

British Discovery of India's Ancient Past

Background

- East India Company
 - Founded in 1600 as a trading company
 - Large army and creation of an empire
 - Indian rebellion of 1857
- Mughal Empire
 - Glory days
 - Break up from the death of Aurangzeb in 1707
 - Last emperor exiled in Burma
- Indian Princely States
 - Nizams of Hyderabad
 - Mysore

People

- Colin Mackenzie 1754-1821
 - First Surveyor General of India 1815
 - Survey of Mysore
- James Prinsep 1799-1840
 - Assay master at Calcutta and Benares mints
 - Linguist
- Charles Masson (James Lewis) 1800-1853
 - Soldier, deserter and spy
 - Exploration of NW India and Afghanistan
- Alexander Cunningham 1814-1893
 - Army engineer in Bengal
 - Founded the Archaeological Survey of India

Colin Mackenzie



*Colin Mackenzie Surveyor
of India*



James
Prinsip

Alexander Cunningham



Alexander Cunningham (centre) at the time of his retirement from the Indian Army, with other Royal Engineer officers in October 1862. (Royal Engineers Museum, Chatham)

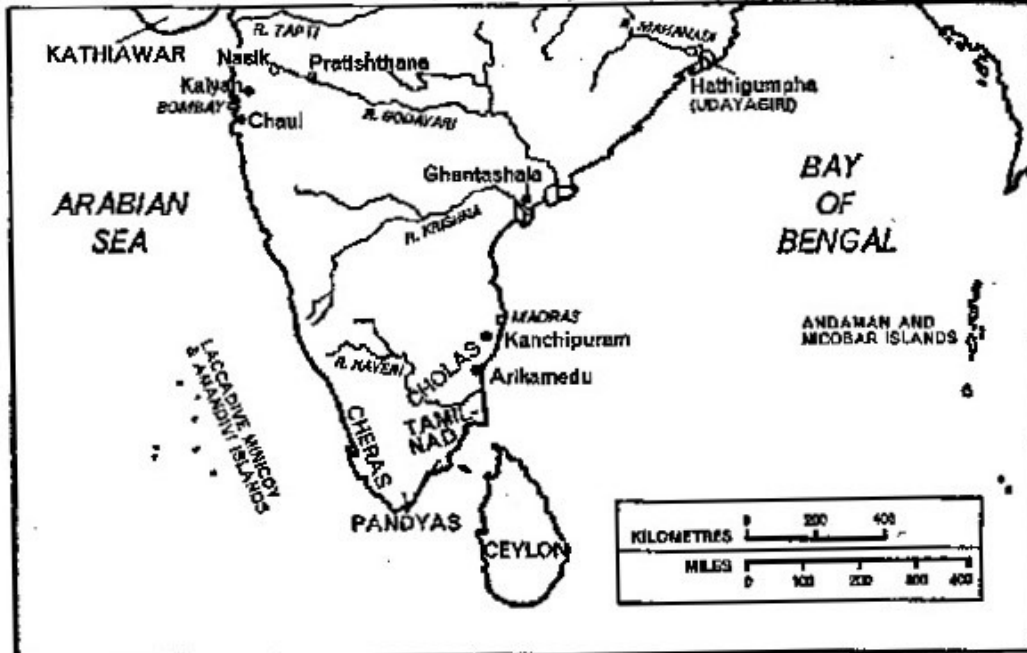
Buddhist Stupas



Ancient Sites

- Indus Valley Civilization
- Edicts of Emperor Ashoka
- Amaravati Buddhist Stupa
- Taxila city

**THE INDIAN SUB-CONTINENT
A.D. 100-500**



Indus Valley Civilization

- Bronze age 3300 to 1300BCE
- NW India and Pakistan
 - Harappa and Mohenjodaro
- Discovered by Charles Masson
- 1856 railway construction
- Studies by Alexander Cunningham

Mohenjodaro



Indus Valley Seals



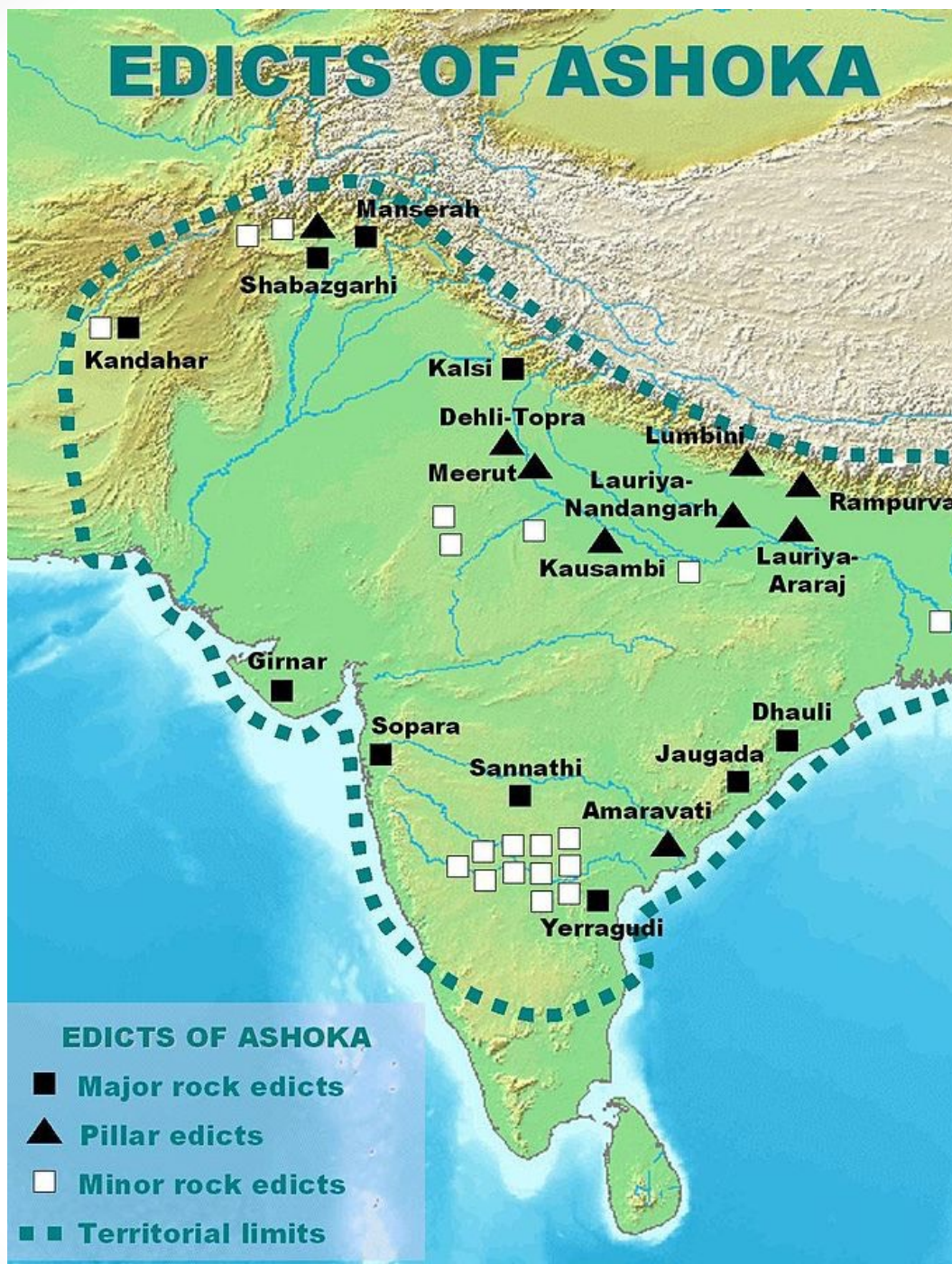
Dholavira



Ashokan Pillar and Rock Edicts

- Emperor Ashoka r269 to 232 BCE
 - Conversion to Buddhism
- Rock and pillar inscriptions
- Brahmi and Kharoshthi scripts
- Deciphered by James Prinsep

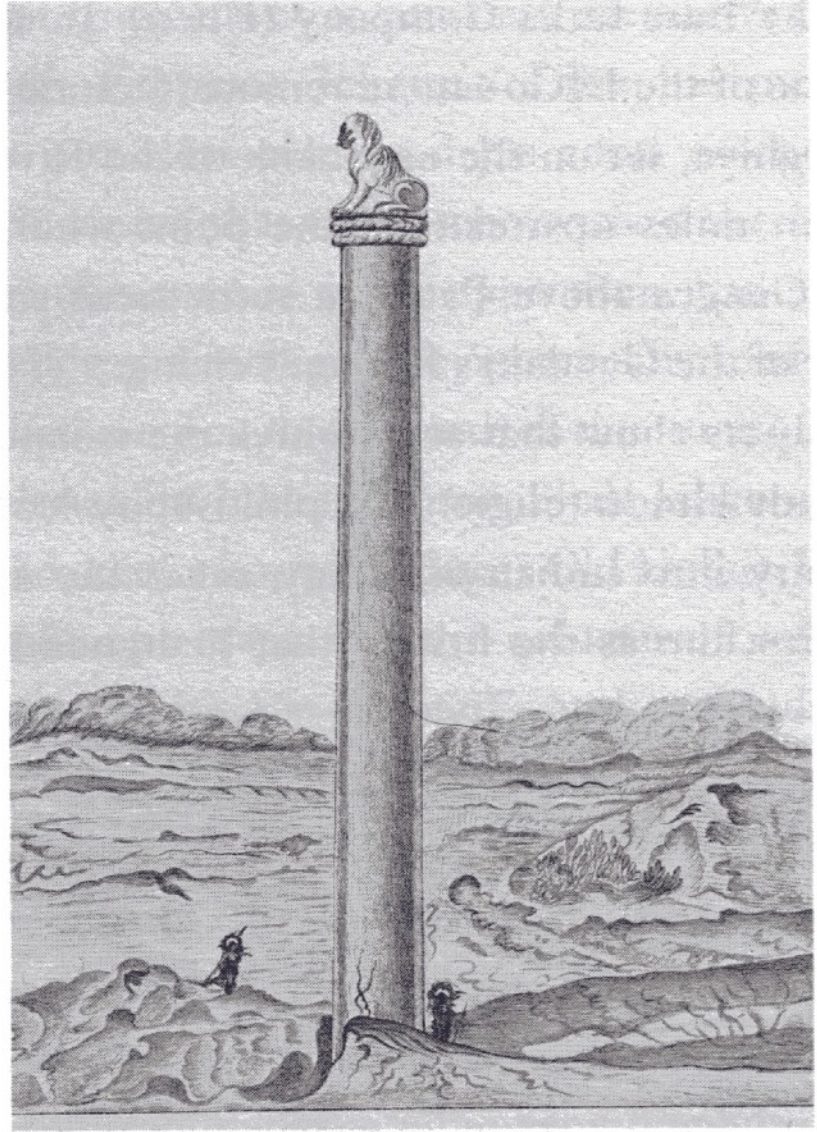
EDICTS OF ASHOKA



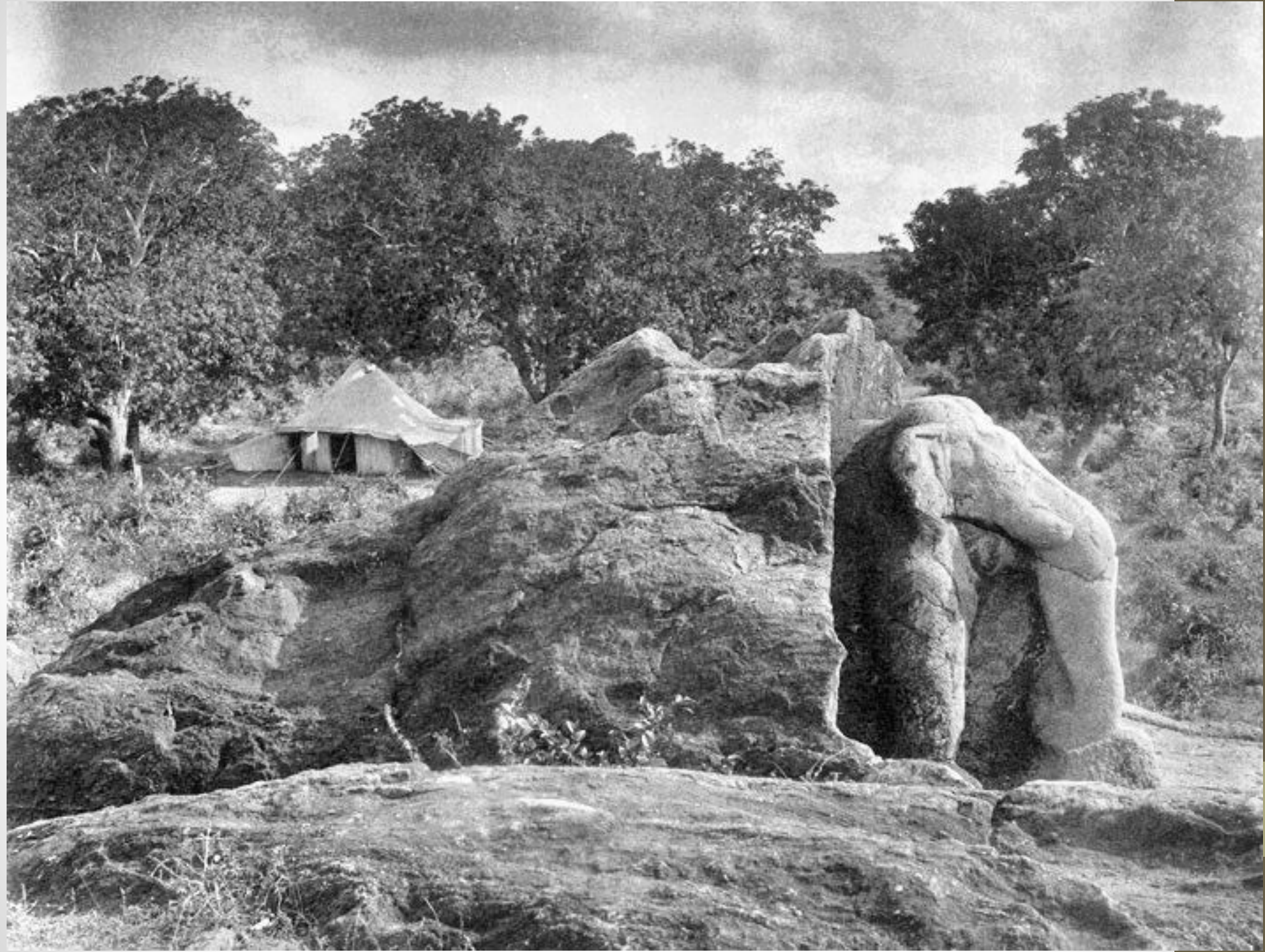
EDICTS OF ASHOKA

- Major rock edicts
- ▲ Pillar edicts
- Minor rock edicts
- ■ Territorial limits

Ashokan Pillar

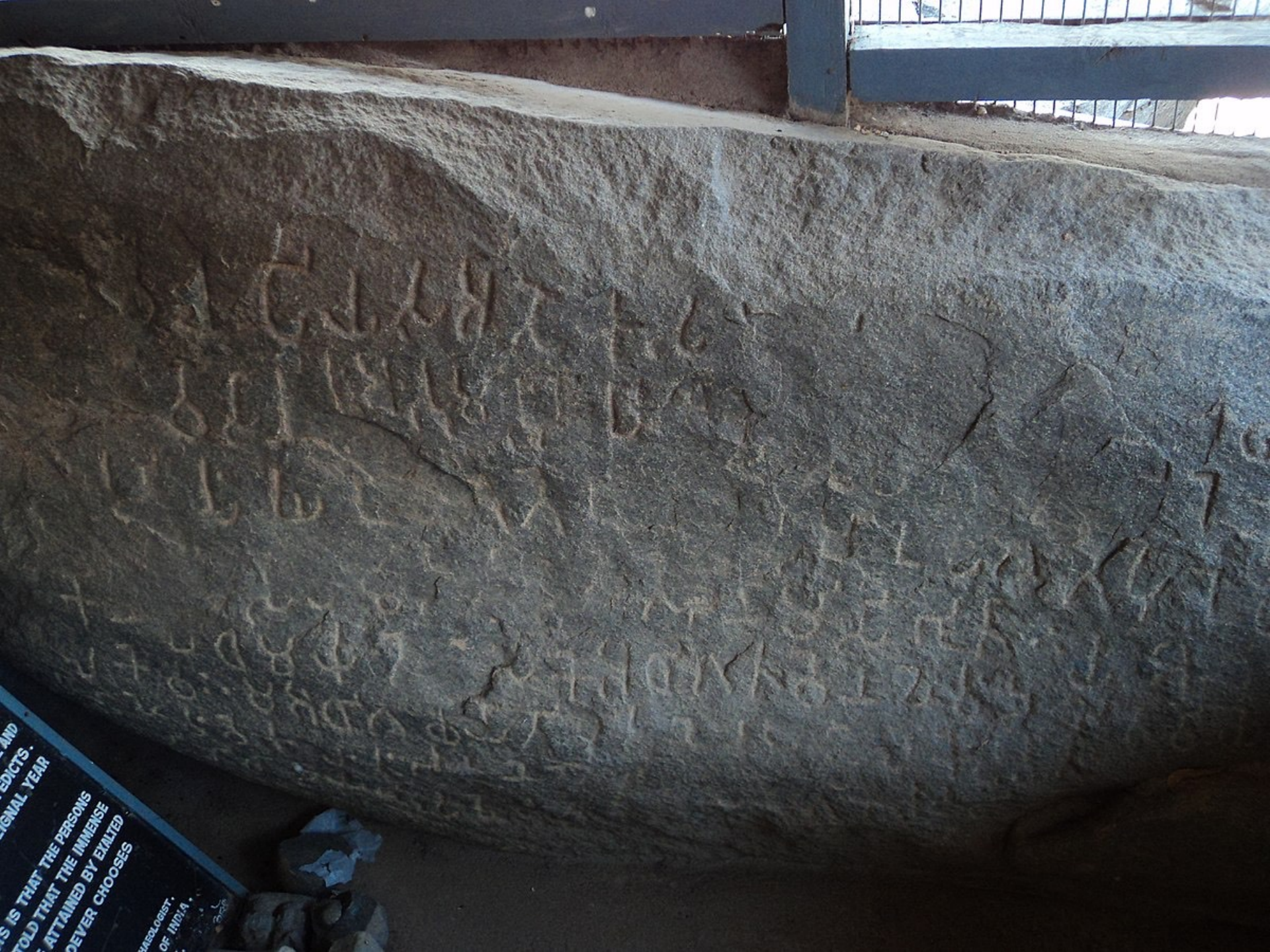


The 'Tyger ingraven' capital and stone column seen by John Marshall in North Bihar, as drawn by an unidentified artist – probably Thomas Law – in about 1783. The column is today known as the Lauriya-Nandangarh pillar. (Royal Asiatic Society)

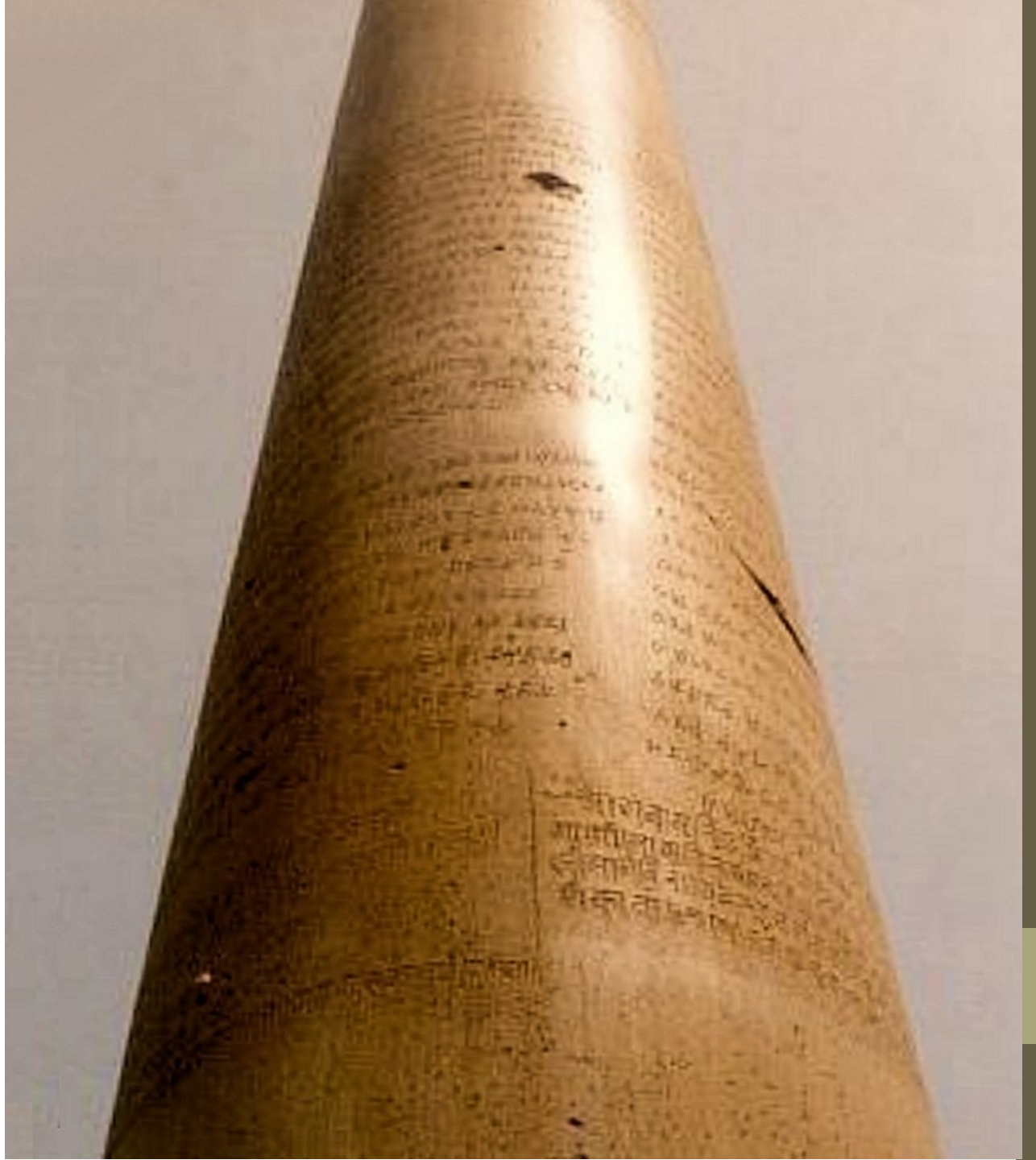


AND
EDICTS.
ORIGINAL YEAR
IS THAT THE PERSONS
ATTAINED BY EXALTED
NEVER CHOOSES

ARCHAEOLOGIST,
OF INDIA



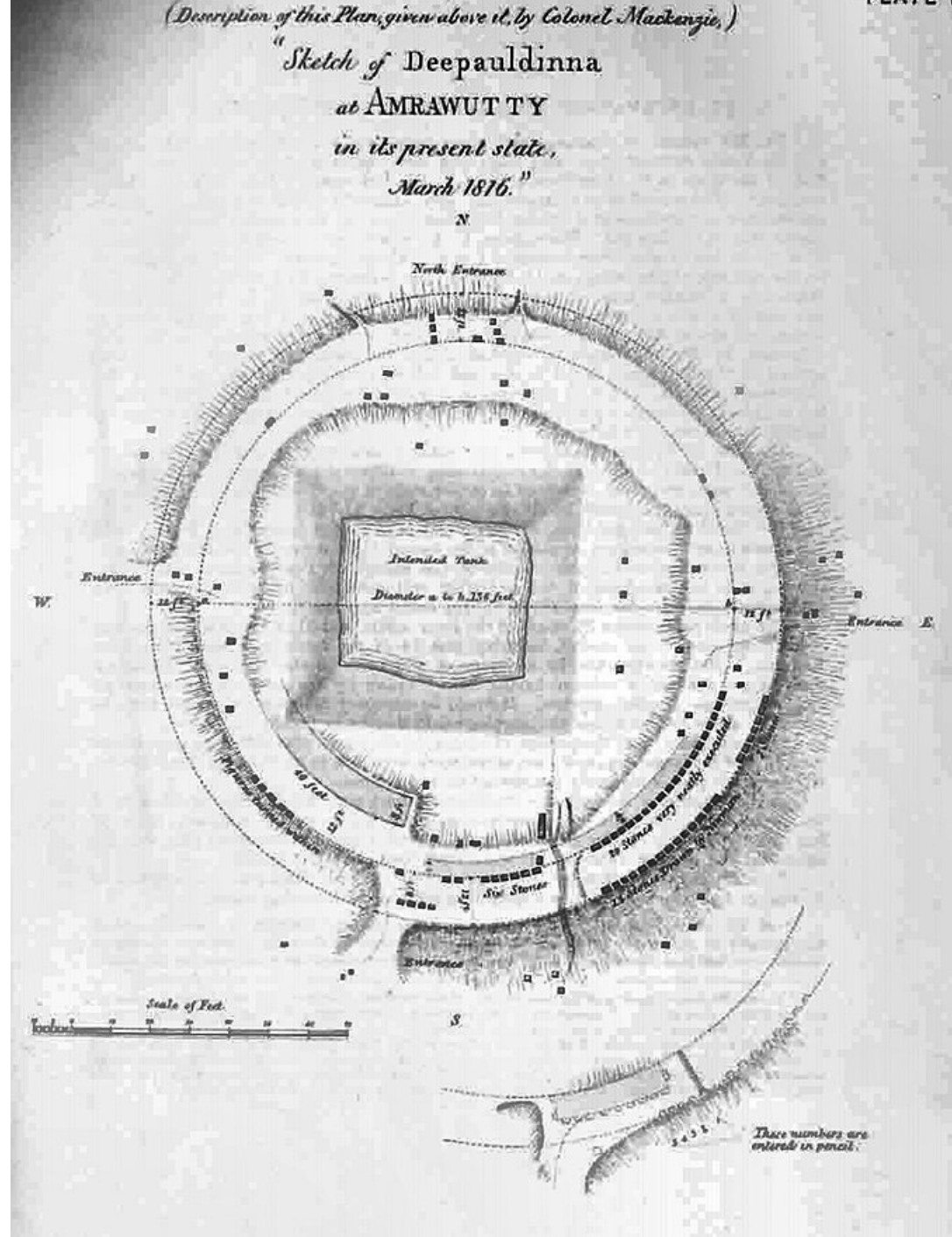
Bi lingual pillar



Amaravati Monastery

- In modern Andhra Pradesh state
- Large Buddhist monastery only great stupa remains
- Built between 3rd century BCE and 250CE
- Discovered by Colin Mackenzie
- Several sculptures in the British Museum

Plan of Stupa at Amaravati



Amaravati



Excavations at Amaravati 1880



Sculptures in the BM



Taxila

- Ruins in NW Pakistan
- Ancient city on trade routes linking India and Central Asia
- Four major cities at three different sites
- Destroyed in 5th century
- Many Buddhist structures
- Identified by Alexander Cunningham

Taxila



Ancient Stupa - Taxila



Taxila



Nalanda

- Buddhist monastery and university
- Centre of learning 5th to 12th centuries
- Visited by Chinese pilgrim monks
 - Xuang Zang
- First surveyed 1811-1812

Nalanda in 1872



Nalanda now

