



ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

Ancient History

KUSHAN DYNASTY HUVISHKA AND KANISHKA II COINS ARE FETCHED FROM ULTA KHERA MOUND, HASTINAPUR

KEY WORDS: Coins, Hastinapur, Kushan Dynasty, Excavation.

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ABSTRACT

Hastinapur is full of mysteries since the Mahabharata period. This secret never came in light. The mystery of Mahabharata period did not open completely from Hastinapur, but it became apparent that Hastinapur was time to time devastated and settled. The Great Flood in the Mahabharata era, described in the Puranas, was certified by Hastinapur excavation. In 1950-52 Dr. B.B. Lal excavated at Ulta Khera mound in Hastinapur and fixed 5 period stratas. In this excavation, it was found that Hastinapur was declined several times and many times resumption began. Evidence from pre 1200 BC to early 15th century AD has been received in Hastinapur. The highest evidence has been obtained in excavation from the Kushan Period. After 70 years of excavation, we obtained the coins of Kushan Dynasty Kings Huvishka, Vasudeva and Kanishka II. Coins of Huvishka and Kanishka II are obtained first time in the history of Hastinapur from Ulta Khera Mound.

INTRODUCTION

Hastinapur north latitude 29°9' and East longitude 78°3', is located in Tehsil Mawana in district Meerut of Uttar Pradesh. It is located approx. 109 km north east direction to the capital Delhi and approx. 37 km from district headquarter Meerut. Hastinapur is famous capital of Kuru Kingdom in Mahabharata era [1]. Since before only one mound is known i.e. Ulta Khera Mound but now two other mounds/places were discovered in Hastinapur or nearby areas i.e. Barakhamba Mound [2] and Ujdi Kheri (in Bahsuma, approx 7 km from Hastinapur) [3], if we see all these three mounds they will appear in series. May be, by the passage of time these three are cut down to make the roads and buildings or used in any other form.

Dr. B. B. Lal conducted excavation in year 1950-1952 at Ulta Khera Mound in Hastinapur. 4 tranches were laid out at different locations at mound. This type of mound are very important for historical research point of view. They brought out 5 detached habitational stratum. According to the excavation report published in Ancient India no 10 & 11 [4]; the first occupational slab ranging from Pre 1200 BC (Before Christ) represent Ochre-coloured ware (OCW), there is no any structural remains found from this period because the area of excavation is limited. The second slab, which is to be associated with the period of Mahabharata (supposed to be) ranges from 1100 B.C. to 800 B.C., in this period they found Painted Grey Ware (PGW), ordinary red and red slipped wares with black slipped ware recovered. There is no regular house plan obtained from this period but some wall of mud or mud bricks; also reed wall with mud plaster recovered. Many other things like copper arrow head, nail parer, antimony rods, iron slag in the uppermost layer, bangles of glass, terracotta animal figurines, discs, feeding cup, styli or knitting needles of bones, charred grain of rice and bones of cattle, horse, pig etc are scooped. Report stated that PGW is associated with Mahabharata story as this pottery was found from the places mentioned in the epic Mahabharata i.e. Mathura, Kurukshetra, Barnawa, Ahichchhatra etc. Evidences of heavy flood in the Ganga. According to Puranas and Mahabharata epic, heavy flood was mentioned in the time of Nichakshu, shift their capital from Hastinapur to Kaushambi (near Allahabad). This heavy flood was proved from Hastinapur excavation. Iron slags at that time show the vast scientific knowledge of people in that era i.e. in 1100 B.C. to 800 B.C. After abandonment of this site by heavy flood this site comes into existence again after some interval of time. The third slab which ranges from early 6th Century B.C. to early 3rd Century B.C., in this period Northern Black Polished Ware (NBPW) recovered with coarse grey ware and unslipped ware. Some other material also recovered from this time period i.e. house of mud brick and kiln burnt bricks, brick lined drains, soakage jars, terracotta ring wells, arrow head, antimony rods, chisel and sickle of iron nail-parer, terracotta animal figurines, most favourite is elephant, human figurines, terracotta flesh rubber, beads of etched carnelian and crystalline quartz, bangles of copper, rings of copper, jadite and chalcedony etc. First time punch marked and unscripted cast coins are recovered at the excavation site they are approximate 5 in number. Due to conflagration this habitation comes to end. Historical data shows that at this time Hastinapur was under the rule of Maurya period ruler Bindusara (son of

Chandragupt Maurya). After some time new town emerged in the Period of Sung-Kushan and come in fourth slab i.e. early 2nd century B.C. to late third century A.D. At this time houses invariably of burnt bricks used for flooring, regular house plans recovered. Along this some other materials recovered like antimony rods, pins and a bell of copper, nails, axe-adze, sickle and pan of iron, terracotta figurines, Sunga terracottas from lower levels, figure of Bodhisattva Maitreya executed after Mathura school of sculptures from upper levels, humped bull, terracotta wheels, toy cart, votive tanks, rotary quern of stone, rings and beads, seals etc. Seven structural sub periods in Period four. Period IV yield large number of coins. They include unscripted cast and punch marked type, 5 of the ruler of Mathura, 10 imitating those of Kushan King Vasudeva, 6 of Yaudheya. In the lower level of the period the coins of king of Mathura, in the middle level Yaudheya coins and at the last imitation coins of Vasudeva obtained. The imitation coins of Vasudeva made of copper, were divisible into two types; in one case the reverse and obverse had "Shiva and bull" and "the king at altar" while in another "Shiva and bull" replaced by "throned goddess". At this period Hastinapur became a fill fledged town. Hastinapur was once again declined in the Kushan period but this time the cause was not known. After the interval of time this site is again settled in Late 11th Century A.D. to Early 15th Century A.D. (5th Slab). Glazed ware with variety of floral designs, Red ware and coarse to medium grained. But this time pottery was entirely different from pre-existing period. A variety of iron objects i.e. tanged arrow, nails, hoes, door ring, knife blades, awls etc was obtained. Terracotta figurines showing poor workmanship, satti-satta plaques, terracotta stamp and dabbers, stone image of Parvati and Rishabhadeva obtained. Bangles of glass, bone, shell, ivory etc are obtained. From middle level of the period coin of Balban (A.D. 1266-87), from surface deposit coin of Qutbu'd Din Mubarak Shah of Khilji Dynasty (A.D. 1316-1320) and from surface coin of Mahmud Shah II of Tughluq dynasty (A.D. 1392-1412) procured.

Site NSTHS1 and NSTHS2 on Ulta Khera Mound, Hastinapur

Ulta Khera Mound was excavated by Dr. B.B. Lal in year 1950-52. 70 years after the excavation we have found 11 Kushan coins from/near the excavation site. These coins are similar to the coins which are found in 1950 and photographs of these coins are published in Ancient India [4]. We gave the name of the site from where we obtained coins of Kushan Period i.e. NSTHS1 and NSTHS2 as shown in fig 1 and 2. The site map is also given in Map 1.

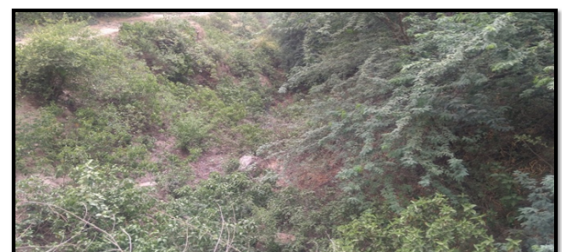
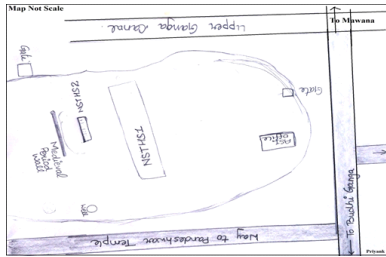


Fig 1: From here we obtained 7 coins of Kushan Period, site named as NSTHS1 [Photo Courtesy: Priyank Bharati]



Fig 2: 4 coins are obtained from this site at Ulta Khera Mound, site named as NSTHS2 [Photo Courtesy: Priyank Bharati]



Map 1: Site NSTHS1 and NSTHS2 on Ulta Khera Mound, Hastinapur

Paraphrases of the coins



Coin Number :NSTHSC1
 Obv. :King Standing left hand upraised
 Rev. :Goddess seated on the throne.
 Size :1.8 cm
 Weight :6.24 gm
 Shape :round
 Condition :fair
 Site :NSTHS1
 Remark :Imitation copper coin of Kushan King Vasudeva [4]



Coin Number :NSTHSC2
 Obv. :King Standing
 Rev. :Goddess seated on the throne, some dotted structures.
 Size :1.7 cm
 Weight :6.82 gm
 Shape :round
 Condition :fair
 Site :NSTHS1
 Remark :Copper coin of Kushan King Kanishka II (circa 227-247 CE) [5]



Coin Number :NSTHSC3
 Obv. :King Standing
 Rev. :Lakshmi seated on throne.
 Size :1.6 cm
 Weight :5.59 gm

Shape :round
 Condition :fair
 Site :NSTHS1
 Remark :Imitation Coin of Vasudeva [4].



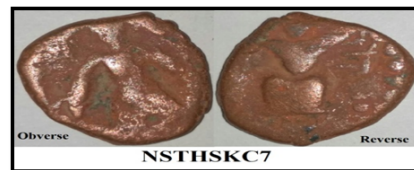
Coin Number :NSTHSC4
 Obv. :Defaced
 Rev. :Lakshmi on throne, Series of dots on right.
 Size :1.9 cm
 Weight :6.29 gm
 Shape :round
 Condition : fair
 Site :NSTHS1
 Remark :Kushan Kingdom, Kanishka II, 227-247 CE [6][7]



Coin Number :NSTHSC5
 Obv. :King Standing
 Rev. :Goddess on throne.
 Size :1.9 cm
 Weight :6.35 gm
 Shape :round
 Condition :fair
 Site :NSTHS1
 Remark :Imitation copper coins of Kushan King Vasudev [4]



Coin Number :NSTHSC6
 Obv. :Defaced
 Rev. :Defaced
 Size :1.8 cm
 Weight :5.65 gm
 Shape :round
 Condition :worn out
 Site :NSTHS1



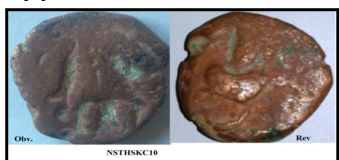
Coin Number :NSTHSC7
 Obv. :Standing king
 Rev. :Goddess sitting on throne holding diadem in hand.
 Size :1.6 cm
 Weight :6.04 gm
 Shape :round
 Condition :fair
 Site :NSTHS1
 Remark :Kushan Kingdom, Kanishka II (circa 230-247 AD) [8]



Coin Number :NSTHSC8
 Obv. :Defaced
 Rev. :Defaced
 Size :1.9 cm
 Weight :6.28 gm
 Shape :round
 Condition :worn out
 Site :NSTHS2



Coin Number :NSTHSC9
 Obv. :Four armed Shiva
 Rev. :Defaced
 Size :1.5 cm
 Weight :5.72 gm
 Shape :round
 Condition :fair
 Site :NSTHS2
 Remark :Kushan King Huvishka (circa 140-180 CE), son of Kanishka [7]



Coin Number :NSTHSC10
 Obv. :King standing
 Rev. :Goddess seated on the throne
 Size :1.6 cm
 Weight :6.53 gm
 Shape :round
 Condition :fair
 Site :NSTHS2
 Remark :Imitation Coin of Vasudeva [4].

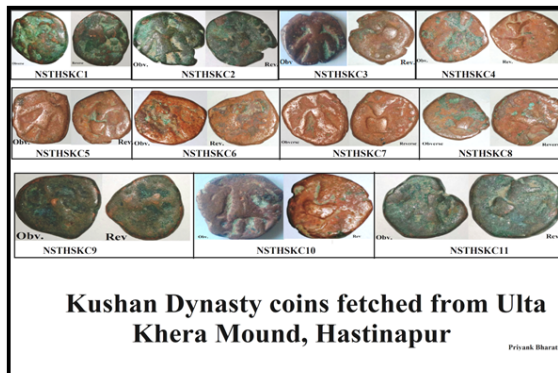


Coin Number :NSTHSC11
 Obv. :King standing
 Rev. :Goddess sitting on throne.
 Size :1.8 cm
 Weight :6.60 gm
 Shape :round
 Condition :fair
 Site :NSTHS2
 Remark :Imitation Coin of Vasudeva [4]

Coin Number	Size of the coin	Weight of the coin	Shape	Condition	Site from where they were obtained
NSTHSC1	1.8 cm	6.24 gm	Round	Fair	NSTHS1
NSTHSC2	1.7 cm	6.82 gm	Round	Fair	NSTHS1
NSTHSC3	1.6 cm	5.59 gm	Round	Fair	NSTHS1

NSTHSC4	1.9 cm	6.29 gm	Round	Fair	NSTHS1
NSTHSC5	1.9 cm	6.35 gm	Round	Fair	NSTHS1
NSTHSC6	1.8 cm	5.65 gm	Round	Worn Out	NSTHS1
NSTHSC7	1.6 cm	6.04 gm	Round	Fair	NSTHS1
NSTHSC8	1.9 cm	6.27 gm	Round	Worn Out	NSTHS2
NSTHSC9	1.5 cm	5.72 gm	Round	Fair	NSTHS2
NSTHSC10	1.6 cm	6.53 gm	Round	Fair	NSTHS2
NSTHSC11	1.8 cm	6.60 gm	Round	Fair	NSTHS2

Table 1: Description of the coins.



Kushan Dynasty coins fetched from Ulta Khera Mound, Hastinapur

CONCLUSION

On 4 March 2019, 11 coins were received from two sites from Ulta Khera, Hastinapur, 7 coins from site 1 (NSTHS1) and 4 coins received from site 2 (NSTHS2). On both these sites, excavation has been done in year 1950-52 by Dr. B.B.Lal. According to a excavation report published in Ancient India no 10 & 11[4], four trenches i.e. HST1 to HST 4, varying from width 9 to 44 ft and length 36 to 590 ft. Total emphasized was on vertical digging rather than area excavation. In the first two trenches, i.e. HST1 and HST2 (site names given in the excavation report published in Ancient India no 10 and 11) were very important, from this 5 detached habitational stratum with definite break revealed. Although the report is not entirely acceptable, it has also been said in the report that we were unable to complete excavation in the absence of time and money; this report is not considered complete in this situation. Through this report, we get an out biography about the history of Hastinapur.

The first site of excavation is HST 1 (according to Ancient India no 10 & 11), we have received 7 coins from the same site (in our research paper this site is named as NSTHS1). These 7 coins have been collected in a faction, it is may be due to the rains that have been 2 days earlier, due to the erosion of the soil it has come outwards. Kushan King Vasudeva and other coins were received from the same place in 1950 during excavation. When these 7 coins (from site NSTHS1, coin number ranges from NSTHSC1-NSTHSC7) are cross checked with different literature sources and websites, we find that 3 coins (coin number NSTHSC1, NSTHSC3 and NSTHSC5) are related with Kushan King Vasudeva (may be dated about middle of 3rd century AD), 3 coins (coin number NSTHSC2, NSTHSC4 and NSTHSC7) are of Kanishka II (Vasudeva was succeeded by Kanishka II, circa 200-220 CE) and 1 coins (coin number NSTHSC6) is worn out.

The 2nd site i.e. NSTHS2 (refer fig 2 and Map 1, this site is behind the medieval period wall, this site is on above the mound of height approx 15-25 ft from the ground of mound) has never been excavated or explored. The distance between site NSTHS1 and NSTHS2 is approximately 30-40 meters. From this site we obtained 4 coins, in which 1 coin (coin number NSTHSC9) is of Kushan Dynasty King Huvishka (son of Kanishka I, circa 126-164 CE [9]), 1 coin (coin number NSTHSC8) is worn out and other 2 (coin number NSTHSC10 and NSTHSC11) belongs to Kushan Dynasty King Vasudeva (refer Table 2).

Coin Number	Site Name	Kingdom
NSTHSC1	NSTHS1	Imitation Coin of Kushan King Vasudeva

NSTHSKC2	NSTHS1	Kushan Kingdom, Kanishka II
NSTHSKC3	NSTHS1	Imitation Coin of Kushan King Vasudeva
NSTHSKC4	NSTHS1	Kushan Kingdom, Kanishka II
NSTHSKC5	NSTHS1	Imitation Coin of Kushan King Vasudeva
NSTHSKC6	NSTHS1	Worn Out
NSTHSKC7	NSTHS1	Kushan Kingdom, Kanishka II
NSTHSKC8	NSTHS2	Worn Out
NSTHSKC9	NSTHS2	Kushan King Huvishka
NSTHSKC10	NSTHS2	Imitation Coin of Kushan King Vasudeva
NSTHSKC11	NSTHS2	Imitation Coin of Kushan King Vasudeva

Table 2 : Table shows the relation of coins with Kushan Dynasty

For the first time, from Hastinapur we received coins of Huvishka and Kanishka II from the Kushan dynasty along with King Vasudeva. In a distance of around 30-40 meters, together getting the coins of different kings of the same dynasty together also creates adventures in this entire research. If we talk about the chronology of Kushan period, from King Kanishka 1, after the death of Kanishka 1 in 140 CE [10], Huvishka took over the rule on Mathura (Huvishka ruled from circa 140 CE to 183 CE) until Vasudeva (circa 191-225 CE), after Huvishka, King Vasudev ruled over on Mathura and then Kanishka II (circa 225-245 CE) have been the king of Kushan Dynasty.

According to the report of Ancient India [4], Period 4 which is connected with Kushan Dynasty, was layed in between early 2nd century B.C. to 3rd century A.D . However, there is no clarity on their ruling time period. Regarding these received coins, we cannot say why such types of coins were not obtained in the excavation. It may also be that many things have been ignored in the excavation, getting these coins is an example. Excavation in Hastinapur is extremely important as it was not done in many area at that time, should the facts be found only from those areas and the areas where the excavation was done is limited (as mentioned in Ancient India no 10 & 11); who knows, some surprising facts can be found from the same area as we have received. It is necessary to research these facts further; this is just a initial information related to the coins and entirely circumstantial until and unless positive numismatic proofs are obtained, considered provisional? This research will start a new debate over Hastinapur.

At last, the reigns of many periods are still buried on this mound in Hastinapur. Hastinapur is capable of changing many dimensions of history if complete/proper excavation is done here.

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