ANCIENT ASIA

Vol. 16, 2025, pp. 171-192
© ARF India

URL: https://ancient-asia-journal.com
https://doi.org/10.47509/AA.2025.v16i.10

https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/

Authors retain copyright and grant the journal right of first publication with the work simultaneously licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution License

Identification of Kumrahar as Aśokārama (Kukkutārāma), Ancient Pātaliputra: A Forgotten Sacred Space

Anand Singh
Department of History, Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar University, Lucknow, India

Abstract: *Spooner's excavation of Pātaliputra started a new kind of debate in the historical traditions of the Magadha region. Although his identification of Kumrahar as a Mauryan Palace was vehemently criticised and denounced by prominent historians like A. B. Keith and A. S. Altekar, echoes of his writings still reverberate in some distant corners of historical writings. Many still consider the Kumrahar archaeological remains a Mauryan Palace edifice. The examination of the archaeological facts and their cross-references in the Buddhist literature indicates that the Pillared Hall of Kumrahar was a part of Aśokārāma/Kukkutārāma built by Aśoka. The Hall, particularly, might be an assembly hall or uposathagāra, which not only facilitated fortnight assemblies of monks and nuns but also took important ecclesiastical decisions in the age of Aśoka. The paper will examine these threads from a microscopic view.*

Keywords: *Kumrahar, Aśokārāma, Kukkutārāma, uposathagāra*

Published : 08 September 2025

TO CITE THIS ARTICLE:

Anand Singh (2025). Identification of Kumrahar as Aśokārama (Kukkutārāma), Ancient Pātaliputra: A Forgotten Sacred Space. *Ancient Asia,* 16: 1, pp. 171-192. *https://doi.org/10.47509/AA.2025.v16i01.10*

The archaeological remains, especially the 80-pillared hall discovered at Kumrahar in Patna, were identified by D.B. Spooner as the Mauryan palace, but objective interpretations of the archaeological facts, further archaeological excavations, and literary evidence contested the hypothesis proposed by Spooner. A.S. Altekar led the excavation of Kumrahar between 1951-1955 and rejected Spooner's view that the Pillared Hall is the remains of a Mauryan palace. He says that –

> '*It trusts that as a result of the discoveries made in Kumrahar excavation, sufficient new light will be found to have been thrown upon the history of Pāṭaliputra, for a long time the most prominent city in the country. The earlier evolution of the monastic architecture, the utilisation of some of the monasteries as sanatoriums, the mode and the time of the destruction of the Mauryan Hall, etc, will become much clearer as a result of this report than before. Negatively, we have proved that the Mauryan palaces and administrative buildings were not located in the extensive plot excavated by Dr. Spooner and the Institute at Kumrahar. We shall have to search for them elsewhere*.' (Altekar and Mishra, 1959: xv)

The physical remains found during successive phases of excavations suggest that the Kumrahar was a great monastic site, and it might be the place where Aśokārāma (Kukkutārāma), a Mahāvihāra, was built by Aśoka. The study proposes an archaeological and scriptural hermeneutics and an objective interpretation of the site Kumrahar as Aśokārāma (Kukkutārāma) in Pāṭaliputra, the capital of the great Mauryans. The methodology to examine the archaeological complex of Kumrahar is drawn from the excavation reports, archaeological findings, and Buddhist scriptures. In addition to the valuable insights of these fundamentals, a more objective assessment is required, reflecting the contexts, contestations, and the precise interpretation of the characteristics of the site in question. It draws on critical hermeneutics with non-partitioned assessment of the reports of the archaeological excavations, elucidation of literary contexts, and an impartial historical analysis incorporating an academic understanding of Buddhist monastics and sacred spaces.

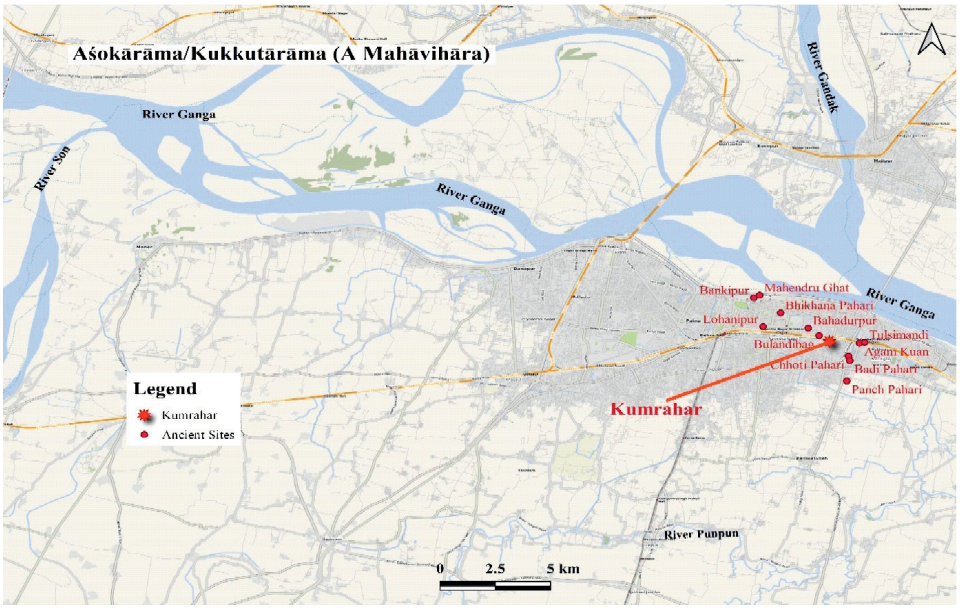

Figure 1: Geographical Location of Aśokārāma (Kukkutārāma) and adjoining places

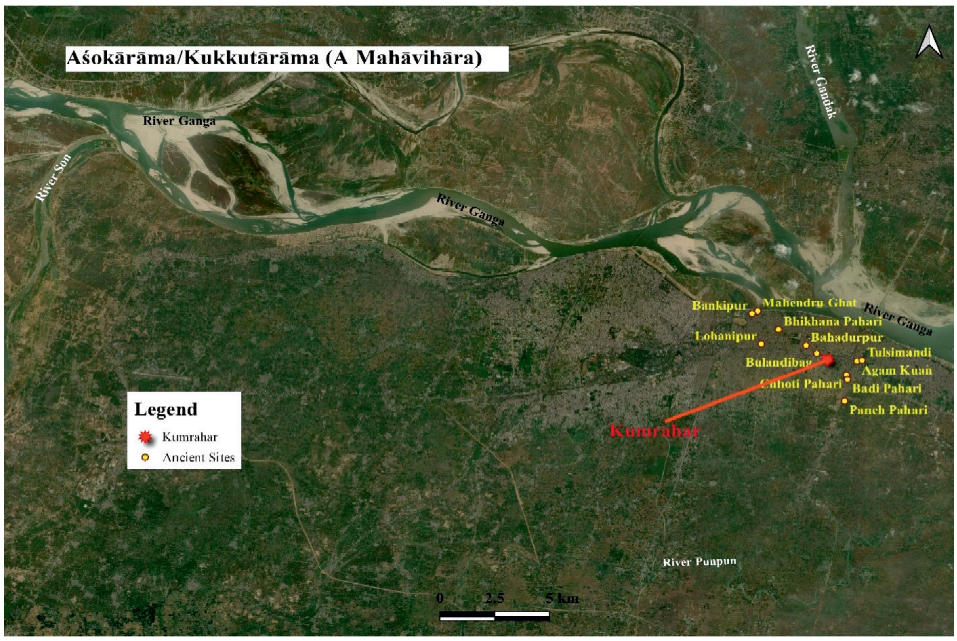

Figure 2: Aśokārāma (Kukkutārāma) and Adjoining Sites

Debate on Spooner's Excavation of Kumrahar

Pāṭaligāma received its name from the Pāṭali flower. The plant is also known as Crepe Myrtle, with the generic name *Lagerstroemia indica L.,* and is native to temperate and tropical Asian climates. It is difficult to show how this plant became associated with this great city. It may be possible that its abundant presence in ancient times in the vicinity of Pāṭaligāma allured Ajātśatru to name his fort on this flower. The fort of Pāṭaligāma was laid on the rivers Son and Ganga to invade and annexe the kingdom of the Lichchhavis of Vaiśālī (Raychaudhuri, 1927:128). The rivers Punpun and Gandak join the Son and Ganga near the city. The *Mahābhāṣya* of Patānjali says that Pāṭaliputra was situated on the bank of the river Son (*Mahābhāṣya*, II.1.16). It shows that Pāṭaliputra was nearer to the river Son rather than the Ganga. Because of its strategic location and perennial rivers and river routes, the fort was developed as a city and became the capital of Magadha, the first great empire of India (Raychaudhuri, 1988:11). Once, the Buddha visited the village on the day of the completion of the construction of the buildings, and the inhabitants invited him to seek his blessings (*Udāna*, VIII.6; *Udāna Commentary*, 407ff). The *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta* **(***Dīgha Nikāya*, II.86ff) informs that during his journey for *mahīparinibbāna*, the Buddha visited Pāṭaligāma and prophesied its future greatness. The Buddha also warns that the greatness of the city will be marred by the danger of fire, water, or internal discord. The entrance by which the Buddha left the Pāṭaligāma was named Gotamadvāra, and the place where he crossed the river became Gotamatīttha (*Vinaya Pitaka,* I.226; *Dīgha Nikāya*, II.86ff). Pāṭaligāma became the capital of Magadha during the period of King Udayana, son of Ajātśatru or under the Śisunāgas. During the Nandas and the Mauryas, the glory of Pāṭaliputra reached at its zenith (Raychaudhuri, 1988:11-13). Its glory as the capital of the empire and as a city continued till the Gupta age.

In colonial India, efforts to trace the exact location of the ancient Pāṭaliputra began. In the 18th century, James Rennell in his book *Memoirs of a Map of Hindoostan*, described the location of ancient Pāṭaliputra near modern Patna (Rennell,1788:50-52). Francis Buchanan traced that the Son, or one of its great tributaries, formerly joined the Ganga in the close vicinity of the modern city of Patna, but now the course of the Son has shifted. The old channel is known as *Mar-Son* (Dead-Son), and the villagers living in the southwest of Patna still have faint memories of this river (Buchanan,1812:17-18). J.D. Beglar surveyed the ancient and current bed of the river Son, which now joins the river Ganga around 19.5 kilometres above the western end of the Patna district. It seems that the old stream deflected from its present course near Daudnagar and meandered through Rampur Chai and Kyal to Sonabhadra. Here, it meets the river Punpun (Beglar,1878:9-10). L. A. Waddell was the first scholar who identify Kumrahar as the palace of the Mauryans. His hypothesis was based on the beliefs of the natives, who told him that the entire mound was once occupied by the kings and their families (Waddell,1892:11). He excavated Bulandibag, Choti Pahari, Tulsimandi, and Mahrajkhand to the northeast of Kumrahar and at Rampur, Bahadurpur, and Pirthipur in the south of Patna. At Bulandibag, Tulsimandi, and Mahrajkhand, he found remains of palisades and from Bulandibag, a colossal capital was also discovered (Waddell, 1903:17-23; Sinha, 1970:5). Waddell says that the names of the adjoining villages and regions like Ashachak, Ashokhand, Dasratha, Ashakpur, Ashopur, etc., suggest that these places were related to Aśoka. The ruins in the adjoining regions were identified by him as remains of Buddhist monasteries, viz., Panch Pahari, Chota Pahari, Bara Pahari or the great hill raised by Aśoka (Waddell, 1892:16-17). The dearth of sufficient financial resources marred the efforts of the archaeologists to identify possible sites related to ancient Pāṭaliputra, and they began explorations. In 1911-12, the Archaeological Department of colonial India pleaded for financial help to Sir Ratan Tata, a wealthy industrialist of India, who granted a sum of Rs. 20000/ per annum for an unspecified number of years to identify

and excavate the remains of the ancient Pāṭaliputra. In 1913, excavation was started at Kumrahar, a possible site to identify the ancient Pāṭaliputra by D B Spooner (Spooner, 2002: 53-55). In Kumrahar, Spooner excavated remains of a Pillared Hall comprising eight rows of monolithic polished pillars with 10 pillars at each row. He termed it the Hall of the Conference of an exemplary, vast. It may be an important monastery or the Hall of Audience, or the Throne Room of the Mauryan Palace. He infers that such a wonderful work could not be dedicated to an Indian. The edicts of Aśoka suggest the influence of Darius, the King of Persia, who did commendable artwork at his capital, Persepolis. The Hall of a Hundred Columns of Persepolis, the throne room of Darius Hystaspes, had a conspicuous resemblance to the structure found at Kumrahar. Although at Pāṭaliputra, the rows of pillars are few, further excavations have revealed some similar structures. He also said that the mason's mark found on the Mauryan pillars resembles the marks found in Persepolis (Spooner, 1915:66-67, Part I). The shaft of the pillar is smooth and polished from beginning to end, which shows that the pillars rest directly on the floor without any kind of sockets. The polish on the whole pillar suggests that part of the pillar was not buried under the surface to give support. The base of the pillar is properly rubbed but not polished. One has engraving of some symbols like three rows of three circles, some Buddhist symbols like *tri-ratna*, etc., are well-engraved. Spooner suggests that these symbols are borrowed under the influence of Achaemenian influence (Spooner, 2002: 69-71). He notes that references to such great works can be found in the epics, especially the *Mahābhārata*, where the Asuras and Dānava Māyā built great cities using their magical powers. These buildings were filled with rich gardens, ponds and buildings of a thousand columns. Such buildings could remind us of the structure of Kumrahar. Asura Māyā resembles the Ahura Mazda. It seems similarities between the faith of the people who built it and Zoroastrianism (Spooner, 1915:80, Part I). He further elaborates that-

> '*But, if the monarch for whom Persian palaces were built by a divine spirit reminiscent of Ahura Mazda were themselves non-Hindus, as the Mahabharata implies, it follows enough that they must have been Iranian in race and Zoroastrian in faith. Were, then, the Mauryas Zoroastrian? I do not, myself, see any escape from this conclusion. The logic of the argument seems to me unimpeachable and the evidence of the epic alone conclusive*.' (Spooner, 1915: II,406).

He also cites Faxian, who said that the Mauryan palaces and administrative buildings were built by spirits.

> '*The royal palace and halls in the midst of the city, which exist now as of old, were all made by spirits which he employed, and which piled up the stones, reared the walls and gates, and executed the elegant carving and inlaid sculpture-work-in a way which no human hands of this world could accomplish*.' (Legge, 2013:77).

D. B. Spooner's fairy tales and fantasies were vehemently criticised by the scholars. A.B. Keith rebutted Spooner's argument point by point. He says that Ahura Mazda is represented as Asur Māyā, but the equation of Asura equal to Ahura is not explained by Spooner. It is a grave objection to his theory that Asura in Mauryan times had an evil design, and outlandish to think that the Iranian masses who revered their deity nevertheless induced the Indians to worship him as a demon. Any kind of linkages with the Mauryans from Persian Mourva, Merv, Meru, and the valley of the Murghab can hardly be taken seriously. The idea that Kautilya was a Magian minister is absurd. He emphasises-

> '*A Zoroastrian period of Indian history never existed, nor indeed was any such existence to be expected'* (Keith, 1916:140-143).

Megesthenes also does not mention Greek influence on the Mauryan palaces and architecture of Palibothra (McCrindle, 1877: 67-69). The imagination of D. B. Spooner was more influenced by the money paid by the Tatas than archaeological evidence he excavated from Kumrahar and Bulandibag.

Identification of the 80-Pillared Hall of Kumrahar as Aśokārāma

Kumrahar and the surrounding areas have predominantly remains of Buddhist structures, and also some of the Jains. Buddhist monasteries of the Śuṅga period and later phases have been excavated in the vicinity of the excavated site of Kumrahar. A monastery cum sanatorium of the Gupta period is excavated near the pillared hall. Some other monastic and apsidal structures are also identified. Except for the hall (4th century BCE), the timeline of the structures goes from the Śuṅga period (150 BCE) to the Gupta age (7th century CE) (Altekar and Mishra,1959:38-48). The seal found here inscribing information in Brāhmī script of the Gupta period- '*Śri ārogyavihārae Bhikshu saṅghasya*' confirms the existence of the monastic hospital (Figure 3) and sanatorium (Thaplyal, 1972: 215). The term '*ārogyavihāra*' has also been found on pots discovered from Kumrahar. These were donated to the monastery for serving a medical purpose (Altekar and Mishra, 1959, pl. XXXV). Twenty-eight terracotta figurines of Naigamesha have been found at Kumrahar during excavation. Naigamesha is a goat-headed deity (male/female) and is considered the guardian of protecting pregnancy, potential mothers, and infants (Altekar and Mishra, 1959:109). The presence of these figurines confirms the presence of a hospital in the monastic complex. A pillar capital (Figure 4) with sculptures of an elephant, bull, horse, and lion is also found at Kumrahar (Bihar Museum, No. Arch.11154). The four symbols represent birth, zodiac sign, and the transformation of Siddhārtha into the Buddha. The elephant is linked to the dream of Māyā Devī, who saw a white elephant entered in her womb with the lotus bud in its trunk. It was considered a sign of the birth of a Chakravartī son. The Bull, a zodiac sign of the Buddha, signifies the evolution and culmination of the universe. It shows the paramountcy of the Buddha. The horse represents renunciation of the world to attain Buddhahood, and the lion shows sovereign power and his universal presence (Singh, 2014:101-103). This capital can be the earliest example of Aśoka's experiment to transform pillar architecture into the Buddhist domain. The pillar capital found from Lohanipur, having four bulls, a Jain sculpture, can be its predecessor, and its architect was none other than his grandfather, Chandragupta Maurya. Initially, Aśoka followed his grandfather and replaced the Jain sculptures on pillars with Buddhist ones. Kumrahar (Aśokārāma) can be the first site where Aśoka raised a pillar to commemorate the Buddha, as it was the chief centre of his ecclesiastical activities.

Figure 3: *ārogyavihāra* at Kumrahar

Figure 4: Pillar capital with four animals (Bihar Museum)

Kumrahar and Bulandibag were situated on the outskirts of ancient Pāṭaliputra. Bulandibag had a palisade or defence garrison. How could the emperors like the great Mauryans live on the boundary of

their capital? It contradicts the information provided by Faxian, who stated that the palace was situated in the centre of the great city of Pāṭaliputra, and he reported the existence of many halls in and around the palace, not a single one as discovered in Kumrahar (Legge, 2013:77-78). The area of the Pillared Hall did not extend further west, and no remains of pillars beyond the ashy layers. The wooden platform also did not extend further east (Altekar and Mishra, 1959:.15). It shows that there was only one hall in Kumrahar, and it was built for religious purposes. J. A. Page excavated Bulandibag and discovered a long wooden palisade of Mauryan period running west to east from the south end of Bulandibag, near Patna, for a distance of 400 feet. The west side of Palisade has a ramp to get over the top of it. Further excavation reveals a semi-circular platform of lime concrete approximately 8 feet in diameter with a raised edge of 2 inches high on one side. A small row with a brick floor, some 30 meters to the south of the platform, is also discovered. The platform may serve the purpose of bathing. A couple of heavy beams and octagonal posts at the east end of Palisade suggest the existence of a gateway for movement (Page, 1926-1927:136-38). Near the palisade, a well-structured drain has been excavated. Such a kind of drain is visible at the palisade found in different places. At Bulandibag:

> '*A large wooden drain contemporary with palisade, which it crosses at right angles at a place just over 200 ft east from the sloping west end. The drain measures some 40 ft in length, and it is set across the palisade so as to project equidistantly or either side of it. The sides of the drain are framed by two lines of wooden posts topped with long tenons and spaced at distances varying from 1'8" to 2'4" apart. They are fixed at the bottom to horizontal beams running longitudinally NS at a depth of 32 feet below the present ground surface, and the greatest height of the posts is 12'6". The wooden planks about 15 cm thick. The iron nails used has to join the planks over 60 cm in length. The joints between the planks were made water-tight by means of strips of iron, 7 cm wide'* (Gupta, 2011: 233).

Megasthenes says that the city of Palibothra was 80 *stadia* (14.50 kilometres) in length and fifteen *stadia* (2.73 kilometres) in breadth, and shaped like a parallelogram. It was surrounded and protected by moats 600 ft broad and 30 cubits in depth. At a distance of 24 feet from the inner ditch, a rampart is established with 570 towers and 64 gates (McCrindle,1877:68). The circumference of the city was around 36 kilometres, and towers were established at a distance of 220 feet from one another. From here, the archers can easily defend the city from any kind of incursion or misadventure. The entrance for access and way out for all palisades can be like one found at Bulandibag and other places in Patna, which had octagonal posts on each side. The exact height of these posts is not known, and the breadth of the gate could be around 15 feet (Altekar and Mishra, 1959:8-10). Pāṭaliputra has a circumference of 33.8 kilometres and a surface area of 25.5 square kilometres. Under any circumstances, whether tracing the foreign influence on the structure of Kumrahar or not, inevitably, Mauryan palaces and administrative buildings could not stand on the outskirts of the city. Even in the excavated site, no remains of the Mauryan or later kings, like the Gupta's palaces or administrative buildings, are found. It was only the monastic settlements in the area, or the Buddhistic or the remains of other Sramanic religions that were found. It is obvious why no such buildings are found and will not be traced in future because Kumrahar is located half a kilometre southeast of the palisade of Bulandibag, and it is completely out of the city and in the peripheral region or boundary near the old course of the river. A King couldn't live outside the city wall, aloof from their establishment and population. Whenever any reference to a city is mentioned in ancient Indian literature, the palaces and other buildings are located within the city, and Pāṭaliputra is not an exception (Sihlingloff, 2013:42).

Megasthenes informs that the city was surrounded by a wooden wall and ditches. These ditches were also connected to the sewage system of the city for smooth drainage of water (McCrindle, 1877:66). The archaeological remains suggest that ancient Pāṭaliputra had a huge water moat surrounding the city. It was perennially full of water supplied by the connecting canal coming from the rivers Son and Ganga. A part of the depression along the railway line can be part of the ancient

ditch. The demographic structure of Patna still looks like a parallelogram extended from Golghar to Malasalami, about 13 kilometres. From there, it is further extended to Didarganj. The archaeological discoveries of wooden palisades from Lohanipur in the west through Bahadurpur, Bulandibag, Kumrahar, Mahrajkhand, Sewai Talab to Gandhi Tank in the east show the physical boundary of Pāṭaliputra. It is difficult to accept that the city was extended beyond that in post-Mauryan times, and the old city was in the vicinity of the river Ganga, which flows further north to the present urban space (Altekar and Mishra, 1959:6-7). During the age of Faxian, it was flowing outside the city, and he had to travel 8 kilometres to reach Pāṭaliputra (Legge, 2013:77). The depression along the Gardiner road is considered the old bed of the Son. Despite several excavations, the exact location of Pataliputra is not known. It may be extended to the south of Shah Arjuni Dargah and Patharki Masjid, Sargalli opposite Khwaja Kalam Ghat, where remains of the Mauryan artefacts have been discovered during different phases of excavations (Altekar and Mishra,1959:8-9). It is difficult to find the exact location of Pataliputra. Beglar and other prominent archaeologists believe that the city of Pāṭaliputra was swept away by the Ganga many centuries ago (Beglar, 1878:24). A. S. Altekar says that the city of Pāṭaliputra was devastated by the inundation of the river Son. The incident is described in a Jain literature, the *Titlhogali Painniya*. Once, a treacherous King Chaturmukha Kakli was killing the Jain monks. The elders advised the monks to leave the city because it would be destroyed by a catastrophic flood due to the sins of the king. Many of the monks left Pāṭaliputra, and after that downpour started. The flood in the Ganga and the Son engulfed the whole city (Altekar and Mishra, 1959:12). It is assumed that Pāṭaliputra may be the long and narrow land of the country from the suburb of the Bankipur to Jafar Khan's Garden, an extent of about 14.50 kilometres or 80 *stadia* of Megesthenes. On the west of Bankipur, there is a large stretch of lowland annually flooded and still known as Mar-son (Dead Son). These currents still could be seen to flow to the Ganga in the rainy season. In early times, there was a definite confluence of the Ganga and the Son. A branch of the Son (main current in the west of Bankipur) is diverted towards the east. The presence of lowlands, sands, marshy lands, and lakes, the channel could be easily traced on the north of Bankipur station and railway lines, Lohanipur, Bahadurpur to Sandalpur, on the north of which a large pond, Gun-Sagar and the Dargah Arzani. From the tank to the east, another tank, Seva tank, existed. Then towards Tulsi Mandi and to the south beyond Patna, under the thick structure of yellowish sand of Son, the remains of boats have been discovered, like from Muradpur, Dargah, etc (Mukherji,1898:12-13). D. R. Patil says that the decline of Pāṭaliputra due to the flood is a remote possibility. It is imaginable that the southern course of the Ganga might have galloped through some region on her riverbank. The lowland stretches of the south are still inundated during heavy rain in the rainy seasons when different streams in the Ganga, joining from the south, are unable to follow the normal course. The real danger is from the river Son, a tributary of the Ganga. But it floods the region for a short time and now it has drifted from the main city, flowing 32 kilometres away towards the west (Patil, 1963:372-373). It may be extended to the south of Shah Arjuni Dargah and Patharki Masjid, Sargalli opposite Khwaja Kalam Ghat, where remains of the Mauryan artefacts have been discovered during different phases of excavations (Altekar and Mishra, 1959:8-9). Indeed, a flood cannot destroy the great city like Pāṭaliputra at once. Even if so, the remains must be visible. The discovery of palisades from Lohanipur, Kumrahar, Bulandibag, and Bahadurpur, etc., suggests that the core city structure of Pāṭaliputra lies somewhere else.

The peripheral region of the city of Pāṭaliputra was flooded with establishments of Sramanic cultures, especially Buddhists and Jains. The regions around the Kadam Kuan were supposed to be a Jain monastic centre. A beautiful image ((Figure 5) of a Tīrthāṅkara (Mahāvīra) with the Mauryan polish has been discovered from Lohanipur (Altekar and Mishra, 1959:10; Bihar Museum, No. Arch- 10998).

P. C. Mukherji excavated Kumrahar, Nawatola, Bulandibag, Rampur, Bahadurpur, Bhikhnapahari, Lohanipur, Jamunadih, and Narottampur. Near Agam Kuan, a footprint of a Tīrthāṅkar of ancient times and in the vicinity, a Jain temple are found. There are also remains of walls on the south bank of Kallu Tālāb and on the west bank of Chamana Tāl, a row of cells or rooms. In some of these cells opening from the front is known, just like in the structures of Sultanganj. The remains of Buddhist and Jain artefacts in the region show their wider presence in the Magadha region (Mukherji, 1898:18). The capitals of a pillar adorned with four Bulls sitting on a platform have been found in Lohanipur (Figure 6) and Hajipur (*Bihar Museum,* No. Arch-10974). Bull signifies Risabhnātha, the first Tīrthāṅkara and founder of Jainism. Hajipur-Vaiśālī (Kuṅdagrām) was the birthplace of Tīrthāṅkar Mahāvīra and has a strong presence of Jainism to date. S. P. Gupta says that the sculpture had Persepolis influence and should be dated to the 5th century BCE (Gupta, 2011: 89). Chandragupta Maurya was a follower of Jainism. It is quite possible that Lohanipur, as a great centre of Jainism, was developed under his influence, and he raised the pillars with the bull capitals having the Mauryan polish. So, the capital should be dated to the 4th century BCE. It seems possible that the first Jain Council was convened at the same place.

Figure 5: Image of Tīrthāṅkara, Lohanipur (Bihar Museum)

Figure 6. Capital of Four-Bulls, Lohanipur (Bihar Museum)

The Buddhist as well Jain monastic settlements were situated either on the peripheral regions of the cities, sub-urbs, and villages or outside them. The Buddha made a rule for the foundation of monasteries. It cannot be built near any urban or rural settlement. It should not be either too near or too far from the *nigama* or *grāma*. It must be approachable without the noise because such places are fit for mediation (*Gāmato neva atidūre na accāsanne, gamanāgamanasampannaṃ atthikhanam manussānam abhikkamiyaṃ diva appakinnam rattim appasaddam appanigghosam, vijanavatam manussārāha seyyakam patisallānāsa ruppam*) (*Cullavagga*, VII.1.6; Singh, 2024:13). The archaeological remains and literary evidence suggest that Bhikhna Pahari, Bulandibag, Kumrahar, Choti Pahari, and Pancha Pahari were part of the same sacred complex, or a great Buddhist monastic settlement existed along the palisades. The northernmost site was Bhikna Pahari, and the southernmost at Panch Pahari or the five great stūpas, probably an abode of Buddha relics and Choti Pahari. Kumrahar and Bulandibag are lying between them. Xuanzang informs that Pāṭaliputra was on the verge of decline, but many of the Buddhist vihāras, stūpas, stone pillars, and Buddhapadas existed (Watters, 2004: II, 88-92). L.

A. Waddell tried to identify many such monuments. Many of these sites are Buddhist, but the exact identification of ancient places is difficult without the support of epigraphic evidence. The northernmost structure of an audience hall was developed by Aśoka for his younger brother. Bhikhna Pahari, or the hill of the mendicant monk, belongs to Tissa. Aśoka built an artificial hill to replicate Gijjhakuta because his brother was residing there. It was 20 feet high and about half a kilometre in circumference. The remains of bricks and stones are lying scattered in the field. A crude image of over six feet in height is located in a local temple and has been identified with Bhikkhu Tissa. The image of monks is popularly known as Bhikhna Kunwar (The Medicant Prince), and local people still offer milk, rice, flowers, and silk thread to seek blessings (Waddell, 1903:11-13). Xuanzang informs that Aśoka built a hill monastery resembling a Gijjhakuta and a cave for his brother Mahinda (Watters, Vol. II, 2004:93-94). He was confused with the name Mahinda, the son of Aśoka. The *Mahāvaṁsa* informs that Aśoka's younger brother Tissa was converted to Buddhism by Thera Mahādhammarakkhita in Aśokārāma. With Tissa, Aggibrahma, the nephew of the emperor and husband of princess Saṁghamitra, was also converted (*Mahāvaṁsa*, V.165-170). It shows that Thera Tissa was residing in the Aśokārāma sacred zone and Aśoka might have developed Bhikhna Pahari as Tissa's monastery. In the south of the city, Panch-Pahari or the five hills exist. Their foundations are lofty, but the structures are ruined. It has two divisions Bara Pahari and Chota Pahari. The mound is 3000 feet in length and 600 feet in breadth. Cunningham identifies Panch-Pahari as a place where Aśoka made the great stūpas, depositing the relics of the Buddha taken from seven places, except Rāmagāma, where the Buddha's relics were deposited (Cunningham, 2000: XI, 157-158).[1] L.A. Waddell identifies the Choti Pahari as a place of the Great Relic Stūpa, but years of brick quarrying by the local villagers have made this site completely ruined (Waddell, 1903:6, 32-33).[2]

One of the pillars from Kumrahar ((Figures 7 & 8) is inscribed with a small inscription *gra-sa-da* in Kharoshthī script, *tri-ratna* symbols, and nine circles in three rows (Spooner 2002:78). The short inscription found on the bottom of one of the pillars suggests the name of the inscriber, who was probably from the Gandhara region.

Figure 7: Pillar with *tri-ratna* symbols and 9 circles, Kumrahar

Figure 8: Symbols and circles, Kumrahar

The inscription of one pillar with symbols and circles had some historical sense. The symbol of *tri-ratna* shows the Buddhist character of the pillar, and the nine circles represent the Nine Missions sent by Aśoka to different parts of the world to propagate Buddhism and his policy of the Dhamma.

A. S. Altekar says that the hall is a kind of audience hall, not a royal edifice or a palace. It was probably designed and built by Chandragupta Maurya, but it does not suggest a palace or residential structure of the Mauryans. The sculptures or any ornamental objects are also missing from this site (Altekar and Mishra, 1959:9-11). Altekar's view is partially correct that the 80-pillared hall was an audience hall. But it was not the part of Chandragupta's palace that has not been discovered and will not be found from this site, as Kumrahara is a religious site. It was an audience hall of the Aśokārāma/ Kukkutārāma. Amalananda Ghosh suggests that the archaeological findings of Kumrahar lead to the conclusion that it was a great monastery of Aśoka's time where the Third Buddhist Council was convened (Ghosh, Vol. II,1989:334). Sita Ram Roy, who excavated the site of Kumrahar, says-

> '*The aforesaid eighty-four-pillared hall, without reflecting any administrative character bore clear testimony to its being a big monastic establishment. The hall was probably an open building all around without any boundary wall; this characteristic suits it to have been a religious congregational hall, because had it been an administrative building, it should have had a surrounding wall in order to maintain privacy of conversation among royal officers. The hall being 16644 square feet (146' X 114') in area, could conveniently accommodate more than one thousand people for their congregational discussion. Secondly, the archaeological operations at Kumrahar have not yet brought to light from any stratum any remains which could reflect its administrative character, whereas monastic remains with epigraphic evidence, exposed at the site, bore sufficient testimony to its being a monastic site in the succeeding periods also*' (Roy, 1987: 713-726).

The overwhelming evidence of Buddhism since the inception of the structure in the 4th century BCE leaves no doubt about the identification of Kumrahar as Aśokārāma.

Structure of Aśokārāma (Kukkutārāma)

The foundation of Kukkutārāma was laid either during the Buddha's visit to Pāṭaligāma or just after it. Buddhaghosa mentions that the Kukkutarāma was made by Kukkuta Setthi, but did not provide information about the foundation and functioning (*Papañcasudānī*.II.571; *Manorathpurānī*.II.866). The *Saṁyutta Nikāya* (*Saṁyutta Nikāya*, V.15). informs that Ānanda stayed and discussed several *suttas* with monk Bhadda. The *Mahāvagga* (*Vinaya Piṭaka*, I.300) mentions the names of several monks like Nilavāsi, Sānavāsi, Gopaka, Bhagu, and Phalikasandana who resided in this monastery. It was also the residence of Nārada, who converted King Munda of Magadha (*Aṅguttara Nikāya*, III.57f). Sonaka, the *Upajjhāya* of Siggava, and Candavajji, the teacher of Mogaliputta-Tissa, also resided in Aśokārāma (*Mahāvaṁsa*, V.122). The *Divyāvadāna* informs that Aśokārāma was a central royal monastery as well as Aśoka's own. It was also known as Kukkutārāma (Strong, 2008:86). During the time of Aśoka, the name Asokārāma became more popular. Xuanzang informs that the Kukkutārāma was situated to the southeast of the old city of Pātaliputta and was built by Aśoka after embracing Buddhism. The Āmalaka Stūpa, signifying the last gift of Aśoka to the Buddhist Saṅgha also situated at this place (Watters, Vol. II, 2004:99-100). When Aśoka was informed that monks of the Pātaliputra did not hold the *uposatha* ceremony for seven years, he sent his minister to summon them to the Aśokārāma. When the minister failed to resolve the issue, he beheaded in rage several monks who did not answer satisfactorily reasons of their indiscipline. Even many of them refused to obey his order to reform. Aśoka repented for the act of his minister, and on the advice of Mogaliputta Tissa, he convened the Third Buddhist Council. Mogaliputta compiled the *Kathavatthupakarana*, a part of the *Abhidhamma Pitaka* in the Council (*Mahāvaṁsa*, V.80, 163, 174, 236). Aśoka's brother Tissa was ordained here, and from here, Aśoka sent his son Mahinda to Sri Lanka (*Sāmantapāsādikā*, I. 69). The presence of the remains of the monastic structure from the pre-Maurya period to the Gupta period suggests the existence of a great monastic complex. The presence of NPBW and punch-marked coins at Kumrahar and adjoining sites suggests that the foundation of the monastery precedes the Gupta

age and is pre-Mauryan, and it was none other than the remains of Aśokārāma (Kukkutārāma). The structural development of Buddhist monastics in the period of Aśoka and the authority embedded with this great monastery of Pāṭaliputra suggests the development of Aśokārāma (Kukkutārāma) as a Mahāvihāra. The important characteristics of Mahāvihāra can be described as (Singh, 2022: 5-6; Singh, 2024:43-44):

1. Mahāvihāra had a single splendid monastic complex, or the cloistering of many monasteries. Aśokārāma (Kukkutārāma) was developed as a single monumental edifice with many small satellite monasteries and a stūpa complex in Bulandibag, Bhikhana Pahari, Panch Pahari, etc. The *Mahāvaṁsa* informs that the construction of Aśokārāma was supervised by Thera Indagutta under the patronage of Aśoka (*Mahāvaṁsa*, V.173).
2. It was regulated by a central monastic authority, serving a range of purposes and establishments, viz., monasteries, uposthagāra, ārogyavihāra, temples, libraries, etc.
3. Mahāvihāra was headed by a patriarch or a chief abbot.
4. All Mahāviharas were state patronised either directly by the kings or by land grants.
5. Mahāvihāras were instrumental in 'directed' ecclesiastical works as well as monastic activities and administration.

Based on these characteristics, it can be inferred that the first Mahāvihāra was Aśokārāma, founded by Aśoka.

1. Aśokārāma was made probably on the ruins of Kukkutārāma, and it was one of the largest monasteries during the period of Aśoka. In Aśoka's tenure, Aśokśārama decided every ecclesiastic work to make Buddhism supreme and proud. The 80 Pillared-Hall was probably the *uposthagāra* where all important decisions were taken. Bulandibag can be a Bhikkhunī Vihāra, and Pancha Pahari an abode of Tissa (Figure 10).

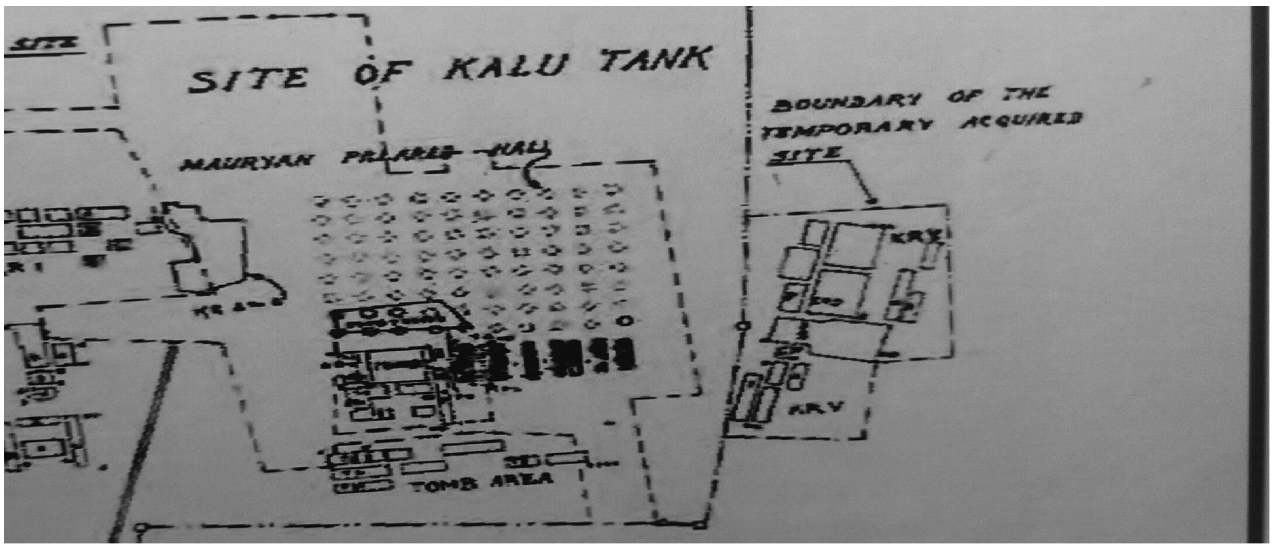

Figure 10: Pillared-Hall, Kumrahar, along with platforms (After Gupta, 2011, p.240)

2. The *ārogyavihāra* is discovered adjacent to the pillared hall. It was not only a hospital for the monks but also a sanatorium where the monks could rejuvenate themselves after their tiring journeys. The evidence of terracotta figurines of Naigamesha suggests that the monastery was also engaged in the discipline of gynaecology and paediatrics (Singh, 2024:173).

3. The *Aśokāvadāna* informs that the great monastery of Aśokarāma was headed by the Mahāthera Yaśa (Strong, 2008:238). The Pali sources inform that Moggaliputta Tissa was its chief patriarch (*Mahāvaṁsa*, V.278).
4. It was directly patronised by Emperor Aśoka. The *Aśokavadāna* informs that Aśoka gifted *kotis* of gold pieces to Aśokārāma/Kukkutārāma. When his donations started affecting the royal treasury, the prime minister Radhagupta informed the heir-apparent Samprati, who put restrictions on Aśoka's overgenerous donations. But the Emperor kept donating his utensils and personal wealth, and eventually, Aśoka left with half of a myrobalan fruit, which he donated to Kukkutārāma as his last offering (Strong, 2008:288-90).
5. At this monastery, the third Pitaka, the *Abhidhamma*, was compiled. Here, Mogaliputta refuted the doctrines of heretics and wrote the *Kathāvatthuprakaraṅa*. The decision to send nine missions to different places was taken here (*Mahāvaṁsa*, VV.279-80).

When the hall was planned by Aśoka, stone masonry was extensively used. The pillars were used to build the lofty structure of the hall. The plan of the pillar suggests eight rows of ten pillars from north to south. In two rows, some pillars are missing. The seventh and eighth rows have only 7 and 5 pillars, respectively. These pillars are broken or misplaced due to the ravages of time. In the north of the rows of the pillars, long wooden planks supporting two wooden bases of the capital of stone pillars indicate entrance to the monastery was from the south. It had a wide porch of four pillars at the entrance (Altekar and Mishra, 1959:2). All portions of the Pillar are polished, and they are buried 6 feet to 7 feet below the surface. It is questionable why a buried portion of the pillar is polished. It is possible that it was inadvertently done when pillars were carved out, and the original planning of the Pillared Hall was not known to the architects (Altekar and Mishra, 1959:25). The foundation trenches for the stone pillars are found with varying depths from 5 feet and 6 feet 4 inches below the excavated level. The trenches were 5' square in shape, and the bottom of the surface was covered with a 6'' thick layer of blue coloured clay that resembles cement. Its blue colour is due to the oxidation of organic elements found on the surface over the centuries. On this surface of cement plaster, a solid wooden base 4 feet 6 inches square, consisting of four beams running east and west, is placed to fix the pillars. It is further strengthened by wedging them together at a right angle. This arrangement is made to balance the wooden structure and divide proportionately the weight of the pillar. The surface layers of blue clay remained undisturbed in all four ash pits, suggesting that the pillars did not slip through their foundation beneath the earth (Altekar and Mishra, 1959:16). Spooner also discovered four rough embosses about 6 inches in height at a distance of 4'6'' from the bottom of the surface. It was underground and served the purpose of strengthening the base of the pillar. The findings of the three stone capitals indicate their use for strengthening the base of the porch pillar (Altekar and Mishra, 1959:25-26). Spooner says that the pillars had a height of 20 feet, but that is not true. The circumference and height vary at the different stages. The circumference of the base of the pillar is 7.91 feet, at the 5' feet is 7.62 feet and at the top is 6', showing its tapering shape. The total height of the pillar should be around 32.5'(Altekar and Mishra, 1959:17).

The hall was well supported with wooden platforms and wooden staircases with 30 steps, each step being 24 feet in length and 6 inches in height. It is possible that some distinguished visitors visited the hall directly by boat (Altekar and Mishra, 1959:25). In the south of the Pillared-Hall, seven wooden platforms are found with similar dimensions of 30' in length and 5'4'' wide, and 4.5 feet in height from the base. It is simply a solid accommodation of legs, but its making and build are unparalleled in the ancient world. The whole structure is built with faultless accuracy and reasoned care. It is presumed that these platforms are raised to solidify the foundation of the pillars as they are so have and liable

to fall if not properly fixed. But some of the platforms are standing free and are not giving direct support to the pillars. Their open existence also does not corroborate the idea of supporting structure. These structures are well designed, and the 30-feet structure was designed to look like a semicircle. Sometimes, it divides the platforms into two curved ends, rectangular from outside but towards the centre shaped like two complementary segments or quarters of a single circle (Spooner, 2002:74-78). The excavation done in the vicinity of the tomb confirms the presence of an ancient canal 43 feet wide and 10 feet deep. Its antiquity goes back to the Mauryan period. It is extended east to west and positioned west of pillared hall. It is possible that in the Mauryan period, it was connected to the river Son as well as the river Ganga. It is a higher possibility that the structure was specially built to facilitate the transportation of pillars directly from the Chunar quarries to Kumrahar (Altekar and Mishra, 1959:23-24).

Prince Mahinda was converted to Buddhism in the Aśokārāma by Moggaliputta Tissa. The *pabbajjā*-ordination was conferred on him by monk Mahādeva, and monk Majjhantika did the recitals. He soon became an *arahant* (*Mahāvaṁsa*, V.206-207). Mahinda was trained under Mogalipuuta Tissa and remained in Aśokārāma till his departure to Sri Lanka. Probably, he carried forward the architectural tradition of Aśokārāma to Sri Lanka, and under his influence, King Devānaṁpiya Tissa built the Lohapāsada (a pillared hall) for the Saṅgha. Dutthagamini replaced iron pillars and built the 'House of Bronze' (*Mahāvaṁsa,* XV.205-206). The Rajagala monastic complex was an abode of Bhikkhu Mahinda in Sri Lanka. Here, a stūpa with the relics of Bhikkhu Mahinda and an inscription are found (Paranavitana, 1962:159-162). The architecture of monasteries and halls had an abundance of stone pillars. Though the shape of the pillars is rectangular, as used in the Bulandibag, rather than circular found in Kumrahar. Though the sizes of these monasteries and halls are different, the rows of pillars in length differ in each monastery, but in the width, the tradition of eight rows of pillars as found in Kumrahar was strictly followed.

Identification of Bulandibag: A Nunnery (Bhikkhunī Saṅgha)

Both literary and epigraphic sources suggest a strong presence of bhikkhunīs in Pāṭaliputra and surrounding areas. The *Mahāvaṁsa* mentions that Therī Saṁghamitra and thousands of other nuns resided in Aśokārāma (*Mahāvaṁsa*, V.188). Here, Princess Saṁghamitra was converted to Buddhism by Therī Dhammapālā in the sixth year of Aśoka's reign, and her preceptor was Therī Āyūpālā. She became an *arahant* soon after taking *upsaṁpadā* (*Mahāvaṁsa*, V.208-209). Aśoka's attempt to begin the reformation in the functioning of the Saṅgha at Aśokārāma suggests the presence of both bhikkhus and bhikkhunīs in Pāṭaliputra. The edicts of Aśoka found from Sārnāth, Sānchī, and Kośāmbī indicate a vibrant bhikkhunī Saṅgha in the period of Aśoka (Singh, 2014:44-45). Unfortunately, no structural remains of the bhikkhuni Saṅgha are known from Pāṭaliputra. At Bulandibag, L.A. Waddell and his team discovered the evidence of a palisade, a large rough stone (the Buddha's footprint), wooden bridges, ghats, and a colossal capital, probably a capital of the pillar. This rectangular column has high-quality floral honeysuckle or *nāgapuṣpa* motifs on the front and back sides of the capital. It was assigned to the period of Aśoka in the 3rd century BCE. The remains of a coping stone of Buddhist railings, and the crossbar of the railings have been also discovered in the vicinity of a structure identified as a monastic establishment. The lotus medallion and depiction of the Buddha sitting under a seven-headed canopy of a Nāgarāja suggest that the structure was a Buddhist monastery. The monastic cells with a protected courtyard and the remains of a pillar were also discovered. The pillar was not inscribed, but the remaining parts may have an inscription described by Xuanzang (Waddell, 1903:17-18, 36-39; Bihar Museum, No. Arch.187). J. A Page also discovers remains of a monastery immediately south

of the palisade. He found the brick foundation of cells of four different periods, and the lowest strata belong to the Mauryan period. Adjacent to it lie the remains of three-room buildings. In the south-east corner of these structures, the remains of a cistern with a paved brick platform and sloping sides were discovered. It is 7 feet 10 inches long, 6 feet wide and 7 feet 10 inches deep. Between these remains and the palisade, four piles of deep earthen rings are placed one over the other. The height of the pile range was between 6 to 10 feet, and it may be the soak-pit. Several terracotta figurines from pre-Mauryan to later phases, a mirror of the Sunga age, coins, and potteries have also been discovered (Page, 1926-1927:135-141). From here, a wooden chariot wheel (Dhammacakka/ Dharmachakra) has been excavated (Figure 11). It has wooden spokes and an iron rim (Gupta, 2011:233, pl.106; Bihar Museum, No. Arch-4493). The wheel represents the *Dhammacakkapabattana*. Its important components are the nave, the spokes, the felly, and the *nābhi*, i.e. the bubble-like structure attached to the rim in between the spokes. The twenty-four spokes indicate the twelve laws of dependent origination and the twelve laws of dependent termination (Singh, 2014:106-107). The presence of the Dhamma-wheel in the monastic site of Bulandibag shows special significance.

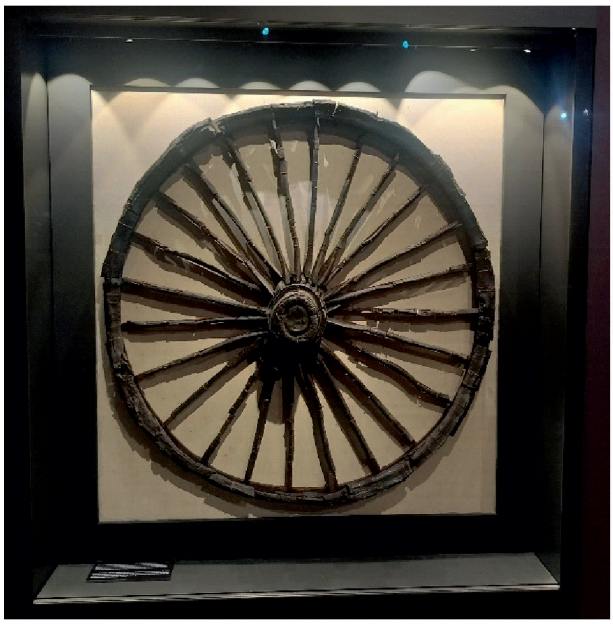

Figure 11: Dhammacakka, Bulandibag (Bihar Museum)

Figure 12. Pillar Capital, Bulandibag (Bihar Museum)

The archaeological evidence found here overwhelmingly suggests the presence of a Bhikkhunī Saṅgha because

1. Bulandibag was an integral part of the sacred complex of Aśokārāma, an archaic form of Mahāvihāra whose nucleus was Kumrahar (Aśokārāma), and Bhikhna Pahari, Pancha Pahari, and Bulandibag were satellite centres. The number of nuns was considerable in numbers, which required a separate monastic arrangement near the Aśokārāma. Bulandibag was the most suitable place for it.
2. The structure of the monastery, like monastic cells, a multi-rooms apartment, a cistern adjacent to cells, and the presence of toilets near to monastic structure strongly endorse that the monastery was well protected and meant for bhikkhunīs. A similar kind of structure is known in Vaiśālī, where the bhikkhunī vihāra was situated near the cistern, and a toilet was found adjacent to the monastic structure. The bhikkhu vihāra is in the same complex but relatively at a farther place (Tiwary and Saurabh, 2018:775-776).

3. The highly decorated motifs of the pillar capital (Figure 12) and other artefacts, the presence of Dhammacakka, and other Buddhist artefacts suggest that the monastic complex was special and built for a specific purpose with the help of the royal patronage. As the earliest stratification of this monastic complex dates back to the 3rd century BCE, it was built by Emperor Aśoka for the nuns, where his beloved daughter also resided. This structure was a parallel development along with the construction of Aśokārāma.
4. A narrow bottom earthen pot inscribed with the word 'Ānade' in Brāhmī script of the 3rd century BCE and a seal impression in glass measuring 1/2" in diameter bearing the character 'Devalakhitasa' in Brāhmī character of the 3rd century BCE have also been found (Page, 1926-1927:139). As these are found within the monastic complex of Bulandibag, their significance is religious and linked to Buddhism.
5. The word 'Ānade' can be vocative or dialectical and may signify 'protected by Ānanda' or the 'progenies of Ānanda'. It is well known that the Bhikkhunī Saṅgha in Buddhism owed its origin to Ānanda, a great disciple of the Buddha, and still all the Buddhist nuns across the Buddhist world have special bond and veneration for him. Here, the Bhikkhunī Vihāra of Aśokārāma dedicated itself to Venerable Ānanda. It is also possible that Bhikkhunī Vihāra of Pāṭaliputra was founded by him during his prolonged stay at Aśokārāma/Kukkutārāma.
6. The term 'Devalakhitasa' does not indicate the name of a monk or nun, as inscribing the individual name of a nun or a monk for donations started only with the emergence of Mahāyāna and these kinds of donations are known only since the post-Maurya period from the 2nd century BCE onwards (Singh, 2014:46-47). The term 'Devalakhitasa' refers to the monastery protected by the Devas (Deva + Rakshita). On many occasions, the Buddha and other eminent monks were accompanied by the Devas. They were considered benevolent and protectors of the Buddhist establishments. They often came to listen to the teachings of the Buddha and accompanied him. It was the Deva (Brahmā Sahampati) who suggested that the Buddha teach the Dhamma to the world, and he accepted his advice. On the other occasion, the Buddha returned to Sāṅkasya accompanied by the Devas, Brahmā and Sakka (Indra) after preaching to his mother in Tāvatimsa heaven (*Suttanipāta Commentary*, II.570; *Saṁyutta Nikāya*, I.136). Because this monastery was a special one, the abode of Aśoka's beloved daughter Saṁghamitra, it was bound to be protected by the Divines. The inscription 'Devalakhitasa' signifies the same.

This nunnery was built in Bulandibag, which was already famous for the Buddhapada and the pillar with having inscription of Aśoka. Xunazang mentions the story of the Buddhapada (the Buddha's footprint). The Buddha, during his journey for the *mahāparinibbāna,* reached Pāṭaligāma. Before taking the boat to cross the north bank of the Ganga, he stood on this stepping-stone at Pāṭaligāma and told Ānanda that he was seeing last time towards Bodhagayā and Rājagṛiha. The mark of his feet became permanent on this stone. Aśoka raised a sacred place for this Buddhapada. During the period of Harsha, Saśānka defaced this stone and threw it into the Ganga, but the stone came back to its original place (Watters, Vol. II, 2004:92-93). L. A. Waddell says that the stone block carrying foot footprint is two and a half feet square and two feet deep. The foot impression looks to be twenty inches long and six inches wide. One of the stone railings must be protecting the stone carrying the Buddha's footprint. The impression of hacking or chiselling suggests that it was defaced (Waddell, 1903:39-40). Xuanzang also informs that an inscription of Aśoka refers to the gift of Aśoka to the whole Jambudvīpa to the Saṅgha (Watters, Vol. II, 2004:93). It seems that the inscription of Aśoka was another version of so

called Saṅghabheda inscription. The pillar with schism edict between Bulandibag and Kumrahar was ideal because both bhikkhu Saṅgha (Kumrahar) and bhikkhunī Saṅgha (Bulandibag) were situated near it.

Puṣyamitra Śuṅga and Destruction of Aśokārāma

There is huge controversy on the nature and time of the destruction of the 80-pillared hall and other structures found at Kumrahar. D. B. Spooner first suggested that the hall was burnt down and destroyed in the post-Gupta period (6th-7th century CE). His hypothesis was contingent on the discovery of a copper coin of Chandragupta II found in the ash layers and the presence of the fragments of the pillars scattered in the vicinity of the Gupta wall. He says that the flood inundated when the Pillared Hall of Kumrahar and other architecture of the Mauryans still existed. The silt carried by the flood is around 9 feet deep, and incidentally, the burned columns are at the same wavelength. It is possible that the hall was still in use when the flood receded and the structure was burnt down in the 4th or 5th century CE. Faxian saw the Maurya edifices, but it is difficult to say that he saw the 80 Pillared Hall of the Mauryans. The presence of a coin of Chandragupta II on the strata of burning makes it more reliance that it was burnt down in the Gupta period. Many scattered fragments of the pillars are lying above the silt and charcoal that was deposited due to fire. Above the original surface of the floor of the Mauryan time, the ash layers/tubes and broken fragments are deposited. After subsidence of fire and raising of the Gupta structure, when water softened the burnt material and the earthen structure, the wooden support of the pillars started decaying, and the pillars started to sink beneath the earth. As the pillars slipped under the earth, they left circular cavities. Later on, ash and stone filled these cavities, and ash tubes were formed (Spooner, 2002:60-64). But the mere presence of a coin on ash-tubes does not signify that the place was vandalised and destroyed in the period when that coin was minted. A. S. Altekar suggests that the Hall and monasteries were not destroyed in the Gupta period, but a little earlier. The potteries, potsherds, and coins of Lanky Bull types suggest that the Pillared-Hall was destroyed around 150 BCE. It was burnt down during the Indo-Greek invasion of Pāṭaliputra in the reign of Puṣyamitra Śuṅga (Altekar and Mishra, 1959: 23-24). He says that the presence of a huge quantity of ash and charcoal in the hall area suggests that a large quantity of timber and wood had been used to construct the hall. A major catastrophe occurred in which the hall was first burnt down, and then the pillars and other parts of the structure were brutally broken by force. The stone fragments, ash, and half-burnt wooden logs exhibit a story of brutal carnage. All these violent destructions happened in the period of the Śuṅga period, and such heinous carnage was done in the phase of the Yavana invasion, as indicated in the *Gārgī Saṁhitā* (Altekar and Mishra, 1959: 28). Altekar did not accept Spooner's proposition that the pillars were sunk beneath the ground, and it paved the way for the formation of ash tubes or ash pits when, later on, the site was devastated. He suggests that the layers of blue clay set for strengthening the foundation of the pillars have remained undisturbed in all four ash-tubes. The cause of the formation of these tubes is not the penetration of pillars under the earth. The pillars are carved in unique proportions with regular size and roundness. But such was not the case with ash-tubes, which are irregular in formation and structure. The shapes of these tubes are formed due to later intervention by the stone plunderers, who removed the pillars and fragments of pillars from the ground. Slowly, ashes and stone fragments filled the pits. There are no wooden flooring remains in the hall. At a depth of about 8 feet, the whole area is submerged in one foot with thick layers of ashes. It suggests that a huge quantity of wood belonging to the floor and ceilings is burned down in a sudden but massive conflagration (Altekar and Mishra, 1959:16-17). Aśokārāma/Kukkutārāma was indeed destroyed in the period of the Śuṅga, but not by the Yavanas. They were ardent believers of the Buddha, so there is a remote possibility

that they became iconoclasts for their faith. It was undoubtedly done by Puṣyamitra, who was against Buddhism. With the killing of the last Maurya King, Brihadratha, Puṣyamitra Śuṅga came into power in the Ganga Valley and Deccan. His antagonism with Buddhism could be ascertained from the facts that Buddhism lost patronage after his ascendancy, and he persecuted Buddhists and destroyed some of the major stūpas and vihāras raised by Aśoka (Singh, 2014:148-149). Greeks were in matrimonial relations with the Mauryans, and many Greek princesses were married into the Mauryan household. A number of Greeks were appointed by the Mauryans as governors, officers, and in charge of various departments. Girnar inscription of Rudradaman informs that Tusaṣpa, a Yavana, was the governor of Saurāṣtra (Gujarat) in the reign of Aśoka, and he did many welfare works for the people (*Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. VIII, 1905-1906:36-49). The majority of the Indo-Greeks were followers of Buddhism. When Puṣyamitra killed Brihadratha and destroyed many Buddhist establishments, the Indo-Greeks felt offended and invaded Pāṭaliputra. Menander's invasion of Pataliputra and probably the killing of Puṣyamitra were personal rather than political. He was converted to Buddhism by the great Buddhist monk Nāgasena, who was a student of Aśokārāma/Kukkutārāma of Pātaliputra (*Miliṅdapanho,* Vol. I, p.26). The *Milindapaṅha* informs that Bhikkhu Assagutta, the teacher of Nāgasena, advised him to visit Aśokārāma, Pāṭaliputra and learn Buddhist tenets under Mahāthera Dhammarakkhita. Nāgasena went to Aśokārāma and became a disciple of Dhammarakkhita. After achieving perfection in the Buddhist treatises, he debated with Menander and won over him (*Miliṅdapanho,*Vol. I, pp.26-30). The destruction of Aśokārāma by Puṣyamitra not only destroyed the abode of his teacher Nāgasena but also ended the lineage of great teachers produced by this Mahāvihāra. It enraged Menander and prompted him to invade Pāṭaliputra and kill Puṣyamitra.

The Śuṅga-Yavana conflict is known through various literature providing conflicting information about the cause and outcome of war/s. The *Gārgī Saṁhitā* says Brihadratha a *duṣtātmā* or *Adharmikā* (*Yugapurāṇa*, 59-61). It shows how this literature developed a bias against the Mauryans. The *Yugapurāṇa* informs that in the second century BCE, the Indo-Bactrians conquered Pāncāla, Mathurā and subsequently invaded Pāṭaliputra. They fought wars under the leadership of Menander or Apollodotus. They did not stay very long and retreated (*Yugapurāṇa*, 55). D. C. Sircar on sources of the *Gārgī Saṁhitā* says that shortly after the reign of the Maurya King Salisuka, the Indo-Greeks invaded Pāṭaliputra. After occupying Sākala and Mathurā, they reached Kusumdhvaja and occupied Pāṭaliputra. After that, Puṣyamitra Śuṅga killed Brihadratha, the last Mauryan king and usurped the throne in 185 BCE (Sircar, 1963:17-20). The *Mahābhaṣya* informs that Yavanas besieged Sāketa and Mādhyamika (*Mahābhaṣya*, III.2.3). Mitchiner says that the reference to the Yavanas' invasion and the performance of the Aśvamedha Yajna for Puṣyamitra by Patānjali (*iha Puṣyamitraṃ yājāyamah*, *Mahābhaṣya*, III.2.123) indicates that the Yavanas invaded Madhyadeśa and Pāṭaliputra during the reign of Puṣyamitra (*Yugapurāṇa*, 56). A.K. Narayan has two views on the Indo-Greek invasions during the Śuṅga times. First, Demetrius I was the king, and Menander was his commander, or both were kings who invaded at different times. It is said that there were two Yavana invasions, one soon after the downfall of King Salisuka (200 BCE) and the other at the end of Puṣyamitra's reign (*circa 148* BCE). The performance of the two Aśvamedha suggests two victories, the first against King Demetrius and the other against Menander (Narayan, 1957:84; Tarn, 193:166-167). He does not accept the imagination of Salisulka as a wicked king. The evidence given in the *Yugapurāṇa* does not corroborate that the Yavanas invaded Pāṭaliputra soon after the displacement of Salisuka. The war must have taken place around 150 BCE under the leadership of Menander. By that time, Puṣyamitra was very old, and Menander was able to control Pāṭaliputra, Sākala, and Mathurā. It is also noteworthy to say that Puṣyamitra never invaded Sākala, as the territory was not under the control of the Śuṅgas.

Again, he says that the evidence of the *Yugapurāṇa*, *Mahābhaṣya*, and *Mālvikāgnimitraṁ* suggests that there is only one war, and after conquering the region, the Indo-Greeks had to retreat because of issues in their homeland. During such movement, skirmishes occurred between the Indo-Greeks and Vasumitra on the bank of the river Indus (Narayan, 1957:85-88). Patānjali informs Aṣvamedha Yajna for the Śuṅgas (*tha Puṣyamitraṁ Yājayāmah*) (*Mahābhaṣya*, III.2.123). The *Mālvikāgnimitraṁ* says that *Puṣyamitra* appointed his grandson Vasumitra to guard the sacrificial horse. The horse was caught by the Yavanas, and a fierce battle was fought on the bank of the river Sindhu in which Vasumitra emerged victorious (*Mālvikāgnimitraṁ,* V.15.14-24). Mitchiner says that the river Indus mentioned in the *Mālvikāgnimitraṁ* may not be the river Indus of the Punjab region but a tributary of Yamuna and its source is north-west part of district Vidisha or it can a Kalisindh, a tributary of the river Chambal that passes close to Chattisgarh and Ujjain after rising near the river Narmada (*Yugapurāṇa*, 56-57). N. N. Ghosh says that the Śuṅgas fought two wars against Indo-Greeks, as the references found in the *Yugapurāṇa* and the *Mahābhaṣya* cannot be mixed with Kalidasa's *Mālvikāgnimtraṁ* (Ghosh, 1946:45-46). K.P. Jayaswal says that Pusyamitra's Sākal declaration suggests that Buddhists allied with the Indo-Greeks. Because of that, Pusyamitra dealt severely with the Buddhist population and announced the 'Sākala Declaration'. This alliance was unfortunate and brought discredit to Buddhism. The persecution of Buddhism in the 2nd century BCE was a political vendetta, not a theological or social struggle (Jayaswal, 1918:262-263). The alliance of Buddhism with the Indo-Greeks cannot be treated as anti-Indian, as the Indo-Greeks were an integral part of Indian culture. Many of them were born in the Indian territory and served under the Mauryans. They Indianised themselves and embraced Indian religion and culture. If they were treated foreigners, then the Śuṅgas may have received the same treatment. as they were considered Iranians and the worshipper of the Sun (Mitra) by some scholars (Raychaudhuri:1927:235). If Puṣyamitra's killing of the last Maurya king was a 'Brahmanical Revolution', then it demonizes the reality of a pan-India empire created by the great Mauryans. Puṣyamitra Śuṅga dismantled the harmonious fabric and etiquette of the empire where Kautilya followed Brahmanism, Chandragupta Maurya patronised Jainism, Bindusara embraced Brahmanism or Ājīvika, and Aśoka adhered to Buddhism. Buddhists, with the help of the Indo-Greeks, did the 'Counter-Revolution' to redeem the dream of the Indian empire developed by the great Mauryans. Menander, as the true representative of the Indo-Greeks in the second century BCE, faced a difficult state of affairs. At one end, Bactria became hostile to the Indo-Greeks, and to the east, the Śuṅga became antagonistic to Buddhism and the Greeks, who were considered strangers to the orthodox Brahmanism and its socio-religious framework. At this critical juncture, Menander took the mantle as the patron of Buddhism from the Mauryans. Even the *Milindapaṅha* informs that Menander abdicated his throne in favour of his son, became a Buddhist monk, and attained *arahantship* (*Milindapanha*. Vol. II, VII.7.21). But Plutarch says that he died in a military camp, and the cities celebrated his funeral with marked respect, and people rivalled with each other to claim a share of his body relics for building monuments. After much deliberation and mutual consent, they agreed to divide the relics equally and make monuments of honour in their respective cities (Plutarch, 10: 279). Menander's funeral pyre was reminiscent of what happened to the Buddha after his *mahāparinibbāna*. The people and the cities in Plutarch's work were represented in very much the same way as the *mahājanpadas* and *ganas* (republics) did after the *mahāparinibbāna* of the Buddha, dividing Menander's relics amongst themselves and afterwards creating a stūpas over it.

Buddhist literature gives opposite views mentioned in the *Yugapurāṇa,* the *Mahābhaṣya,* and the *Mālvikāgnimtraṁ*. Banabhatta says Puṣyamitra Śuṅga 'Anārya' (ignoble) because he killed the king (*Harṣacarita*, 193). Tārānath informs that Puṣyamitra was king of Aparantaka. He burnt down many

monasteries and persecuted the Buddhists from Madhyadeśa to Jalandhara. Because of his fear, many of the imminent monks fled to other countries (Tārānāth, 120-121). Bu-Ston mentions that a king called Bhadanta destroyed temples and vihāras from the eastern country to Kashmir and massacred the monks (Obermiller, 1999:119). The *Aśokāvadāna* informs that Aśoka built 84000 stūpas, and his fame will survive till the existence of Buddhism. A wicked Brahmin minister advised Puṣyamitra that if Aśoka could earn fame by raising the Dharmarājikas, then Puṣyamitra could get the same by destroying all the Dharmarājikas. After that, he ordered to destroy of all the stūpas raised by Aśoka (Strong, 2008:293). The *Divyāvadāna* mentions that Puṣyamitra tried to destroy the Aśokārāma/ Kukkutārāma in Pāṭaliputra, but he was frightened and frustrated by the lion's roar. After many attempts, he was successful in destroying it and killing all the monks residing there (Strong, 2008:293-294). The *Āryamaṅjusrimūlkalpa* informs that Gomi-mukhya killed bhikkhus and destroyed vihāras. Later on, a Yakkha killed him along with his family with his supernatural powers. It says-

> '*Having seized the East and the Gate of Kashmir, he, the fool, the wicked, will destroy monasteries with relics, and kill the monks of good conduct. He will die in the north along with his officers and relatives, being attacked with a bloc of stone by an angry non-man* (*amānuṣenaiva kruddhena*)'. (*Āryamaṅjusrimūlkalpa*, VV.530-537).

The implementation of the 'Sākala Declaration' to reward the hundred *Dināras* on the head of a monk may be a non-event. Indeed, *Dināra* was not a currency in the time of Puṣyamitra. During the time of the writing of the *Divyāvadāna*, i.e. 4th-5th CE, the currency of the Guptas was *Dināra*. The author of the *Divyāvadāna* borrowed that denomination to create the legend of the 'Sākala Declaration' (Singh, 2014:150). B.N. Puri informs that the *Yugapurāṇa,* appended by a writer, Dhruva informs that Puṣyamitra waged war against the Yavanas of Sākala and was killed on the battlefield (Puri,1990:34). It is said that after his death, Yakkha Buddhapaksa ascended to the throne. He was a devout king and did many benevolent works. And built many monasteries, caityas, and stūpas. He lived a mature age and was succeeded by his son Gambhira Yakkha, an equally pious king (Bagchi, 1946:81-83). K.P. Jayaswal says that Gomi-mukhya could be identified with Puṣyamitra Śuṅga, and the two Yakkha kings could be the Kujula and Wima Kadphises (Mishra, 2012:50-51). P. C. Bagchi says that Gomi-mukhya denotes Puṣyamitra, who was not a sovereign king but in charge of a *gulma* or a division of the army, and there was a long hiatus between the decline of the Śuṅgas and the foundation of the Kuṣāna empire. These two kings may be related to other dynasties (Bagchi, 1946:82). P.C. Bagchi, on the basis of references found in two Chinese translations of the *Divyāvadāna,* dated 300 CE by Ngan Fa-Kin and another dated 512 CE by Saṁghabhadra, identifies the kingdom Koṣthaka of Daṁṣtranivāsin with Uddayana. He was a devout Buddhist and pledged not to harm living beings. When Puṣyamitra started massacring the monks and destroying the vihāra, he got worried. He remembered another Yakkha named Kṛmiśa who once demanded the hand of his daughter, but Daṁṣtranivāsin refused because of the evil character of Kṛmiśa. Now, Daṁṣtranivāsin put a condition of extermination of the wicked king Puṣyamitra and in lieu of that, he would marry his daughter to him. Demitrius took an expedition against Magadha at the request of the Greek king, a devout Buddhist ruling at Koṣthaka in the Swat Valley. Kṛmiśa can be identified with Demitrius, who invaded Puṣyamitra and his main army in the hilly region, probably not far from Swat Valley, from where it was possible to roll down big boulders from the top of the hill to crush the enemy. Another wing of the army of Puṣyamitra was attacked by other Greeks near the shore of the Southern Sea, probably in the lower valley of the Indus. Buddhist reference to the death of Puṣyamitra is a possibility in these Greek invasions. There is no reference to the defeat of the Greeks at the hands of Puṣyamitra as the Greeks receded from Pāṭaliputra due to internal strife between Demetrius and Eucratides. The references to horse sacrifice/s could not be linked to these wars but to other skirmishes with the Yavanas present in Gujarat or other regions. It can be Tuṣaspa, a Yavana

Governor of Aśoka in Gujrat or Antiochus III who marched to Kabul Valley (Bagchi, 1946: 86-89). The circumstantial evidence leaves little doubt about the destruction of Aśokārāma/Kukkutārāma by Puṣyamitra, and evidence also indicates that he was killed by the Indo-Greeks.

Conclusion

The archaeological remains and literary evidence ardently show that Kumrahara was a monastery. The vast infrastructure and use of stone masonry on a higher scale in the 3rd century BCE endorse the view that it was Aśokārāma/Kukkutārāma. The Pillared Hall and other edifices surrounding it were built by Aśoka.

Kumrahara was not the palace site of the Mauryans. The structure is outside the city near the palisades, and the royal buildings can not be on the outskirts of the town. Absence of supporting structure near the Pillared Hall also does not support the idea that it was an assembly hall of the Mauryans.

Archaeological and literary records suggest that Puṣyamitra Śuṅga destroyed Kumrahara, where the great monastery Aśokārāma was situated. The political situation in Pāṭaliputra was not conducive to him, as he killed Brihadratha and shifted the nature of the polity founded by Chandragupta Maurya and his successors. He resorted to religious vendetta by destroying the Buddhist monasteries, which annoyed the Indo-Greeks. The destruction of Aśokārāma, the abode of Menander's teacher Nāgasena, cemented his defeat by the Indo-Greeks.

Bulandibag can be identified as a Bhikkhunī Vihāra. The literary evidence suggests a flourishing nunnery at Pāṭaliputra in the age of Aśoka, where Therī Saṁghamitra and other bhikkhunīs resided. The architectural design of the monastery at Bulandibag and epigraphic records lead to the conclusion that it was a Buddhist nunnery.

***Competing Interests**:* The author has no competing interests to declare.

Notes

1. Xuanzang informs that on advice of Upagupta, Aśoka collected the Buddha's relics from seven places. Watters, *On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India (A.D. 629-645),* Vol. II, p.91)
2. Xuanzang says that Aśoka built five stūpas to celebrate the event that the Buddha's five-fold spiritual body was seen miraculously when Aśoka started building 84000 stūpas. Watters, *On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India (A.D. 629-645),* Vol. II.p.96; Faxian does not inform about the group of five stūpas).

References

Altekar A.S. and Vijaykant Mishra. 1959. *Report of Kumrāhar Excavation 1951-1955*, Patna: K. P. Jayaswal Research Institute.

Aṅguttara Nikāya, 2006, *The Book of Gradual Sayings*, tr. F. L Woodward, New Delhi: Motilal Banarasidas, reprint.

——2012, tr. Bhikkhu Bodhi, *The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha: A Complete Translation of the Aṅguttara Nikāya* (The Teachings of the Buddha), Shambhala: Wisdom Publication.

Āryamañjusrimūlkalpa. 1932. ed. T. Ganpati Sastri, Travancore: Government of the Maharaja of Travancore.

Bagchi, P.C. 1946. 'Krimisa and Demetrius', *The Indian Historical Quarterly*, Vol. XXII, No.1 pp.81-91.

Beglar, J. D. 1878. *Report of A Tour Through Bengal Provinces of Patna, Gaya, Mongir and Bhagalpur, The Santal Parganas, Manbhum, Singhbhum, and Birbhum; Bankura, Raniganj, Bardwan, and Hughli in 1772-73*, Calcutta: Office of the Superintendent of the Government Printing, Vol. VIII.

Buchanan, Francis. 1812. *An Account of Districts of Bihar and Patna in 1811-1812*, Patna: The Calcutta Oriental Press.

Cunningham, Alexander, 2000. *Report of Tours in the Gangetic Provinces from Badaon to Bihar in 1875-76*, Vol. XI. reprint

Dīgha Nikāya, 1995. tr. Maurice Walshe, The *Long Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Dīgha Nikāya* (The Teachings of the Buddha), Boston: Wisdom Publications.

Ghosh, Amalananda. 1989. *An Encyclopedia of Indian Archaeology*, Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, Vol. 2.

Ghosh, N. N. 1946. 'Do the References to the Yavana Invasion of India Found in the Yuga Purana, Patanjali's Mahabhasya and the Malvikagnimitra form the evidence of one single event?', *Journal of the Ganganath Jha Research Institute*, Vol. IV (1), pp.45-60.

Gupta, S. P. 2011. *The Roots of Indian Art*, Delhi: B. R. Publishing House.

Harṣacarita. tr. 1897. *The Harṣha-Carita of Bana*, tr. E. B. Cowell and F. W. Thomas, London: Albemarle Street.

Jayaswal, K.P.1918. 'Revised Notes on the Brahmin Empire', *The Journal of Bihar and Orissa Research Society*, Vol. 4, pp.257-265.

Keith, A.B. 1916. 'The Zoroastrian Period of Indian History', *The Journal of Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, pp.138-43.

Legge, James. 2013. tr. *A Record of Buddhistic Kingdoms Being an Account by the Chinese Monk Fa-Hien of Travels in India and Ceylon (AD 399-414) in Search of the Buddhist Books of Discipline*, New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal.

Mahābhāṣya of Patanjali. 1991. tr. Surendernath Dasgupta, Delhi: Indian Council of Philosophical Research.

Mahāvaṁsa. 1996. *Great Chronicle of Ceylon.* tr. Wilhelm Geiger, Delhi: Asian Educational Service, reprint.

Manorathpurānī. 1973. tr. M Walleser, Commentary on the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* by the influential Pāli commentator Buddhaghosa. (5th century C.E.), London: Pali Text Society.

McCrindle, J.W. 1877. tr. *Ancient India as Described by Megasthenes and Arrian*, London: Trubner & Co.

Miliṅdapanho, tr. T. W. Rhysdavids, 2 Vols. Oxford: SBE, Delhi: Low Price Publication, 2010, reprint.

Mishra, R.K. 2012. 'Pushyamitra Sunga and the Buddhists', *Proceedings of Indian History Congress*, Vol. 73, pp.50-57.

Mukherji, P. C. 1898. *Report on the Excavation on the Ancient Site of Pataliputra (Patna-Bankipur) in 1896-97*, Calcutta: Bengal Secretariat Press.

Narayan, A.K. 1957. *The Indo-Greeks*, Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Obermiller, E. 1999. Bu-ston, *The History of Buddhism in India and Tibet*, New Delhi: Satguru Publications.

Page, J.A. 1926-1927. 'Bulandibag, Near Patna', *ASIAR*, 135-140.

Papañcasudānī of Buddhaghosa. 1922. tr. J.H. Wood and D. Kosambi, London: Pali Text Society.

Paranavitana, S. 1962. 'An Inscription of Circa 200 B.C. at Rajagala commemorating Saint Mahinda', *University of Ceylon Review*, Vol. XX, No.2, pp.159-162.

Patil, D.R. 1963. *The Antiquarian Remains of Bihar*, Patna: K. P. Jayaswal Research Institute.

Plutarch, 1936. tr. *Moralia*, Harold North Foster, Loeb Classical Library, no. 321, Harvard: Harvard University Press.

Puri, B.N. 1990. *India in the Time of Patanjali*, Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal.

Raychaudhuri, Hemchandra. 1988. 'India in the Age of the Nandas', in *Age of the Nandas and Mauryas,* ed. K.A. Nilakantha Sastri, Delhi: Motilal Banarasidas.

Raychaudhuri, Hemchandra. 1927. *Political History of Ancient India*, Calcutta: University of Calcutta.

Rennell, James. 1788. *Memoirs of a Map of Hindoostan*, London: M. Brown.

Roy, Sita Ram. 1987. 'Presidential Address', *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, Vol. 48, 713-726. https://www.jstor.org/stable/44141791, accessed on 10.06.25

Sāmantapāsādik. 1947. *Buddhaghosa's Commentary on Vinaya Pitaka*, ed. J. Takakasu, London: Pali Text Society.

Saṁyutta Nikāya, 1996. tr. Woodward, F.L. *The Book of the Kindred Sayings or Grouped Sutta,* Oxford: The Pali Text Society (first published in 1927).

——2003. tr. Bhikkhu Bodhi, *The Connected Discourse of the Buddha: A Translation of the Samyutta Nikaya*, Boston: Wisdom Publications.

Sihlingloff, Dieter. 2013. *Fortified Cities of Ancient India, A Comparative Study*, London/Delhi: Anthem Press.

Singh, Anand. 2014. *Buddhism at Sārnāth*, Delhi: Primus Books.

Singh, Anand. 2024. *Nālandā A Glorious Past*, New Delhi: Primus Books.

Singh, Anand, 2022. 'Origin of Nālandā Mahavihāra: Structure as Evidence and Seal as Symbol', *Ancient Asia*, Vol. 13, No. 5, pp. 1–11, DOI: https://doi. org/10.5334/aa 273.

Sinha, B. P. 1970. *Pataliputra Excavation 1955-56*, Patna: The Directorate of Archaeology and Museums.

Sircar, D. C. 1963. 'The Account of the Yavanas in the "Yuga Purana"', *The Journal of Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, pp.7-20.

Spooner, D. B. 2002. 'Mr. Ratan Tata's Excavation at Pataliputra', *ASIAR*, 1912-13, pp.53-81.

Spooner, D.B. 1915. 'The Zoroastrian Period of Indian History', *The Journal of Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, Part I, pp.63-89.

Spooner, D.B. 1915. 'The Zoroastrian Period of Indian History', *The Journal of Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, Part II, 405-455.

Strong, John S. 2008. *The Legend of King Aśoka, A Study and Translation of the Aśokāvadāna*, New Delhi: Motilal Banarasidas.

Tabaqat-i-Akbari 1878. tr. H. M. Elliot and John Dawson, *The History of India as Told by Its Own Historians*, Vol. V, London: Trubner and Co.

Tārānāth,1970. tr. Lama, Chimpa and A. Chattopadhyaya. *Tārānātha's History of Buddhism in India*, Shimla: Indian Institute of Advanced Studies.

Tarn, W. W. 1931. *The Greeks in Bactria and India*, Cambridge

Thaplyal, K. K.1972. *Studies in Ancient Indian Seals*, Lucknow: Akhila Bhartiya Sanskrit Parishad.

Tiwary Sachin Kumar and Shubham Saurabh. 2018. 'Archaeological Evidences of Toilet System in Ancient India', *Heritage, Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies in Archaeology*, Vol. 6, pp.775-776

Udāna. 1997, tr. Peter Masterfield, Oxford: The Pali Text Society.

Udāna Commentary. 1994-95. *Paramātthadīpani nama Udanatthakathā of Dhammapala,* tr. Peter Masefield, 2 vols., Oxford: Pali Text Society.

Vinaya Piṭaka, 1996. tr. David T.W. Rhys and Herman Oldenberg. 3 vols., New Delhi: Low Price Publication, reprint.

Waddell, L.A.1892. *Discovery of the Exact Site of Asoka's Colossal Capital of Pataliputra*, Calcutta: The Bengal Secretariat Press.

Waddell, L. A. 1903. *Report on the Excavation at Pāṭaliputra (Patna), The Palibothra of the Greeks*, Calcutta: Bengal Secretariat Press.

Watters, Thomas. 2004. *On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India (A.D. 629-645),* 2 vols., New Delhi: Low Price Publication, Vol. I & II, reprint.

Yugapurāṇa, 1986. tr. John E. Mitchiner, *The Yuga Purana*, Calcutta: The Asiatic Society.