Culture and Society of the Beas Area in Bygone Times: A Study of Vainiwal

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ABSTRACT

Twenty sites of pre-historic nature have been discovered so far along the dry bed of River Beas in the jurisdiction of Sahiwal, Khanewal, Multan, Vehari and Lodhran districts of the Punjab province of Pakistan. Inhabited first, during the early phases of the Kot Dijian Era, they collectively remained settled during Early, Mature and Late Harappan Periods with different levels of activity and population density. Apparently the people of Beas area changed their locations in wake of environmental vicissitudes, mainly associated with rain patterns and variation in water courses in the habitat. Some of the settlements, however, remained nourishing during the pre-historic span without break. Vainiwal is the most representative site amongst them and throw light on almost every shade of the society during that period. Studying Vainiwal, therefore, offer an opportunity to gain massive amount of knowledge about the Indus Valley tradition in this part of Pakistan. Most of the shades are identical to those observed in case of other bigger sites of the Harappan Period, yet, some of them are different from contemporary settlements located towards the North and South of Vainiwal. Perhaps nature of trade links resulted into these differences. These links were not of internal kind only, but some peculiar pottery types and beads indicate export and

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import relationships with soils outside the Harappan regime as well.

Following pages shed light on culture and society of the Beas Area during bygone times with the help of data and material of antiquity collected from Vainiwal.

Introduction

Greater Indus Valley was the center of one of the most remarkable civilizations of the pre-historic world. Hundreds of settlements, relating to its different phases, have been found so far and the process of new discoveries is still not ceased. This phenomenon clearly indicates depth, extent and comprehensive nature of the Indus Age. At its peak, from around 2600 to 1900 B.C., it covered an area twice the size of Ancient Egypt or Mesopotamia. This culture primarily came into existence in its comprehensive form when people, due to enhanced economic needs, opted to migrate from the Trans-Indus Range to the Cis-Indus Zone to exploit recourses of the land of five rivers—tributaries to the mighty Indus.

As regards, the time zone of this important civilization, various assessments, with slight variation, have been made by different scholars. This disparity is basically based on difference in the active d the material of antiquity discovered by various scholars as a result of their exploration or excavations. Rafique Mughal assigned assemblages or periods to different pre-historic zones in the light of his work in Cholistan as under:[1]

Hakra Wares	Fourth Millennium B.C.
Early Harappan	3100/3000-2500 B.C.
Mature Harappan	2500-2000/1900 B.C.
Late Harappan	1900-1500 B.C

1 Mohammad Rafique Mughal, *Ancient Cholistan–Archaeology and Architecture* (Lahore: Ferozsons Ltd., 1997), 40.

In the light of excavation at Harappa, Randall Law described the chronology of the site as under:[2]

Table 1: CHRONOLOGY OF THE SITE AT HARAPPA, RANDALL

Period	Phase	Dates
1	Ravi Phase	> 3900 B.C. to c. 2800 B.C.
2	Kot Diji, Early Harappa Phase	c. 2800 B.C. to c. 2600 B.C.
3A	Harappa Phase A	c. 2600 B.C. to c. 2450 B.C.
3B	Harappa Phase B	c. 2450 B.C. to c. 2200 B.C.
3C	Harappa Phase C	c. 2200 B.C. to c. 1900 B.C.
4	Harappa / Late Harappa Transitional	c. 1900 B.C. to c. 1800 B.C.
5	Late Harappa Phase	c. 1800 BC? To < 1300 B.C.

Beas is one of the main eastern streams joining the Indus along with Jhelum, Chenab, Ravi and the Sutlej, the rivers that gave Punjab its name. It ran between the Ravi and the Sutlej.

During various spans of history different names were attributed to the Beas. Vipas of *Rig Veda*[3], Vipasa of *Mahabharata*[4], Hyphasis of Arrian[5], and Curtius Rufus[6],

2 Randall Law, "A Diachronic Examination of Lithic Exchange Networks During the Urban Transformation of Harappa," *South Asian Archaeology* (2003): 112.

3 Ralph Griffith T. H., *The Hymns of Rig Veda, Vol-I* (Varanasi: Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series Office, 1971), 353, 432.

4 Nando Lal Dey, *The Geographical Dictionary of Ancient and Mediaeval India* (Lahore: Book Traders, N.D.), 105.

5 J. W. M'Crindle, *The Invasion of India by Alexander the Great as Described by Arrian, Q Curtius, Diodoros, Plutarch and Justin* (Karachi: Indus Publications, 1992), 121.

6 M'Crindle, *The Invasion of India by Alexander the Great as Described by Arrian, Q Curtius, Diodoros, Plutarch and Justin*, 221.

Hypanis of Diodoros[7], Beas of Al-Balazri[8] and Minhaj Siraj[9], Abi-yab of Makhdum Jalal-ud-Din Jahanian Jahan Gasht[10], Ab-i-Siyah of Sirhindi[11] Darya-e-Siyah of Ahmad Yadgar[12], Biah of *Babur Nama*[13], Machala of Abdul Baqi[14], Bipasa as separate and Hurhari and Dand Nurni, when united with Sutlej of Abul-Fazal[15], Darya-e-Sultan Pur as separate and Ghara when united with Sutlej of Nizam-ud-Din Ahmad[16], Gharo Wah of Mir Masum Bakkari[17], Darya-e-Gobindwal of Jahangir[18], Ghillo-Ghara, when united with Sutlej of Sujan Rai Batalvi[19], Aib-i-Gobindwal of Qabil Khan[20], Gara, as

7 M'Crindle, *The Invasion of India by Alexander the Great as Described by Arrian, Q Curtius, Diodoros, Plutarch and Justin*, 281.

8 Ahmad bin Yahya Al-Balazari, *Fatuh-ul-Baldan,* Abul Khair Maududi (tr.) (Karachi: Nafees Academy, 1986), 623.

9 Minhaj-ud-Din Siraj, *Tabqat-i-Nasiri*, Vol-I, Ghulam Rasool Mehr, Hissam-ud-Din Rashidi, (eds.) (Lahore: Markazi Urdu Board, 1975), 822.

10 Jahan Gasht, *Jalal-ul-Din Mukhdoom Jahanian, Jame-ul-Uloom, Ad-Durr-ul-Manzoom Fee Tarjama-i-Malfooz-il-Mukhdoom*, Zulfiqar Ahmad (tr.), (Multan: 1382 Hijra), 722-723.

11 Yahiya Bin Ahmad Sirhindi, *Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi,* H. Beveridge (tr.), (Delhi: Low Price Publications, 1990), 175, 191, 215.

12 Ahmad Yadgaar, *Tarikh-i-Shahi*, Nazir Niazi (tr.) (Lahore: Urdu Science Board, 1985), 36.

13 Babur, *Babur Nama*, Annette S. Beveridge (tr.) (Lahore: Sang-e-Meel Publications, 1987), 458.

14 Abdul Baqi, *Muqamat-i-Daudi*, Hameed Yazdani (tr.) (Lahore: Naqoosh Press, 1990) 122.

15 Abul Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari*, Muhammad Fida Ali (tr.) (Lahore: Sang-e-Meel Publications, 1988), 1019, 1037.

16 Nizam-ud-Din Ahmad, *Tabqat-i-Akbari*, Muhammad Ayub Qadri (tr.) (Lahore: Urdu Science Board, 1990), 72, 279.

17 Mir Muhammad Masoom Bakkari, *Tarikh-i-Masoomi*, Amir Ahmad (tr.) (Hyderabad: Sindhi Adabi Board, 1985), 195.

18 Noor-ud-Din Jahagir, *Tuzak-i-Jahangiri*, Ahmad Ali (tr.) (Lahore: Sang-e-Meel Publications, 1995), 353.

19 Sujan Rai Batalvi, *Khulasa-tut-Twarikh*, Nazir Hassan Zaidi (tr.) (Lahore: Urdu Science Board, 2002), 109.

20 Qabil Khan, Abul Fateh, *Aadab-i-Alamgiri*, Abdul Ghafoor (ed.) (Lahore: Idara-i-Tahqiqat, Punjab University, 1971), 1154-1155.

composed waters of Sutlej and Beas of Tod[21], Suk Viyah of Aulad Ali Gilani[22], and Suk Beas of modern days are the known names of river Beas, along with Arjikiya[23], Uranjira[24], Arjikuja[25], Majho-Wah[26] and Haryani Dhand[27].

SOURCE: Map of Pakistan and the Punjab. Pakistan Archaeology No. 29, 1996.

21 James Tod, William Crooke, *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan* (Delhi: Low Price Publications, 2000), 1226.

22 Muhammad Aulad Ali Gilani, *Muraqqua-i-Mooltan* (Lahore: Jazib Publishers, 1995), 101.

23 Dey, *The Geographical Dictionary of Ancient and Mediaeval India*, 5.

24 Dey, 97.

25 *The Imperial Gazetteer of India*, Vol-III (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1908), 138.

26 Siddique Tahir, *Wadi-e-Hakra Aur us Ke Aasaar* (Bahawalpur: Urdu Academy, 1982), 33.

27 Tahir, 33.

Process of exploration started along the dry bed of the river Beas after the outstanding discovery of mega urban center of Harappa along the abandoned bed of the Ravi near Sahiwal, the then Montgomery.

Chak Purbane Syal (now divided into two separate nearby mounds known as Chishtiwala Tibba & Chak 126/9L)[28] was the first settlement of the pre-historic nature, discovered by Madho Sarup Vats during his exploratory trips around Harappa.[29]

Vainiwal was the second important find that came into light after a considerable gap of more than 30 years. During an exploratory trip it was quite accidently noticed by Wali Ullah Khan and Ashfaq Khan of Pakistan Archaeology Department. Both the scholars were studying the area with a purpose to discover architectural remains and mounds of the mediaeval period when they came across this fabulous site of pre-history.[30]

During an extensive survey, conducted in the suburbs of Multan, by Muhammad Sharif of the Archaeology Department of Pakistan, in 1989, two more Harappan sites, Chak 133/10-R and Mai Manoori were discovered.[31] These sites indicated potential of the area with respect to remains related with Harappan tradition and paved way for further exploratory efforts.

In 1992, a large-scale survey was initiated by the Department of Archaeology, Pakistan. In the jurisdiction of Sahiwal, Khanewal, Multan, Lodhran and Vehari districts of

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28 *Pakistan Archaeology* No. 29 (Karachi: The Department of Archaeology, 1996), 55.

29 Madho Sarup Vats, *Excavations at Harappa: Being an Account of Archaeological Excavations at Harappa carried out between the Years 1920-21 and 1933-34* (Delhi: Manager of Publications, 1940), 475.

30 *Pakistan Archaeology*, The Department of Archaeology, Karachi, no. 4 (1967): 6.

31 Muhammad Sharif, "Archaeological Exploration around Multan–1989," *Pakistan Archaeology,* Department of Archaeology and Museums no. 24 (1989): 196-198.

the Punjab, 14 new sites, covering Early Harappan to Late Harappan Period, discovered including Lohama Lal, Tibba 90/12-L, Kusamsar, Bhirki (76/15-L), Tibba 104/10-R, Tibba Bhag Thali, Faujian Wala (160 W.B.), Tibba Qutabpur Sadaat, Tibba 113/10-R, Tibba 123/10-R, Tibba 18/19 M, Tibba 21-M, Tibba 27-M and Tibba 29-M.[32] As is evident, the last effort proved to be the most successful, but, unfortunately, the survey could not be completed as per plan and many districts of the Punjab province could not be explored. At the same time detailed report on this outstanding effort never published.

Material of antiquity indicated that most of the Beas settlements came into existence during the Kot Dijian Period. But at certain sites like Vainiwal, Chak 18/19-M and Chak 21-M, evidences go beyond this phase as well. Wheel made Appliqué and incised forms of pottery, having close resemblance with Hakra pottery of the same but earlier tradition, can easily be associated with the transitional period between the Hakra and the Kot Dijian Phases of Harappan Age. This factor also indicates possibility of finding earlier forms of such pottery types from the Beas settlements. However, the final opinion in this regard can only be made after an appropriate study of the stratigraphy of these cultural mounds up to the level of virgin soil. During Kot Dijian and Mature Harappan Periods, pre-historic society touched its peak and then faced decline in accordance with unchanged pattern of the Mother Nature.

An overall view, indicating cultural association of various settlements in catchments of the Beas, is as under:

32 *Pakistan Archaeology* no. 29, (1996), 276-280, 285, 288, 292, 293.

Table 2: CULTURAL ASSOCIATION OF VARIOUS SETTLEMENTS IN CATCHMENTS OF THE BEAS

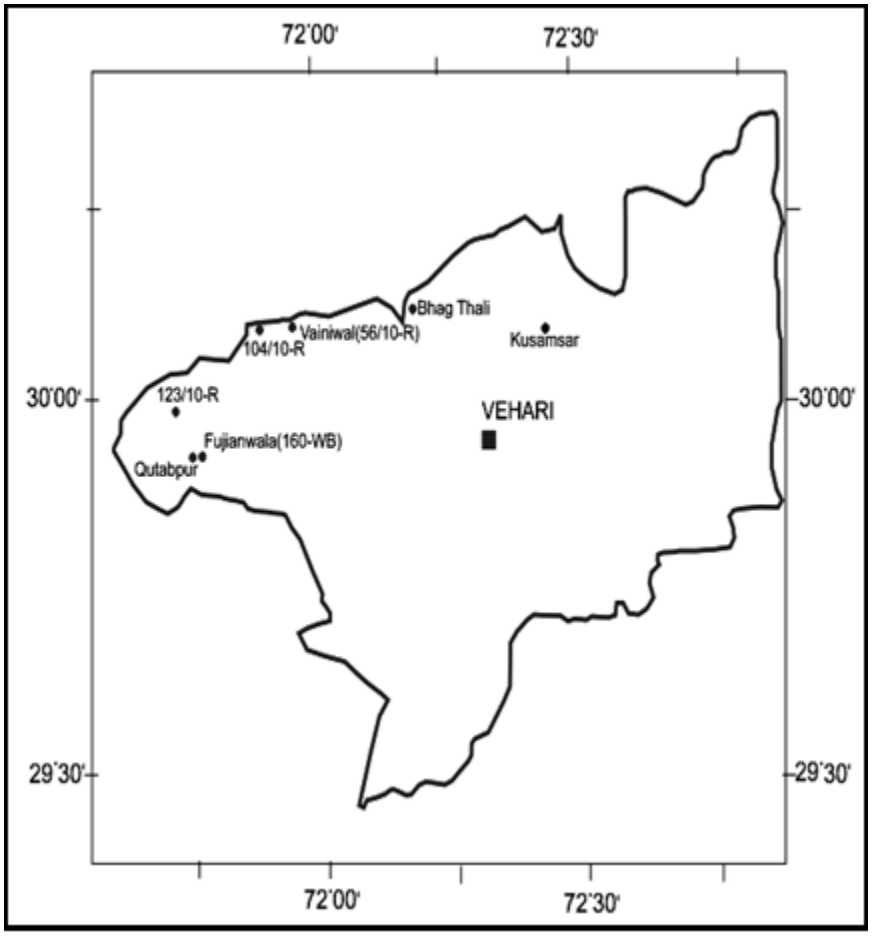
S. No.	Site	Early	Mature	Late
1	Lohama Lal	✓	✓	✓
2-3	Purbane Syal (126/9-L + Chishti Wala)		✓✓	✓✓
4	90/12-L	✓	✓	
5	Kusamsar	✓	✓	
6	Bhag Thali			✓
7	Bhirki	✓	✓	
8	Vainiwal	✓	✓	✓
9	104/10-R	✓	✓	
10	113/10-R	✓	✓	
11	123/10-R	✓	✓	
12	133/10-R	✓	✓	
13	Mai Manoori	✓	✓	
14	Qutabpur	✓	✓	
15	Faujian Wala		✓	
16	18/19-M	✓	✓	
17	21-M	✓	✓	
18	27-M	✓	✓	
19	29-M	✓	✓	
20	Bhirwala (Buttanwala-Peer Ghaib)	✓	✓	
		16	**19**	**5**

As the data above indicates, only two settlements, out of twenty, remained inhabited during all the three major spans of pre-history. Lohama Lal could survive, perhaps, due to its status of a satellite locality in the catchment of Harappa, but Vainiwal flourished due to its ideal location, size, population and cultural strength. Independent economic activities also played role in this phenomenon, in all probability.

Vainiwal, therefore, can be termed as the most representative site along the dry bed of the river Beas. It is located at 30º 05' 40'' north latitude and 71º 57' 20'' east longitude[33] in Chak 56/10-R in Tehsil Jahanian of District Khanewal at a distance of about one and a half kilometer from Vainiwal Village. This village is approximately 13

33 *Pakistan Archaeology* No. 29, 224.

kilometers Northeast of Jahanian. The mound can also be approached from Jangal Mariala, a Railway Station, on Khanewal–Lodhran Cord Line.



Kusamsar, Bhag Thali, Vainiwal, 104/10-R, 123/10-R, Faujianwala and Qutabpur in Vehari District of the Punjab, Pakistan.

The mound, consisting of subsidiary elevations, roughly forms a square shape covering an area of more or less 12 acres. Towards North-South, its length is almost 295 meters, whereas, breadth in East-West direction is approximately 225 meters. It attains maximum height of approximately 30-35 feet above the normal ground level. In the present scenario it is surrounded from all the sides by cultivated

fields. Levelling activity for including area commanded by the mound in agricultural land is continuously in progress and considerable earth has already been removed from its north-eastern corner. Phenomenon of construction of modern houses towards south-western side is also posing a threat to the ancient settlement. These processes are liable to be arrested, as early as possible; otherwise these would lead towards serious damage to the remains. Pottery sherds and other material of antiquity, prolifically scattered on the surface, give clue of the density of population that once resided the site. This material of archaeological importance can be observed in area all around the cultural mound, which establishes the fact that in remote past actual dimensions of the settlement would be considerably larger than the present one.

A portion of the mound towards the north-east is covered by comparatively dense groove of bushes. Tatters of colorful cloth can be seen, tied with the branches by those devotees who visit the site, to offer respect to the place and to pray for the fulfilment of their desires. This sort of tree and bush worship is prevalent in different parts of the country where some old trees or bushes enjoy respect and esteem by the public. Roots of this practice can be traced in ancient traditions of the area.

Fissures, created by weathering process through ages, have exposed different layers of the mound and in gullies formed by them minor antiquities are found in relatively great numbers as they drift towards gaps in the surface during rainy seasons because of their lighter weight.

The mound, in its comparatively well preserved state, especially when compared to the other contemporary sites of the area, is located at the left bank of the abandoned channel of the Beas which is not far from the settlement in north-eastern direction. Breadth of the channel has reduced to such an extent that it gives look of a seasonal "*nala*" or stream, at the most, rather than a river, carrying large amount of water. Meandering of the bed, however, clearly

indicates that it is a naturally carved waterway of the bygone ages. The same position was observed near “Sukh Beas”, a closed station on the cord line, but at “Sukh Beas” process of inclusion of the abandoned bed into agricultural land was in mid-way, whereas, at Vainiwal this happening had already been materialized.

In the recent past some important exploration activity managed by the members of HARP with the coordination and support of Pakistan Archaeology Department. Small test pits also managed by them that provided important information with regard to the cultural assemblage, along with data related to environmental scenario during the pre-historic era. During the survey of Beas sites by HARP members, Vainiwal was given, quite prudently, maximum attention. Investigations performed at the site included preparation of contour maps, scraping and documentation of mound profiles, auguring of two subsurface cores, excavation of a test trench and sampling and collection of surface material.

As narrated by Rita Wright, a narrow saddle connects the broader oval-shaped northern mound to the central and south mounds, which are oblong to circular in shape. The surface terrain consists of a series of undulating knolls and hillocks with a network of rills incising across the mid and foot slopes. In Harappan times the landform may have been continuous, since more robust structural features – for example visible streets, foundation walls, and platforms – mark the edges of mound segments; these clay and mud reinforced structures have proved resistant to sustained long-term erosion.[34]

During investigations, an extra-ordinarily well-preserved large-scale mud brick construction encompassing the south mound was found. Another important find was the traces of a

34 R. P. Wright, J. Schuldenrein, M. Afzal Khan, and S. Malin-Boyce, “The Beas River Landscape and Settlement Survey: Preliminary Results from the Site of Vainiwal,” *South Asian Archaeology* (2003): 103.

kiln and concentration of baked bricks and vitrified sherds and nodules eroding out of the south mound. Remains of many other kilns were also observed. However, with one exception all were located on the periphery of mounds. Network patterns of streets and traces of small-scale buildings were also observed on the North and central mounds.[35]

Very rich collection of the pottery was made during the survey. Ceramic finds included typical Kot Diji (Early Harappan) Phase types found in Period 2 at Harappa and others that, although found in smaller quantities, were types associated with settlements in Balochistan, such as Faiz Mohammad Gray and Quetta Wet Ware. The bulk of the ceramics contemporary with Period 3 at Harappa were typical Harappa Phase forms that span the 600 year period at Harappa. Also present but in extremely small quantities were ceramics from the Late Harappan Phase.[36]

Small finds were representative of both, the Kot Diji and Harappa Phase. They included animal figurines; carts and wheels, suggesting that animals at Vainiwal were used for traction; terracotta and shell bangles; chert (including blades and cores); beads (faience, steatite and terracotta); grinding stone and pestle fragments; copper and un-worked stone, including lapis lazuli. There were quantities of baked brick, fired clay nodules and terracotta cakes near kilns. The fired clay nodules were also associated with traces of residential structures.[37]

After detailed study of this important mound, final conclusion was made. According to Rita Wright:

> Our analyses show a long history at Vainiwal with its origins at least by the Kot Diji (Early Harappa) Phase, an expansion of occupation in the Harappa Phase, and decline in the Late Harappa Phase. The

35 Wright, *et al.*, "The Beas River Landscape and Settlement Survey: Preliminary Results from the Site of Vainiwal," 105.

36 Wright, *et al.*, 105-106.

37 Wright, *et al*., 106-107.

> settlement at Vainiwal appears as a predominantly residential town that was also engaged in specialized manufacturing. The evidence for a large platform on the south mound leaves open the possibility that larger non-residential structures may also have been present. With respect to its association with Harappa, there are many similarities in materials at Vainiwal to those at Harappa, including diagnostic ceramic types and small finds. The presence of script in the Kot Diji (Early Harappa) Phase and the Harappa Phase similarly indicates that at least some individuals at Vainiwal were conversant with the Indus script. It further suggests that the development of written communication may have co-occurred at rural settlements and major centers such as Harappa.
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> Although Vainiwal clearly had ties to Harappa, judging by the overall similarity of ceramics and small finds, and no doubt was part of a hierarchy of settlements along the Beas, it need not have been a satellite to the larger site. Our analysis of site function demonstrates a degree of self-sufficiency in craft production and in the types of manufacturing present. In particular, the presence of non-local chert, semi-precious stone and ceramic types associated with Baluchistan, suggests that the site participated in a wider network beyond Harappa.[38]

During my exploratory trips to the sites along the Beas I got many brief chances to visit Vainiwal. Surface collection at this site was almost unparallel keeping its scope, canvas and time range in view. Brief narration of selective antiquities would be of some interest for those interested in the study of Harappan Culture.

Earliest pottery types were represented by the Appliqué and incised sherds, having close resemblance with the Hakra pottery of the same tradition. Both the pottery types were wheel made. Appliqué pottery was rather simple with exterior having coating of mud and pottery bits, whereas, on incised pottery, red or buff slip was provided prior to decorate it with lineal patterns consisting of parallel and wavy incisions. These types can safely be placed in the transitional period between Hakra and Kot Dijian era.

According to Rafique Mughal:

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38 Wright, *et al.,* 109.

> Handmade, thick textured vessels treated on the external surface with a thick coating of mud mixed with pottery bits that are precisely identical to the "Hakra Applique" pottery, also occur at Early Harappan sites. Its presence suggests continuity of the applique pottery making tradition from the fourth to early third millennia B.C. The basis of such an inference comes from the stratified levels of Jalilpur where applique pottery first appeared in levels assigned to Period-I and then continued to occur in the Kot Dijian occupation of Period-II.[39]

In late Harappan Period, "Appliqué Pottery" once again became a choice of the potter's of Indus settlements. Perhaps cooling effect of the mud based Appliqué persuaded them to apply it on the pots used for keeping water or other liquids. However, pottery made during the Late Harappan Period gives a different look when compared to the pottery of earlier periods.

As regards Hakra Incised, this ware is characterized by thick and thin, large and small bodied vessels decorated on the external surface with groups of multiple incised lines drawn horizontally, diagonally and in a wavy manner. It is extremely well fired. The large and heavy vessels appeared to be wheel turned, if not made on fast wheel. No other form of decoration occurs. The multiple incised lines are thin and made on the body of the vessels without the use of slip. Thin bodied vessels are wheel made and have an averted rim.[40]

In the light of this scenario, I am of the opinion that Appliqué pottery found in Vainiwal can easily be associated with earlier phases of Kot Dijian Period, if not Hakra. Similar is the case with Incised Pottery of Vainiwal. Although it has a close resemblance with Hakra Incised Pottery, but application of slip leads us to form a careful assessment with regard to the pottery type and place it in the transitional phase between the Hakra and Kot Dijian Periods.

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39 Mohammad Rafique Mughal, *Ancient Cholistan: Archaeology and Architecture* (Lahore: Ferozsons, 1997), 71-72.

40 Mughal, *Ancient Cholistan: Archaeology and Architecture,* 63.

Kot Dijian pottery was symbolized by grooved and banded types, along with typical black on red. Some sherds were having striated exterior, whereas, many were with Periano Reserve Slip, provided for decorative purpose. Grooves were of different styles, from straight to wavy with variation of distance between the lines. In most of the cases red slip was applied on the exterior of the pots. As regards Banded Pottery, bands along the neck, both inside and outside lips of the earthen vessels were of different width. The pots were applied with slip as well, in red of various tones. Black on Red Pottery of the Kot Dijian Era was representative of more experimentation with regard to decorative motifs. They were illustrative of flora and fauna available in the habitat, and additionally portraying interest of the potters in geometrical designs as well.

Mature Harappan Period was an era of vast experimentation and almost all types of pottery were observed at Vainiwal related with this phase. Pottery sherds with *pipal* leaves, eye and sun motifs, hatched leaves, loop and balls, fish scales, geometrical designs with circles, straight and wavy lines were seen in abundance. Some sherds were representing flora and fauna of the environment. Pieces of dish-on-stand and incised pottery were also present in large numbers. Dishes were simple as well as decorated, sometimes with black on red designs and occasionally with lineal patterns or nail incisions. Incised pottery was in all probability used for various purposes; however some pieces were indicating their use in the bathrooms or places of veneration as tiles. Mud wash, fluted, perforated and with Periano Reserve Slip sorts of pottery were also observed during the surface collection. Some sherds were having close resemblance with the pottery found in various sites in Baluchistan. Some sherds of Wet Ware and black and sepia designs on grey background clearly indicate contact with respect to pottery between plains of the Beas and the highlands of Balochistan. Another very interesting sherd was with knobs or pimples. This sort of pottery was rather rare. Jars with rows of such knobs were recovered from Tell Asmar in

Mesopotamia and thought to be related with Indus Domain by the scholars and taken as an imported material.[41] Discovery of such pot at Vainiwal is, therefore, liable to be probed further in its typical background. Some sherds of fluted pottery and pointed goblets were indicating their relevance with the Late Harappan Period. Their number was however much lower than the pottery sherds relating to the Mature and Early phases of the Harappan Tradition.

Pottery sherds with graffiti and Indus script were of immense importance. They were related to both, Kot Dijian and Harappan era. Some patterns, lines or alphabets were of quite basic and simple in nature, yet some were of clearly indicative of words. With a limited effort, by the author of these lines, discovery of sherds with graffiti or Indus script in such a number is not an unimportant phenomenon to be ignored. Concerted efforts are, therefore, required to find more representative sherds from Vainiwal.

As regards, pottery of Harappan Domain, despite many scholarly efforts starting from the discovery of the Indus Civilization, enormous data is still to be studied appropriately. Addition of number of newly discovered sites has made this matter even more important.[42] Variations in preparatory and firing techniques, along with decorative motifs, and the material used for this purpose need elaborate studies.

Some important works, in comparatively recent past, have thrown commendable light as a result of excavations in different parts of Pakistan. Gonzague Quivron, in the light of excavations at Nausharo, opined that the beginning of the Mature Indus period is the most homogeneous stage in this

41 Ernest Mackay, *The Indus Civilization* (Lahore: Sang-e-Meel Publications, 2001), 151-152.

42 Zubair Shafi Ghauri, *Thal of the Sindh Sagar Doab during Indus Age–An account and analysis of 226 Prehistoric Settlements of the Hakra, Early and Late Harappan Ages in Thal Desert of Pakistan, discovered during 2009-2012* (Lahore: Iqbal Publishers, 2018).

evolution. This is also the reason why its pottery is more easily recognizable in the corpus of ceramics of the various Harappan sites. The vessels, particularly the large storage jars, are extensively decorated. Intricate abstract and naturalistic black motifs are depicted on a red glossy slip. For example, the combinations of peacocks, fishes or antelopes amid trees and undergrowth, radiant solar motifs and rows of leaf-like objects may be derived from some kind of water weed, are hallmarks of this first stage. It is also the case for the repeated motif of black dots with connecting lines suspended from horizontal bands which underline the decorated panels. The design repertoire is rather conservative. The static iconography ventures slight variants especially on small pots and only a few vessels bear unusual patterns. The wares are also superior in painting and finish from those manufactured during the subsequent stage. A considerable care is taken in the execution of the scenes and, to delineate the motifs, the painter's touch is sure.[43]

Changes occur during the second stage of the Mature Indus Period. During this stage, the previously known decorative tradition appears to continue but the Indus iconography starts becoming less rigid. The elaborate combinations of designs are more and more transformed into purely decorative repetitions of one or two motifs only and are often less carefully executed. The remarkable homogeneity of the previous stage disappears and stylistic regional differences start occurring.[44]

The third stage of the Mature Indus Period is the time of regional groupings. This final sub period has a more diversified repertoire of motifs which corresponds to specific

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43 Gonzague Quivron, "The Evolution on the Mature Indus Pottery Style in the Light of the Excavations at Nausharo, Pakistan," *East and West*, 50, no. ¼ Istituto Italiano per l' Africa e l'Oriente (IsIAO) in collaboration with JSTOR (December 2000): 178–179.

44 Quivron, 180.

regions showing nevertheless, in pottery style, evidence of contacts.[45]

As a result of fresh excavation at Chanhu–Daro, Sindh, Pakistan, some fresh observations came into light. As narrated by Aurore Didier, the macroscopic observation of the ceramic paste showed that the studied corpus is highly dominated by vessels with fine or medium-fine paste characterized by well-sorted mineral fabric. Overall, the colour of the ceramic paste ranges from brownish light red to pinkish buff and the great majority of the vessels have been fashioned by the wheel-throwing technique. Eighteen form-classes of vessels have been documented, that represents an important morphological variability if we consider the limited size of the sounding. The most common forms of the assemblage are dishes-on stand with high pedestal, large bowls/basins with bilateral projecting rim, short-necked globular jars and pots with rounded rim projecting on the exterior. In general, the surface treatments of the vessels display red or pinkish-buff to cream slips. Other surface-finishing techniques are used such as comb-sand slip, sandy coating and cord-impressions. In addition, sherds of dish-on stand having incised or impressed decoration on the interior surface. Decorations painted in black, dark brown or red have been observed on dishes-on stand, jars and pots. Horizontal bands, wavy lines and interlacing circles are the most commonly attested, but the decorative motifs also include peacocks (head, body or tail) and friezes of vertical hatched leaves separated by wavy bands.[46]

Terracotta sling balls, both fragmented and intact, together with fragmented wheels and parts of terracotta toy-carts, terracotta tops, terracotta discs, tiny pots of terracotta, and terracotta animal/bird figurines were indicative of playing

45 Quivron, 180.

46 Aurore Didier, David Sarmiento-Castillo, Pascal Mongne, and Syed Shakir Ali Shah, “Resuming excavations at Chanhu-daro, Sindh: First results of the 2015-2017 field-seasons,” *Pakistan Archaeology,* Department of Archaeology and Museum, Islamabad no. 31 (2018): 75.

activities prevalent in the society and status of children. Apparently children were respected by the society and it was responsive with regard to their needs. In a way this also indicates respect for the mothers as well as they always try to make their children happy and nourishing.

Terracotta net sinkers were indicating fish hunting practices and availability of water sources in the vicinity. Although the society was not solely dependent on food gathering and hunting practices, yet it was widespread in society party due to the need associated with the provision of meat of different kind and partly because of thrill and adventure.

Terracotta cakes, both intact and fragmented, were quite abundant. Their probable use, or uses, have been talked about and discussed much by the scholars, but in all probability they were used for more than one purpose.

Terracotta chunks of fire places or hearths were also observed in great number.

In some parts of the great mound remnants of kilns were more than obvious. Their debris was indicative of usage of pyro-techniques by the people. Molted pieces and nodules of copper also indicated this phenomenon.

Fragmented bangles were found in great number. Their preparation was also dependent on kilns like many other antiquities made of terracotta. Most of them were of red colour with no decoration on the drum. However, in one example a pattern was made on the outer surface with the help of finger tips and nails prior to the firing. Grey bangles were limited in number. They were simple as well as decorated with parallel or diagonal lines on the drum.

Terracotta rollers with bulbous ends were interesting to watch but their exact use was not easy to understand with precision. In all probability they were used to adjust pots before firing in the kiln.

Terracotta beads were also interesting to watch. Some made for the purpose of adornment, mostly biconical in shape, but some of them were made for decorating domesticated

animals in all probability. Some were exact imitation of semi-precious stone beads, especially the elongated ones.

Representation was very limited as far as stone vessels were concerned. Only one specimen found during the surface collection. However, stone implements, both intact and fragmented found in great number. Some intact stone weights were also collected during the surface study. Chert blades, cores, and borers were found in very large numbers. Shiny or broken edges of some of them were indicating their use for longer spans of time. Flakes and nodules were giving clear cut evidence of their preparation at local level. Most of the lithic material was imported from Rohri and its catchments but black chert was acquired from the quarries located in the Salt Range or Kohi Sulaiman in all probability. Randall Law, in the light of his research in Salt Range, elaborated that the colour of the chert found in the Amb Formation is mostly light brown, greenish brown, greyish brown and brownish grey. The colour of the chert observed in Sakesar Limestone is mostly brownish grey to dark black. Nammal lake area was the most productive with respect to black chert. In his opinion black Sakesar chert was being procured from Nammal Gorge and utilized, at least on a local scale, during the Kot Diji and Harappan periods. That Sakesar chert may have been traded more widely is suggested by the fact that the mound at Musa Khel, as well as other Kot Dijian sites, found in the vicinity of the Salt Range[47] are located along the natural route between Harappa and Sarai Khola, the northernmost known site of the Kot Diji phenomenon.[48]

Shell bangles were found in large quantity. All specimens were fragmented. Some were having perforation on an end

47 Saif-ur-Rahman Dar, “Antiquity of the Salt Range: Pre- and Early Harappan Evidence,” Paper for the international Colloquium on Indus Valley Civilization, (April 6th – 8th 2001), Islamabad.

48 Randal Law, and Syed Rafique Hassan Baqri, “Black Chert Source Identified at Nammal Gorge, Salt Range,” *Ancient Pakistan,* University of Peshawar (2001): 34-35.

indicating their use as amulets. Certain incomplete specimens were giving clear-cut indication of a local shell industry for preparing beads and bangles.

A large variety of beads was discovered from Vainiwal. Steatite, lapis lazuli, carnelian, agate, sandstone and faience were the main materials used for bead making. Some carnelian beads were decorated with bleached designs having double circles or eye designs. Unfinished beads along with broken chips of lapis lazuli and carnelian indicated local bead industry as well.

Discovery of beads in such a large number along with shell bangles clearly hints towards trade activities widespread in the society. It could be internal or external in nature, but many articles were certainly not found in the jurisdiction of Harappan Domain. Detailed study is, therefore, required to understand exact nature and dimensions of trade links of Vainiwal with other areas in and outside the orbit of Indus Valley civilization.

Conclusion

Vainiwal, near Khanewal in the Punjab province of Pakistan, is a classic custodian of Indus Valley or Harappan tradition along the dry bed of the river Beas, a tributary of the mighty Indus River. Fortunately enough, unlike most of the cultural mounds of the pre-historic period in this area, along various abandoned channels and creeks of the Beas River; it is still intact to a great extent. Wheel made Appliqué and incised pottery types place it to time span related to the transitional period between the Hakra and Kot Dijian era. Cultural material related to the Kot Dijian and Mature Harappan Period is prolifically available at the site, including pottery, terracotta, shell and semi-precious stone beads, terracotta and shell bangles, lithic material of various natures, chert tools, figurines and sherds with graffiti and Indus Script. Limited antiquities are associated with the Late Harappan Period as well. Vainiwal, therefore, covers almost the whole cultural span of pre-history in the fertile lands of the Beas. Antiquities, found from the site, represent almost all the

shades of cultural and economic life of the inhabitants of the bygone ages. It is absolutely necessary to ensure its proper preservation. There is every possibility that careful study of the site will enhance knowledge with regard to one of the most glorious civilizations of the remote past.

VAINIWAL: Grooved sherds of the Kot Dijian period along with pottery having Periano Reserve Slip

VAINIWAL (Chak 56/10-R): Incised and Appliqué Pottery associated with the transitional phase between the Hakra and the Kot Dijian Periods.

VAINIWAL: Banded Pottery of the Kot Dijian Period with black bands on the inner and outer side of the rim.

VAINIWAL: Delicate Pottery of the Early Harappan /Kot Dijian Tradition with black decorative motifs on the red background.

VAINIWAL: Sherds indicating fauna of the Harappan Age. Peacocks, seagulls and caprids made in black over the slipped surface in red.

VAINIWAL: Typical pottery of the Harappan tradition having black decorative motifs on the red surface. Hatched leaves, pipal leaf, eye and sun motifs are visible.

VAINIWAL: A rare sherd indicating Knobbed Ware, in all probability, prepared for the export purpose.

VAINIWAL: A piece of stone vessel indicating base of the pot.

VAINIWAL: A beautiful sherd of the Faiz Muhammad Grey-Ware tradition with peacock, pipal and hatched leaves.

VAINIWAL: Fragments of dishes on stand. Flat and bowl type dishes are decorated with slips, circular lines and black motifs on the red surface.

VAINIWAL: An extraordinarily clear impression of the Harappan script over the rim of a pot.

VAINIWAL: Another example of Harappan script over the rim. Pots with black slip having such writings are relatively rare.

VAINIWAL: A typical pottery type of the Harappan period. Some of the sherds are representing Harappan tiles used in the bathroom areas, in all probability.

VAINIWAL: Terracotta net sinkers.

VAINIWAL: Round stones used as weights in all probability

VAINIWAL: Terracotta lids for miniature pots.

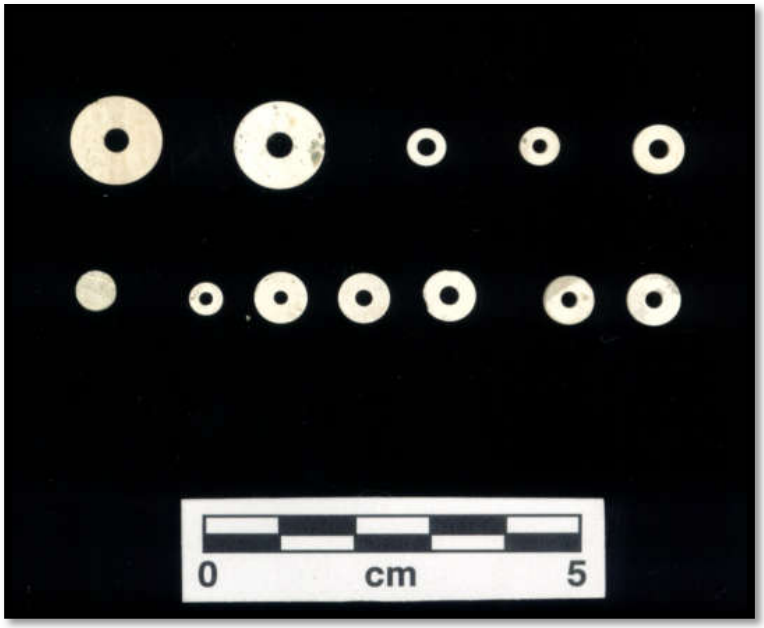
VAINIWAL: Fragmented animal figurines indicating different animals, mostly bulls. Hole in one of the figurine was made for attaching wheels.

VAINIWAL: Fragmented grey bangles of the Kot Dijian Period.

VAINIWAL: Pieces of red bangles.

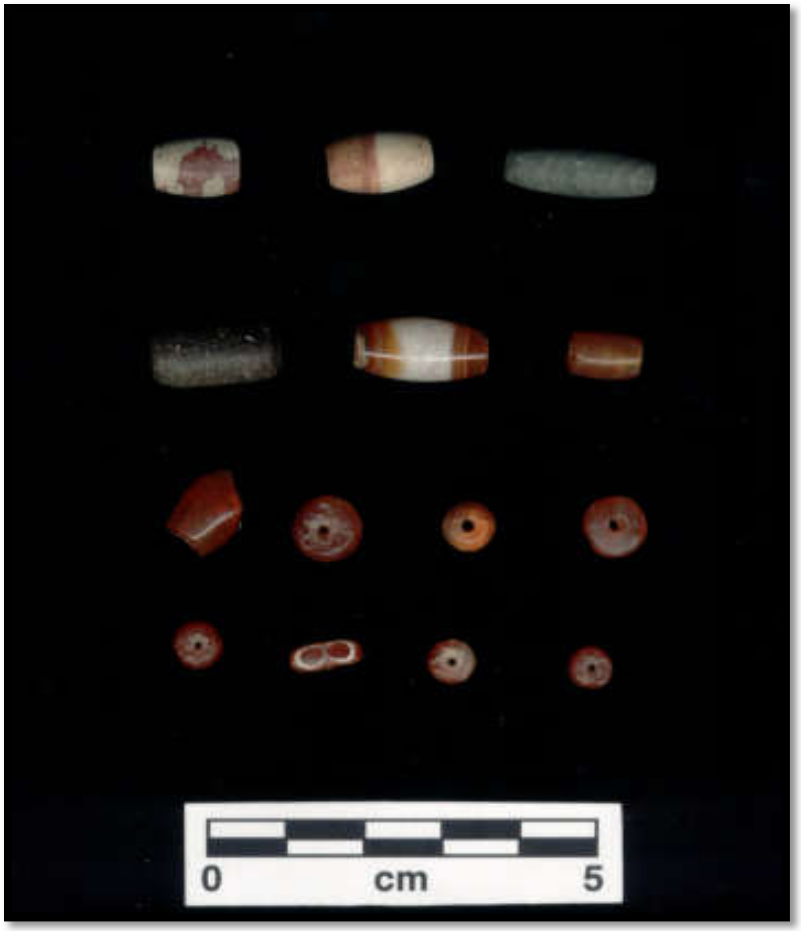
VAINIWAL: Chert blades of various types and colours. Shiny and broken edges indicate their use for longer period.

VAINIWAL: Fragmented shell bangles indicating trade links with the coastal areas.



VAINIWAL: Steatite disc Beads.

VAINIWAL: Elongated terracotta beads.



VAINIWAL: Beads of semi-precious stones including the etched one with two eye motif.