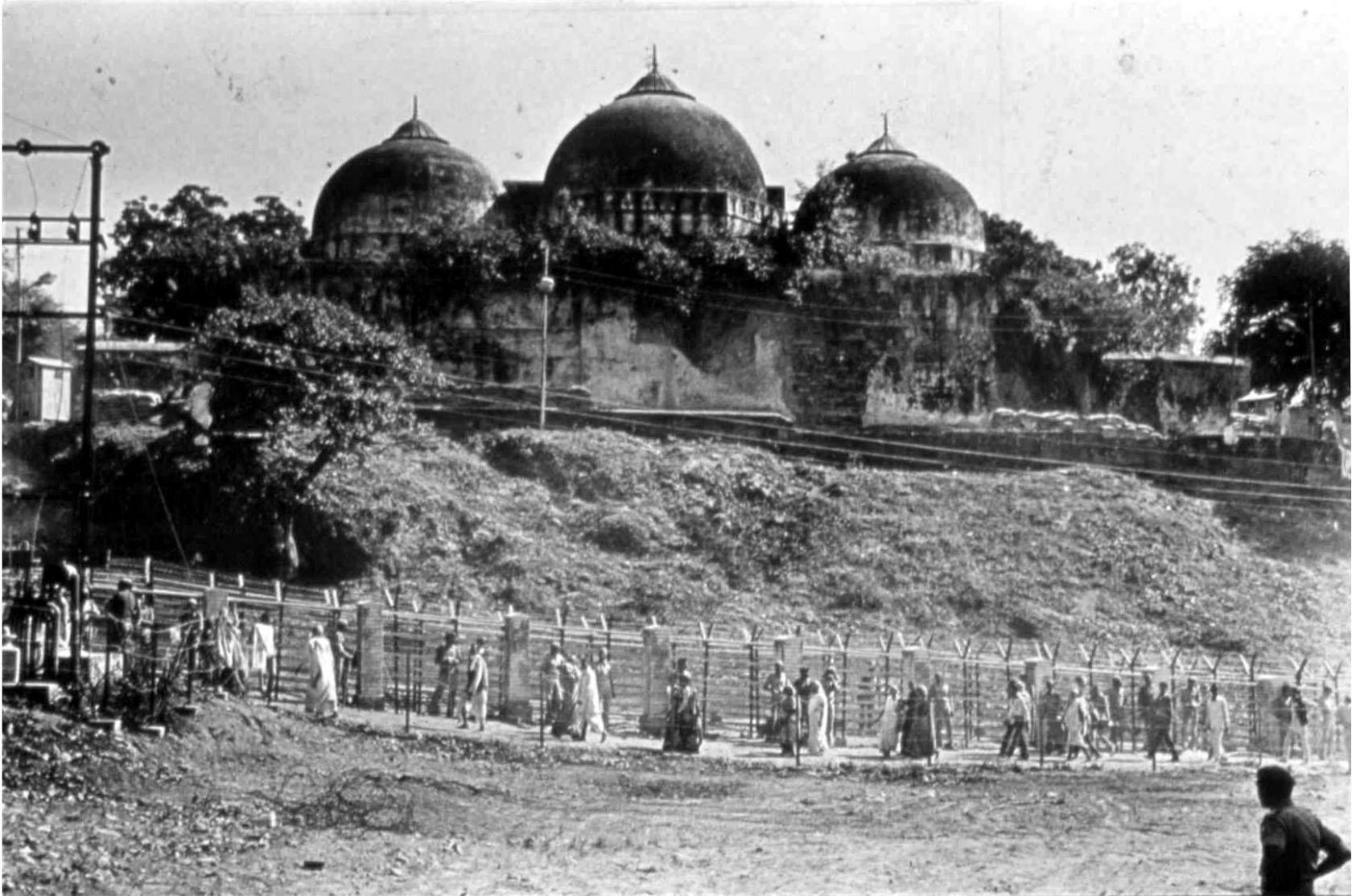


ARCHAEOLOGY AND THE MONUMENT

ON TWO EMBATTLED SITES OF
FAITH AND HISTORY IN
MODERN INDIA: AYODHYA
AND BODH-GAYA

The cordoned and fenced-off structure of the ill-fated mosque – the Babri Masjid at Ayodhya, 1990

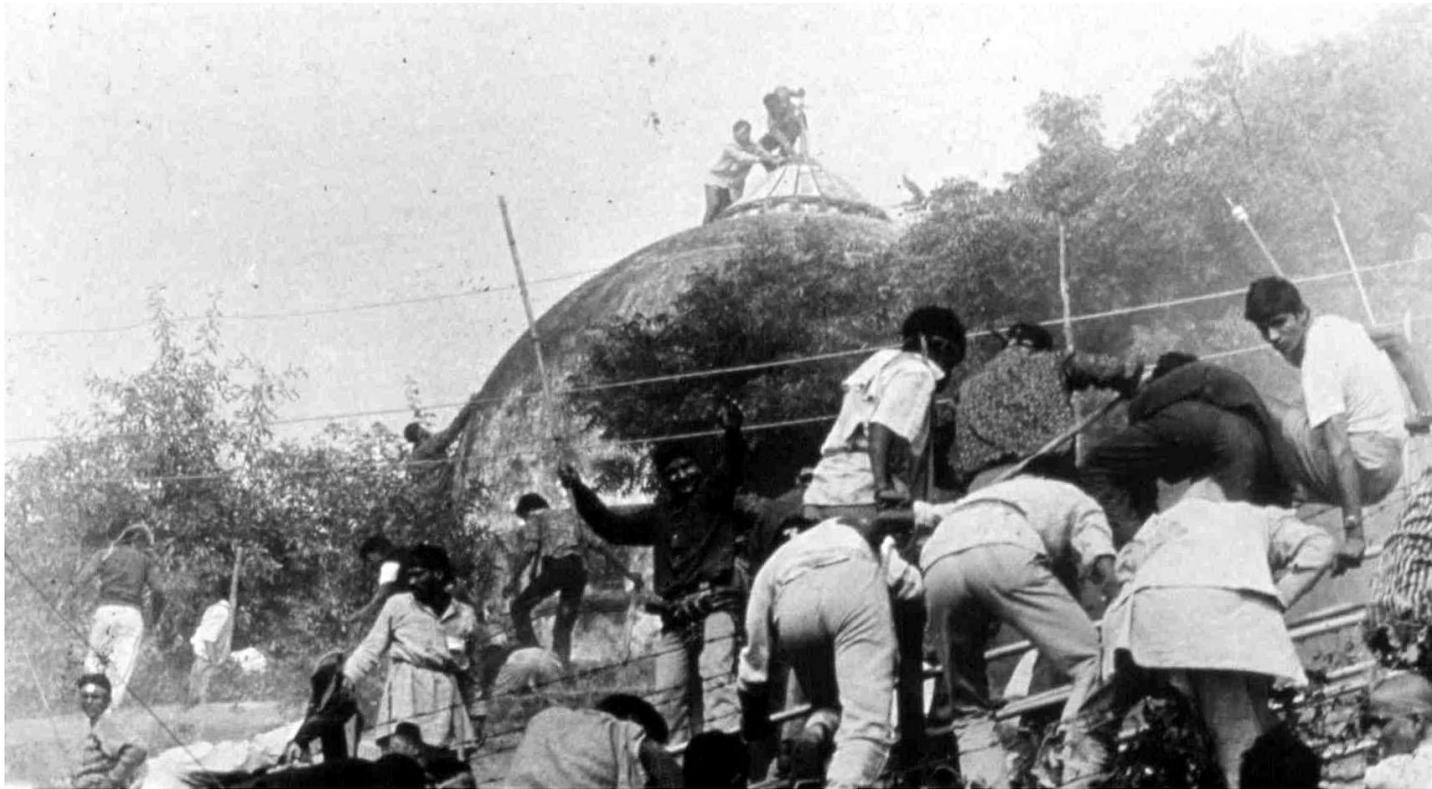


Left: Volunteers and agitators of the *Ramjanmabhumi* campaign propagating their cause in front of the Babri Masjid, 1989

Right: Well before the demolition of the mosque, “consecrated” bricks piled around a temple site adjacent to the mosque during the foundation-laying ceremony for the Ram Mandir, November 9, 1989



The razing of the mosque on 6th December 1992 – groups of armed men (who called themselves “karsevaks”) with demolition tools destroying one of the three domes



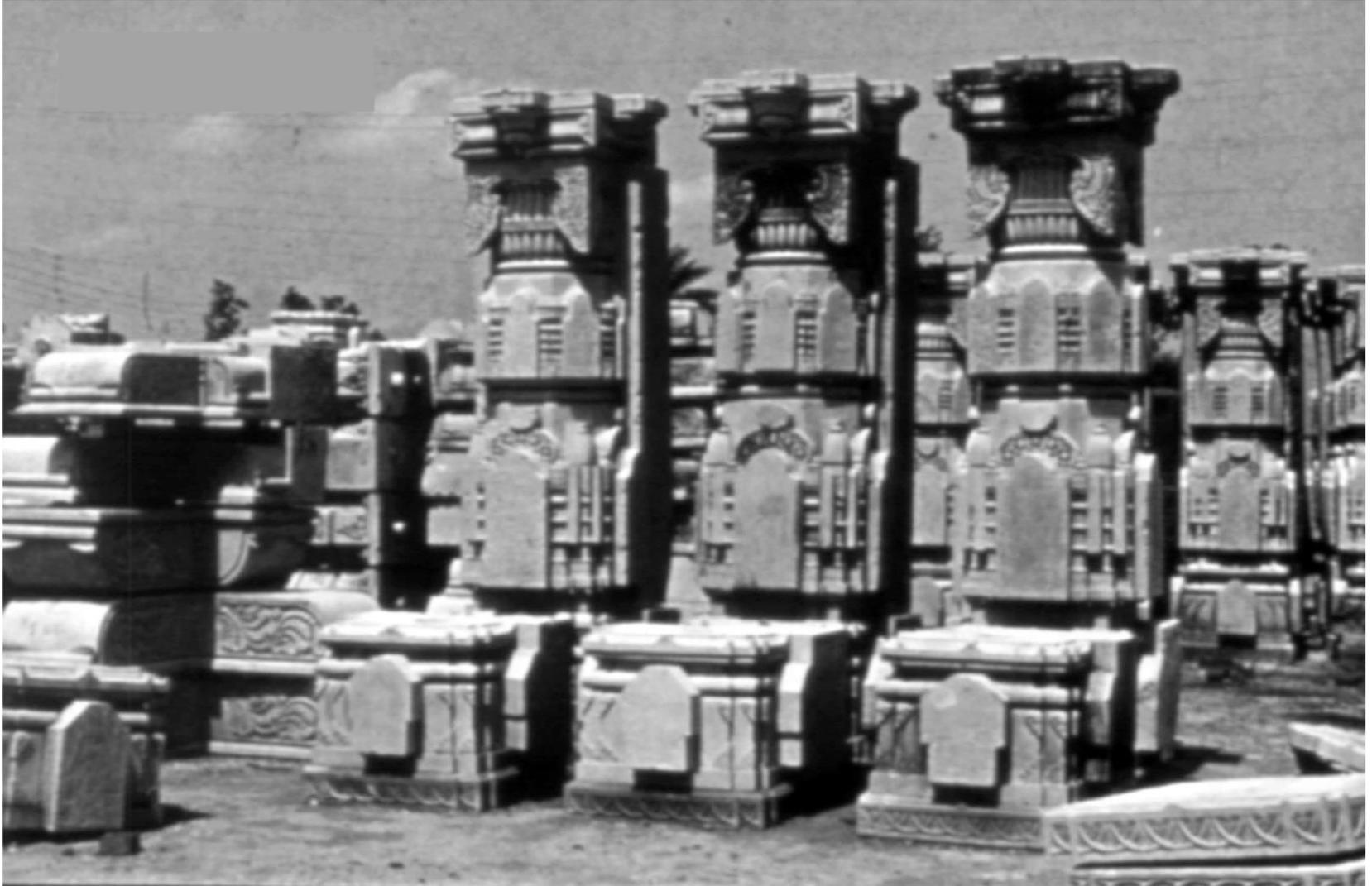
The rubble and mound at the emptied demolition site, with the fencing now cordoning off the makeshift Ram shrine with hoisted flags, standing at the exact spot of where the telescoped sanctum existed within the structure of the mosque





A giant hoarding on the streets of New Delhi in 1990, of Lord Rama as warrior-crusader, demanding of his modern devotees the reclamation of his birth site and its commemoration by a new temple, the model of which stands displayed by his side

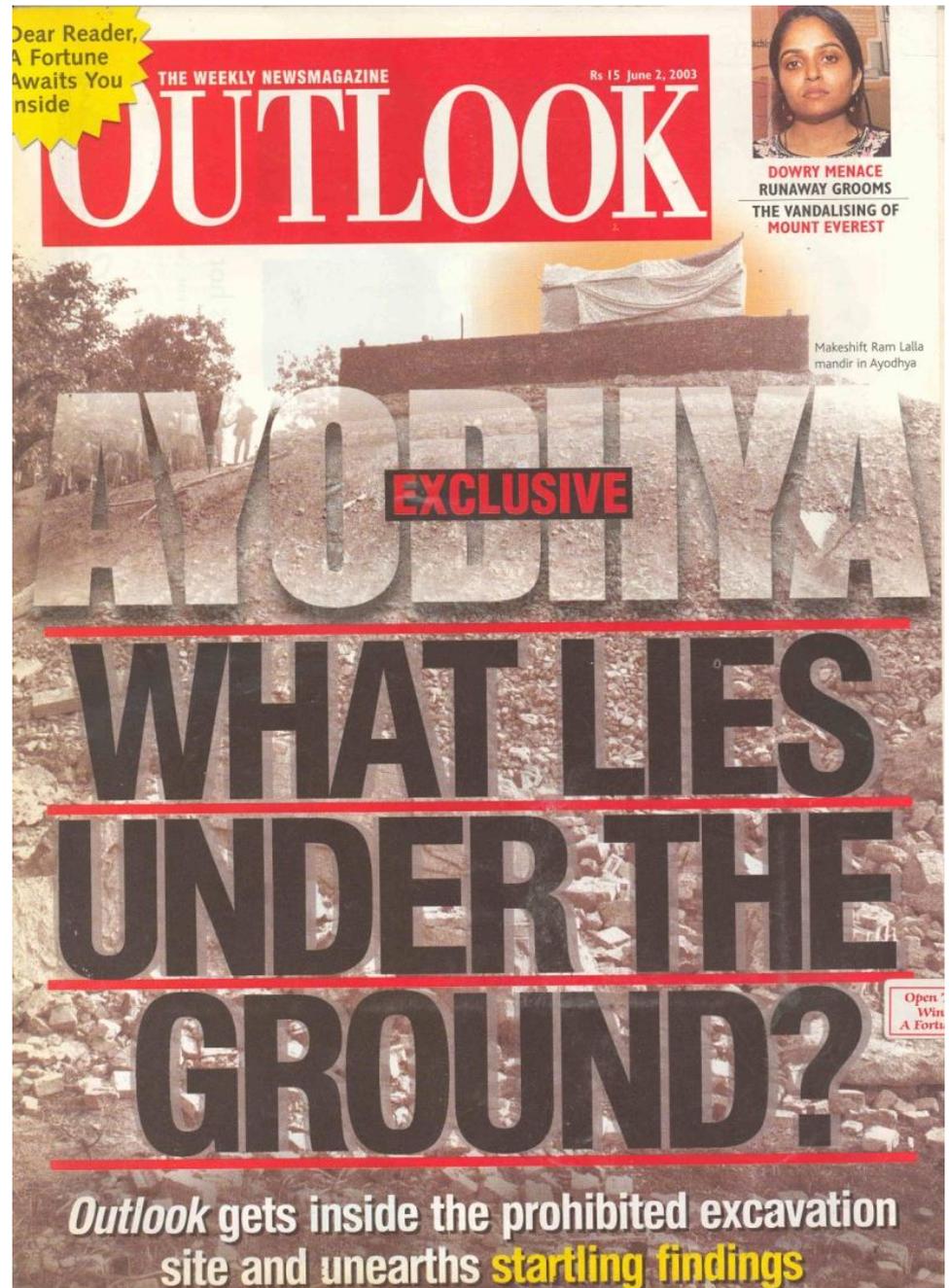
Samples of carved prefabricated pillars standing off-site at a workshop at Ayodhya, all set to be assembled into a made-to-order temple, November 1998



Another sample of a ready elaborately-carved pillar at the workshop site, called Ramsevakpuram, in Ayodhya, June 2003



Cover page of the widely-circulating English magazine, *Outlook*, June 2, 2003, providing an exclusive scoop on “startling finds” about temple remains at the prohibited excavation site

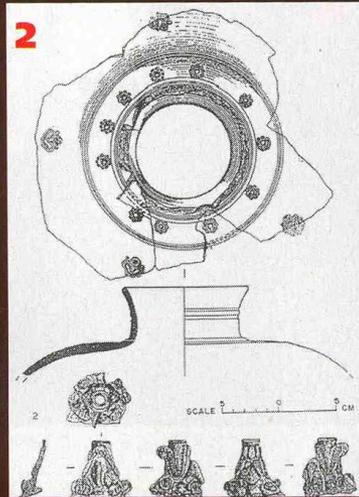
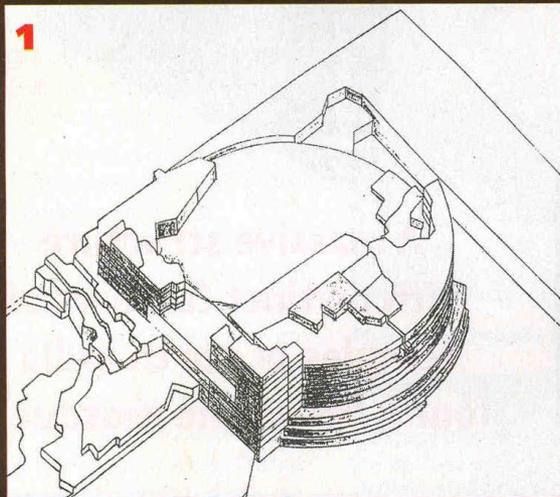


The cover story in the *Outlook* issue of June 2, 2003, called “The Secrets of the Shrine”, laying out this eye-catching graphic on the underground clues to the presence of a temple beneath the floor levels of the now-disappeared mosque



The earlier chart now replaced by this other lay-out of these latest, 'authorized' findings of the Archaeological Survey of India, following the submission of the Survey report to the Allahabad High Court –
Outlook, September 8, 2003

WHAT THE ASI HAS UNEARTHED

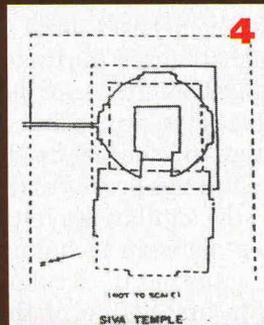
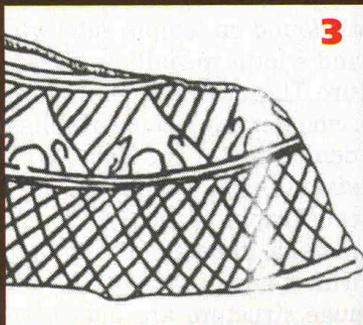


1 A view of the east-facing circular structure below the mosque

2 Upper part of a decorated vase of 'red ware' with triratna symbols

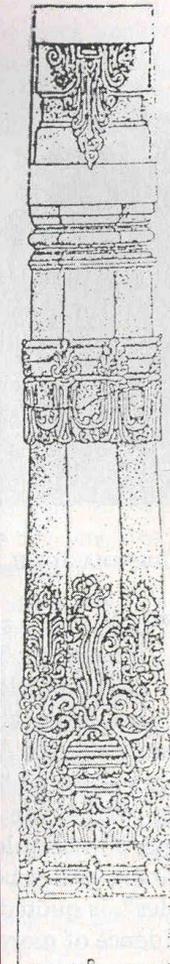
3 The shoulder fragment of a vase of 'red ware'

4 The circular structure at Ayodhya is similar to the Chirenath Siva temple at Sravasti the ASI excavated recently



5 Small 'red ware' vase

6 Architectural fragment with a double-petal design





The Bodh-Gaya temple in ruins, c. 1870s – the abandoned temple that came to be continuously denuded of its ornaments and quarried for its stones, to be reduced to “an unreadable rubble of the past”

Left: The Bodh-Gaya temple, under restoration by the Archaeological Survey of India, photographed by J.D. Beglar, c. 1880s

Right: The cleared underground with the fully restored plinth and refurbished tower of the remade Mahabodhi temple of the Gupta period, c.1920s



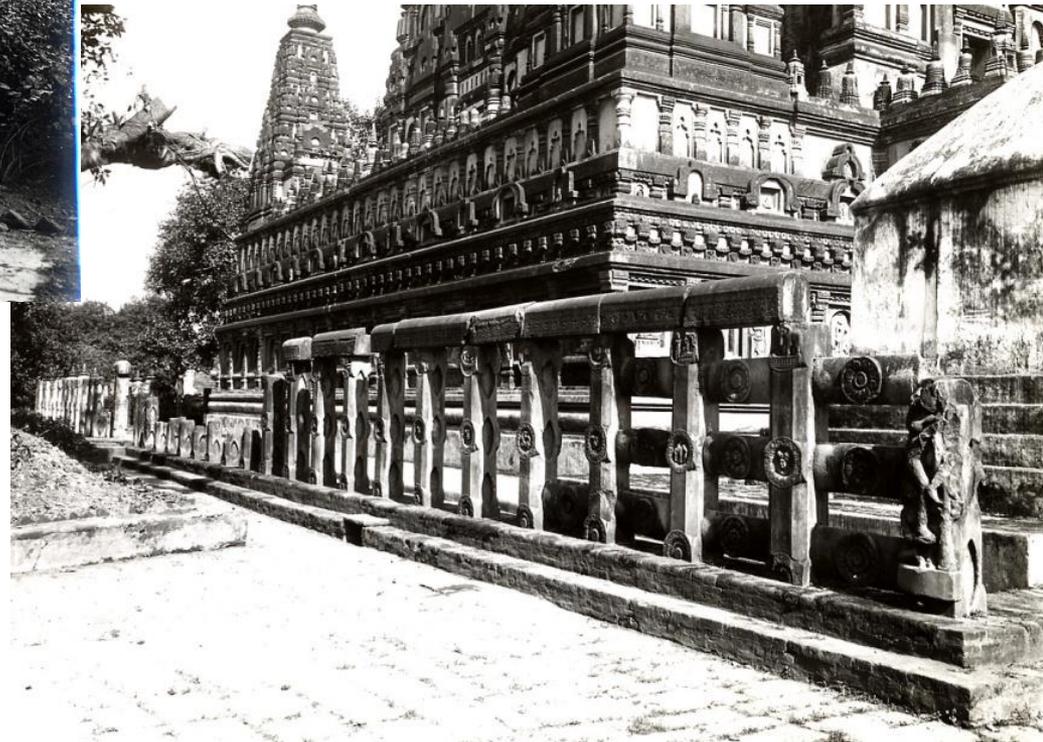


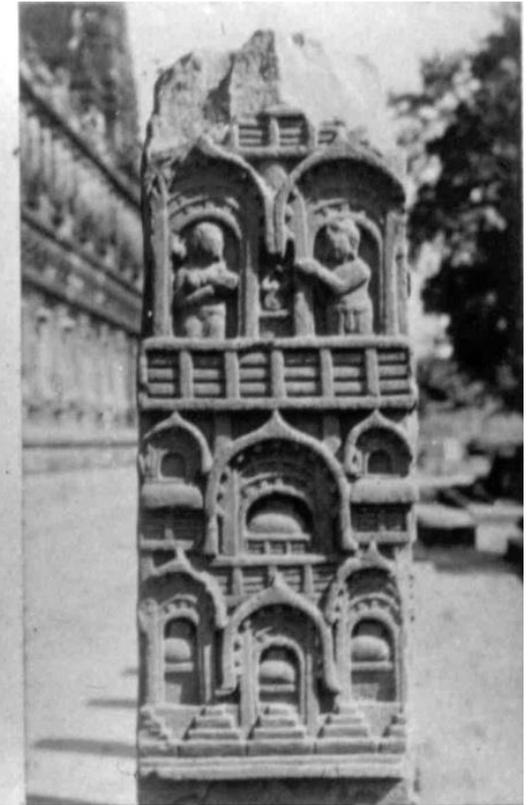
The reconstructed temple and antiquities of the Mauryan period



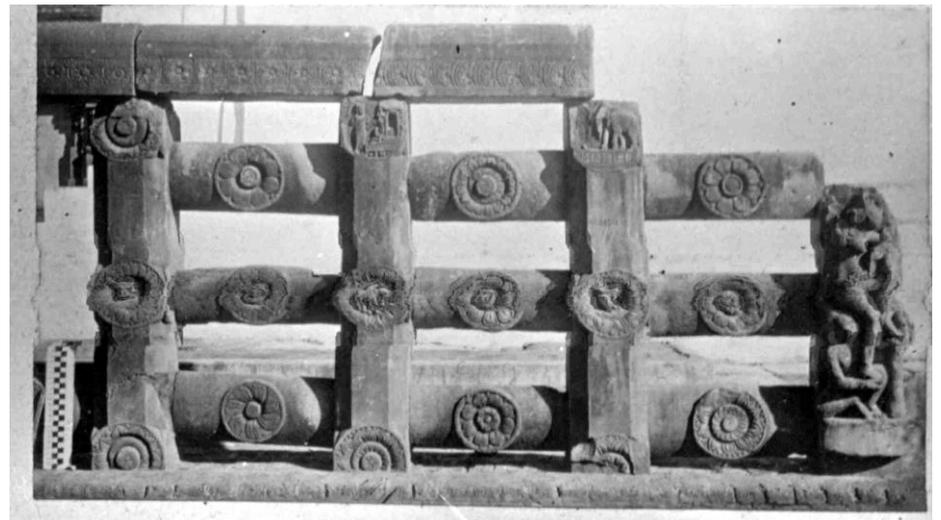
Above: The recovered “Vajrasana” throne attributed to Emperor Asoka, laid out under the Bodhi tree
Below: The restored “Chankrama Chaitya” or the “Jewelled Cloister”: a raised terrace walk along the right-hand outer wall of the main temple

The red sandstone railing pillars of the late Mauryan/early Sunga period, relaid as a surrounding railing around the plinth of the main temple





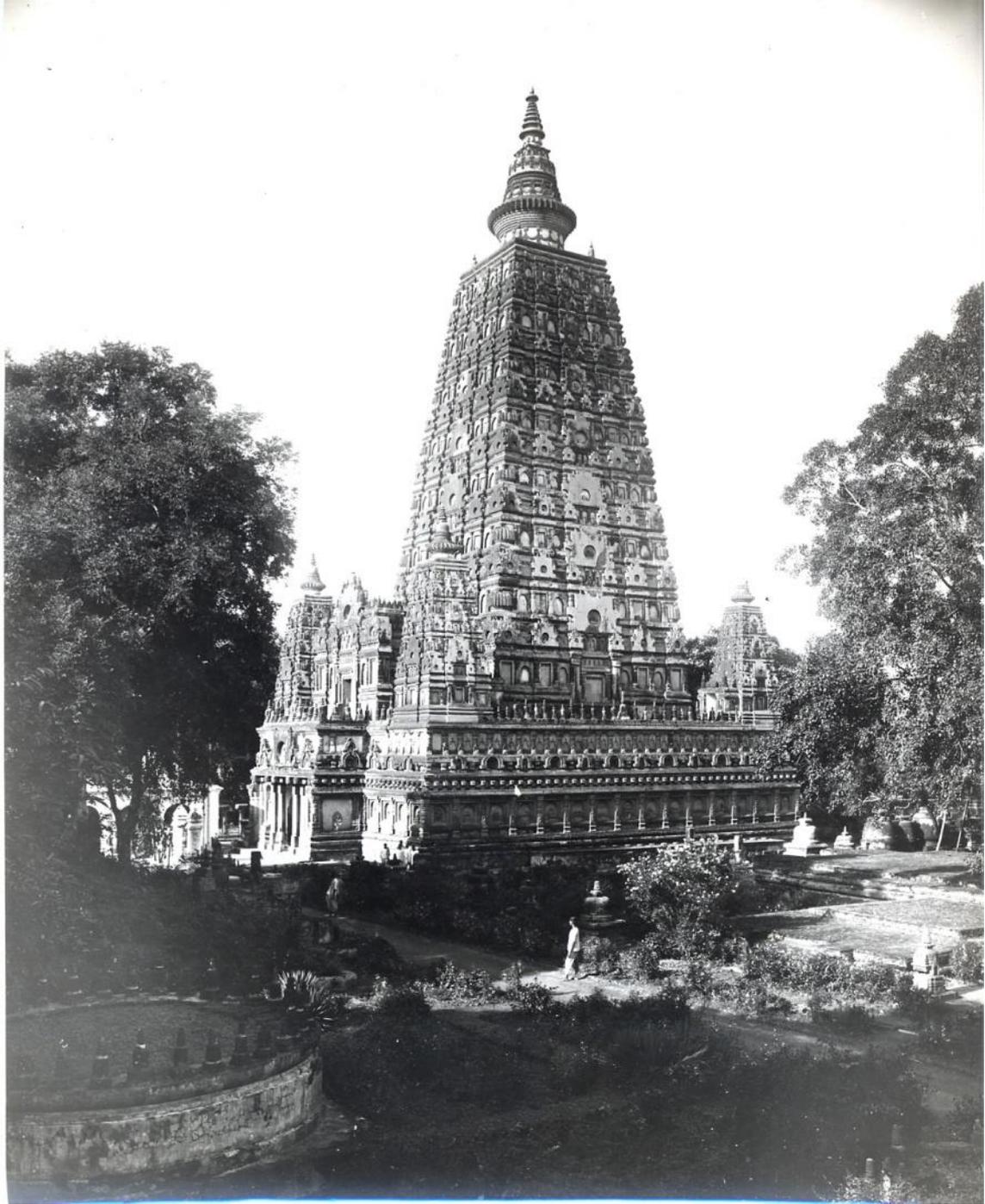
Scrutinized details of the sandstone railing pillars of the Mauryan period, from a Johnston and Hoffman photographic album on Bodh –Gaya, dating probably from the immediately post-restoration period (c.1890s)



The railing pillars later transferred and reassembled inside an open courtyard of the Bodh Gaya Archaeological Museum, c. 1950s



The restored and rebuilt Mahabodhi temple of the turn of the 20th century: the object thereafter of a protracted battle for custody between the *Shaivite Mahants* and an international Buddhist lobby





An instance of the many forms of Shaivite make-over of the sculptures of the site – an image of a Bodhisattva converted into one of Shiva-Mahesvara, at the entrance of the main sanctum of the Mahabodhi temple

The monumental resplendence of the Mahabodhi temple, starkly contrasted by the rubble and empty site of the demolished Babri Masjid



Popular pilgrim posters of the imagined Ramjanmabhumi temple at Ayodhya and the Mahabodhi Mahavihara at Bodh-Gaya

