

EXCAVATION AT SAMPER DHERI, BAJA STŪPA, KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA, PAKISTAN

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Introduction

The region of Gandhara is known for its rich cultural heritage and has always remained focus of great archaeological interests, particularly for the numerous Buddhist sites. However the tragedy with these sites is the continuous clandestine activities going on in the area since the British period. But despite the security constraints and increase in the illegal diggings, some official and scientific excavations have also been continuing in the region.

Discussion and Conclusion

The paper will discuss one of such Buddhist Stūpa site which first became victim to illegal diggings but later on a salvage excavation was undertaken by the author. The paper will focus on one side on the results of the excavation which resulted in the discovery of so far largest Stūpa building in the region, stone and stucco sculptures and coins. Similarly this Stūpa is among the few reported in Gandhara revealing hoard of coins in the relic casket providing an absolute chronology for the establishment of the site. The other aspect will compare it with the already known Buddhist establishments in the neighbouring areas thus to find a proper cultural and chronological Buddhist profile of the region.

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