan for our excavation. We also divided the whole site into following six 'Units' or 'Sectors':

S.N.	Unit	Local Name	Nature of the Site
1	A	Kattian	Settlement Area
2	B	Kattian	A Small Fortified Temple
3	C	Mattian	Fortress, Temple & the Northern Hill
4	D	Sattian	Eidgah Mound
5	E	Poultry Farm	A Low Mound between C'&'D'
6	F	Garr Moriya (Garh Mauryan)	Buddhist Site

With this new planning, it was decided to re-probe that area in Unit 'A' that was cleared during the first season (1997) and then extend it in other directions with emphasis on deeper digging. As regards Unit 'C', it was decided to probe some space both inside and outside the fortress and establish a connection between the Central Platform inside the Fortress with the fort-walls, on the one hand, and the area immediately outside it on the other. The work in Unit 'B' was also started but more thorough work was undertaken only during the third season. In all, excavation was conducted in almost 50 squares each of 5 x 5 meters.

Summary of Excavation

Seasons 1997 and 1998-1999

For the first season, the team concentrated on that part of the site that was already badly disturbed by the coin-hunters in 1994. After clearing looters' debris, some trenches were sunk in the adjacent area (Plate II). But nowhere the virgin soil could be reached. However, the excavator claims that structures cleared by him belong at least to three successive phases. These are built of diaper masonry in the lower and of rubble masonry in the upper levels. No fresh hoard of coins

and no coins of good quality were discovered. The few coins discovered from various levels, and tentatively identified cover a long range of occupation ranging from the 1st century BCE (Coins of Azes), to the 4th century CE (Coins of Vasudeva) and finally to the 9th century CE (Coin of Sri Vekka Deva).

Settlement area selected for excavation during the second season of our excavations was only an extension of spoils of previous years. Especially, the southern end of the site was greatly disturbed and as such was the structural remains thus exposed. Even the grid of 1997 was prepared after the excavations of that season were over. Thus, finds of this season were marked with reference to the numbers allotted to the areas or spaces enclosed at least by three walls and not to the squares on the grid. Still, only structures in the eastern half of the excavated area were allotted room numbers (R1 to R10) whereas structures in the western half of the excavated area were left without any reference mark. The numbers with plus (+) signs in Figure 4 have been allotted by the present authors. Some information regarding a deep trench (actually a pit) in R5 is available, but no information is preserved with regards to the four other deeper trenches south of the 'western half'. Same is the case with stratification. As marking on some important artifacts show, these were excavated with reference to some stratigraphy, but the available record is not sufficient for drawing dependable conclusions. Nevertheless, there is no reason to doubt the claim of the excavator that the excavated structures belong to three different

periods though in the light of fresh excavations of the current season, some minor amendments in the chronological framework (1st century BCE to the 10th century CE) has become necessary.

The walls, as exposed during the first season revealed a layout of rooms of varying sizes laid out south and north of a long wall running from east to west were drawn defectively. Actually, this wall runs straight for almost 30 meters. It appears that Room nos. 1, 2, 5, 6, 9 and 10 as well as +R1, +R2 and +R4 and +R7, +R5 and +R8 belong to two (or four) separate houses placed back to back and having access from the north, in one case, and south in the other. Probably a road was running between the latter and the Eidgah Mound which was probably the ancient road between Manakrai and Sarai Naimat Khan-Mansehra, always keeping the River Daur on the right and hence never need to cross it.

The rooms so far excavated are rectangular or square in plan. As revealed during later probing, doors, windows and even ventilators connect several rooms with one another. However, the presumed drain between R1 and +R1 (Plate VI) actually, later on, turned out to be walls of two different periods. Further, originally walls of only two types of masonry were observed - diaper in the lower and rubble in the upper levels. A closer examination, however, revealed masonry of four different periods and styles. The earlier excavator, through an oversight, could not appreciate the presence of three stubs of earliest walls present under two heavy walls in +R4 and +R1. All walls are built of flat limestone blocks and river pebbles which are

in abundance in the river bed nearby. Nowhere the virgin soil appears to have been reached during 1997 season.

On the contrary, when the work started in Unit C (Mattian) on a nearby hilltop some 100 meters above the settlement area, here soon an outline of a small fortress was traced out with four corner bastions and a damaged grand staircase for leading into the fortress. From outside, the fortress measures 48x33 meters north south. The bastions are in quasi-circular shape. The staircase was found in a poor condition. The earlier excavator has dated the fortress in the Hindu Shahi period. But the grounds for the dating are not given. Actually, the fortress walls and their bastions are built of beautiful diaper masonry so common in Gandhara during the Kushan period. This masonry is contemporary with the walls of the last but one period of the settlement area. In the northeastern bastion, there were used three blocks - one decorated with a *trisula* carved in relief and two with ears of wheat plant set in mosaic of small slices of stones. All the three blocks have since been stolen.

Inside the fortress, and in the center of it, the Excavator was able to trace out the outline of a huge platform measuring 21.5 x 9.50 meters. The entire platform stands to a height between 2 and 3 meters from foundation upward and is entirely built of squarely cut blocks of stone. In some later period it was repaired with finely cut blocks of porous *kanjur* / 'kannat' stone which in turn was covered with *chunam* plaster or stucco so common in the later period history of Taxila in the near vicinity. Local traditions attribute that on top of this platform was once an

impressive structures, though they fail to give its description. These structures are said to have been pulled down recently by the owner of the land who denies the allegation. The excavator of Garh Mauryan, does not make any mention either of this fortress or some high building inside it.

During 1997, a deep trench was also sunk following a robbers' trench in what is now Squares L-7 and M-7. Some other trenches also appear to have been sunk near the four bastions. No account of the results is available. Inside the fortress, a long trench sunk in, what are today Squares M-3 and M-4 revealed a partly covered drain and a coin of Vasudeva, three fragmentary walls near the north eastern corner of the central platform and a semi-round bastion near the south-eastern corner of the same platform were exposed for ascertaining their chronological relationship with the central platform or the fortress itself. Discovery of a coin of Vasudeva itself proves that that this fortress was there long before the time of Hindu Shahi rulers as has been wrongly presumed previously.

Excavation Season 1998-99

Now, as regards 1998-99 excavations in the settlement area the work of last year was expanded northward and eastward with a purpose to ascertain the limits of the structures exposed as well as chronological framework left undetermined during the previous year. For this purpose, a north-south deep trench was attempted in squares I-V/10, 15, 20 and 25. Here the virgin soil could be reached only in Square I-V/15 below layer 12. In no other trench, this year or last year, natural soil could be reached on account of limited area of excavation. No structure was met with in squares I-V/10 & 15 and I-IV/3. In square

H-V/21 only one wall running north south was found running in the middle of the trench. In all other trenches several walls have been encountered barring further deeper digging there without removing the structures in upper layers. In only one or two cases the uppermost fragile walls of rough and rubble masonry had to be removed.

The total area excavated in Unit 'A' comes to 488 sq. meters, including 125 sq. meters of previous year (Figure 4). Several of the trenches and sections of the last year had to be redone, redrawn and re-studied.

Stratigraphy (Figures 5 & 6)

Stratigraphical details of excavation of season 1997 are not available. Even during 1998-99 season, stratigraphy of the settlement area and the fortress could be studied only at a few places namely L-7, M-7, S-7 & S-8 inside the fortress (Figure 9) and the deep trench (Squares I-V/10, 15, 20 and 25) and in a single Square H-IV/6 in the settlement area (Figures 5-6 and Plates IV & V). Virgin soil could not be reached even in Square I-V/15 even at a depth of 6 meters or about 20 feet from the highest point of the trench. In brief, the site appears to have been founded on a sterile layer followed by the deposition of layer 12. Only potsherds and other miscellaneous articles are met with in earlier layers. The earliest walls can be detected in layers 11 and 10 (Period I) clearly shown in Figure 6. Structures of this period are very scanty. Regular and massive structures start appearing in Period II and are associated with layers 9 and 8. Structures of Period III are associated with layer 7 and 6 and represent the climax of the site. The decline starts with period IV which is represented by layers 5, 4 and 3. The final abandonment of the site took place with the deposition of layer 2. The Period V, if it was there, is very thinly met on this site. But, inside and outside the fortress, life continues for some more centuries.

In all 12 layers with some sub-layers have been detected. Regular and well laid out floors are few and far between. This is natural for such a site built on the slope of a low hill situated on the bank of a river. The fallen heavy stone blocks and boulders at times made our study of regular floors very difficult as the same, were already gravely disturbed, if and wherever these existed. Only in one case a bathroom floor was found intact in Square H-V/22 (Plate VI). In another case, a similar floor of heavy slabs was preserved only in a part (Plate VII).

Deep digging was further marred due to presence of large size pits; some cut down into the natural soil (Figure 5). These pits are full of pots, sherds and ashes (Plates VIII & IX), a large pit cutting into layers 10, 11 and 12 was sealed by layer 9. The same situation continues from bottom to top.

Chronology of Settlement Area

Apart from the coins-hoard accidentally discovered in 1994, numismatic evidence from proper excavations is scanty and not all reliable. Disturbed stratigraphy, on account of too many pits, makes it very difficult, if not impossible to assign periods to finds in terms of absolute years. Following chronology is, therefore, suggested on the basis of relative positioning of structures *vis-à-vis* one another. But we must keep in mind that many of the earlier structures survived into later periods and were used in conjunction with new structures (Figures 5 & 6):

Period	Particulars	Age
I	Beginning Appertains to layers 9, 10 and 11. No structure is associated with these layers	Mauryan (4 th -3 rd century BCE)
II	Rise Appertains to layers 9 & 8. Only fragmentary walls are found.	Indo-Greek (3 rd -2 nd century BCE)
III	Climax	Scytho-Parthian

	Appertains to layers 7 & 6. It is the most flourishing period at this site.	(1 st century BC-1 st century CE)
IV	Anti-climax Appertains to layers 5, 4 & 3.	Kushan (2 nd -4 th century CE)
V	Decline Layer 2. One coin of Sri Vekka Deva found in this Period.	Hindu Shahi (9 th century CE)
VI	Abandonment Layer 1. Few rubble walls.	Modern

There is no major structural evidence of Period I, very little in respect of Period V and almost nothing in respect of Period VI. Thus, for all purposes, there are in the main four building periods in settlement area in Unit A dating from 3rd century BC to 4th century AD. The chronology of fortress area (Unit 'C') is slightly different and is discussed elsewhere in this report.

Town Planning and Architecture

It is still premature to talk about town planning at Pir Manakrai. The information, so far available to us is limited and too sketchy to allow us to draw some definite conclusions. However, some general assumptions can be offered here for better understanding of the house plans and architecture on basis of structures so far discovered. It appears that the town of Pir Manakrai was laid out on principles of Hellenistic town planning attributed to Hippodamus. Such a town planning always provides to the living city the protection of river on one side and some mountains with a citadel on the remaining sides. Nothing can be said about the layout of roads and streets and locations / presence of public buildings.

Citadel (Figures 7-8 & Plate X)

The whole city is also naturally guarded by the wide River Daur on one side and a few low mountains holding strategic positions on all other sides. One of these hills (Unit C) has been further

strengthened with a fortress acting as a citadel or a fortress-cum-temple. On top of a higher mountain further up in the north of the citadel (not shown in the contour map (Figure 2) foundations of an observation post have been located. Even the high hill with Eidgah (Unit D) on top of it could have served as citadel. It is only 13 meters lower than the fortress but, when seen from the bed of the river below, it gives it a much more domineering view than the fortress itself alone. If we consider Unit C as truly representative of a fortified temple or a state treasury - which all ancient temples acted as, then Eidgah hilltop can have a better claim to be the citadel rather than anything else. Standing directly on the flat floor of River Dorr some 40 meters / 120 feet further down the Eidgah with almost vertical right bank of the river and the southern side of the Eidgah, a fortress on top could have served better strategic purpose both from defensive and offensive point of view. It was an easier site to defend but difficult to conquer and occupy and strong enough to protect the lower town lying on the north. There are certainly some structures seen along the slopes on all sides but the presence of an Eidgah on top of it, though used only twice in a year, renders it a more unlikely place for excavation.

Religious Sector

All major religious buildings were certainly located outside the living city. Three of these have certainly been located outside the city, though still not very far from it. A Stupa and Monastery at Garr Morya, a grand temple inside the fortress with a monumental staircase and gate leading to it in Unit C and a smaller temple / shrine in Unit B have already been excavated partly or fully. The temple inside the fortress was most probably a Jaina or even a Mazdian temple whereas the one in Unit B was devoted to some other religion - probably Hinduism. For their precise religious identification, save the Buddhist Stupa and monastery at Garr Morya, we need

further investigation. The discovery of two inscribed vessels from within the Settlement Area (See Inscriptions below), particularly the one on a Relic Container, makes us hopeful to find a place of worship - a Buddhist monument indeed, inside the living city as well. But if there was any domestic temple or some cultic shrine inside private houses, we are not sure, though the possibility of the same cannot be ruled out.

Blocks of Houses (Plate III)

The area excavated in the downtown is not enough to give a clear idea as regards the principles on which the town was laid out. But, an over-view of alignment of exposed structures in Units A, B and C leaves us without doubt that ancient town of Pir Manakrai had a well laid out plan on a true north-south and east-west axis. All walls of the three units running east to west are parallel to one another and so are the walls, which run north to south. Exceptions are there but those are few. No road or street has as yet been excavated or identified on ground. But definitely, one of the major streets was towards the south of the present excavated area in Unit A. It appears to have run east-west at some distance south of room +R7, +R4, +R1, R1, R6, R10, R11 and R12 (Figure 4). The soak-well (or well?), at the junction of four squares (Square J-V/5 and 10 & I-V/1 & 6) near the Chowkidar hut was probably in the middle of the street immediately north of Unit D under the shade of *Eidgah* mound.

The excavated plan of the settlement area (Figure 4) clearly shows that we have excavated two blocks of houses with their backs joined together and their façades facing in opposite directions. The doors wherever detected are placed either in northern or southern walls except the connecting door between two rooms.

Masonry

All walls, without exception, are built of stone masonry (Plates XI-XII). Stones are dressed or are naturally rolled boulders extracted from the

bed of the river nearby. Walls are built by laying large stone blocks horizontally with smaller interstices in between two blocks. This diaper masonry is of two different periods - the more refined one being of earlier period. In Period III, the masonry becomes somewhat ashlar i.e. composed of larger dressed stones placed horizontally above a few courses of thin stone slices. The spaces between two larger blocks are filled up similarly with interstices. The masonry of two earliest periods is composed of large boulders balanced at places horizontally with the help of smaller stones, chips and slices of slate stone without a clear horizontal line (Plate XIII). The smaller slices and pieces are set in mud plaster. In slightly later period, some sort of order is obtained by putting larger stones in lines creating an impression of horizontal courses (Plates XIV - XVIII). Technically, the best masonry is reached in the third and fourth building periods where the so-called Gandhara ashlar, masonry appears (Plates XVII, XVIII, XIX). In this masonry, larger stone blocks with flat external faces and flat bottoms are placed in a row above a single or more layers of thin slices of stones. The spaces between two larger stones of irregular shapes are also filled up with similar interstices. In the last building period, the masonry becomes rough and rubble and is composed of boulders of assorted sizes placed one above the other in thick mud mortar. In any case outer surfaces are even which might have remained either uncovered or covered with a thick layer of mud plaster. Such a plaster, red in colour, was found in a room on the outer side of the Fortress in Unit 'C'.

Usually, one or two courses of large sized unhewn natural river boulders are placed at the bottom of a wall which acts as foundation. More often with an offset on one side (Plates XX, XXI, XXII, XXIII). Only in one case (Plates XVI, XVII, XVIII) an offset on both sides of a wall is provided.

The walls are fairly uniform in thickness, in the main, of eight varieties- ranging from 105 cm in thickness in layer 8 in Square H-IV/7 to 45 cm thick wall in layers 1 & 2 in Square H-IV/16.

Shrine in Unit 'B'

Unit B is a small but distinct, and considerably high promontory north east of Unit A and west of Unit C. It falls within squares F-I/1 to F-I/10 on our Grid Map (Figures 2 and 10). From top of the promontory, there is a gradual fall on all sides - the most steep being towards north-west where beyond a deep gully, presence of an exposed long patch of a stone wall of early period (Gandhara style) (Plate XXIII) indicates that the site continues beyond this point.

We started our excavation at the west-end of Unit B with an intention to go eastward and ascertain its relationship with the fortified-temple in Unit C.

The earliest structure around this platform is a Period II wall of one course running north-south seen in Square F-II/22. Above this wall runs another wall, running east west built of stones placed in regular horizontal courses. It is a part of the retaining wall, 1.5 meter high, of the platform. Towards east, it joins the bastion attached to a wall of Period III (Wall 3) that is placed between walls of the same period that runs north-south in Square F-II/22 (Plate XXIV). Only western face of the wall could be exposed. The bastion and the connecting wall constituted the western wall of a large platform encompassing three natural rocks - probably with their promontories standing above the platform.

During the succeeding period, the platform was raised in height (but reduced in width) by enlarging it westward (Wall 4). Some seven meters long portion of the western wall of this platform is still in tact. Southward, it has been washed away. The northwestern bastion is well preserved together with another bastion, still

quite well preserved on south of the former. Some 1.5 meter of the northern wall has also been excavated. Here it has a prominent offset. The space between the natural rock and western face of this wall has been filled up with stones (Plates XXV - XXVI). This wall is built of beautiful semi-diaper masonry with neatly packed interstices in characteristic Gandharan fashion (Plate XXVII). There is a prominent offset between the two bastions (Plate XXVIII).

During the final phase (Period V), the platform was confined to a smaller area (W.5) measuring 15 X 8.5 meters including exposed portion of the staircase on the east. Only one or two courses of the southern wall of this last platform have been found in tact.

What purpose did these platforms serve, is not certain. No characteristic artifact has been discovered from surface or in any of the trenches. The initial impression that the three round structures probably represented the bases of three votive stupas was soon dispelled when these turned out to be part and parcel of contiguous walls. The northern most bastions actually formed a corner of two walls. The masonry attached with two northern bastions turned out to be much superior in fashion than that of the southern-most bastion of earlier date. The former walls are built of large size stone blocks dressed in large diaper of Gandhara period including later use of porous Kanjur blocks in ashlar fashion. (Plates XXIX - XXX). Was Unit B a miniature replica of the fortified temple in Unit C? we are not sure. For this purpose we extended our excavation into two adjoining squares F-I/1 and G-I/5 on the west and, F-II/22 on the south which proved a bit more rewarding. The balk between F-I/1 and F-I/2 provided a fine section-study of 6 layers and even deeper (Plates XXXI -XXXII). Here under layer 2 runs slightly diagonally north-south a wall (W.6) with its irregular back space filled up with thick ashy deposits of grey colour in the form of layers 4 and 5 whereas the wall

itself belonging to layer 6 and is sealed by layer 2 (Plate XXXIII). The wall stands more than one meter high. Cutting its western face, 1.2 meters from south and 2.0 meters from the north is a semi-circular shrine (enclave) found built inside the thickness of the wall with inner face coated with thick mud plaster burned to terracotta. Stuck against the eastern face of the shrine was part of the bust of a female deity with prominent breasts but in a very fragile state of preservation. She appears originally to have posed as a sitting deity with her legs dangling along the western face of the wall containing this shrine (Plates XXXIV-XXXV). Who was this presiding deity? we are not sure. If it was a Buddhist shrine, the Lady present here was possibly Hariti. In any case this female deity would have been facing the setting sun. The wall of this shrine certainly belongs to Period III as is reflected by the rough and rubble masonry of diaper stones laid horizontally. It is 80 cm wide and some 20-cm deep.

Along the western face of this wall is a platform or floor set with river boulders (W.7). Its southern edge forms a neat and clean face of a wall. One meter and 40 cm further southward there was another wall parallel to the platform. The space between three walls (W. 6, 7 & 8) was full of potsherds deposited in loose earth of layer 5. The potsherds on the eastern side of the north-south wall are similar. The floor or platform on the northern half is later than three walls in this square.

The southern wall (W.8) of Period III in Square F-I/1 extends into the next square (G-I/5) on the west. Here too many fallen stones spread almost all over the trench made it very difficult to understand the nature of walls (W.8-10) underneath and their relationship. May be future excavation clear this position better. A fire place in the middle of the square is obviously of a later date.

The entire debris in all these squares was

carefully strained in search of finds. However, with the exception of a few rare objects majority of the artifacts turned to be potsherds - and even those belong to the utilitarian types. These comprise mostly rims, bases and bodies of open-mouthed bowls (found in plenty in Unit A as well). But the bowls from this Unit B are slightly of different nature than those generally similar bowls in Unit 'A'. These are more open at mouth and more spacious at the inner bottoms. The walls of bowls are thin and smooth. A mono-conical bead with three grooves and one axial hole is a special find from Square F-I/2. From the same square three sherds of N.B.P. ware were recovered from the debris. Another unique find from shallow debris in Square F-I/4 is one-third of a circular terracotta stamp with floral motifs running in three/four concentric rings. It is 0.8 cm thick and 2.5 cm in length and chocolate brown in colour. Some similar terracotta stamps have been found from Taxila. Another interesting find from layer 2 in Square F-I/7 west of the bastion is a head-and neck part of a beautifully caparisoned horse, 6.5 cm high and 3.5 cm across (Figure 13).

Fortified Temple in Unit 'C'

(Figures 7-9, 11 and Plates X, XLVI-LI)

Before we go any further, it may be noted here that for purpose of our excavation in Unit 'C' we devised a new grid of single units of squares of 5x5 meters each instead of a grid of multiples of 25x25 meters, each subdivided into five sub-grids of 5x5 meters as adopted in Units A and B. The Unit C has four components – three major and one minor, namely:

- a. Fortress proper,
- b. Structures inside the fortress,
- c. Structures outside the fortress,
- d. Observation post on top of Mattian Hill.

The last component hardly needs any further elaboration, as the remnants of this post are

known only through a few fragmentary walls exposed by treasure hunters. The other three components are discussed below. Briefly, our findings in Unit C are as follows:

During the first season (1997), in the main, only the outline of the fortress and the central platform, together with the remnants of the staircase and a covered drain, were cleared (Figure 7). During the next season it was decided to explore the spaces outside as well as inside the fortress more thoroughly with a purpose to co-relate the walls of the fortress, with the central platform and the grand staircase, on the one hand and several structures outside the fortress excavated in Units A and B on the other both stratigraphically and chronologically. In this regard, we were able to solve some major problems as far as relative chronology of different buildings in and around the fortress are concerned. However, in other cases, our problems could be solved only partially. For this purpose we will have to wait for some more excavations in coming years.

The Fortress

With the help of two deep trenches inside the fortress (See the section in Figure 9 and the section of Deep Trench in Figure 11) and extensive and deeper diggings along the western face of the fortress south of the huge staircase, we gathered conclusive evidence that this small fortress was not constructed solely for military purpose. Instead, it was built to protect the temple or a sanctified rock in the center of it that certainly predates the fortress. The foundation of the fortress, resting on layer 5 composed of ashes, post-dated the construction of the central platform. The foundation of the central platform goes back to layer 9. The Fortress is a simple one comprising four walls, four solid bastions and a single ceremonial entrance (Figure 7). It is a small fortress by any definition (Plate XLVI) measuring internally 47x30 meters with walls ranging from 1.10 to 1.70 meters in thickness.

The bastions are semi-circular in shape. However, in details the two western bastions differ from the two on the east. It is certainly not a military fortress in the true sense of the word. Because, unlike a military fortress in which entry is usually provided through ramps and re-entrants, here the ramp is stepped and straight entrance is not at all convenient for rapid movements of army, specially a mounted one. The walls of the fortress were constructed in solid stone masonry externally finished with beautiful diaper patterns (Plates XLVII-XLVIII) of true Gandhara fashion very well known from the city of Taxila and other sites of Kushan period. Internally, only the part of the fortress walls above the floor level the walls have a similar finish as on the outer side. Below this, there is a wider and rough foundation with one or two offsets. Externally too, a narrow offset of 20 cm has been observed along the southern wall (Figure 9).

Originally, the inner side of the fortress comprised an uneven surface, often quite steep around the central pinnacle. There was made a lot of filling all around the central rock. But, in order to relieve the fortress walls of the pressure of such filling against them, a number of enclosing walls were built running parallel to the sides of the central platform as well as the four walls of the fortress. A number of them have been excavated on three sides of the Platform (Figure 8 & Plate XLIX). No such enclosure has so far been tested on the east. The fortress had remained in occupation for a considerable time from Kushan days to the Hindu Shahi period and even into the early days of the Muslim occupation in the 13th century.

Buildings inside the Fortress

Central Shrine

Inside the fortress, the main building was a temple or shrine on top of the central platform

(Figures 7-8 & Plate L), measuring 20.5x9.5 meters. Only the platform is now preserved whereas all vestiges of all the super structure of shrine have disappeared. According to some local informants, the temple walls were intact up to a considerable height till a few years back but were pulling down by the owner for leveling the ground for a poultry farm (the same was actually later on built on Mound E). The owner, however, denies this allegation. The temple-platform extends from west to east with entrance/approach from the west through an indented or receding staircase of the type usually found on one side of square bases of Buddhist stupas. The Platform was constructed on the bed of natural rock with medium sized stone slabs used for leveling. This forms layer 10 of our deep digging inside the fortress whereas the foundation of the fortress wall, as already stated above, were laid on top of layer 5 (See the section-drawing with Figure 9). The platform was initially built of nicely cut and dressed locally available stone blocks. However, at a later stage, the upper part was repaired with dressed *kanjur* or *kannat* stones. The superstructure, whatever its nature and form, appears to have been entirely built of dressed *kanjur* stones. Thousands of these blocks were found scattered on the top of the mound which gives credence to the local view that the superstructure was most probably pulled down more recently. The platform still stands to a considerable height - about 3 meters near the N-E corner. At least three floors can be discerned in the cuttings made here and there, especially in the narrow trench of 1997 along the northern face of the platform. No object of any religious nature has so far been discovered in association with this temple-platform. Hence it is very difficult to say what religion it served. It was certainly not a Buddhist shrines since a complete Buddhist establishment of a stupa and monastery has been partially excavated under the very shadow of the southeastern bastion of this very fortress (Mian

1990). The portion of building built with dressed *Kanjur* stone blocks was certainly covered with thick stucco plaster. A large number of lumps of stucco plaster, fallen from walls above, have been seen near the southwestern and southeastern corners of the temple-platform. There is stratigraphical evidence as well to show that this temple was burnt down at least three times, if not more - once prior to the construction of the fortress walls and twice subsequent to its construction.

Enclosures around the Central Platform

There is no doubt that the first thing, which a visitor in ancient times would have encountered on reaching the top of the grand staircase, was the imposing facade of this shrine. There was a lot of uneven space between the walls of the fortress and the platform. It had to be brought at par with the floor level of the temple-platform. Sides of the natural rock being very steep, excessive filling would have put pressure on the high but comparatively thin walls of the fortress. A solution was found. The architect built two or even three ring-walls running parallel to the walls of the fortress and the temple-platform on all but eastern sides (Figure 8 & Plate LI). There were some cross walls as well, especially on the western side. These must have relieved considerably the pressure of the fillings on the fortress walls.

Rooms, Drain and Hearths

Some room spaces were also available inside the fortress, but not much of these have survived with the exception of a covered drain and the attached room (bathroom?) with a floor of stone flags set in lime, a brick-tiled floor of the last occupation and one or two hearths for cooking. A meter-high thick deposit of colourful ashes piled against the excavated portion of western face of the fortress

wall proves that a lot of cooking arrangements was going on inside or immediately outside the fortress. A large circular oven (Plate LII) with a lot of ashes and heaps of animal bones were actually excavated in Square I-4 on the north of the staircase.

Stratigraphy

Inside the fortress, deep digging at two different places have revealed in all 11 layers of occupation (See section with plan in Figures 9 & 11 and the section-drawing of a deep trench in square L-7 and M-7). The first deep trench was laid in Squares L-7 and M-7 near the SW bastion. The other deep trench was laid in Squares S-6 to 8 linking the central platform with the bottom wall of the fortress. In the latter case the section clearly shows that whereas the fortress wall was built on top of layer 4, the foundation of the central platform rested on the layers 10-11. This platform appears to have been built in the 1st century BC – AD on top of the layers 10 and 11 whereas the fortress was built in 2nd - 3rd century AD on top of layer 4. But, the two certainly co-existed for a long time and survived through later Kushans, Hindu Shahis and then finally through the 13th century during the early years of Muslim occupation of the area. A good number of painted glazed sherds, numerous fragments of coloured glass, quite a few number of triangular terracotta plugs and several square terracotta tiles as well as hundreds of ordinary burnt bricks³, all found from strata 3 and above both inside and outside the fortress. No doubt, like the settlement area below, there are six building periods inside the fortress as well. But, the occupation span of life of the fortress is much longer than the settlement area. Whereas the Settlement ended round about third or 4th century AD, the fortress and the temple inside lived from the 1st century BC – AD to the 13th century AD. The last date is just

³ . None of these objects have ever been found from the Settlement Area in Unit 'A'.

tentative and can be shifted towards either side of the bracket after the proper and detailed study of the small finds and pottery from the fortress area.

Outside Structures

Grand Staircase

Outside the fortress, the most important building is the Grand Staircase fixed in the center of its western wall (Fig. 8 & Plate LIII). It is about 4 meters wide and at least 15 meters long, but it may turn out to be longer than this. In the first place, there is clear evidence to suggest that this staircase was there before the fortress walls were constructed. Probably it went direct to the days of the shrine without the protection of the fortress wall as at present. The second part - the visible portion of the staircase certainly is contemporary with the construction of the fortress wall. Its present state of preservation is very poor. Its further extension towards west also still remains to be ascertained, though it certainly covered a distance of 15 meters i.e. Squares K-5, J-5 and I-5.

Other Buildings

As regards structures excavated outside the fortress, there are a lot of them but their chronological framework is not yet clear. The only thing, which so far is definite, is that the grand staircase was not an isolated structure that stood there outside the western wall of the fortress i.e. on way to and from the living city below. There were indeed a lot of buildings around there, though their precise nature and functions these performed is yet to be ascertained.

Near the southwestern bastion of the fortress and outside it there is a big hall (9.5x5 meters internally) in Squares I-7, I-8, J-7 and J-8. It was found filled up with pure ash up to a height of 2 meters. Its precise function near the fortress wall is not yet clear. There is street on its west and a few room further west.

A large circular oven with flat bed slates of black stone, together with lot of ashes and heaps of animal bones, excavated in Square I-4 showed a lot of culinary arrangement near the shrine inside the fortress. Such commercial activities near the entrance of the shrine are a common phenomenon in the whole subcontinent - Muslim or Non-Muslim.

Finds

The most common finds from inside and outside the fortress is pottery. From early levels the pottery is almost common with later period pottery from the settlement area. However, the characteristic pre-Christian era pottery - N.B.P Ware, Grey ware and Red Burnished Ware of the Parthian pottery is totally absent here. From top three or four layers, there started appearing a new variety of ceramics namely the painted glazed ware so characteristic of the Muslim period. Together with this, there appeared a good number of specimens of Syrian glass. Among other characteristic Muslim period objects are numerous triangular terracotta plugs usually used for decorating exterior of Islamic period buildings such as those at Lal Mahra Sharif. The large square tiles of burnt clay, as these are found in the floor of the last occupation of the fortress, also belong to the Muslim period. Two or three pieces of a very thin, finely executed specimen of buff ware also come under the same category. From the cursory study of the pottery from outside the fortress shows that probably the majority of structure outside the fortress belong to the period of Muslim occupation. A fragment of a Kuza-i-Fuqaa, a grey ware with heavy stone texture and external incised horizontal lines and other decorations in high relief, from layer 4 is also a rare find coming from proper excavation

for the first time in Pakistan⁴.

Coins

The site of Pir Manakrai is very rich in structures and ceramics but quite poor in small finds, particularly in coins. Although it was flashed all over the world as the site of a great hoard of Greek coins (Plate LIV), but proper excavations, so far, have failed to yield coins in good number and quality. Only a few badly corroded coins of Azes II (35 BCE), Vasudeva (4th century CE) and of Sri Vekka Deva (9th century CE) were recovered from a limited section in Unit 'A' (Settlement Area) and that is the only positive evidence of dating the excavated structures.

Sculptures

Sculptures mostly of stucco have been found only from its sub-site Garr Morya. A brief report about this excavation has already been published by its excavator (Main 1990) and hence needs not be discussed here. A colossal head of Bodhisattva, wrought in a single piece of porous kanjur stone from this site is now in Taxila Museum.

Terracotta figurines and plaques

Some interesting terracotta plaques and figurines have been excavated from various sections of the site (Figures 13-14). Majority of these comprises terracotta figurines of animals and birds. It will take some time before these are properly studied in the perspective of local art history. Here, we mention briefly only a few important ones. The most important among plaques is one from layer 5 of Square I-V/20. It represents moulded busts of a couple. Although it was discovered from a

late layer, it is worked in the Sunga fashion of 2nd Century BCE, a moulded emblema of a Megarian bowl of Parthian period from layer 9 of Square I-V/15 and a fragment of terracotta disc of Mauryan style from layer 1, Square F-I/1. Among terracotta human figurines most important are: a molded human head (male or female?) of Parthian period found from layer 4 of Square H-IV/21 and an impressive male head of Hindu Shahi period from layer 3 of Square H-IV/17. A fragmentary figure of a female centaur from layer 1 of Square I-V/18 is very interesting and rare. It has been very ably reconstructed by Dr. Rifaat Saif Dar. There are flying birds, leaping leopards and beautifully caparisoned horses of pre-Christian Era.

Common Pottery (Figures 17-20)

Detailed study of pottery from this site is still awaited. Only a brief note on pottery and a few selected terracotta figurines from 1997 excavation has recently been published (Khan, 2002). On the whole pottery is quite prolific on this site. Vessels of bigger size have been made with course clay mixed with grit and sand. However, smaller vessels have been prepared with fine clay obtained locally from the river alluviums and terraces along the river. In all cases, save the larger pots, clay has been well levigated. All pots have been turned on a fast wheel with fine thin walls and baked on a fairly high temperature and evenly fired. In case of larger vessels, however, the walls are unevenly thick and so is their firing. Most of the medium sized and small pots have a red slip, in a few cases

⁴ . Another fragment of a pottery vessel, usually identified as Mercury Container, has also been seen in the SSAQ Museum in the University of Peshawar. It is claimed to have come from early Muslim period layers of Gor Khuttree Excavation, Peshawar as conducted by Dr. Taj Ali. There are some five specimens of these so-called Mercury Containers in Peshawar Museum (still wrongly labeled and displayed in its Gandhara Gallery), and

almost a number of similar ceramic vessels in the reserve collection of Lahore Museum. I have seen several of these pots in the Mardan Museum where these are claimed to have come from the excavation at Hund. I have also seen a few more specimens of these pots in a private collection in Lahore. This subject has recently been discussed thoroughly by the author in a paper (Dar 2006).

almost polished and shining and in certain special cases burnished surfaces can be seen. Un-slipped vessels have mild wash. Larger vessels are in a coarse fabric and are coated with a thick layer of slurry on the underside of the pot.

Bulk of the pottery is plain. But appliqué and painted decoration also occur, though not very frequently. Cord-bands and dots, and other embossed decoration as well as incised decoration frequently occur. Painted designs comprise of lines, dots, triangles, sun, geometric and floral designs. The common features of Pir Manakrai ceramic are almost same as seen in pottery from other historic period sites of the region such as Taxila, Shaikhan Dheri, Bala Hissar, etc.

An embossed molded sherd belonging to the shoulder of a bowl is interesting. It is said to have been found from layer 3 in trench B/6 in Unit 'A' of 1997 excavation. The excavator dates this layer in Scythian period of 1st century BCE. This sherd shows on its convex outer side a single band of figures and vine plant in low relief. An ibex or gazelle is shown trying to reach a flower. A similar vessel from Taxila is claimed to have been a local imitation of Hellenistic molded ware of the type of Megarian/Arretine ware much imitated in Asia Minor, Africa and Europe. Another interesting complete vessel of unmistakably Hellenistic origin is a wide dish with a conical boss in the middle. It is certainly a local copy of the familiar Greek mesomphalos-type silver dish in the Taxila Museum. This type was quite popular in the Mediterranean countries during the 3rd and 2nd centuries BC. Our example seems to be a bit later in date. Two very closely resembling pieces of a moulded potter showing bunches of grapes, animals, human figures, etc. have been found from layer 6 of Square I-V/25. From the same square but from a much earlier level was found a fragment of a Megarian bowl with emblem of two mythical duck-legged figures within a circle. A fragmentary figure of a

female centaur from layer 1 in Square I-V/10 is apparently from some earlier layer as it is surely of a Hellenistic origin.

N.B.P. Ware and Grey Ware

A limited number of parts of vessels and sherds belonging to Grey Ware have also been found from various levels of occupation at the site. But more important than the simple Grey Ware is the discovery of a good number of sherds of a lustrous black polished ware belonging to a number of types of small and medium sized vessels, popularly known as N.B.P. Ware. The sherds of this, otherwise rare ware in Pakistan, have been discovered from layers 3, 4, 5, and 6 during 1998-99 Season of excavation, though a few pieces from earlier season are also known. Majority of the N. B. P. Ware sherds from 1997 excavation appears to have been discovered from room R2 in what is today Square I-IV/20. But during 1998-99 Season, a greater number of these sherds were discovered from the close proximity of the same settlement area. Three sherds of this ware were also picked up from surface in Square F-1/2 in Unit 'B'. However, no N.B.P. or Grey Ware sherd has been unearthed from any part of Units C. Following A. H. Dani, Shah Nazar Khan has also regarded the Black and Grey Ware from his excavation in 1997 at Pir Manakrai as local imitation of N.B.P. Ware and places it in the 4th – 3rd Century BC (Khan 2002, pp. 86-87). Now this class of ceramic from Pir Manakrai has been thoroughly studied by the Principal author (Dar 2003).

A number of sherds belonging to the Grey Ware have also been discovered from layers 3 to 6 and hence the two groups of wares - N.B.P. and Grey are contemporary to each other. The N.B.P. Ware, in particular, is very rare in Pakistan. Previously, these sherds are known only from three sites in Pakistan and one in Kashmir - 11

from Taxila⁵ (which Sir John Marshall calls Greek Black Varnished Ware), 12 sherds from Bala Hissar Charsada, and one from Udegram Swat. As compared to this small number of earlier N.B.P. sherds, the single site of Pir Manakrai has yielded more than 40 sherds. Number of N.B.P. Ware sherds from Semthan, Kashmir, is not known. As compared to this meagre number and thin spread of N.B.P. Ware in Pakistan, its distribution in the Gangetic Valley and elsewhere in India is quite wide spread both in time and space - it is found over a vast area spreading from Rupar, near Ambala in the west to Gaur and Pandua in West Bengal on the east.

Whereas a final analysis of this ware is still due, there is general consensus among scholars to accept the primary date of N.B.P. Ware in the 5th century BC for its first production and the 1st century BC as its terminal date. Thus discovery of N.B.P. Ware in such a good number at the site of Pir Manakrai is significant for the study of early historic period of Pakistan's archaeology and the proper understanding of early days of Pir Manakrai.

Glazed Ware (Plate LV)

From outside the fortress in Unit C along the south western bastion to be precise and from various trenches on the west and south of the grand staircase have been excavated several specimens of rough course pottery of dull brown fabric decorated with incised lines in comb motifs. Several glazed sherds of smaller size of two categories have been reported - one is having greenish or blue glazed slip on red fabric and the painted glazed type on red fabric. Both varieties

are comparable from sites in Afghanistan, Iran and Central Asia. Among designs, linear, geometric and floral designs predominate. Over a white and cream colour band, drawn on red glazed slip in chocolate dark, brown, black cream, green shades.

Small finds (Figure 16)

Among smaller finds, a good number of stone querns and ponders dominate. A terracotta figurine of quadruped (cow?) with human face of Hellenistic origin was discovered from trench A/4, layer 1. Another terracotta figurine of an elephant and other of bull has also been found. Among personal ornaments many glass and paste bangles in blue, black and yellow texture and gold dots, ivory bangles and paste bangles are frequent. A bronze bracelet and silver finger ring are among the rare finds. A half bangle in bronze has a terminal in the shape of a serpent's head. The silver ring, already quoted, originally had a bezel to receive a semi-precious stone. Beads of different shapes and material - terracotta, precious stones, shell, etc. are also reported in adequate number.

Inscriptions

The most important among the miscellaneous finds is red terracotta Relics Container (6.6 x 5.9 x 2.4 cm) with five compartments (Figure 12 and Plate LVI). On its four sides is inscribed a Kharoshthi inscription reading: *Buddha varmasa Buddha sura putrasa (dhato) o. It* means: "The relics of the son of Buddhasura, Buddha Varmasa). Found in Room 5 in Unit A, this Relic Container is datable to the 1st century BCE.

The surface reflects a dark black luster due to iron ores. Another similar black sherd reflects golden lust, whereas one other larger piece shows lustrous surface of silver grey colour. One fragment even preserves copper nails used for repair in ancient times. Only one fragment preserves a straight rimmed neck. In one case the texture is red.

⁵. In addition to these, more than a dozen sherds have been freshly excavated from Bhir Mound, Taxila during last three or four seasons of excavations under the leadership of Mr. Bahadur Khan. These sherds vary in texture, hardness and burnishing. More important are those thin sherds on unmistakable N.B.P. Ware – hard, thin, fine burnish on both sides and un-scratchable surface with nail.

Of a still greater importance is another inscription discovered in November 1998 (Plate LVII). It is the discovery of narrow-based and open-mouthed bowl of a common red ware variety from layer 3 in room no. +R3a (Figure 4). It bears two inscriptions in two different scripts - one inside the bowl and another on the outer side of it. One in the inner surface is a Kharoshthi inscription inscribed in a very neat handwriting near the bottom of the bowl. It reads: "Armaasa" i.e. "Belonging to Aramase". Who is Aramase the name is certainly the Prakrit version of the Greek name Hermaios - the last Indo-Greek king of Gandhara in the 1st century BCE. No other individual bearing this name is known. This record therefore appears to belong to the last Indo-Greek king. It is for the first time his name has been discovered inscribed on a pottery vessel or on any other artifact other than coins. The site of discovery of this inscribed vessel is very close to the spot from where the bronze vessel containing some 2000 coins - some very rare- was discovered in 1994. The other inscription, scribed in an unknown script near the rim on the outer surface of the bowl has not yet been read completely. Probably, it is in Bactrian script. In any case this type of script is not known from any other part of Pakistan from previous excavations.

Discovery of these two inscribed vessels, the first one in particular, show that there must have been some stupa or a household shrine with in the Settlement Area.

Bones

As stated above a lot of bones were discovered during both the seasons of excavation from Units 'A' as well as 'B' and 'C'. In 1997, some bones were found in unit 'A' whereas during 1998-99 a lot of animal bone was dug up from either side of the grand staircase outside the fortress. Only, scientific study in respect of bones collected from Unit 'A' has been carried in the Department of Archaeological Studies, University of Bradford,

England. Following summary is based on the report dated the 29th October 1999 prepared at my request by Ms. Ruth Young of the same Department.

Ms. Ruth Young examined more than 50 samples. The samples were numbered as 'deposit 10, 14 from Manakrai A6 1-3 and A6-8 and layers 1 to 3. The bones studied belong to animals like: *bos* (cattle) *equus* (horse), *ovi-caprid* (sheep/goat), *babulus* (?) (Buffalo, *sus* (?) (Pig), *cervus* (deer), *Sm. cervus*, *canis* (?) (Dog). A substantial majority of bones studied belong to the category of cattle (30 specimens), whereas among others 4 specimens belong to horse, 7 specimens to sheep/goat, one each to buffalo, deer, dog and pig. Identification of bones belonging to pig and dog is not sure.

Conclusions

Although the site of Pir Manakrai was first discovered in 1889 by Reverend Charles Swynnerton who published a small note about it in Indian Antiquary of year 1891. It could never find a place in any archaeological literature in subsequent years save in early 1990's when it was accidentally 'rediscovered' by the spade of archaeologists. Part of the site containing a Buddhist Stupa and Monastery was excavated in 1989 and given the name of Garh Mauryan [sic.]. The excavator, however remained oblivious about the rest of the site which was eventually 're-discovered', in January 1994 when the local villagers accidentally discovered a bronze jar full of 2500 silver coins of 2nd and 1st centuries BCE. This treasure trove soon reached the hands of antiquities dealers and the hoard eventually appeared in the international market under the name of Sarai Saleh Hoard. But, as soon this discovery was reported in the press and before illegal diggers could do much damage to the site, the late Prof. Dr. F.A. Durrani, the then President of National Heritage Foundation, Peshawar managed to collect some funds and sent a team to

excavate the site in March 1997. These excavations were limited and restricted to such area that was already gravely disturbed by the coins-hunters earlier. It took the team almost three and a half months but only to clear the debris left behind by the looters. Although some interesting small finds were discovered but by and large no proper record of these excavations was kept save a simplified plan of structures in the settlement area and the outline of a small fortress or a fortified temple. Much later the excavator, on basis of a few badly preserved coins and the ceramic evidence, tentatively dated the residential area between 35 BCE to 10th centuries CE whereas fortress was assigned a much later date in the Hindu Shahi period with some sporadic Islamic period potsherds outside the Fortress. Later discoveries however, necessitated to change both these sites.

More regular excavations were started in 1998-99 under the supervision of the Principal author and, with some intervals, continued till 2001. During these seasons a much larger area, at three different points, was explored up to the maximum depth of 6-7 meters. In all 12 layers and six periods of settlement have been identified. But, for all purposes, there are in the main four building periods in settlement area dating from 3rd Century BC to 4th Century CE. Thus, the site appears to have been founded in the 4th-3rd century BCE during Mauryan period, rose to eminence in the 3rd-2nd century BCE during the rule of Indo-Greeks and reached a climax under the Scytho-Parthian period of 1st century BCE-CE 1st century. The anti-climax started with the decline of Kushans (*2nd-4th Century CE*) and was finally abandoned during the rule of Hindu Shahiyas in (9th Cent CE). The chronology of fortress area is slightly different. Certainly, inside and immediately outside the fortress, life continued for some more centuries.

Regular and well laid out floors are few and far between. The fallen heavy stone blocks and

boulders at times made our study of regular floors very difficult. Only in one case a bathroom floor was found intact. In another case, a similar floor of heavy slabs was preserved only in a part. Regular and massive structures started appearing in Period II.

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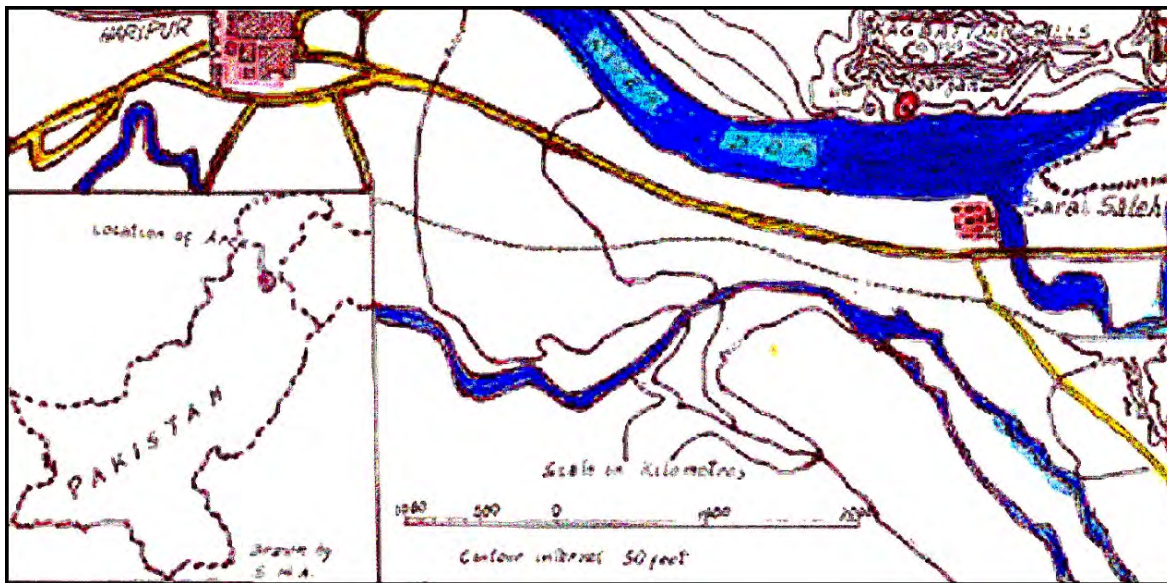


Figure 1: Haripur Valley and Sites of Pir Manakrai and Garh Maurya

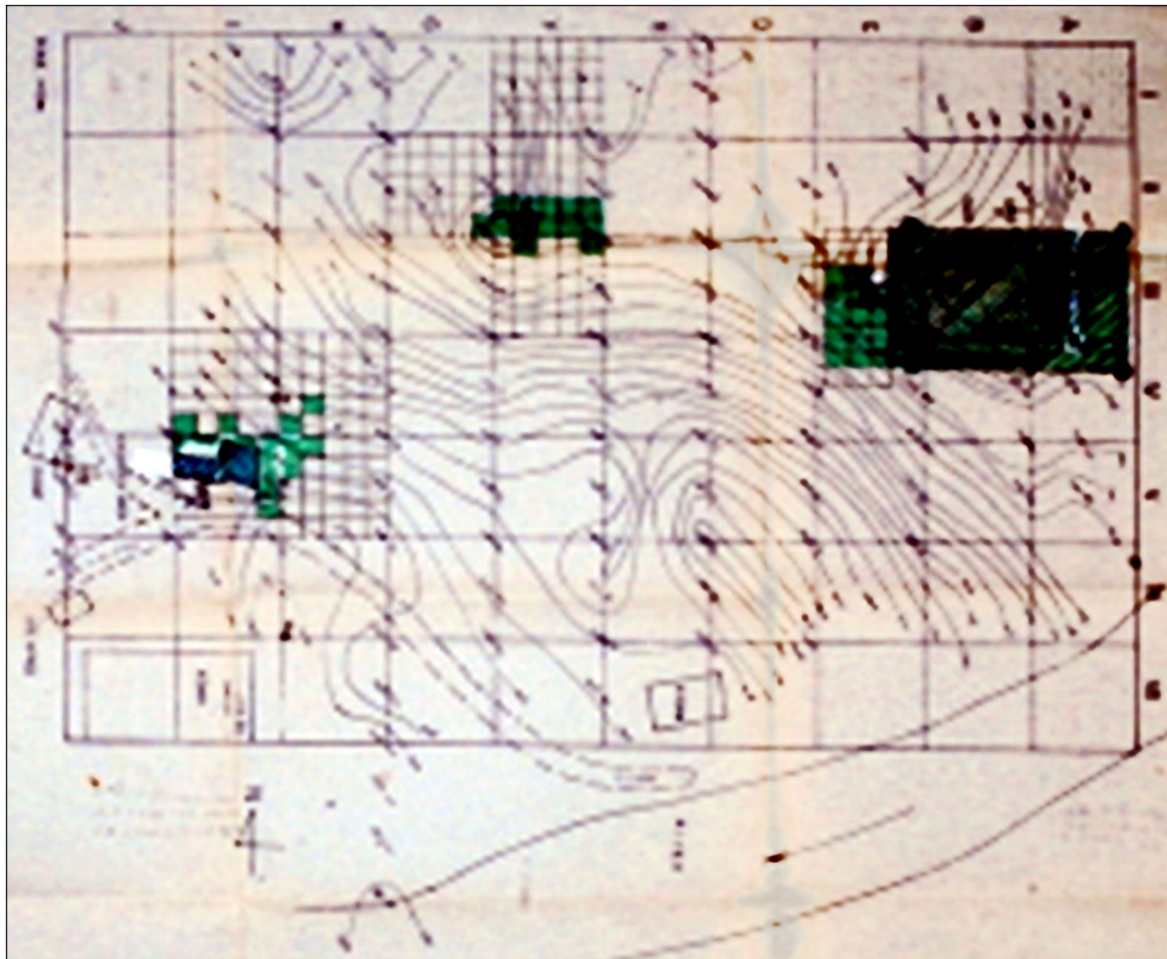
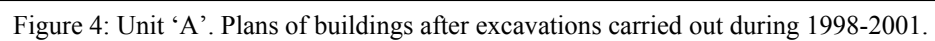
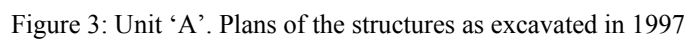


Figure 2: Contour Map of the site and excavated areas 1997-2002



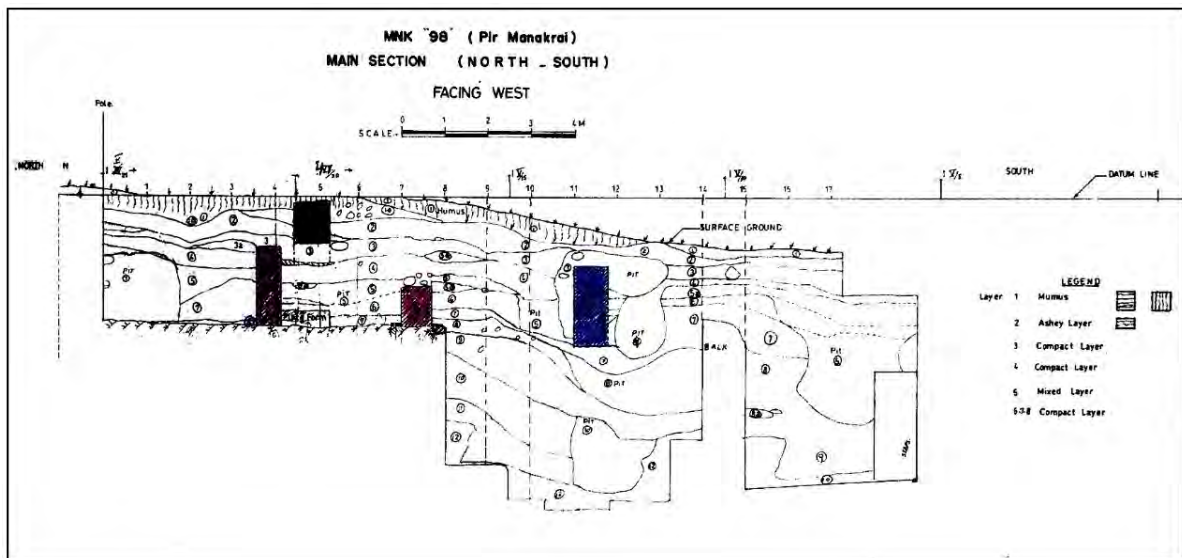


Figure 5: Unit 'A'. North-south Section of the deep trench in Square I.V.15 looking west.

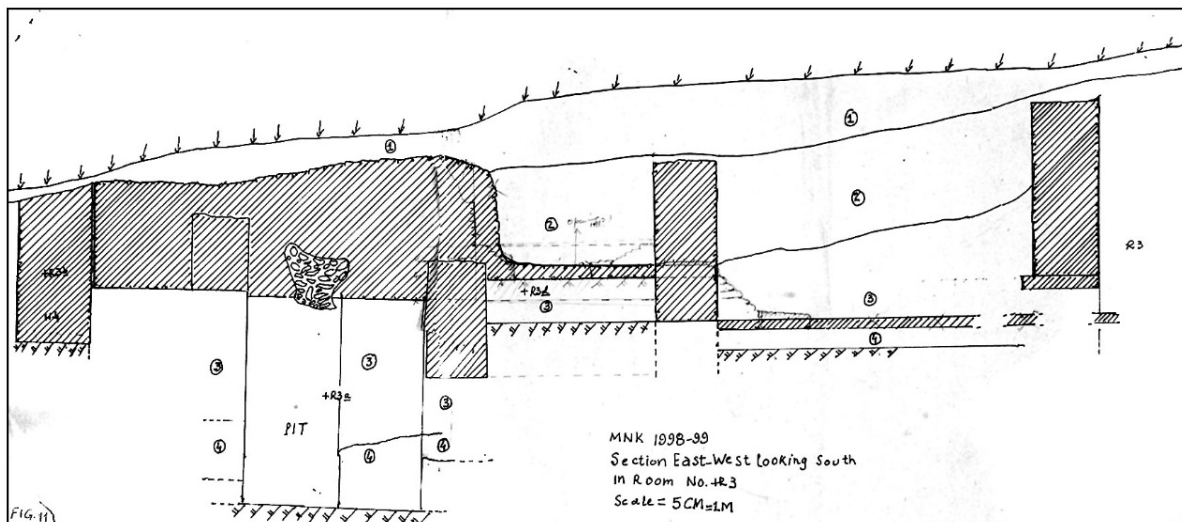


Figure 6: Unit 'A'. East-west Section of the deep trench in Room No. +R3 looking south.

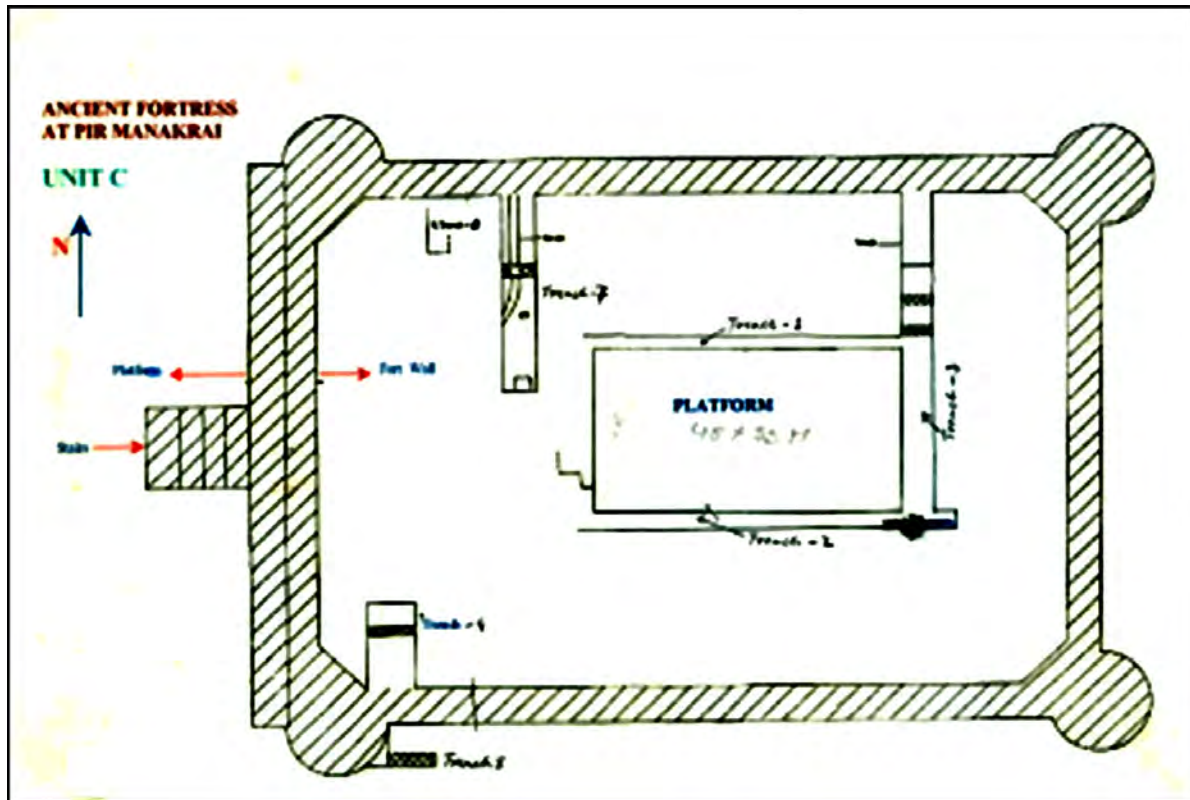


Figure 7: Unit 'C'. Plan of the Fortress with temple inside as exposed in 1997

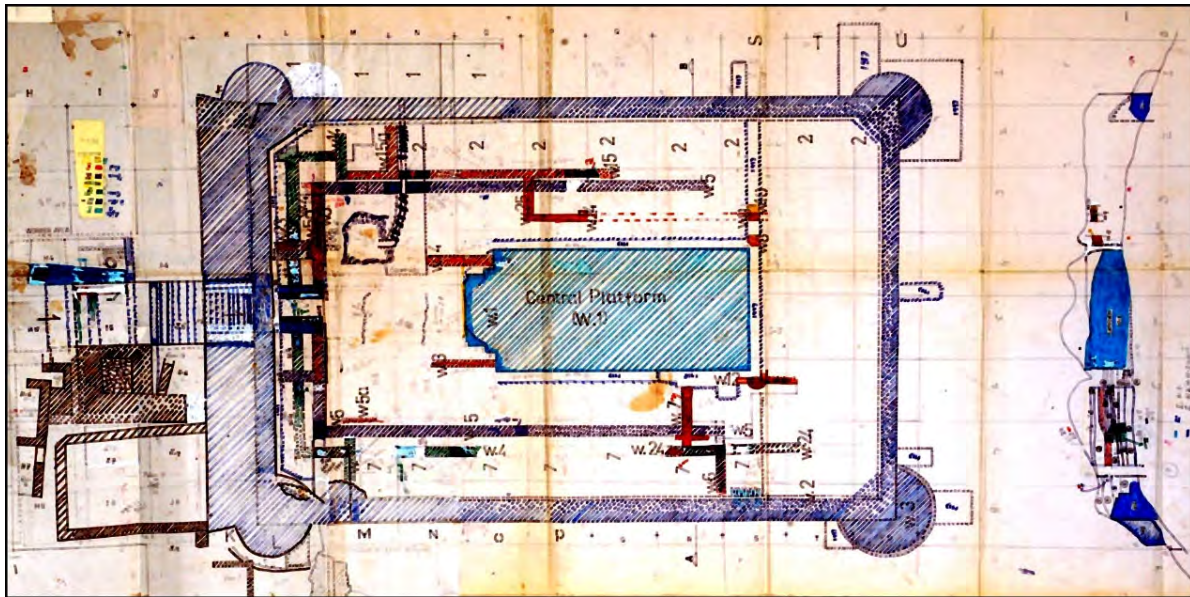


Figure 8: Unit 'C'. Plan of the Fortress and Temple with buildings exposed inside as exposed in 1997 inside and outside the Fortress during 1998-2001. The entrance to the Fortress is from the west.

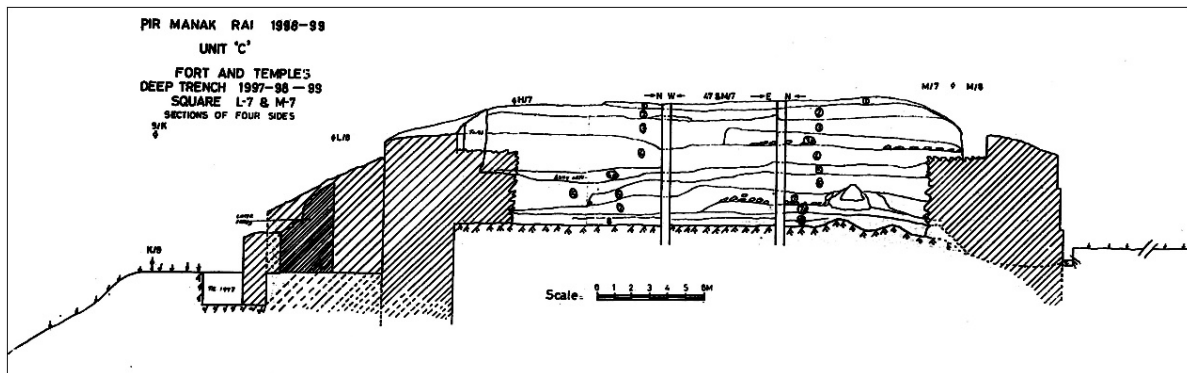


Figure 9: Unit 'C'. Section along the four sides of the deep trench in Square L-8, H-7 and M-7 along the inner side of the south-western bastion of the Fortress.

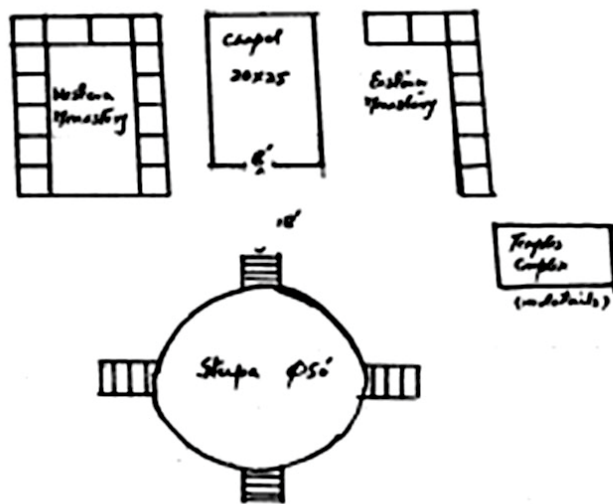


Figure 10: Unit 'F'. Garh Maurya, Stupa and monastery excavated in 1987-1989. (Not to scale).
On the right is a stucco head from the same site.

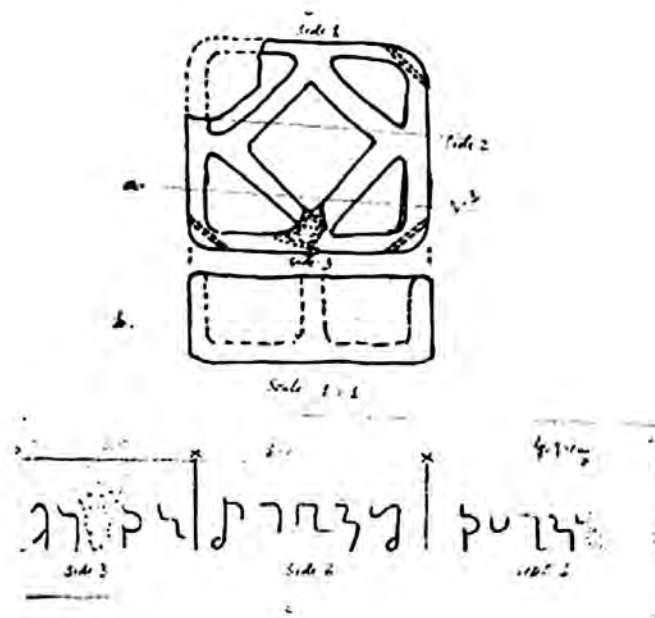
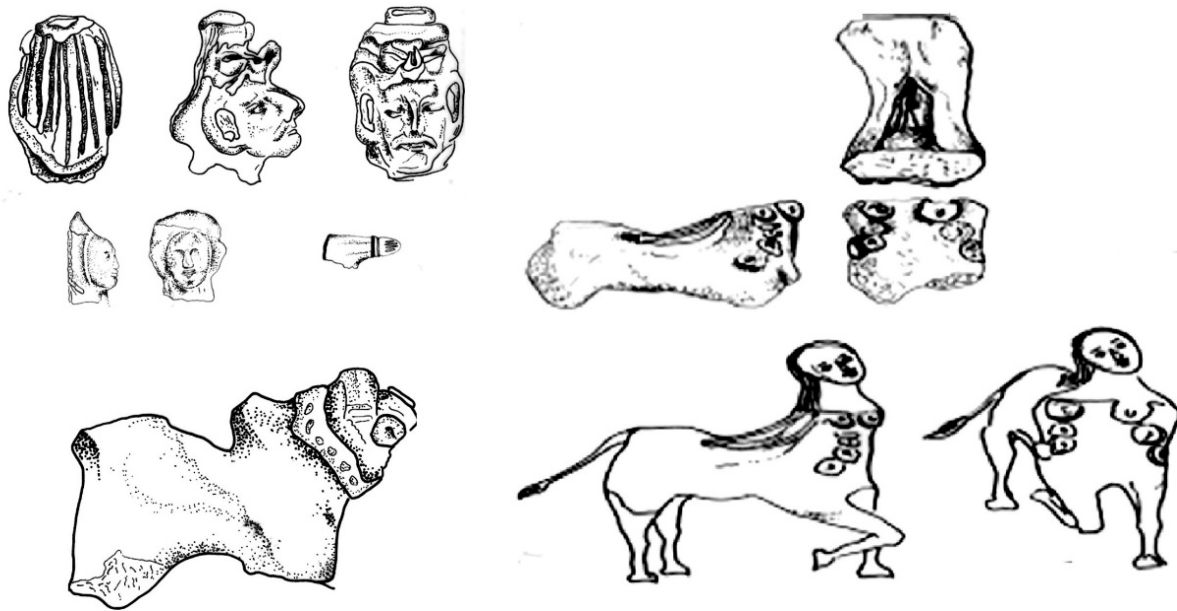


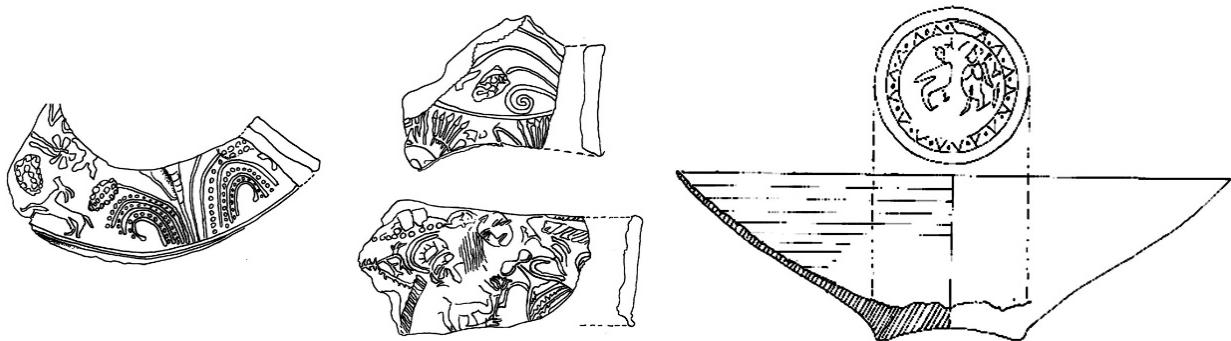
Figure 11: Unit 'A'. Plan and section of the square compartmented Relic Container in burnt clay with a Kharoshthi inscription scribed on three of its outer sides.



Figures 12-13: Unit 'A'. Left. Figure 12: Terracotta figurines of caparisoned horses; and Figure 13. Details of scene on medallion of a Megarian Bowl from layer 9 (above) & terracotta plaque showing a couple from layer 5 (bottom).



Figures 14-16: Unit 'A'. Figure 14 (left-top): Three views of a terracotta male head from layer 3 (top) and two views of a terracotta male head of Parthian Period from layer 4 (bottom); Left bottom: Figure 15. Terracotta figurine of a bull from layer 4 and Right: Figure 16. Three views of a partially preserved terracotta figurine of a female Centaur and its conjectural reconstruction by Dr. Rifaat Saif Dar of LCW University, Lahore.



Figures 17-18: Unit 'A'. Three potsherds from layer 6 (on left) each stamped with stylized branches of vine plant and figures of animals and a man and section drawing of a Megarian bowl (on right) from layer 9 with a mythical scene of a couple stamped on the medallion of the bowl.

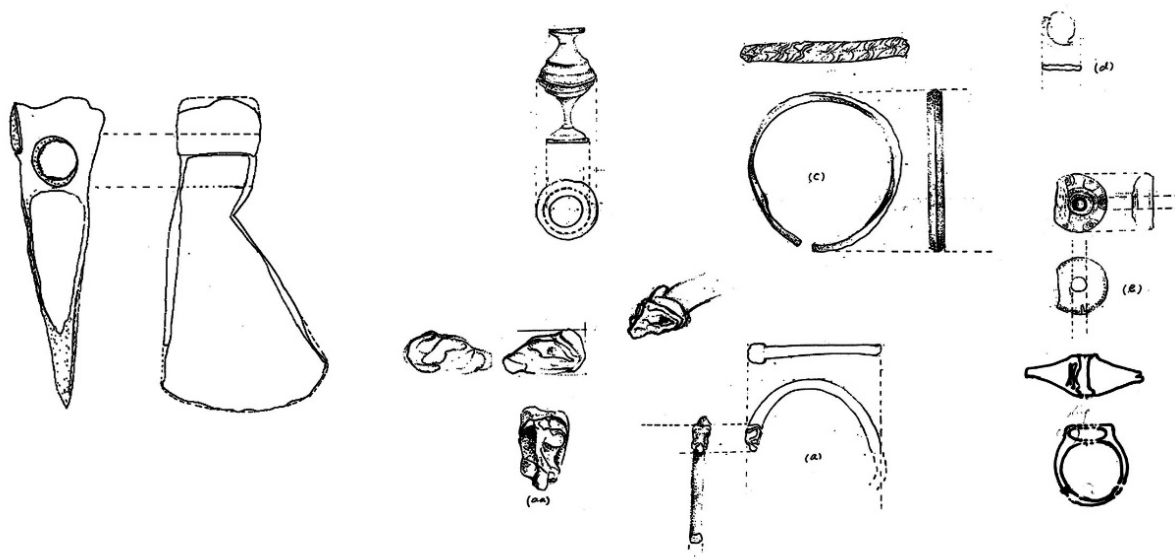


Figure 19: Unit 'A'. Miscellaneous articles such as corrylium container, bi-conical beads etc. finger ring etc. (on right) and an iron axe from layer 2 from Unit 'C'.

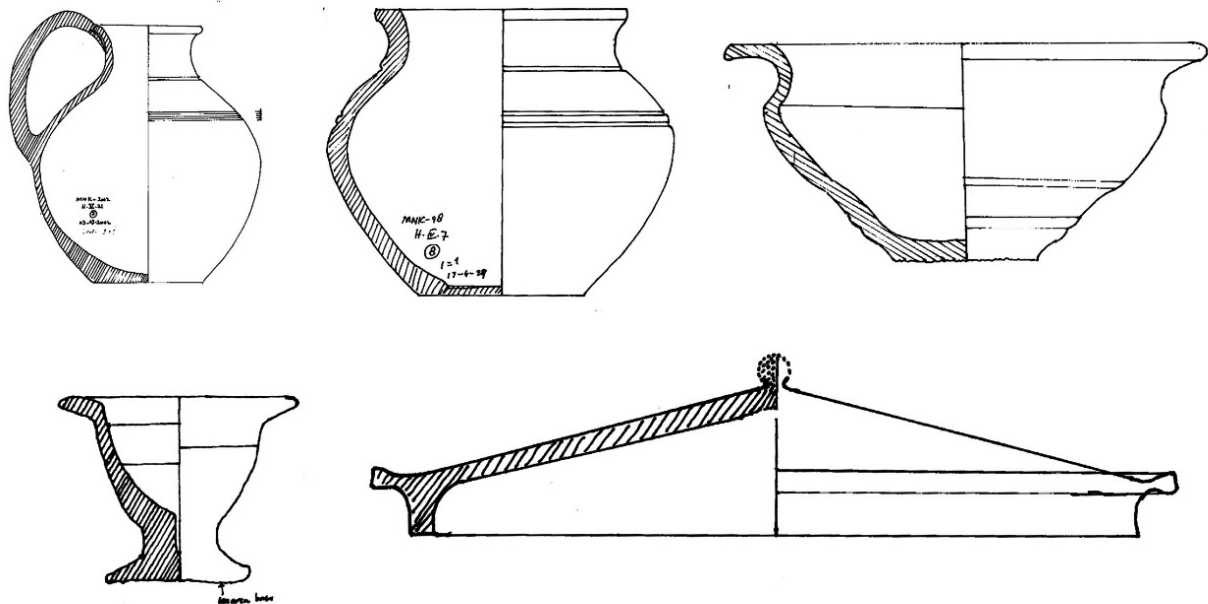


Figure 20 (a-e). Unit 'A'. Five pottery vessels. Top row from left to right: A handled jug (layer 7), a 'garvi' type vessel (layer 8), a flat-based shallow bowl (layer 6), Incense burner (layer 5) and a knobbed lid (layer 8).

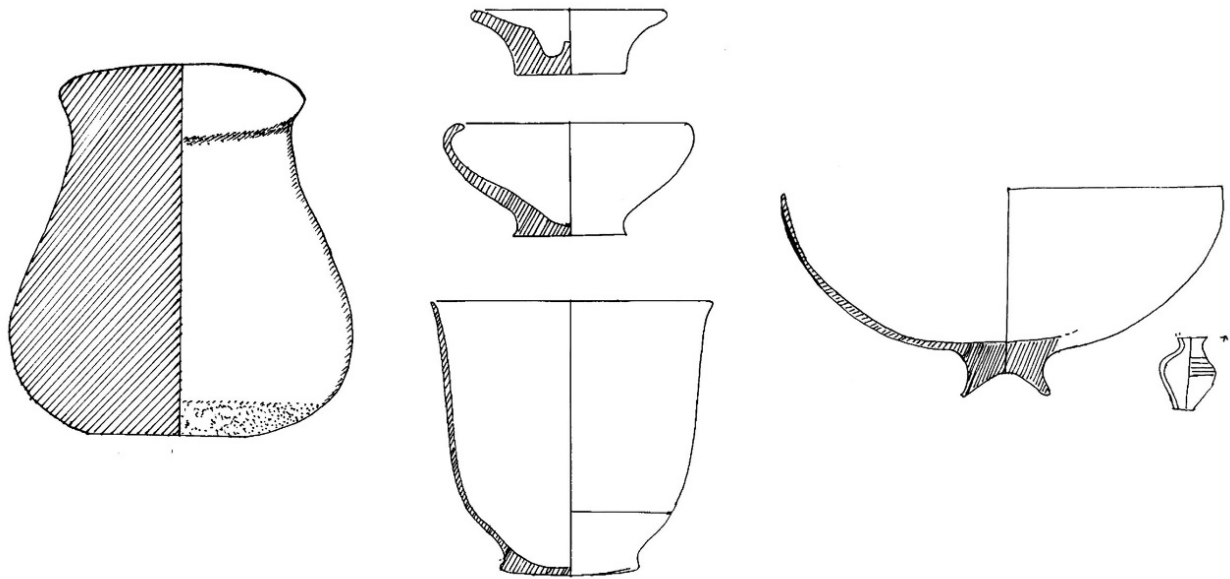


Figure 21 (f-h). Unit 'A'. Miscellaneous pottery Ware. From Top left to right: A dabber (from surface); three vessels including a beaker, a *phiale* with inverted rim and an incense burner – all from layer 7 and a thin bodied pedestal bowl from surface.

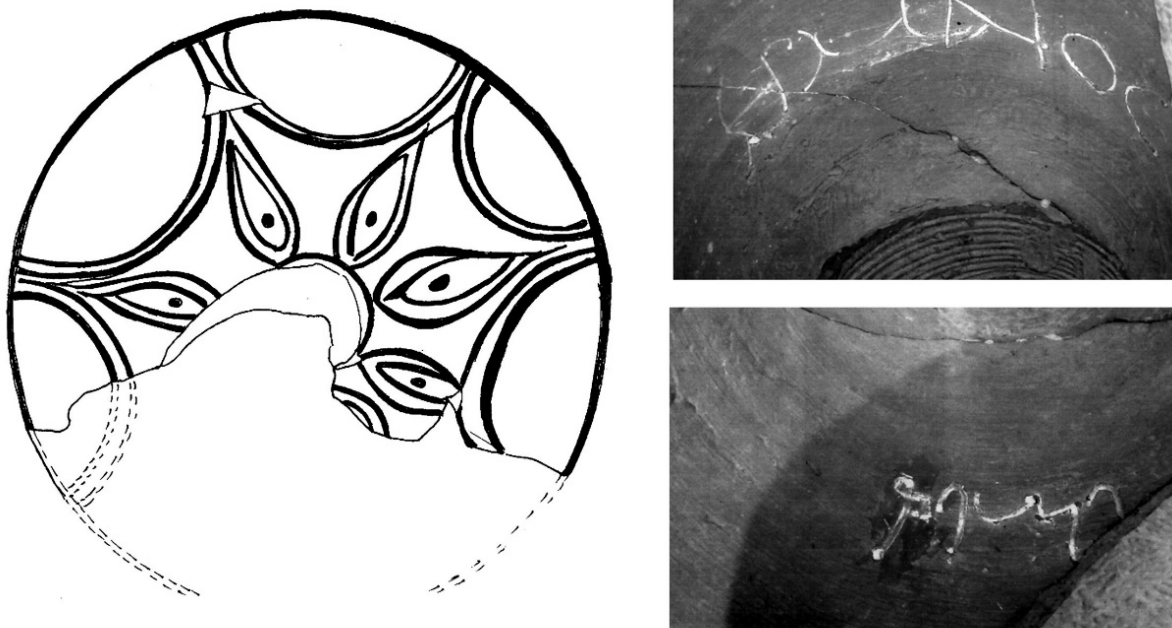


Figure 22. Unit 'A'. Left: A dish with painted geometrical design. On the Right: Two close-up views of two inscriptions in Cursive Greek (top) and Kharoshthi (bottom) scribed on an open mouthed bowl found in 1997 excavation.



Figure 23. Unit 'B'. On Left: Plan of structures as excavated during 1998-2001 and (on the Right) two sherds each showing a peacock painted in black on a red polished surface.

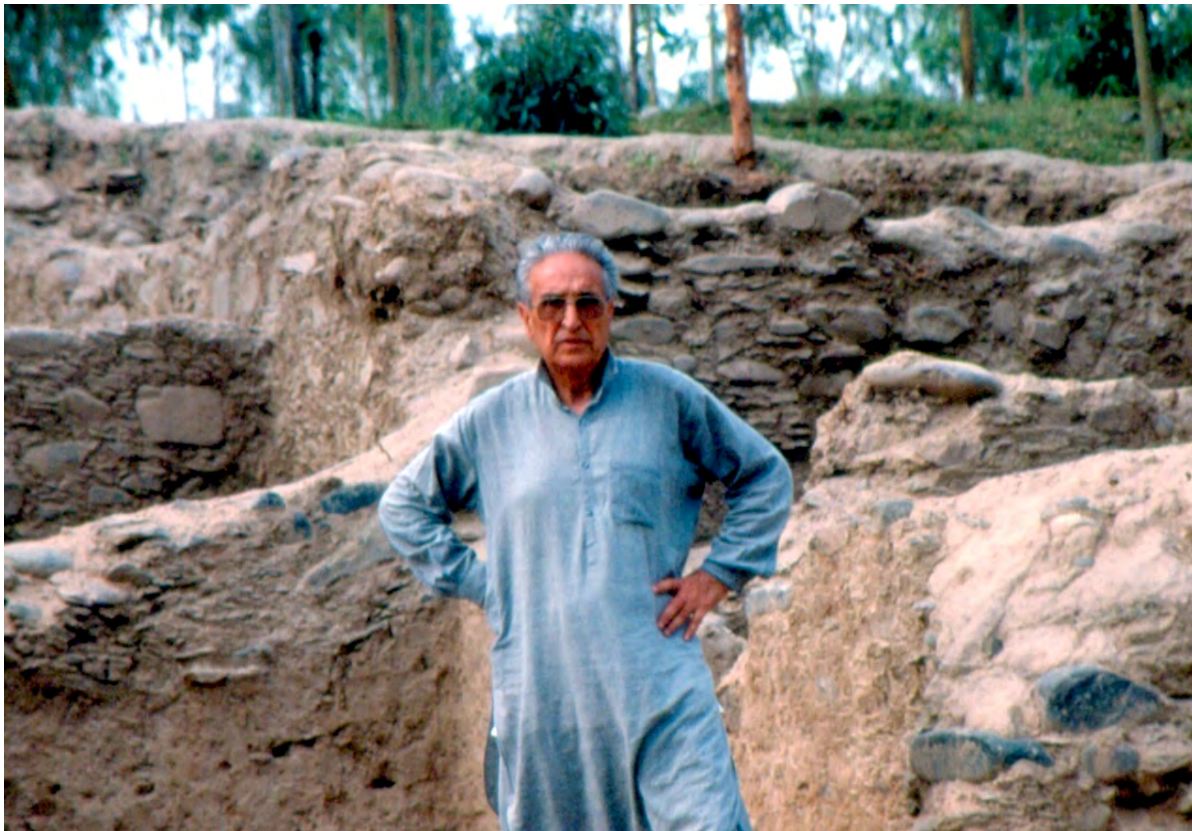


Plate I. This study is dedicated to the memory of late Professor Dr. Farzand Ali Durrani, the man behind Pir Manakrai excavations



Plate II. General view of the site showing Fortress/Temple on the left, Eidgah on the right, settlement site between the two and River Daur in the background.



Plate III A View of River Daur flowing on the west of the site of Pir Manakrai.
The village Ali Khan can be seen in the background on the other side of the river.



Plate IV. The site of Pannian also called Manakrai Dheri excavated in 1997



Plate V. Unit 'A'. General view of excavation in the Settlement Area
as seen from top of the Eidgah Mound on the south.



Plate VI. Unit 'A'. Area excavated in 1997



Plate VII-VIII. Unit 'A'. Two views of a deep trench in Square I-V/15. On the left: As seen from north with section on left; and on the right: The same trench seen from south with section on right.



Plate IX. Unit 'A'. Deep trench in Square H-IV/6 stretched east-to-west with section facing south.



Plate X. (a-d). Four types of stone masonry used in Pir Manakrai.
Left top is from Unit 'C' while the rest are from Unit 'A'.



Plate XI. Unit 'A'. Two living rooms each containing one or two large pots in-situ.



Plate XII. Unit 'B'. Two views of the central platform built in typical Gandharan masonry. Left: Western wall with two bastions and part of northern wall. Right: Western wall with a bastion in the center.



Plate XIII. Unit 'B'. Two trenches on the west of the central platform.



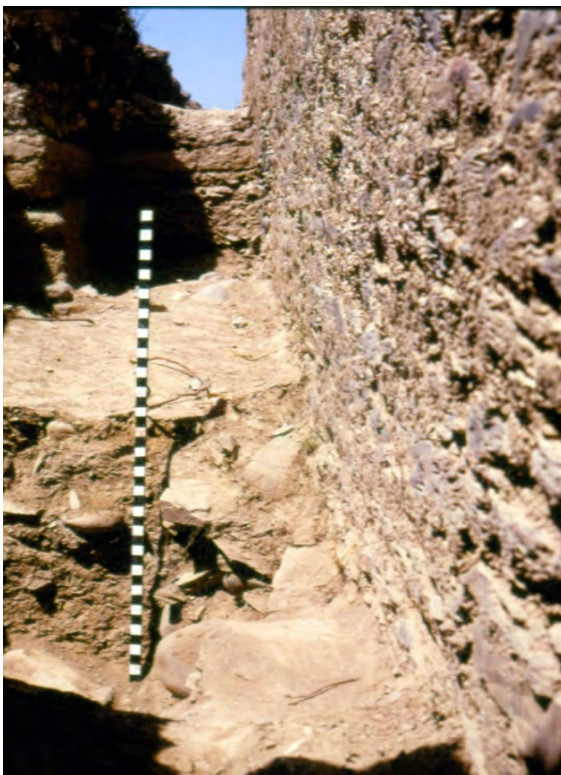
Plate XIV. Unit 'B'. Three views of the shrine of an unidentified female deity.
In the larger picture the shrine is shown covered up with modern stone slabs.



Plate XV. Unit 'C'. Distant view of the Fortress and temple as seen from top of the Eidgah Mound.



Pls. XVI-XVIII. Three views of the Fortress wall and bastions. Left: Long view of the southern wall built in Gandharan masonry; and on the n Right: North-western and south-western bastions.



Pls. XIX – XX. Unit 'C'. Two sides of the platform on which once stood the main temple of the city. Left: Eastern wall with a ring wall in the background, and B: Southern wall showing its foundation and deep trench linking it with the southern wall of the Fortress.



Plate XXI. Unit 'C'. Ring-walls built between central temple-platform and the Fortress-walls on north, south and west in order to release pressure of earth fillings between the two gigantic structures. Left: a ring-wall running east-west and Right: Ring-walls and cross-walls with a wall of the platform in the ground.



Plate XXII. (a-b). Two deep trenches dug inside the Fortress walls. Left: Trench behind the south-west bastion showing a layer of ashes going under the foundation of the Fortress; and Right: The trench linking the temple wall (seen on the right) with the Fortress wall. Several layers of ashes indicating repeated burning of the temple.



Plate XXIII. Unit 'C'. Two views of the Grand Staircase. Left-top: Staircase looking west; Left-bottom: a circular oven near staircase; Right: Southern half of the western Fortress wall with staircase in the background and multiple rooms built between the staircase and the south-western bastion.



Plate XXIV (a-b). Unit 'C'. Fortress during Muslim Period. Left: A covered drain inside the Fortress ; and Right: Some of the pieces of Glazed Pottery also from Fortress area . Both belong to the occupation of the Fortress during early Muslim Period.

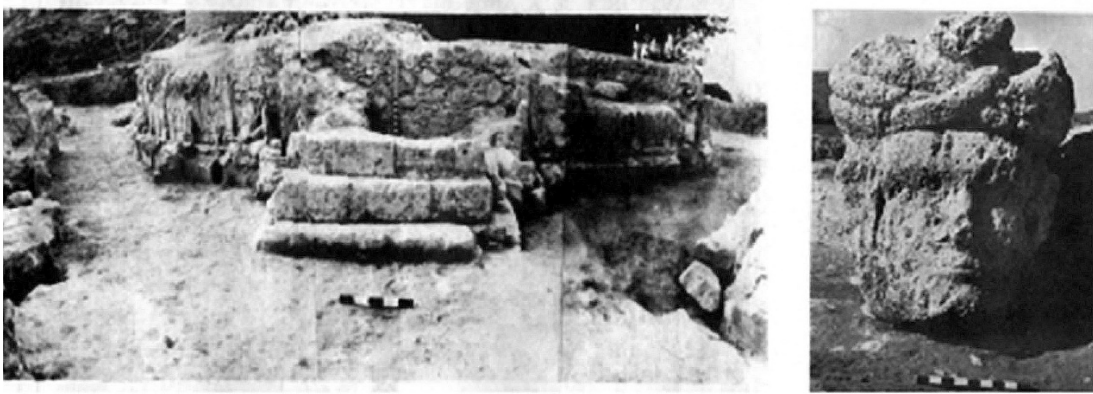


Plate XXV (a-b). Unit 'F'. Gar Moriya. Buddhist site excavated in 1988-89. Top: Main Stupa and at the Right: a colossal head of Bodhisattva in *kanjur* stone.

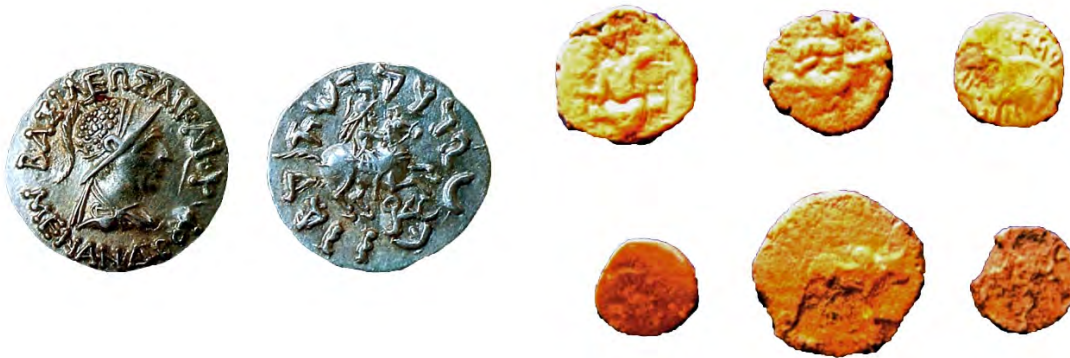


Plate XXVI (a-b). Coins from Unit 'A'. Left: Obverse and reverse sides of a silver drachma of Menander the Great from the so-called Sarai Saleh hoard. Right: Six copper coins of later period discovered during 1997-2001.



Plate XXVII-XXVIII. Objects from Gar Moriya and Manakrai Dheri. Left: Stucco head of the Buddha and Right: Stone Toilet Tray with a Dionysiac scene carved on it.

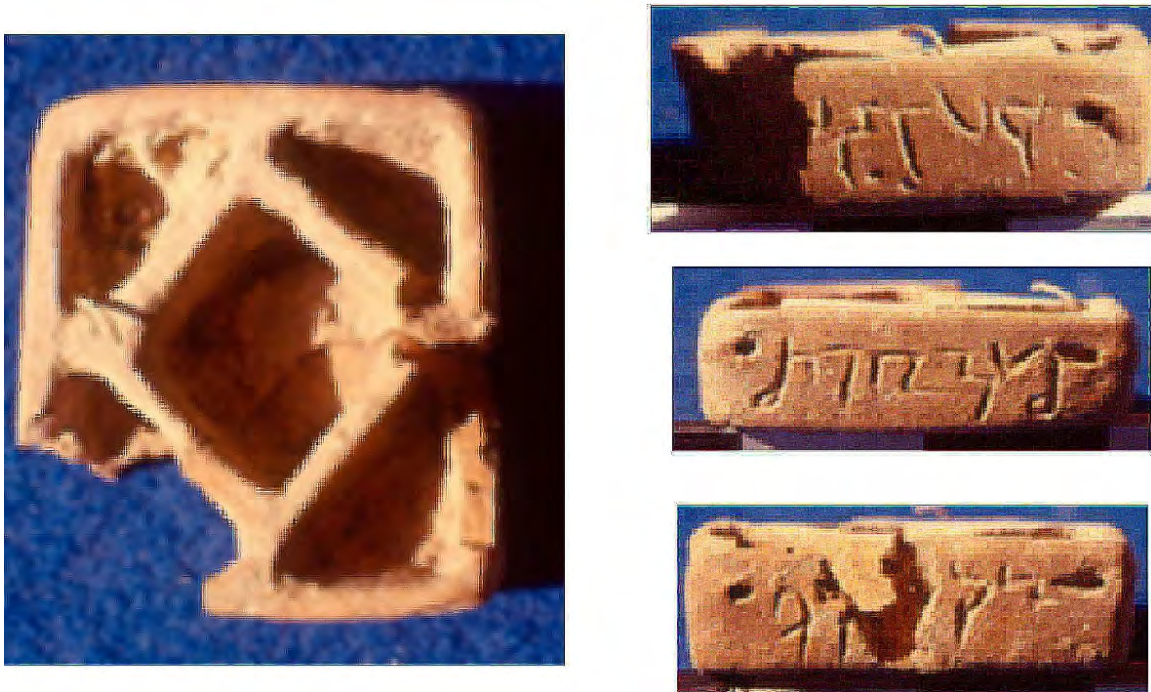


Plate XXIX. Unit 'A'. Left: A square compartmented Buddhist Relic Container in burnt clay. Right: On three of its outer sides there is an inscription in *Kharoshthi* which reads "*Buddhavarmasa Buddhasura putrasa (dhato) o*" (Trans: "The relics of the son of Buddhasura, Buddha Varmasa").

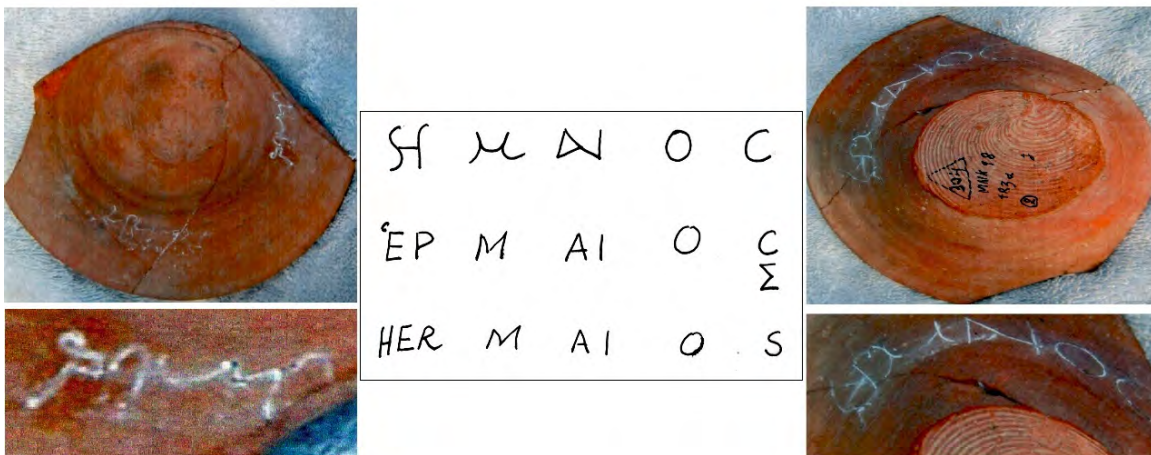


Plate XXX. Unit 'A'. Two views of a pottery bowl from layer 2 bearing two inscriptions. Left (top & bottom): *Kharoshthi* inscription reads "Aermaasa" (Belonging to Hermaois). Right (right top & bottom): The inscription is in cursive Greek script and reads the same name in Greek form i.e. "Hermaois". In the center is a handwritten transcript of the Greek name. Third scribbling as seen in the picture on left-top has not yet been deciphered.

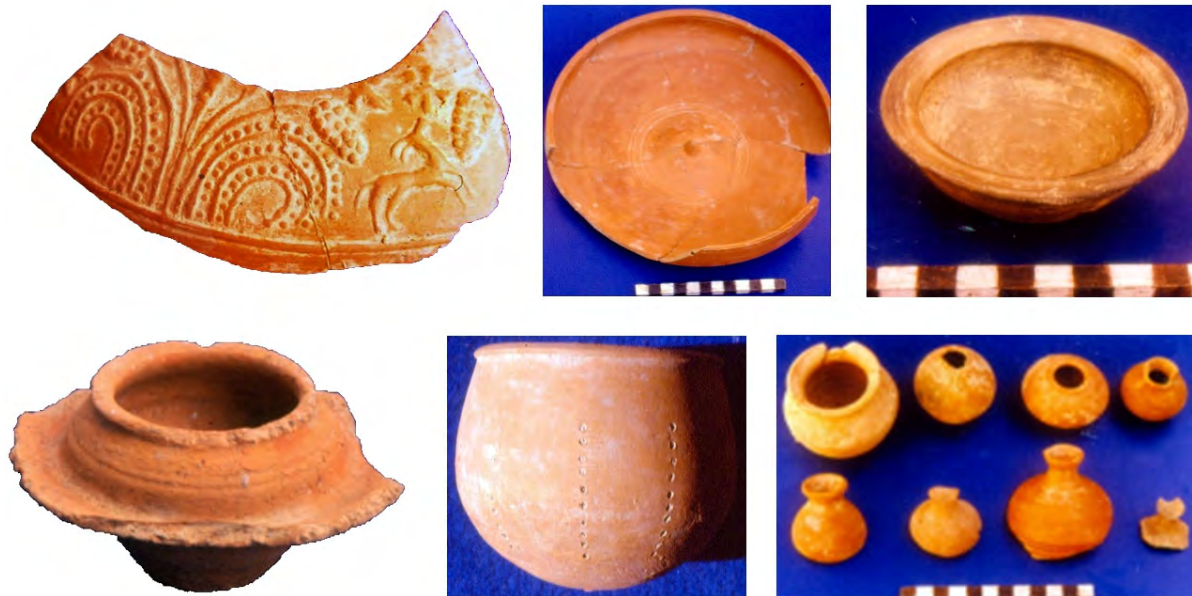
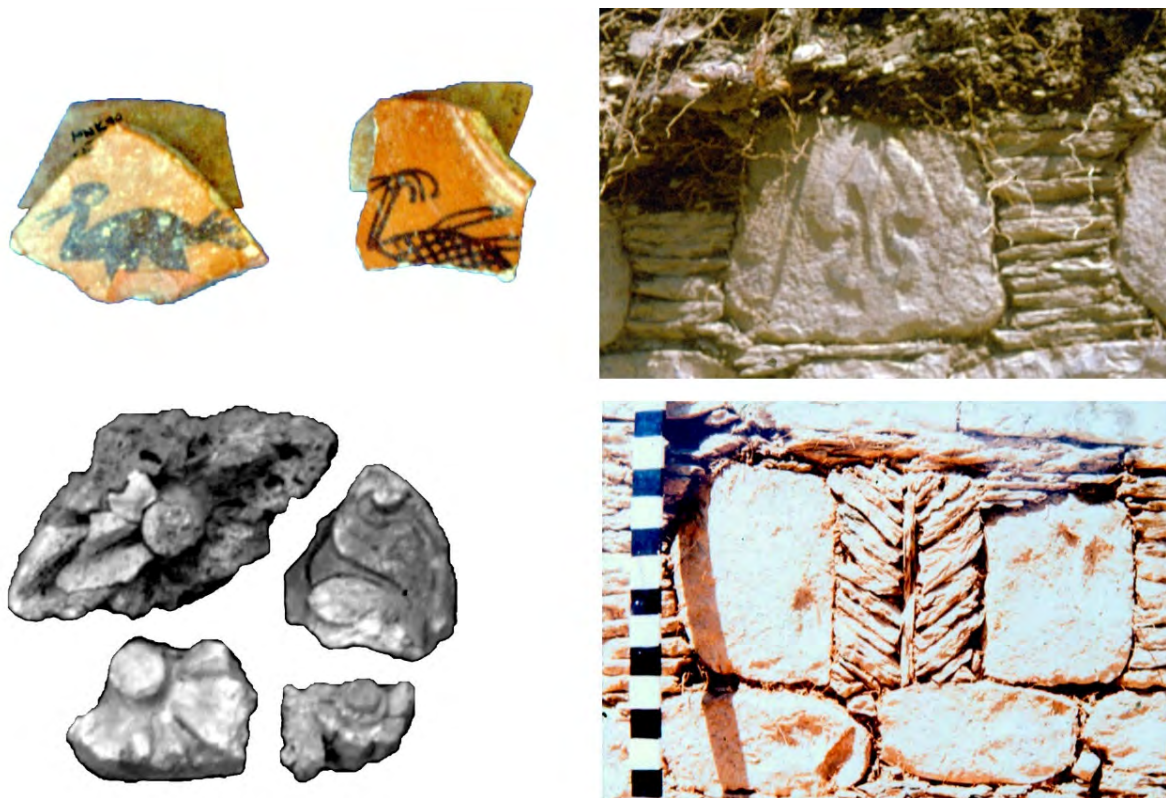


Plate XXXI (a – f). Unit 'A'. Pottery vessels of different types and sizes. Top left to right: Part of vessel stamped with vine scrolls and animal figure; dish with a knob; shallow phiale; incense burner with broad shoulder; a deep bowl with corded rim; eight pottery vessels.



Pls. XXXII-XXXIII. Top-left: Two potsherds each with a peacock painted in black on polished red surface from Unit 'A'. The other three: Stucco fragments (Unit 'C'); b-c: d *Trishul* and a stalk of wheat fixed in bastions of Fortress.



Plate XXXIV. Unit 'A'. Bottom: Animal terracotta figurines.
Plate XXXV. Unit 'C'. Top: Stone querns and pestles.



Plate XXXVI. Unit 'A'. A close-up view of mythical scene on a Megarian bowl, layer 9.
Plate XXXVII. Unit 'A'. collection of stone and paste beads.