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ZÉMARYALĀĪ TARZI

Tapa-e-Top-e-Kalān (TTK) of Haḍḍa

About two hundred meters away from the present village of Haḍḍa, is to be found a very big *stūpa* called 'Tope Kelān' (Great Tope) by Ch. Masson (1841: 108-10, *stūpa* 10) and 'Bordj-i-Kafarihā' by J. Barthoux (1933: 8, fig. 2) (fig. 1).

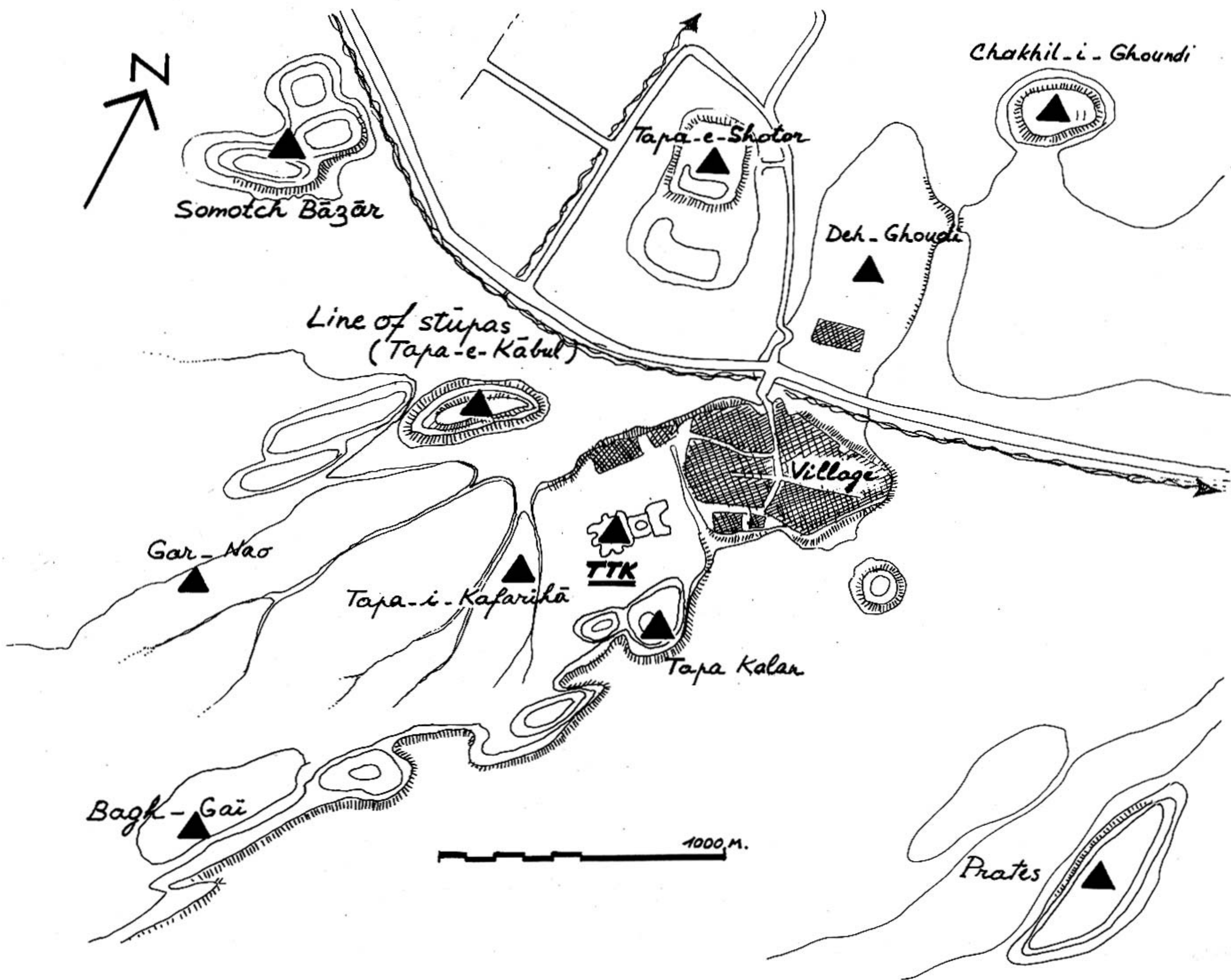


Fig. 1 - Haḍḍa, general plan of the sites.

Nowadays, the inhabitants of Haḍḍa call it Top-e-Kalān, Borj-e-Kalān, Top-e-Kafaria and principally Borj-e-Kafaria (Kafaria = Kafarihā = Kafarha). Before such a profusion of names it is necessary to choose one for our *stūpa* and surrounding site so that we will avoid any confusion due to the similarity of names with the nearby sites excavated by J. Barthoux, such as Tapa-Kalan (Barthoux 1933: 6–7, 67–116), Tapa-i-Kafarihā (Barthoux 1933: 6, 117–43). We decide in favour of Ch. Masson (1841: 108) and will call it from now on Top-e-Kalān (with a slight alteration of spelling) and the site to which it belongs Tapa-e-Top-e-Kalān (TTK).

The excavation site of TTK was not chosen because of its size nor with the aim of discovering objects in stucco and clay which are already well known, but because there were already excavations going on at Tapa-e-Shotor. In fact, studying the complicated architecture spread out over centuries, I felt that it was absolutely necessary to undertake new excavations able to bring scientific informations over the two most important phases of Haḍḍa, that is the beginning of the Buddhist monasteries, and the second phase, most likely post-Hephthalite, which ended very rapidly due to the general burning not only of the buildings of Tapa-e-Shotor (Cf. Mostamindi 1969a, 1969b; Tarzi 1976) but also of all the other monasteries. Our choice of TTK was due to two reasons. First of all, the identification of the Great Stūpa (GS = Top-e-Kalān), thanks to the illustration of Ch. Masson, raised no problem because it is the only ruin of a *stūpa* in the region of Haḍḍa which has a cylindrical form instead of the usual more conical flat form. Moreover, Ch. Masson took the trouble of drawing very carefully the alternating courses of the mass of the *stūpa* itself because the totality of its stone dressing was torn away (Masson 1841: pl. VIII, 'Tope No 10 at Hidda'). On the other hand, the discovery of the Hephthalite coins with the other relics pushed us to pursue a series of excavations under my direction. Because of political reasons, however, we were only able to complete two campaigns in 1978 and 1978/79.

On the spot where TTK is constructed, the plateau of conglomerate reaches its biggest width north-south and forms a kind of natural esplanade rather flat but sloping on the northeast. Set between the present village of Haḍḍa to the east (fig. 2), the monastery of Tapa-i-Kafarihā to the northwest and Tapa-Kalān to the south, our so-called esplanade offered a large area, approximately a dozen of hectares, to a large monastery unit, from the centre of which rose GS, the Great Stūpa of the area, with its nearest buildings. All around, at approximately 50 m distance, were seven peripheral buildings (CP) (fig. 3).

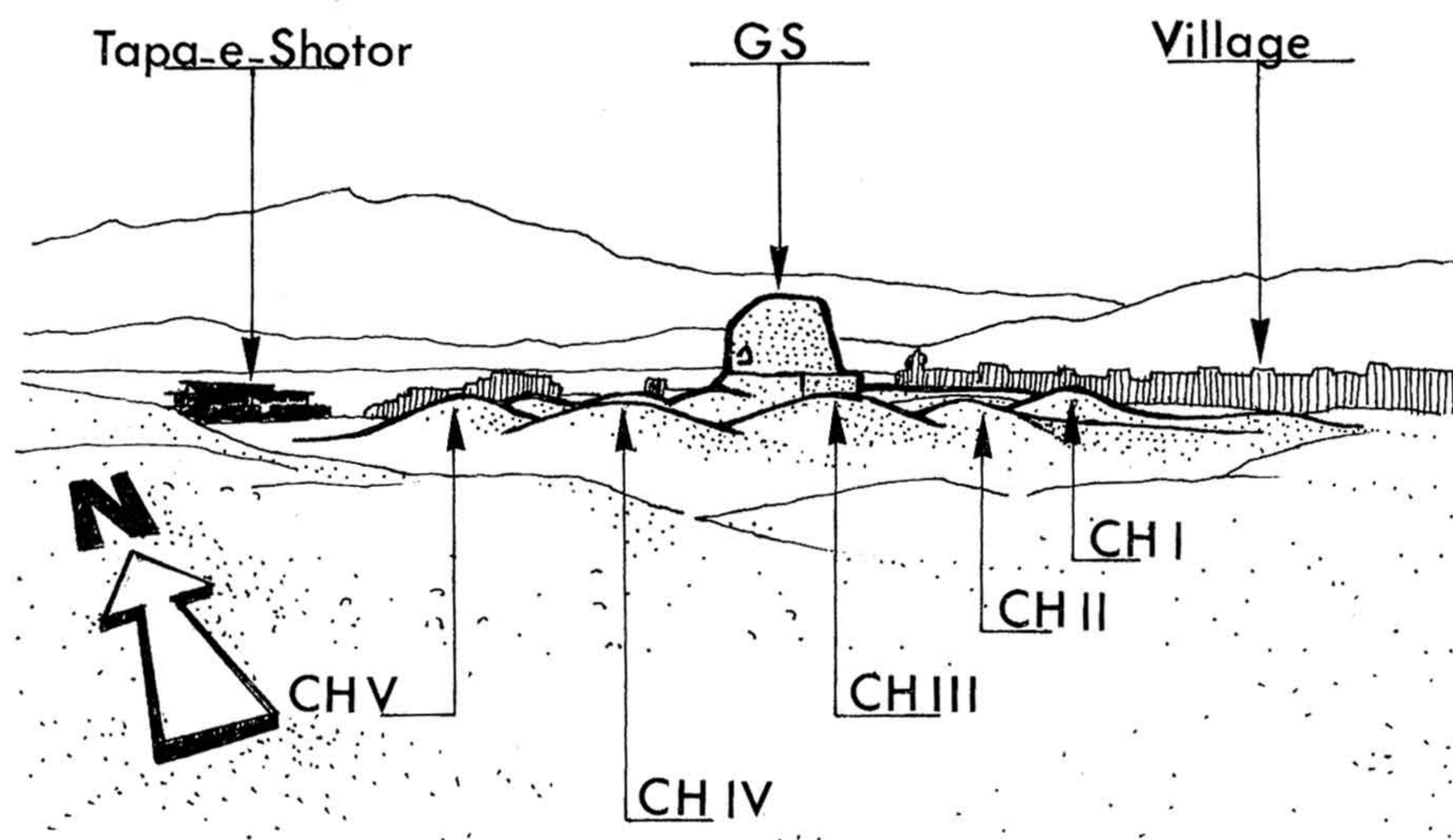


Fig. 2 – GS, Top-e-Kalān (i.e. *stūpa* no. 10 of Masson) in the middle of the Tapa-e-Top-e-Kalān (TTK), not very far from the present village of Haḍḍa.

The ruins in the central part of TTK directly around GS are composed, from southwest to northeast, of the well distinct areas:

1 – GS, in the middle of the courtyard, enclosed by seven buildings, all being more or less square in shape, linked together by a surrounding wall;

2 – attached to it, on the northeast is a square building (*vihāra*);

3 – further towards northeast and in the same alignment as the two pre-

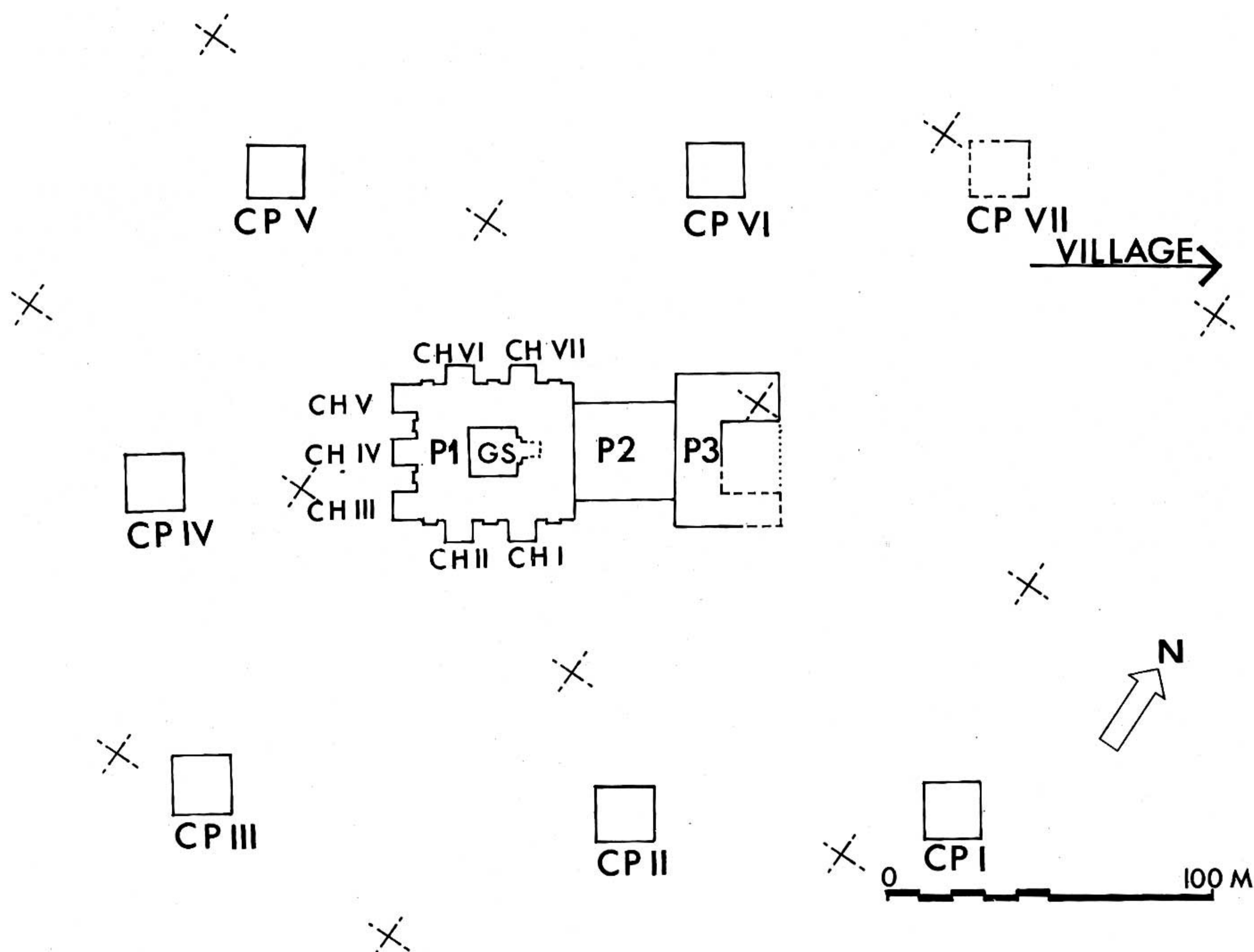


Fig. 3 – Plan of the different parts of TTK with its peripheral buildings (CP).

viously mentioned parts, is a structure built on three sides of a courtyard; the southeast side of it was severely damaged by the inhabitants of the village.

The conglomerate ground on which TTK is built appears even but is slightly uneven and sloping to the northeast. The levelling of the ground of the three areas 1, 2, 3 could be done by filling the huge embankment.

FIRST EXCAVATION CAMPAIGN (1978)

While we were about to accomplish the 12th campaign of Tapa-e-Shotor, in January and February, the mission's architect completed the topographical map and at the same time ordered the partitioning. The ground was broken for the first time in the second week of March. Since the beginning, our main interest was for excavation of the big central square M in which were enclosed areas 1 and 2 and a portion of area 3. Because of the position of the ruins, we could not dig in a straight line but had to

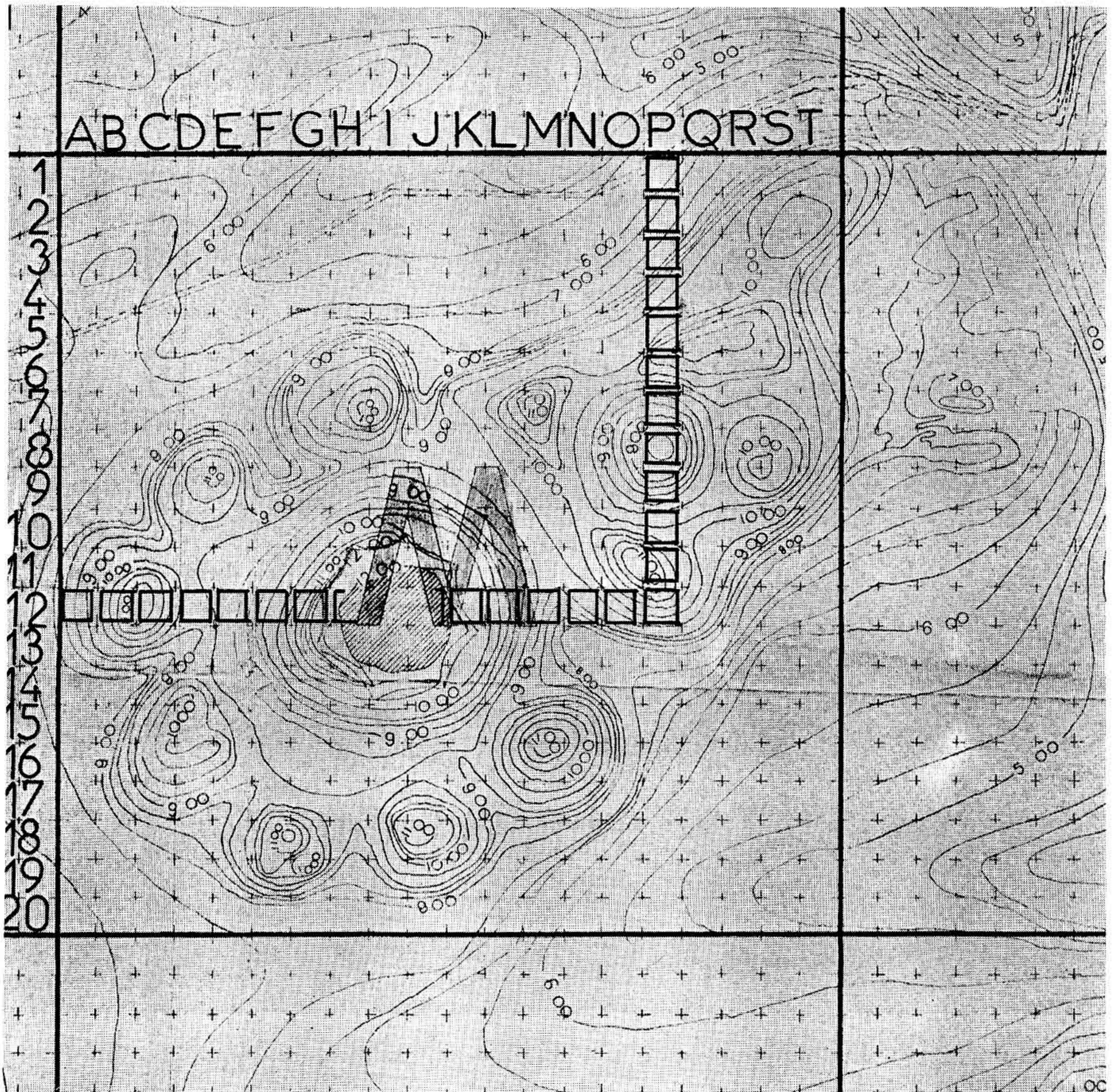


Fig. 4 – TTK. The squares excavated during the first campaign (1978).

follow an L-shaped line. We were soon enlightened about the most important monuments of this site (fig. 4).

Going from west to east in the second square (MB 12) at 40 cm under the surface, we discovered the top of a *stūpa* with a cut-stone (limestone) and schist (rather slate) dressing of a very sophisticate type, which was constructed in the inside of chapel V (CH V). Further east, the excavation cut the courtyard around GS so as to end against the southeast side of its podium (base). This base, as in most of the *stūpas* of this region, was divided into panels by pilasters with pseudo-Corinthian capitals (fig. 5), each panel being decorated by the image of a sitting Buddha surrounded by Bodhisattvas



Fig. 5 – One of the pilasters of the podium of GS (southwest side).

and deities (fig. 6). The capitals of the pilasters are composed by a basket of acanthus leaves whose central veins are ringed like those in the Graeco–Roman works (Cf. Bernard 1973: 43–45, fig. 7, pl. 52). On the other hand, the volutes are incomprehensibly flattened so that they are distinctly different from the ancient prototypes.

On the other side, at the east of the stately mass of GS, the excavation brought to light a stretch of the northeast side of the podium where a



Fig. 6 – One of the deities of the northeast wall of the podium of GS.

set-back reveals the junction with the main staircase. Here also the walls of the podium are decorated with high reliefs in stucco separated by pilasters with pseudo-Corinthian capitals.

In spite of the distance separating GS from the surrounding portico, we noticed traces of burning at the level of the edge pilaster of the set-back of its staircase.

The excavations then reached the two cells at the southeast corner of

the *vihāra*. At this precise spot, i.e. at square MP 12, they changed direction and cut through the central courtyard from south to north, ending at the northern limit of the great square M.

It should be noted that it is not absolutely necessary to keep, as we did, a baulk between two adjacent squares of the excavation. For this practice we had two reasons: first, this excavation site of Haḍḍa was used as a training school for young Afghan archaeologist. They needed to start with strict discipline to be trained to scientific requirements. The second reason is that in a region like Haḍḍa, where the spring rains cause serious damages, the protection of a 4 m square surface with water-proof material or wood will not give any preservation problems to the excavators.

SECOND EXCAVATION CAMPAIGN (1978/79) (fig. 7)

The primary aims of the second campaign were:

- 1 – total excavation of chapel V (CH V) in the northwest corner of the great courtyard with portico around GS;
- 2 – excavation of a second chapel, namely chapel I (CH I);
- 3 – excavation of the northeast corner of the great courtyard with portico;

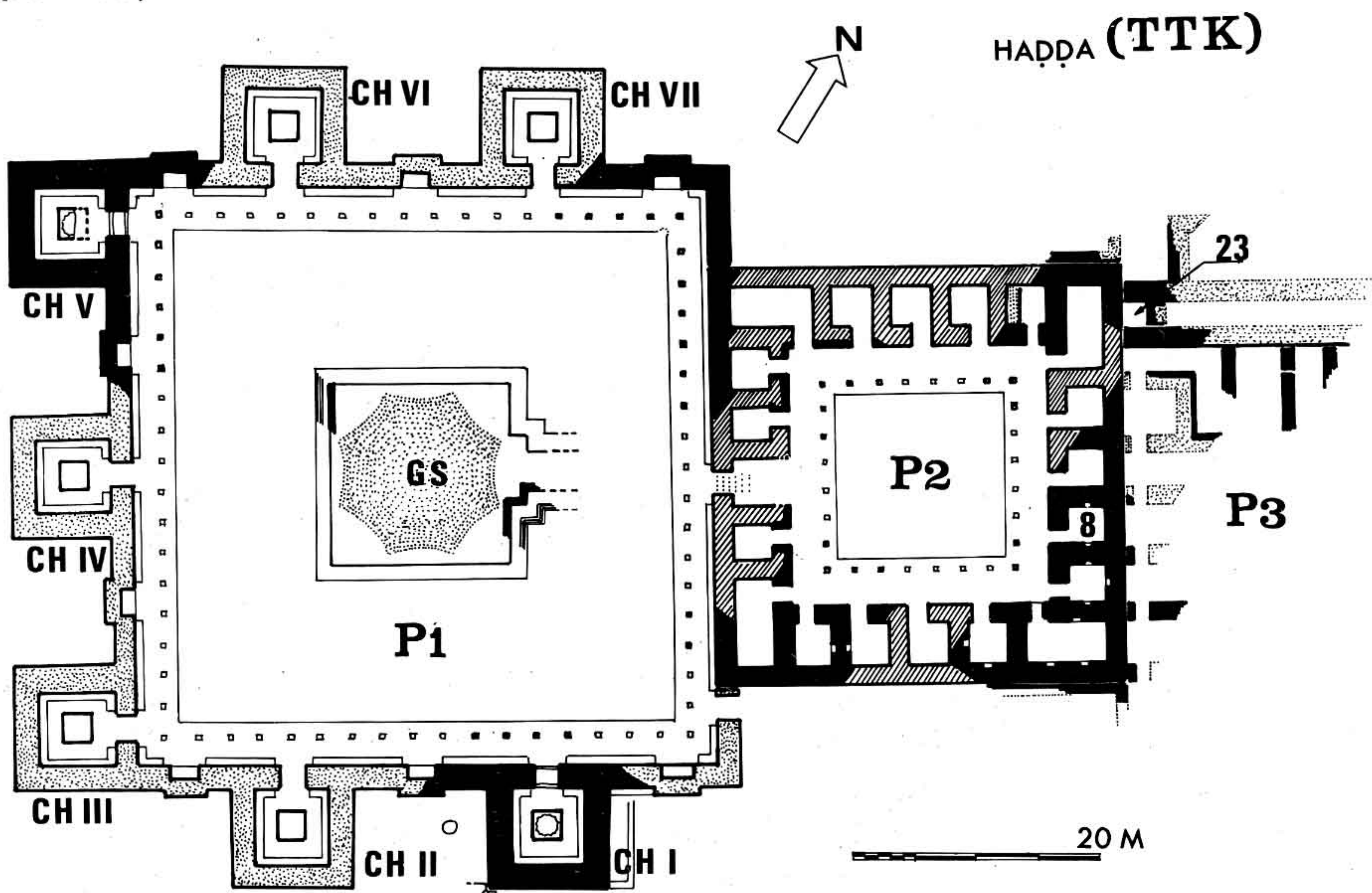


Fig. 7 – TTK. Plan of the excavations (excavated parts in black, restituted parts: hatching for the first period, stippling for the second period).

- 4 – excavation of the *vihāra* (area 2);
- 5 – excavation of the front courtyard (area 3).

1 – CH V (figs. 8, 9)

It is a building about 6 m square, with a *stūpa* in the center, half of which was torn down by clandestine searchers. All around it, along the walls, a bench was used as a base for the big standing statues of Buddha, moulded in clay, covered with a fine layer of stucco which had almost vanished. The chapel was covered with a dome, maybe on squinches. Lots of bricks used as archstones confirm us in our assumptions.

2 – CH I (fig. 10)

This chapel has the same size as the preceding one, i.e. 6 m square with walls about 2 m thick. Here the *stūpa* has been preserved up to a lesser height but its surviving portion is almost undamaged; both have the same form, the podium with a square shape slightly tapering, supporting the high, also square base; this supports an intermediary, polygonal storey with scalloped sides, itself surmounted by a cylindrical element announcing the dome, much better preserved than the one of CH V (fig. 11).

In this chapel, a bench was used as a base for the big images. One of the heads was found quite undamaged (approximately 80 cm high from the *uṣṇīṣa* to the chin, modelled with clay and covered with a layer of stucco (fig. 12).

One of the most important discoveries in CH I is represented by one of the two funeral urns, unearthed along the outside walls of the building, (the second one was discovered outside CH V) containing fragments of human bones mixed with ashes (fig. 13). These finds increase the number of vases of this kind already excavated at Tapa-e-Shotor. The problem of the funeral proceedings in Buddhist monasteries in a general way and specially at Haḍḍa was never seriously studied since the information of Ch. Masson (1841: 112–13) and J. Barthoux (1933: 59–61), until the publication of the inscribed vase by G. Fussman (1969). We are not going to solve here this question; the only matter I would like to emphasize is that there was never found in Haḍḍa an inscribed vase filled up with human bones. These simple-looking vases, without decoration, were found mostly against the monastery walls and certainly contained human bones, what remained after cremation of the monks. I don't see why the inscribed vase published by G. Fussman would be the only exception, unless this vase was not a gift

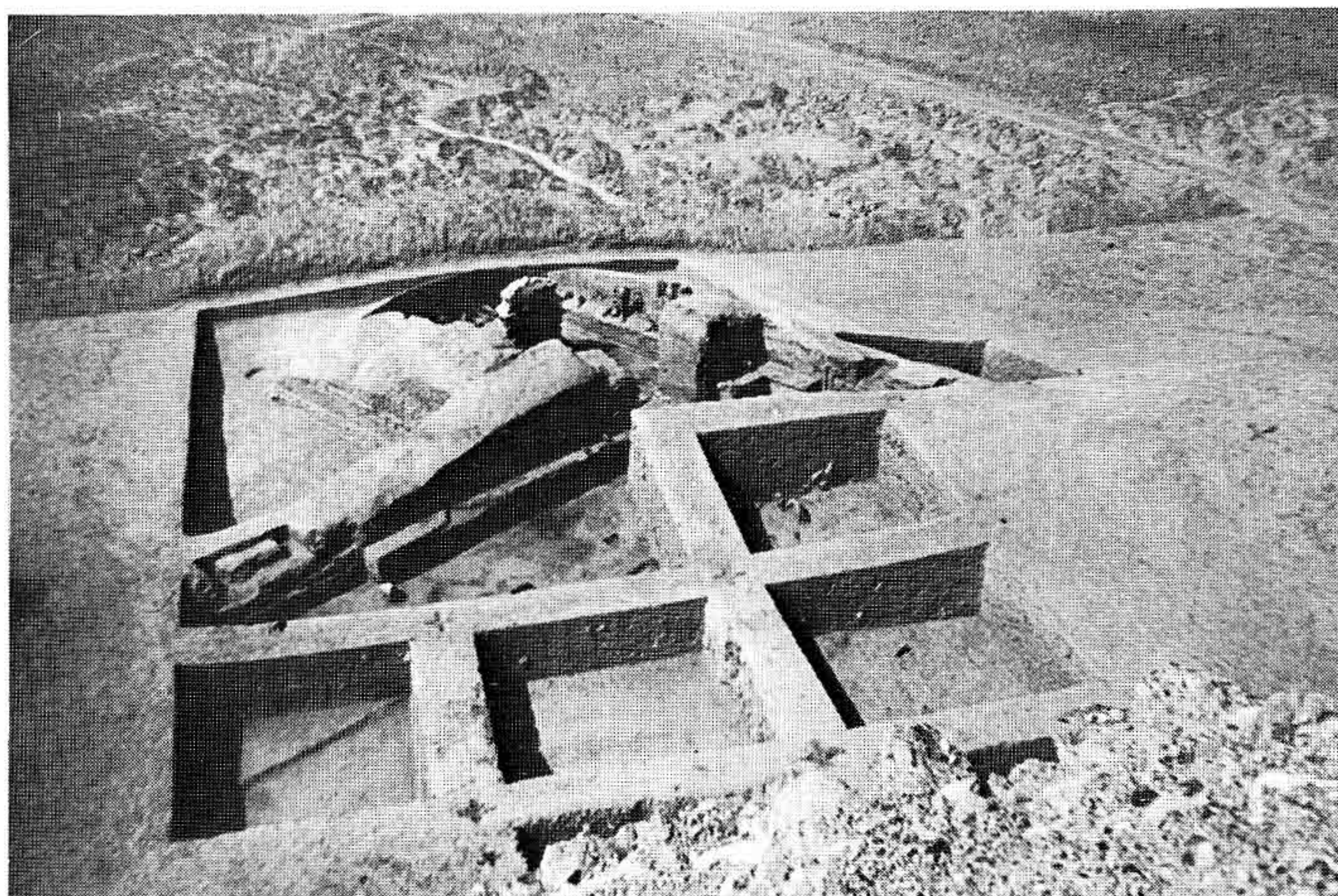


Fig. 8 – Chapel V (CH V) with its *stūpa*, half destroyed by the clandestine excavators. Photograph taken from the top of GS.



Fig. 9 – *Stūpa* of Chapel V (CH V); in the background, Top-e-Kalan (GS).



Fig. 10 – Chapel I (CH I) with its *stūpa* seen from the top of GS.

to a monk but to a monastery. Incidentally, G. Fussman did not conceal his hesitation. I shall say no more on this matter, which will be discussed in another publication, in the chapter about the funeral rites in the Haḍḍa area.

3 – *The Great Courtyard with Portico around GS (Area 1)*

It is a nearly square courtyard of approximately 45.60 – 46.60 m, enclosed by a portico protecting a long bench used as base for standing clay

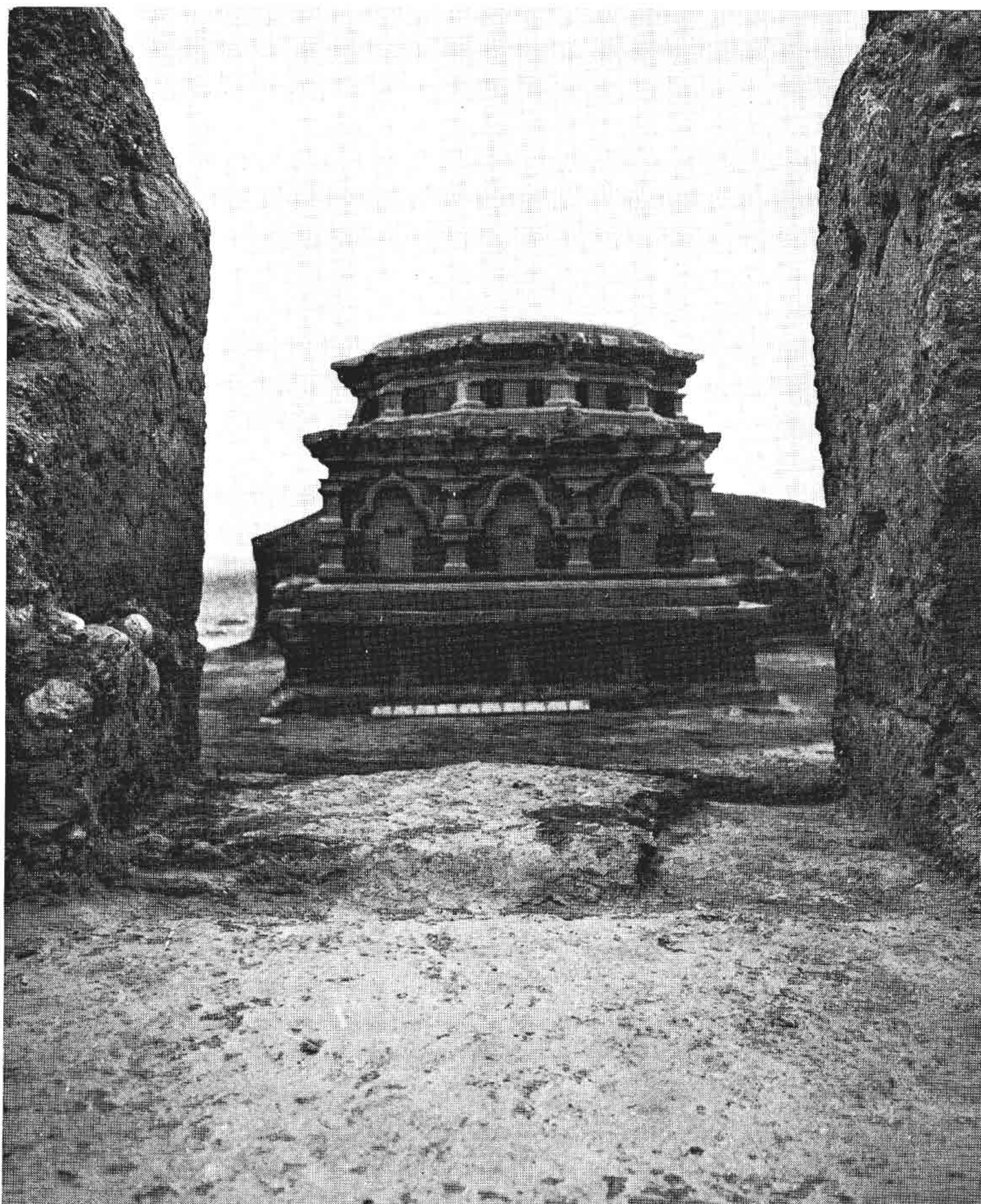


Fig. 11 — *Stūpa* of Chapel I (CH I).

figures, interrupted only by the doorways to the chapels and the *vihāra*. Of the seven chapels opening on to the courtyard, two are situated on the southeast (CH I and CH II), three on the southwest (CH III, CH IV and CH V) and the remaining two (CH VI and CH VII) on the northwest side. The courtyard looks like a small fort with seven towers. The chapels are separated by niches containing clay figures (eight niches in all). With the exception of the central stretch of the northeast wall, backing the southwest wing of the *vihāra*, all the other structures, the seven chapels and the eight niches, were built at the same moment and belong to the same programme.



Fig. 12 – Head of one of the colossal standing Buddhas adorning the bench of Chapel I (CH I). Clay covered by a thin layer of stucco.

There was no break in their erection, everywhere the same laying of *pakhsa* is to be found and there is no interruption in the line of the alternating courses. The roofing of each side of the portico was supported according to our restitution, by eighteen pillars with square plinths having a central $35 \times 35 \times 15$ cm depression. We do not know why the cavities are not filled with charcoal and why there is so little burned wood coming from the pillars themselves and from the roofing, because the traces of burning are clearly evident on the floor, on the bench and even on the walls themselves.

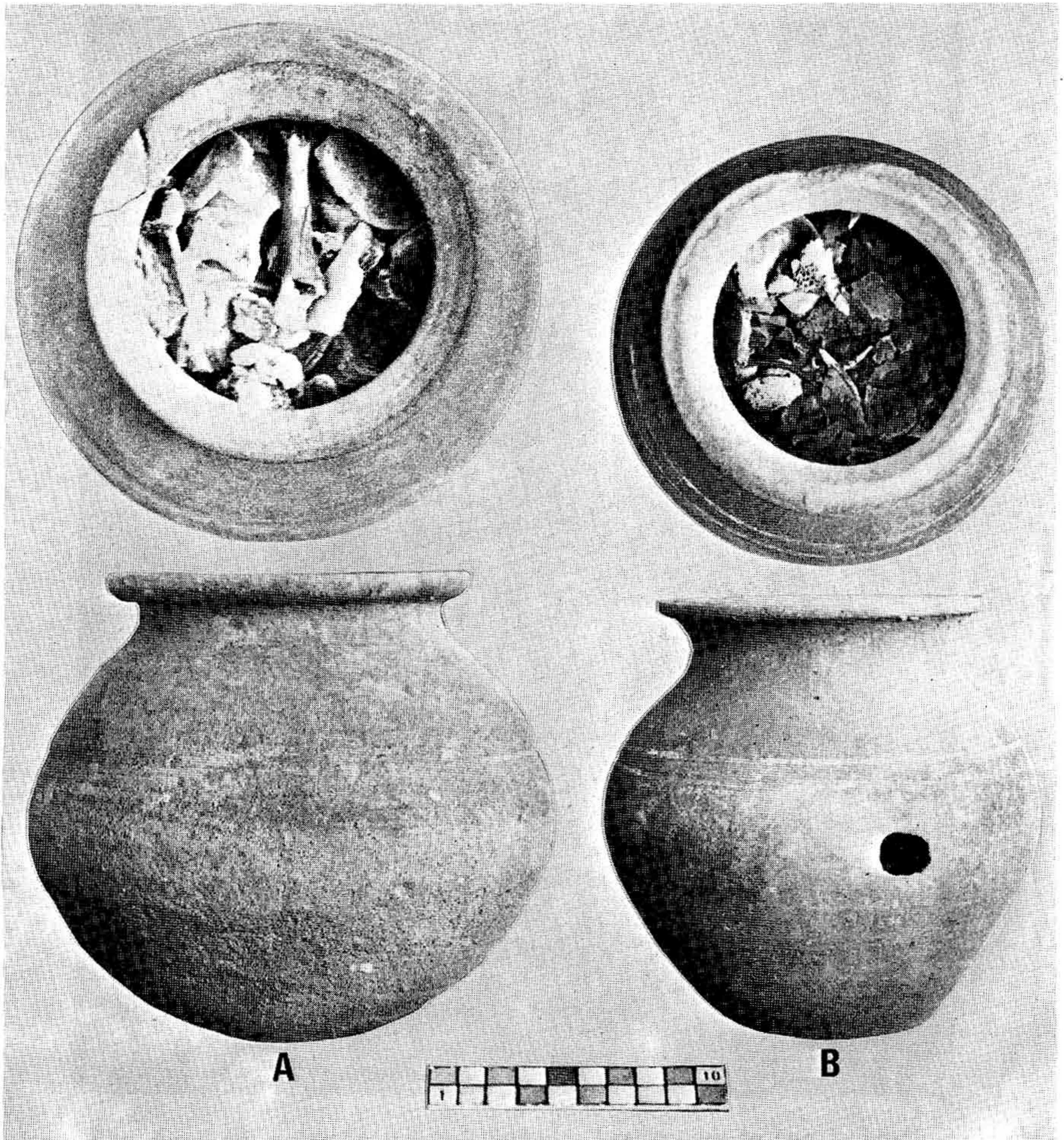


Fig. 13 – A. Funeral jar with burned human bones found against the wall outside CH I (ML 16).
 B. Funeral jar with burned human bones found against the wall outside CH V (MC 13).

4 – *The Vihāra (Area 2)*

It is a 22.60 m square building, with the monks' cells along the perimeter wall; the cells, twenty in all, are square but for the rectangular ones at the corners. The entrances of the cells are protected by a portico supported on each side by eight columns. Here the bases with their plinths and the columns were wooden and, mixed with the wood of the roofing, did leave a big accumulation of charcoal.

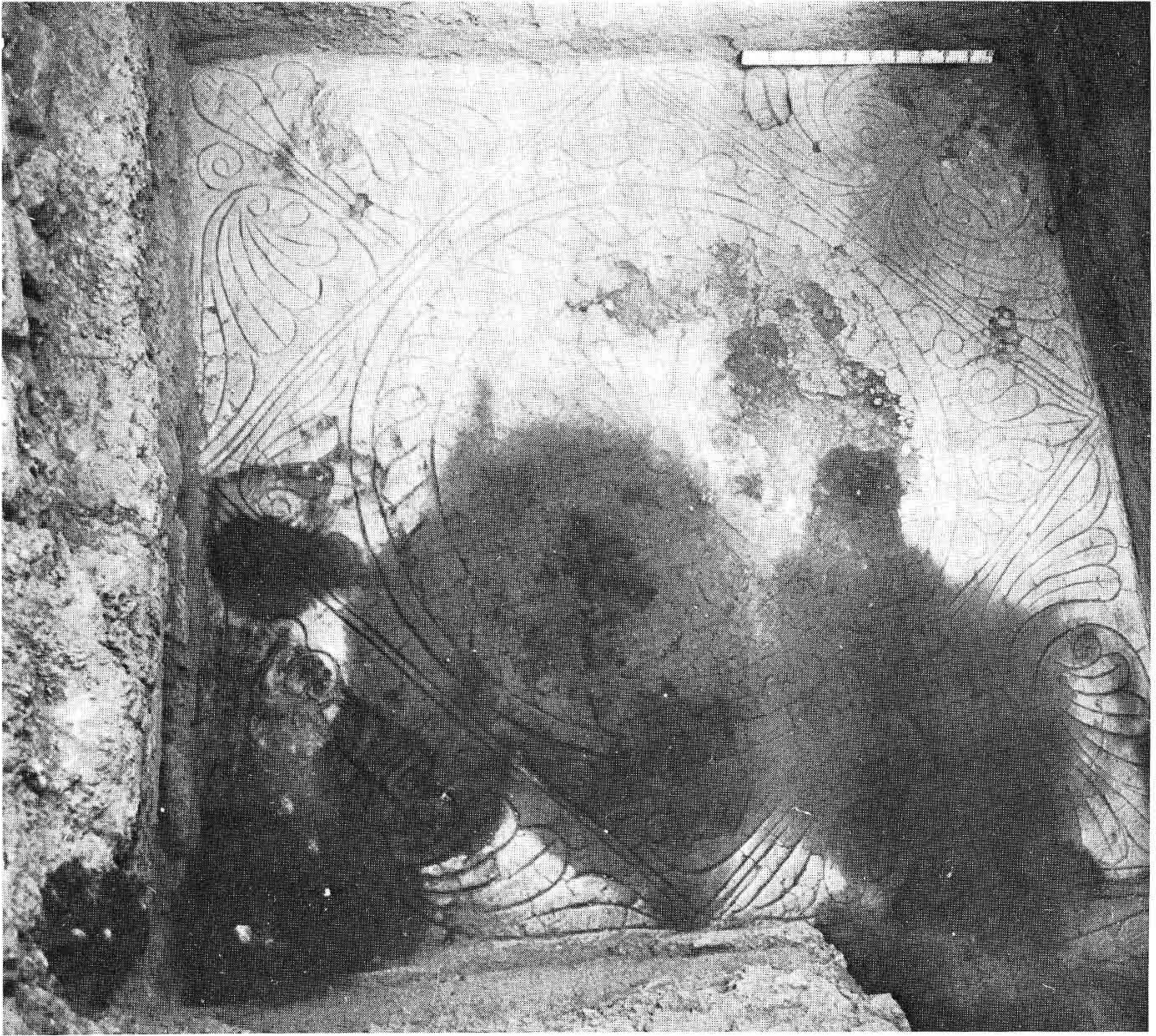


Fig. 14 – A *yantra* covering the whole floor of a monk's cell.

There is no doubt left that after the general burning and the demolition, the site was abandoned. We could see that a column base with torus and scotia was cut and shaped in the same wooden block. On the other hand, we noticed that the roofing of the portico of the *vihāra* was composed by a double disposition, the first wooden beams resting horizontally and topped by a second series of beams sloping towards the courtyard.

Excluding these details, we found precious informations about the door-frame and the metallic elements of the carpentry, which however we have no time to expose here. Before we finish with the *vihāra*, I would like to point out that the lower part of the walls bore a painted decoration that we may compare with the flower motifs from Tapa Sardār (Silvi Antonini & Taddei 1979: fig. 2). I like to draw your attention to the discovery of a second *yantra* (fig. 14), this time in a monk's cell, covering all the floor of the room. Like at Tapa-e-Shotor, the centre carries a lotus-like medal-

lion and the corners a vegetal decoration recalling palm leaves (Tarzi 1976: 409, fig. 22).

5 – *The Front Courtyard (Area 3)*

We called the extreme northeast part of the site, before any sounding was done, the ‘front courtyard’ because of his horseshoe form open to the northeast and because it was built against the southwest part of the *vihāra*. The excavation of the second campaign did not reach this courtyard. On the contrary, we dug out a series of rooms and corridors. One of them was called by its excavator room without outlet (room 23). The sounding reached the virgin soil and we discovered several big fragments of earthenware belonging to the first period of the site.

It is in this part of the ruins that we looked in vain for the image of the Buddha in *parinirvāṇa* which should have been found in a big corridor, according to the information given in 1978 by Mussa Shafiq, the last Prime Minister of the Kingdom, who in his youth was attending the Coranic school of Haḍḍa and used to play with his friends in the hand of a big laying figure.

TOP-E-KALĀN OR THE GREAT STŪPA (GS) (fig. 15)

I do not want to end this paper without saying some words about Top-e-Kalān or the Great Stūpa of the site.

Apart from the discoveries *in situ* of the 1st campaign, of which I have already spoken, the finds of dozens and dozens of stucco objects, especially heads, gave us an idea about the late art of Haḍḍa (figs. 16–18).

As regards the *stūpa* itself, it is certainly one of the most interesting examples to study because of the different layers forming its stately mass. The profiles of the layers of their laying out were checked, both from the outside and from the inside, both by us and a team of engineers of the Ministry of Public Works supplied better than we were with measuring instruments.

We noticed that like in the work of *pakhsa*, we had to proceed layer after layer and wait until the lower layers dried up. The surface of the dry layer was perfectly levelled, quite often with an alternating course composed of schist fragments and even of flat limestone blocks. As you can see in fig. 15, the cavities A, B and C were dug by Ch. Masson. This drawing shows clearly the difficulties he had to face. A first attempt (A) going down vertically and a second one (B) horizontally from west to the center

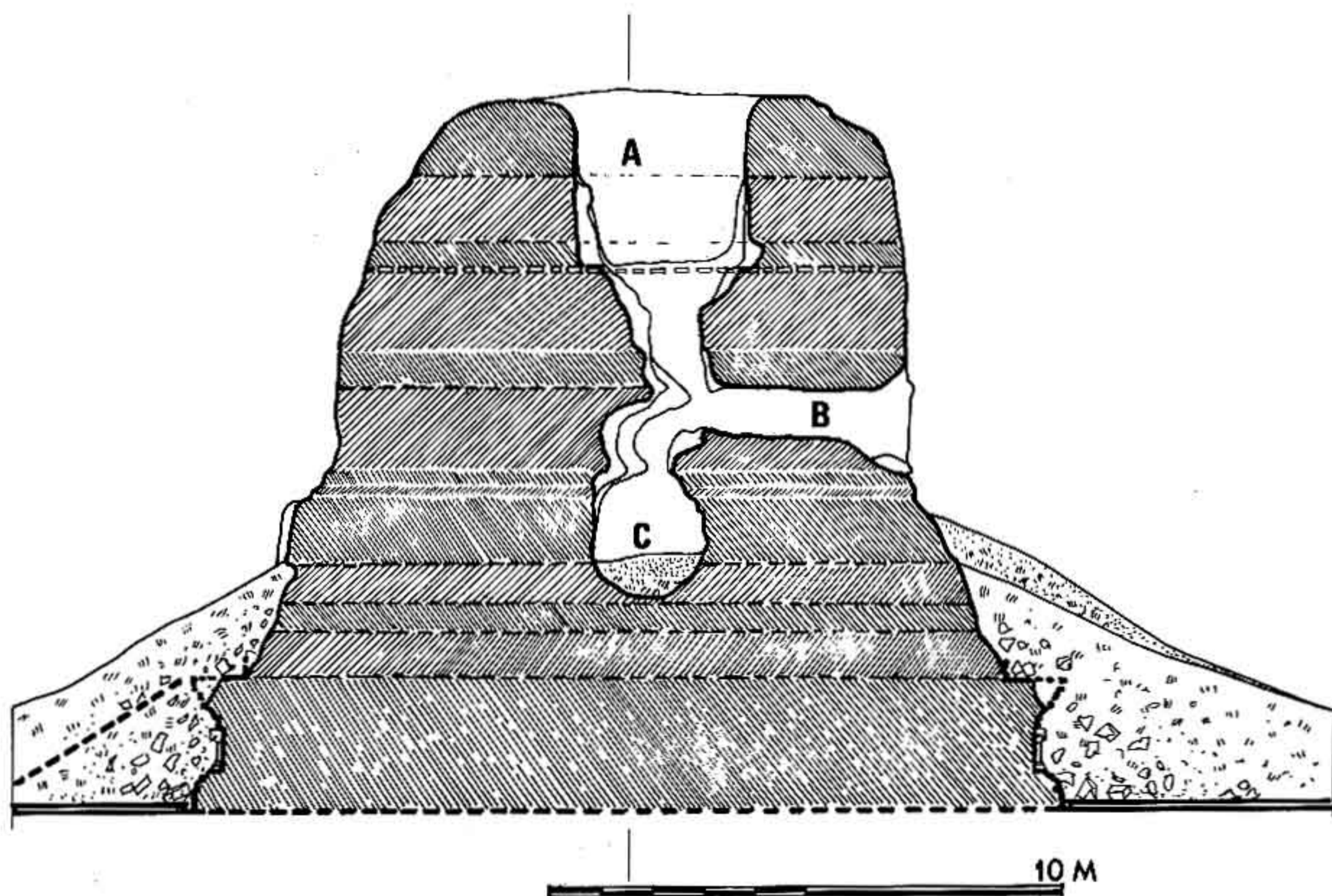


Fig. 15 – Section of Top-e-Kalān (GS).

failed; at last a third one (C) horizontally from north to the center, proved the good solution and allowed him to discover the relics he described in H. H. Wilson, *Ariana Antiqua* (1841: 109). Among these relics, Hephthalite coins (Masson 1841: pl. XVI, 18–20) prove, that, even after the acts of cruelty of Mihirakula, the builders and the artists of Haḍḍa did continue to work not only in restoring the decayed monuments as Hsüan-tsang (Beal 1884: 91; Watters 1905: 183) saw them but also in building large blocks of buildings contemporary with Wu-k'ung (c. AD 753), who found this region on the whole flourishing (Foucher 1947: 241, 244, 348). Between this date and the accession to the throne of the Ghaznavids, the end took place not only of Haḍḍa but of all the Buddhist monasteries of the region devastated by the hordes of iconoclasts and incendiaries. Their only aim was to destroy everything, and the decorations of GS were torn down with picks, so that they could be found at the foot of the monuments.

In this matter, we disagree once more with G. Fussman (1976: 56–59), who after J. Barthoux asserts that the monuments of Haḍḍa were not destroyed but decayed because of lack of maintenance and the giving up of the site (Barthoux 1933: 64). It is true that to locate traces of fire on stucco pieces is not an easy matter: to proceed with this search in fact, one must



Fig. 16 – Head of Bodhisattva wearing a diadem with a pearled moon crescent in the same manner as it is worn by Hephthalite rulers.

Fig. 17 – Stucco head of a monk; northeast side of GS.

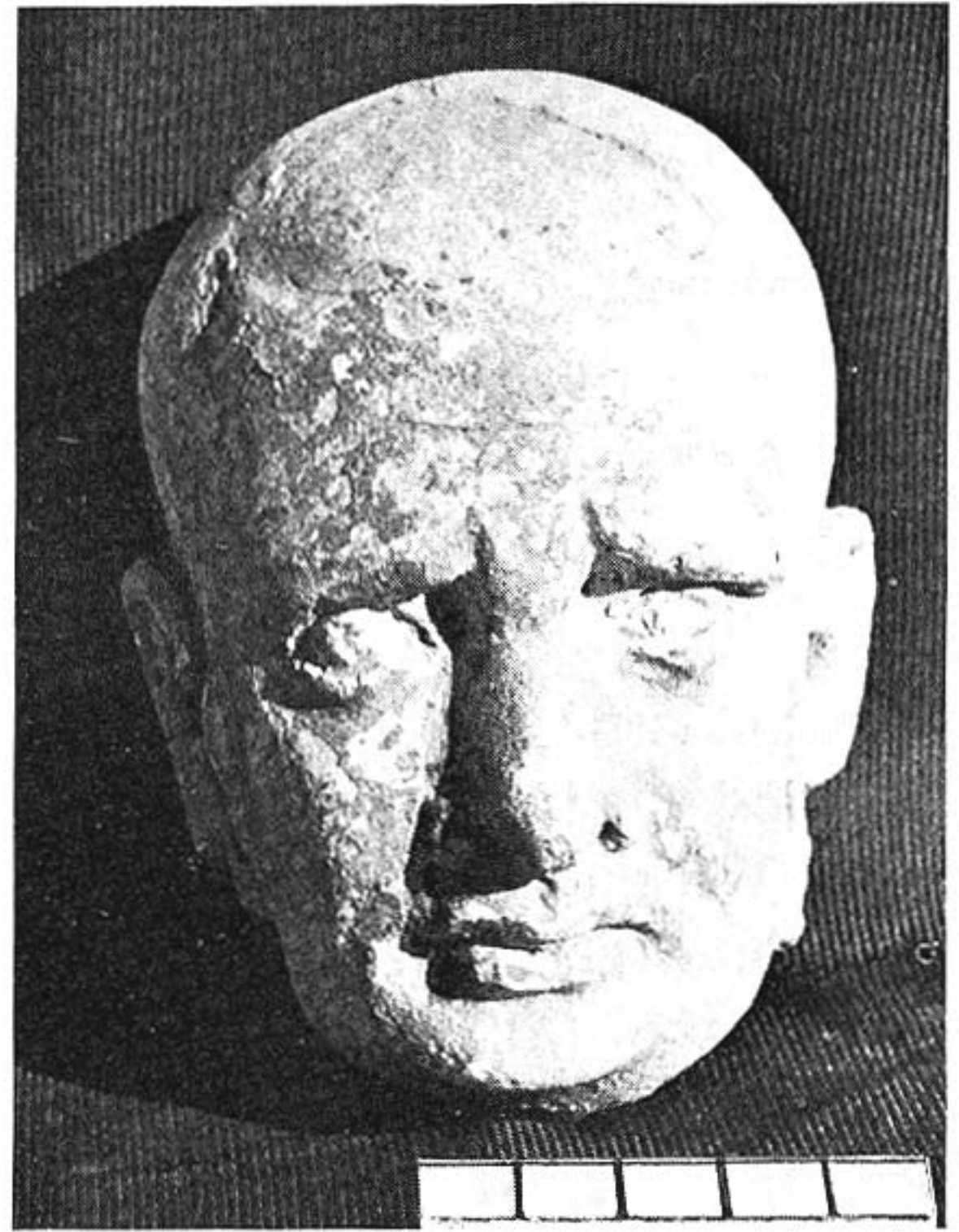


Fig. 18 – Head of a young man in stucco, wearing heavy earrings; east angle of GS.



Fig. 19 – Fragment of a vase, the surface of which is entirely covered by engravings.

look out if the wooden reinforcement, when there was one, did turn into charcoal; also if the inside layers (the mass) of the objects did not become grey. Otherwise, one should look very carefully for the ochre–yellow, brown, purple–blue, grey and even black spots appearing on the surface of the objects. Everywhere in Paris, Kabul, Berlin, I saw this kind of burned traces on the objects in stucco from Haḍḍa. What is much more astonishing is that in the filling up of the former excavation of J. Barthoux, for example Tapa–Kalān, I found a large amount of fragments of coating of the burned walls and charcoal fragments.

As regards the general final burning of the Buddhist monasteries, from Haḍḍa to Chahār Bāgh (Čahār Bāḡ), through Ganda Cheshma (Ganda Češma), there is no doubt that it destroyed definitively the monastic activities. Sometimes, the traces of burning can be seen at a glance on the surface of the sites, e.g. at Chahār Bāgh. Archaeologically speaking, this burned layers can be identified by the sherds of the water vases, a kind of globular jar approximately 30 to 50 cm in diameter, the surface of which was entirely covered by engravings of a motif repeating itself or of several motifs combined so as to create a complete image. This kind of ware found at TTK in the burnt layer, decorated by a vegetal motif (a kind of flower

flanked by two leaves) was already seen in the layer of the final burning at Tapa-e-Shotor (fig. 19).

In other words, even if the block of buildings of TTK was brought to life later than Tapa-e-Shotor, they underwent the same fate and perished the same day.

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