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PREFACE

F.R. Allchin

The site of Anuradhapura is important, from two principal points of view. In the first place it has played a significant role in the history and cultural traditions of Sri Lanka as a whole. This was made possible from early times by its geographical position in the central dry zone of the island, favoured by a moderate climate with good potential for agriculture and adequate water supplies from tank irrigation. These conditions provided the longstanding basis for the city's political stability and importance throughout Early Historic times. Secondly, Anuradhapura has a more immediate, specific importance from an archaeological point of view on account of the extent, depth and richness of the occupation deposits. This has been demonstrated by the research done there by archaeologists during the last century. Particular mention may be made of the excavations at Anuradhapura carried out by P.E.P. Deraniyagala and, more recently, by his son, Dr S.U. Deraniyagala. This work has opened the way to achieving a better understanding of Early Historic Sri Lanka than was hitherto possible and provided an excellent basis for further investigation. Indeed, it is upon this basis that the investigations described here have been undertaken and have carried forward the study of this remarkable site, leading to a more detailed and comprehensive understanding of its long history and development. The investigations described here had the advantage of a number of modern techniques, including geophysical methods of surface survey, three-dimensional recording of levels and finds in excavation, and ample radiocarbon measurements. On account of the depth and continuity of the dated cultural sequence described in the two volumes that make up the report, each of which deals with specific aspects of the

excavation as a whole, it is possible to relate Anuradhapura to a wider archaeological context. Volume I, *The Site*, provides the archaeological framework and is firmly based on the carefully recorded cultural sequence, the longest and most fully recorded so far available in Sri Lanka, and indeed in the entire southern half of the Indian subcontinent. Furthermore, this sequence is dated throughout by a large number of radiocarbon measurements. The present, second volume, *The Artefacts*, describes the artefacts and other finds and relates them to the dated sequence of archaeologically identified layers, thus clothing the dated structural framework with cultural material. This means that reasonably precise comparisons can now be made with dated sequences elsewhere in adjoining regions, and in the world at large. Another important discovery was that of a small number of short inscriptions on pottery and other objects in Brahmi script. These too are now datable by radiocarbon measurements and are the oldest dated inscriptions so far recorded in the southern peninsula, with the earliest occurring in the late fifth century BC at trench ASW2 but even earlier ones (c. sixth century BC) at Deraniyagala's trenches AMP88 and ASW88 (Deraniyagala 1992: 739). Furthermore, the record provided by the Anuradhapura sequence makes it possible to look outward at its historic links and their implications. For example, it is now possible to study the city of Anuradhapura's cultural and trading links with other parts of the ancient world. In sum, the excavations at Anuradhapura provide a wonderful database of evidence relating to the Iron Age and Early Historic periods of South Asia and from it we can study the stages of the emergence of a city and its subsequent growth.

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Unless otherwise noted, objects were drawn by Paula Coningham, Antonia Douthwaite and Jon Sygrave and prepared by Steven Cheshire.

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2/D/B/1	
2/D/C/1	
2/D/C/2	

2/E/A/1
2/F/A/1
2/F/B/1
2/F/C/1
2/F/C/2
2/G/A/1
2/H/A/1
2/H/A/2
2/I/A/1
2/I/A/2
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4/A/A/1
4/A/A/2
4/A/A/3
4/B/A/1
4/B/A/2
4/B/A/3
4/C/A/1
4/D/A/1
4/D/B/1
4/E/A/1
4/F/A/1
4/G/A/1
4/I/A/1
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6/B/A/1
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6/C/A/1
6/C/A/2
6/C/A/3
6/C/A/4
6/D/A/1
6/D/A/2
6/E/A/1
6/F/A/1
6/G/A/1
6/H/A/1
6/I/A/1
6/K/A/1
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14/E/B/1
14/F/A/1
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15/E/A/1
15/F/A/1

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18/A/A/1
18/B/A/1
18/C/A/1
18/D/A/1

Form 20: Jar or *kotale*

20/A/A/1
20/A/A/2
20/A/B/1
20/F/A/1

Form 22: Jar or *kotale*

22/A/A/2

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Form 23: Jar or *mutti*

23/A/A/1
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23/B/A/1
23/C/A/1

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24/A/A/1
24/B/A/1
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28/B/A/1
28/C/A/1

Form 29: Deep dish or *tali*

29/A/A/1
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65/B/B/1

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66/A/A/1

66/B/A/1

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72/A/A/2

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Egyptian glass vessel rim (sf 106)

Egyptian glass vessel rim (sf 302)

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Egyptian glass vessel rim (sf 1301)

Egyptian glass vessel rim (sf 1636)

Syrian or Egyptian glass vessel rim (sf 1108)

Egyptian glass vessel rim (sf 1356)

Egyptian glass vessel rim (sf 328)

Egyptian glass vessel rim (sf 1406)

Egyptian glass vessel rim (sf 2653)

Egyptian glass vessel rim (sf 5696)

Egyptian glass vessel rim (sf 5702)

Persian glass vessel rim (sf 273)

Eastern Mediterranean glass vessel rim (sf 6716)

Egyptian glass vessel base (sf 977)

Egyptian glass vessel base (sf 5695)

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Glass disc bead (sf 7036)

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Glass spherical disc bead (sf 793)
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 Glass tube bead (sf 186)
 Glass tube bead (sf 5769)
 Glass tube bead (sf 1680)
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 Glass sphere bead (sf 6414)
 Glass elliptical bead (sf 435)
 Glass elliptical bead (sf 6095)
 Glass elliptical bead (sf 2043)
 Glass collared sphere bead (sf 5589)
 Glass collared sphere bead (sf 1625)
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 Glass collared sphere bead (sf 2929)
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 Lapis lazuli faceted bead (sf 2595)
 Lapis lazuli lugged angular bead (sf 6689)
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 Greenstone conch-shaped bead (sf 2947)
 Greenstone pendant (sf 199)
 Carnelian ring (sf 10044)
 Carnelian ring (sf 15855)
 Carnelian ring (sf 7044)
 Carnelian ring (sf 7162)
 Carnelian sphere (sf 17281)
 Carnelian squashed sphere (sf 15136)
 Carnelian barrel bead (sf 6297)
 Carnelian barrel bead (sf 7123)
 Carnelian button bead (sf 6650)
 Carnelian faceted bead (sf 10568)
 Agate lugged sphere bead (sf 2231)
 Agate lugged sphere bead (sf 2232)
 Agate oval bead (sf 2078)

Figure 8.2 Stone objects

Agate sphere bead (sf 6485)
Chalcedony rod or undrilled blank (sf 5141)
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Smoky quartz spherical disc bead (sf 2798)
Smoky quartz shaped bead blank (sf 2799)
Clear quartz ring (sf 6519)
Clear quartz oval bead (sf 1565)
Clear quartz oval bead (sf 2502)
Clear quartz hexagonal tube bead (sf 16998)
Clear quartz ring blank (sf 2149)
Smoky quartz waste ring core (sf 5025)
Smoky quartz shaped bead blank (sf 8128)
Quartzite lugged sphere bead (sf 2216)
Quartzite lugged sphere bead (sf 2943)
Smoky quartz hexagonal tube bead (sf 16291)
Clear quartz intaglio or ring blank (sf 792)
Clear quartz stupa (sf 1609)

Figure 8.3 Stone objects

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Figure 10.2 Ivory and bone objects

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Figure 10.3 Ivory and bone objects

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Ivory bangle (sf 7236)
Ivory bangle (sf 1569)
Ivory disc (sf 15686)
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Bone stylus (sf 16673)
Bone stylus (sf 10459)
Ivory stylus (sf 15026)
Bone arrowhead (sf 15687)
Bone arrowhead (sf 16589)
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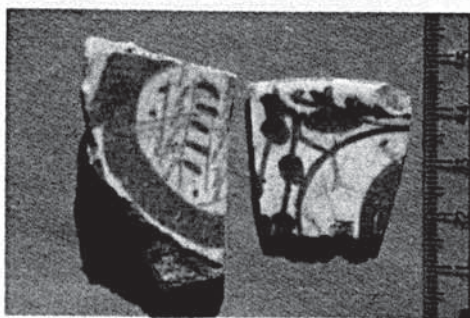
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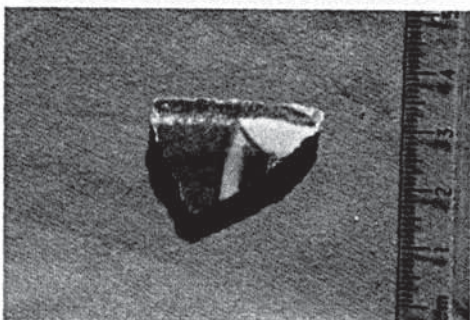
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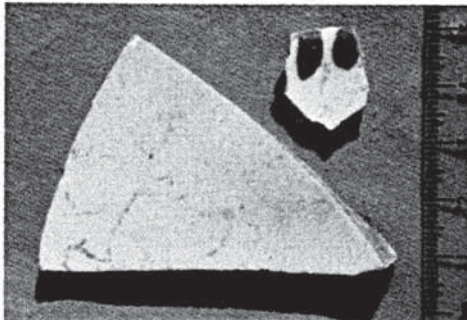
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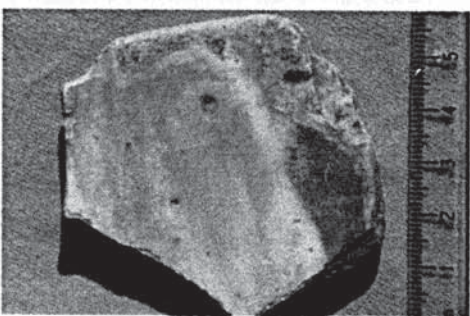
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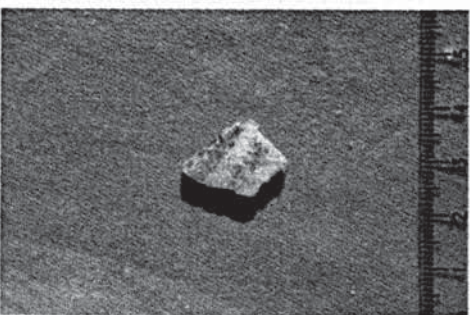
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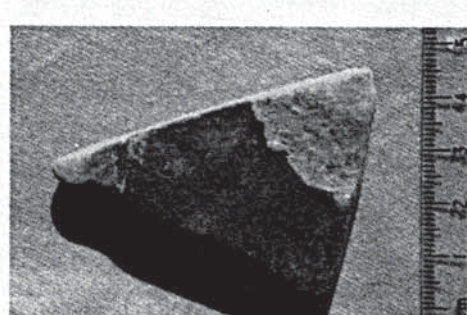
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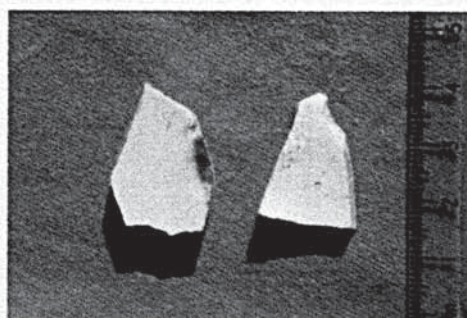
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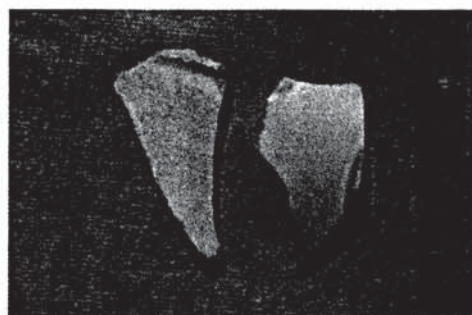
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i



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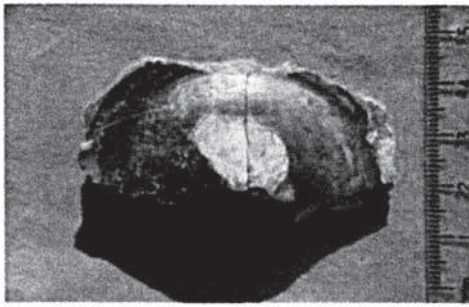


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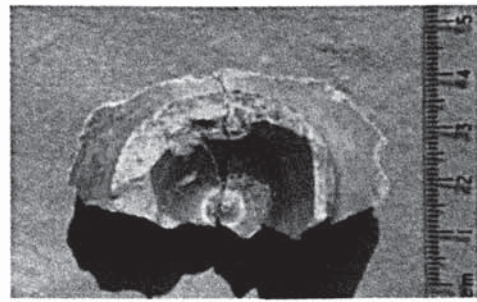


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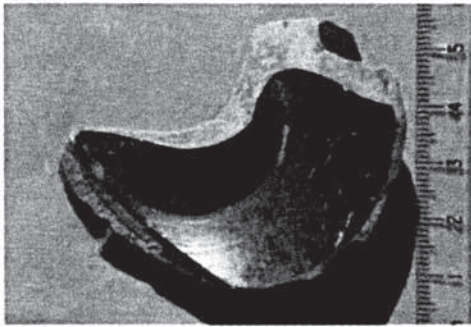
Colour Plate 1.2.



a



b



c



d



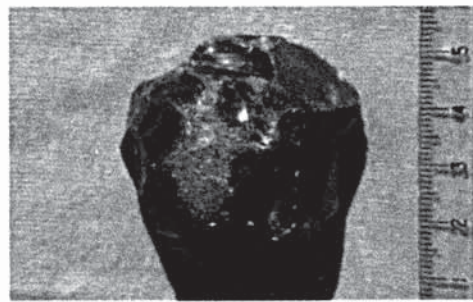
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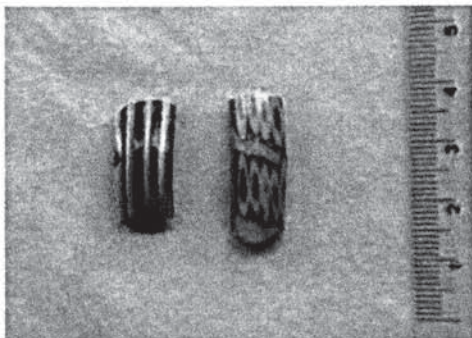
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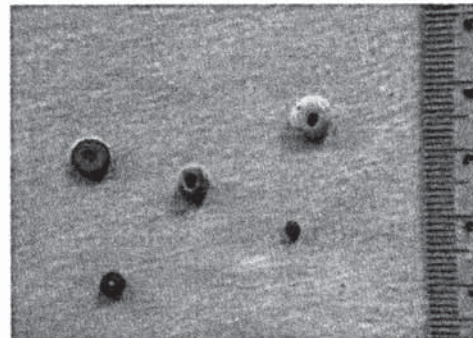
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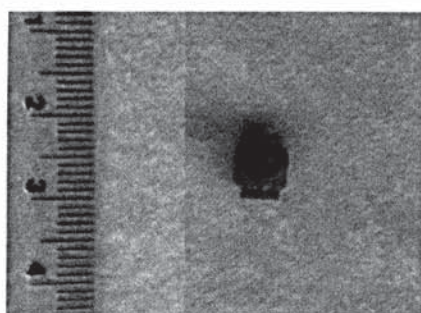


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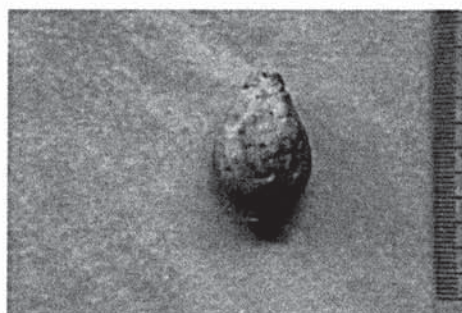


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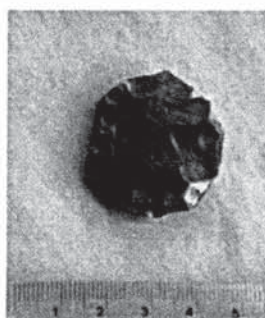
Colour Plate 1.3.



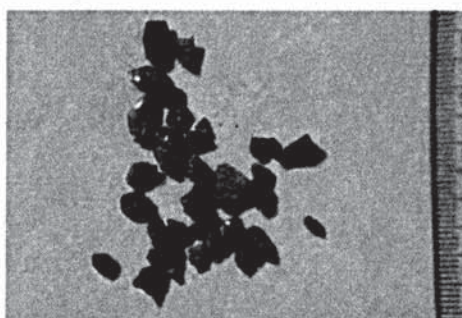
a



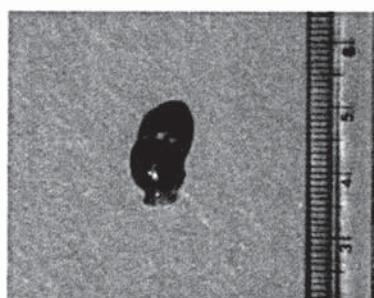
b



c



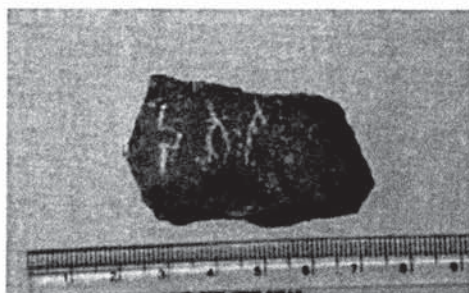
d



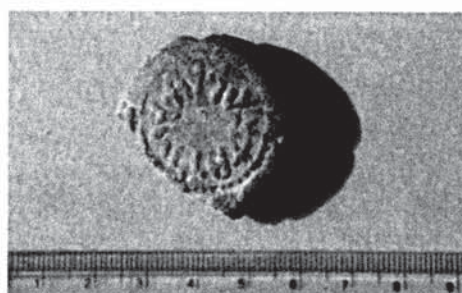
e



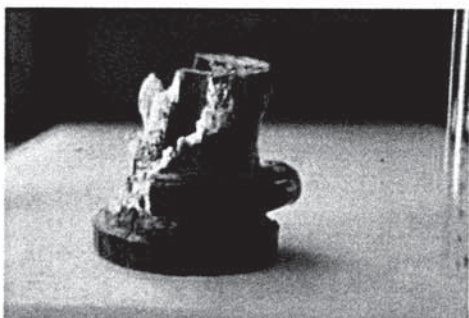
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j

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Robin Coningham

This is the second of two volumes reporting the results of the British–Sri Lankan excavations at Anuradhapura Salgaha Watta 2, the first – *The Site* – having been published in 1999 (Coningham 1999). As already noted in the earlier volume, Anuradhapura is the modern capital of Sri Lanka's North Central Province, but it also represents one of the island's most important archaeological and religious sites (see Maps 1 and 2). This importance centres around the site's role as royal capital between around the second half of the first millennium BC and AD 1029, when it was largely abandoned. Even before that date the city was occupied, and we have identified a very significant sequence which stretches from the establishment of Anuradhapura as a modest Iron Age settlement to its maturation as one of the region's greatest cities (see Table 1.1). It functioned as a commercial centre as well as an administrative one, and evidence for the former is provided by substantial quantities of finished luxury goods as well as craft-working debris. This commercial network linked the city with its own hinterland but also with the island's coastal settlements, as well as with trading communities as far east as Vietnam and as far west as Berenike in Egypt (see Plates 1.1, 1.2, 1.3 and 1.4). The city also attracted significant wealth and prestige from its important role as a depository for Buddhist relics, both from within the island and within South and Southeast Asia as a whole. Indeed, the city was important enough to feature on the itinerary of the fifth-century Chinese pilgrim, Faxian (Fa Hsien). The role of Anuradhapura's Buddhist monks and nuns was also significant within the Indian Ocean region, as already noted by Dutt (1962). The relationship between the centre, Anuradhapura, and the periphery can now also be investigated more fully, making use of the excellent publications of recent work in the island's rather later southern maritime corridor (Weisshaar and Wijeyapala 2001). In conclusion, the excavations at Anuradhapura present important new evidence concerning the emergence of complex societies and urban forms in the southern half of South Asia. Indeed, the majority of projects and excavations to have examined the Early Historic period have concentrated either within the Gangetic zone or the northwest of the subcontinent. As a result, historic and proto-historic texts have tended to be more heavily emphasized in the south, backed up by the fragmentary archaeological data available. As discussed elsewhere, there are dangers in relying on these strands of evidence (Coningham 1995a;

Coningham and Lewer 2000) and recent projects have begun to significantly reassess their validity (Begley 1996).

In order to further investigate these themes and present a new seam of evidence, the British–Sri Lankan excavation team started their work in 1989. The team, directed by Robin Coningham and Raymond Allchin, worked within the framework already established by the Archaeological Survey of Sri Lanka's Anuradhapura Citadel Archaeological Project, which had itself been set up in 1984 under the direction of Dr Siran Deraniyagala, to investigate the ancient urban core of the complex. Our own trench, Anuradhapura Salgaha Watta 2 (ASW2), was excavated between 1989 and 1994 during which some 905 m³ of archaeological deposits were excavated. The trench, measuring 10 metres by 10 metres and 10 metres deep, was designed to enable successful identification of a structural sequence at the site as well as to provide a periodized artefact catalogue. Both objectives were fully realized during the four years of excavations, and the 1,887 contexts, 118 stratigraphic phases, 515 postholes, 77 pits, 42 walls, 38 slots, 17 ovens, 3 wells, 30 structural phases and 11 structural periods have provided a unique sequence through the site's development from an Iron Age village to a mediaeval metropolis. Equally importantly, it is argued that the sequence is one of unbroken continuity, providing an invaluable artefactual and structural sequence supported by a very comprehensive chronometric sequence. As noted, the excavation has provided a strong structural sequence, which starts with the erection of temporary timber structures located beside an outcrop of gneiss boulders (Coningham 1999). These structures, built during structural period K, became more solid during the period and culminated in the construction of a circular timber shelter with an estimated diameter of 2.5 m associated with a series of ancillary structures as well as a shallow well. The period, which is dated between c. 840 and 460 cal. BC, was then succeeded by structural period J, itself associated with an increase in the diameter and depth of postholes, probably indicating increasing height and longevity of structures. The period consisted of five phases of superimposed circular timber structures with wattle and daub walls and diameters ranging between 3 and 6 metres associated with pits, fences and furnaces. One of the pits, 1371, appears to have very close affinities to the pit burials of the associated Iron Age of peninsular India (Coningham

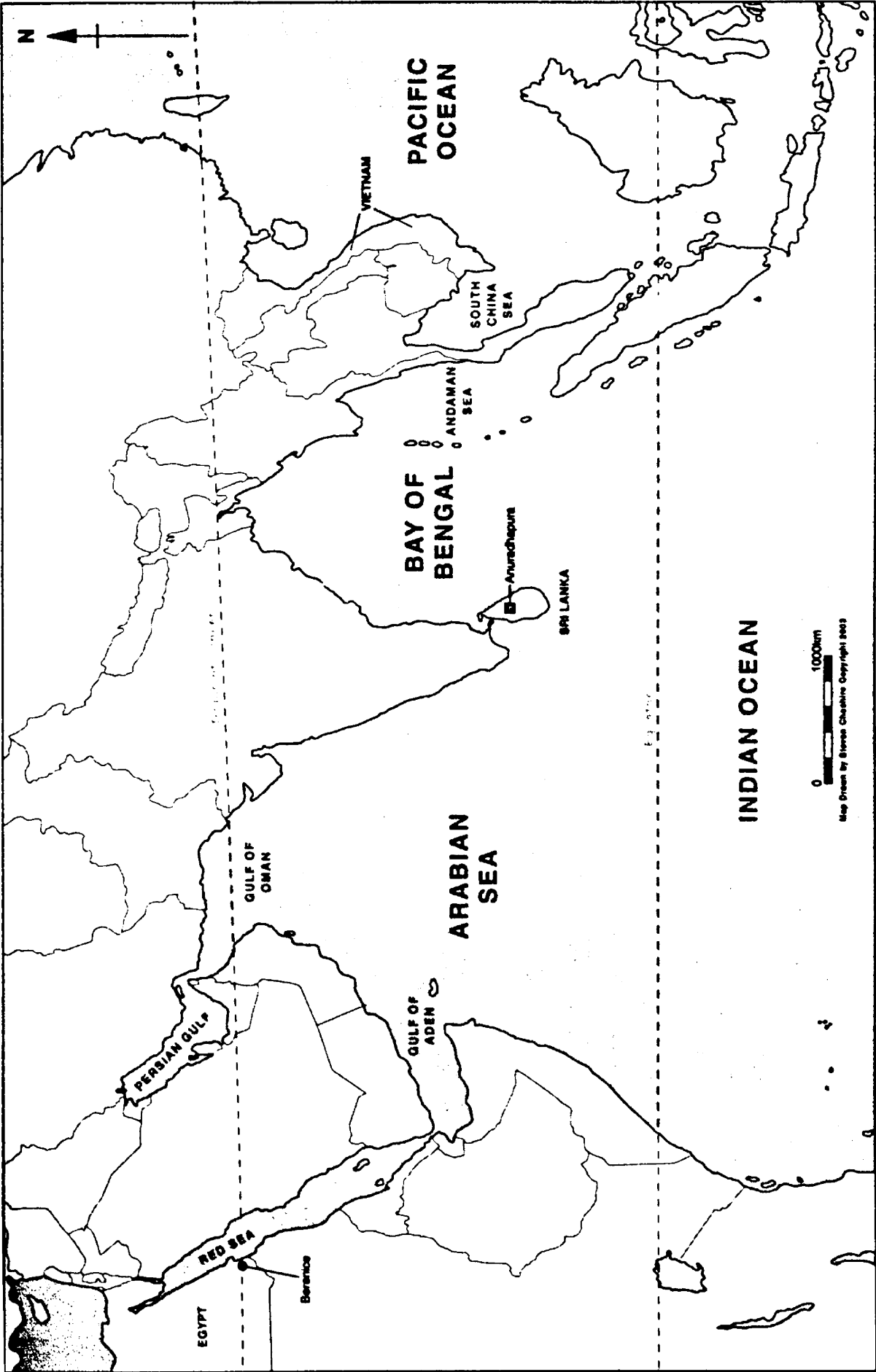
and Batt 1999), and the period has been allocated a general date range of between c. 510 and 430 cal. BC. These structures were, in turn, superseded by those of structural period I, which saw the introduction of eight phases of rectangular and square plans and the loss of circular ones in the vicinity of the trench. Built of timber with wattle and daub, phase 4 provided the first evidence of the use of fired ceramic roof tiles, complete with iron securing nails. Period I, dated between 360 and 190 cal. BC, is also contemporary with the construction of a ditch and rampart around the settlement as a whole (Coningham and Cheetham 1999). Structural period G provided evidence for the first introduction of fired brick within a sequence of five phases of rectangular structures as well as for the use of limestone slabs in foundation pits for timber pillars. This period, dated between the third century cal. BC and the latter half of the first century cal. AD, was followed by the construction of a brick platform, with at least 25 stone pillars, in the early centuries of the first millennium AD. Following its abandonment, the pillared hall was utilized as a source of building materials and was itself the focus for a series of impermanent structures between the seventh and twelfth centuries AD. The locality was fully abandoned after that date and only reoccupied, with brick and concrete structures, following the recolonization of Anuradhapura in the early twentieth century.

As noted above, the report of the Sri Lankan-British excavations at trench ASW2 has been divided into two volumes, *The Site* (Coningham 1999) and *The Artefacts*. The first volume contained six chapters which introduced and discussed the site's physical environment, the history of archaeological research at the site, its general topography, the dating and phasing of its fortifications, the archaeological and structural sequence at trench ASW2, the dating of that sequence, and the impact of the findings on the models proposed for the emergence of Early Historic urban forms in the southern half of South Asia. The present volume, *The Artefacts*, presents the artefacts recovered from the excavations at trench ASW2 and has been divided into chapters largely in terms of material. While this material approach may provide some undue complexity to the study of beads, which range from metal to glass and stone, it is strongly felt that the material base may provide a clearer basis for the understanding of artefact manufacture and provenance. Chapters 2, 3 and 4 cover the metal artefacts and have been divided into coins, metal objects and metal-working residues (the latter includes two stone moulds). Chapters 5 and 6 comprise the ceramic artefacts and have been divided into glazed and unglazed ceramics, the latter including both fine wares – such as Grey ware and Rouletted ware – and coarse wares. Chapter 7 covers glass objects and Chapter 8 the stone artefacts. Chapter 9, which contains the epigraphical evidence, forms a self-contained group as its evidence is found spread through a number of materials such as metal, stone and clay. Chapters 10, 11 and 12 include the faunal, human and botanical materials recovered from the excavation. Chapter 13, the conclusion, identifies the key findings of the excavations and is followed by an index covering both volumes.

Each artefactual chapter in this volume follows a similar organization and contains an introduction to the material, followed by a complete catalogue of each artefactual group, recording special find (sf) number, context number, structural period, stratigraphic phase and weight; dimensions are recorded if necessary. Key and representative examples are illustrated in order to provide explicit dated artefactual groupings which may go towards filling the lacunae in the chronological and artefactual sequences for the island in the light of the absence of more than preliminary reports from major excavations at the major sites of Mantai, Kantarodai, Pomparipu and Ibbankatuva. These materials, combined with the results of Dr Deraniyagala's excavations (1992), will lead towards the generation of a relative type-site for the island's Early Historic chronology. As already noted in the first volume (Coningham 1999: 3), the artefactual catalogues comprise the largest section of the present volume. Furthermore, they are purposely embedded within the text as they represent the key data sets and results from the excavations at trench ASW2, and are not an annexe to that work. Where possible, analogies and comparisons with other relevant sites and artefacts have been made. Much of this work has relied heavily on the expertise of the team of 17 international scholars who contributed formally to this volume; a number of other scholars offered additional assistance and their comments have been gratefully acknowledged. In conclusion, it is hoped that publication of this volume will allow presentation of our data and its identification and interpretation. However, we should reiterate Barry Cunliffe's words of warning (1984: viii) that

...no excavation report, however detailed, can hope to be more than an interim summary of a site. To suggest more would be naive or arrogant. A data-set will continue to be reworked by students for the foreseeable future asking new and increasingly sophisticated questions. These reports merely advertise what is available and offer some general approximations to the truth which may help those interested in these matters to design new and more penetrating analyses.

As already noted in Volume I, certain conventions adopted in the text should be explained. Firstly, De Silva's list of Sri Lanka's rulers (see Volume I: 155–8) has been accepted as an initial framework for the island's chronology (De Silva 1981). It is understood fully, however, that as this framework was based upon a combination of sources including the *Mahavamsa*, the *Culavamsa* and various inscriptions, it is not necessarily without error or omission (Coningham 1994a, 1995a). Secondly, it should be noted that, with the exception of Chapter 9: Inscriptions and Graffiti, diacritical marks have been dispensed with following the convention used in the *Cambridge Encyclopedia of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan and the Maldives* (Robinson 1989).



Map 1

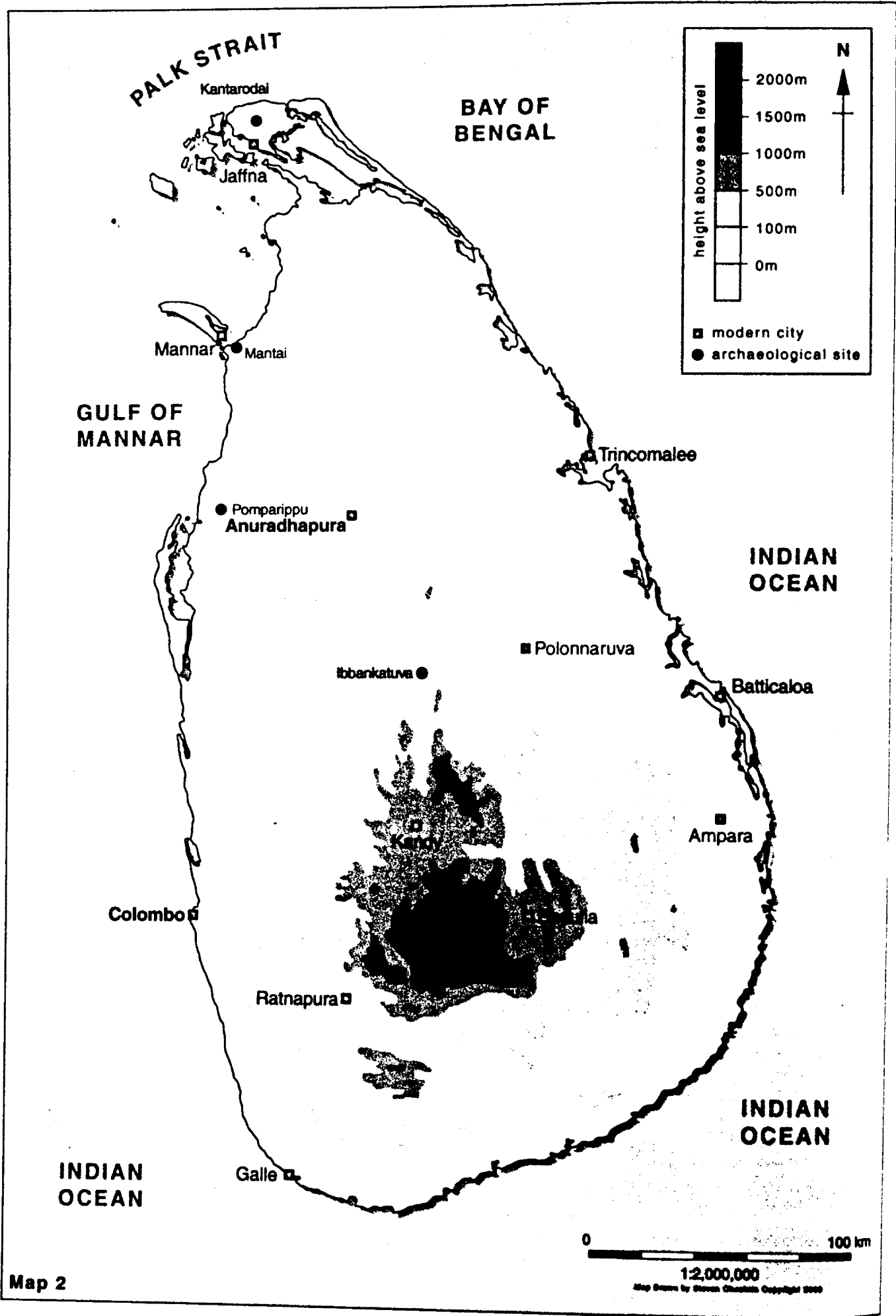


Table 1.1 Chronological summary of the sequence at ASW2 (earliest appearance)

Structural phases		
A	Enamelled sign (1918) and George VI coin (1943 AD)	c.600 AD - 1100 AD
B5		
B4		
B3		
B2		
B1		
C, D & E	Pandyan coin, Lustre ware, Lead glazed ware, White tin glazed ware, Buff ware, Sasanian-Islamic blue glazed ware, Changsha painted stoneware, Yue green ware and Xing and Ding wares	(c.200 AD - 600 AD)
F	Granite and Late Roman Imperial Third Brass	(c.200 - 600 AD)
G5	Maneless Lion coin, copper alloy kohl stick, Eastern Mediterranean glass and blue glazed wares	
G4	Caitya & Fish coin	
G3	Lakshmi plaque and copper alloy mirror	
G2	Limestone and pillar foundations, Arikamedu Type 10, Nandipada & Swastika coin, Tree & Swastika coin and iron saw	(c.200 cal BC - 130 cal AD)
G1	Elephant & Swastika coin	
H2		
H1		
I8	Punch-marked coin and copper alloy vessel with laurel leaf design	
I7		
I6	Flap-shell turtle and palm fibre	
I5		
I4	Mangrove wood species	(c.360 cal BC - 190 cal BC)
I3	Lapis lazuli and Rouletted ware	
I2	Bamboo	
I1	Square structures, roof tile and horse	
J6	Marine shell	
J4	Camelian, marine turtle and early Brahmi inscription	
J3	Rice and early Brahmi scriptural graffiti	(c.340 cal BC - 510 cal BC)
J2	Bunai pit?, quartz and Grey ware	
J1		
K3		
K2		(c.460 cal BC - 840 cal BC)
K1	Round structures?, iron objects and ferrous slags and residues	

