The Archaeological Site of Londo, Balochistan: A New Periodization

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Abstract

This paper deals with Londo¹ site, particularly its periodization. The site is in Khuzdar and has been often associated with Londo Horizon. Previously, this site was surveyed by Stein and de Cardi; however, they only seem to have collected Londo and Togau Wares. Applying comparative studies, the authors from the recent surface collection claim that it is a multi-cultural site including Togau, Naal, Kulli, Harappan and Londo wares. This study also includes a catalogue of pottery from the Sultan Shahwanni's Private Collection which has never been studied. This paper is also concerned with treasure hunting in the region.

Keywords: Londo, Balochistan, Togau, Naal, Kulli, Harappan, Pottery

1. Introduction

Khuzdar district in Balochistan shares its borders with Sindh province and Jhal Magsi district in the east, Awaran and Washuk districts on the west, Las Bela district in the south, and Kalat district in the north (Fig. 1) (District Development Profile Khuzdar 2011: 1, 93).

The earliest archaeological works in Khuzdar were carried out by Mirza Sher Mohammad who discovered Sohr Damb/Naal (Hargreaves 1929: 18) which were published by John Marshal (1904-05: 105-06). Later, H. Hargreaves carried out excavations on Sohr Damb/Naal site in the district (1929: 17-35). A. Stein (1931) was one of the scholars who visited this region during his surveys; he also discovered Londo Ware for

¹ Lond or londo in Balochi means "irregular". The toponym "Londo" indicates a mound (damb) "irregular in shape/form".

All the photographs are by the authors if not otherwise indicated.

the first time. B. de Cardi carried out reconnaissances in Khuzdar which resulted in many discoveries (1951, 1983). R. L. Raikes was one of the principal investigators of this region; he also found Londo sites (1968: 103-60). The recent researches and excavations at Sohr Damb/Naal from 1996 to 2006 by German-Pakistani Archaeological Mission headed by U. Franke further added to the importance of the region in Balochistan archaeology and proved Sohr Damb/Naal one of the vital sites of the region (Franke-Vogt and Ibrahim 2005: 105-15; Franke-Vogt 2005: 63-76). One of the important re-assessments on Londo Ware was recently published by U. Franke-Vogt (2001: 270-78).

The authors have collected ceramic sherds which are analyzed and comparatively studied. Based on this, a new chronology has been established for the site. Earlier only one Togau sherd and many Londo sherds were discovered from the site (1931: 181, Pl. XXXIII; de Cardi 1983: 37). However, there are more wares found which certainly show periodization issues of the site. They helped in the new periodization of the site. Moreover, there are several Londo specimens with Sultan Shahwani, who bought them so that the culture remains in town. These materials seem to be excavated from Londo site or other Londo Ware sites of the region or from neighbouring regions.

The site of Londo was discovered by A. Stein (1931: 181) who recorded it for the first time. A horizon has been named after this site and there are a number of sites of this horizon. However, B. de Cardi (1951: 65-6, 72) has claimed it a variant of Sialk VI B of Iran. It has mostly occurred at settlements and cairns (Franke-Vogt 2001: 263). The new wares were mostly found beside the mound; it proves that there has been another mound or mountain slope next to the main mound.

2. The new collection of pottery/ceramics

The previous investigations only recorded small number of Togau (one sherd by Stein) and Londo Wares (Stein 1931: 181, Pl. XXXIII; de Cardi 1983: 37). Furthermore, de Cardi (1983: 37) also mentions punctate combmarked, incised and relief decorated with combined dotted motifs with a meander on the rim wares. However, the present survey includes further wares as Naal, Kulli and Harappan which are used to modify the chronology of the site.

Togau Ware

Togau Ware, hereafter TW, was first found at the type site of Togau which was discovered by B. de Cardi in 1948 (1983: 2; Possehl 1999: 498). Moreover, it was defined from the excavations at Surab region (de Cardi 1983: 43). It was possibly the result of Kili Gul Mohammad culture or because of their contacts similarities must have emerged (de Cardi 1965: 127). It is wheel thrown (Wright 210: 664-65) and clay coil technique is used too (Hideaki *et al.* 2013: 89). Chronologically, TW is important for central Balochistan and Sarawan (Franke 2015b: 60).

Decoration Repertoire

R. Wright (2010: 69) considers Togau A the earliest decorated ware having animal motifs in the region. TW is marked from a single motif called the Togau horns (alternatively called hooks) by B. de Cardi which most frequently occurred on open bowls and plates. They are used to see four stages of evolution of TW i.e Togau A, B, C and D (1965: 130-31; Franke 2015b: 60; Possehl 1999: 498-99). For example, Togau A is recognized from a frieze of caprids or ibexes; Togau B is recognized from their neck, head and horns; Togau C is recognized from a single horn (hook) facing right and Togau D is recognized from a single hook like a hockey stick, facing left (de Cardi 1965: 130-31; Franke 2015b: 60). In the case of Mehrgarh, Togau A was found in Mehrgarh III, Togau B-C were found in Mehrgarh IV and Togau D was found in Mehrgah V (de Cardi 1983: 43). The recent excavations at Sohr Damb/Naal site also includes another type named by U. Franke as Togau E (2008: 654). Other geometric and animal designs like caprids, birds (de Cardi 1965: 129-34) humped bulls are used too (Hideaki et al. 2013: 89). Red, brown and maroon or violet are used as additional colours in polychrome (Franke-Vogt 2001: 270). Nevertheless, most of the decorations are executed on the interior except for some the Togau B examples. These are associated with monochrome and bichrome wares (de Cardi 1965: 129-34).

Name of Ware	Variants / Types	Making Techniques	Main Shapes	Decoration	Firing
Togau Ware	Togau A	Coil and wheel made	Different Bowls and jars	Frieze of caprids	Oxidized

Togau B	Coil and	Bowls and	Frieze of caprid	Oxidized
	wheel made	jars	head and horns	Oxidized
Togau C	Coil and	Bowls and	Frieze of hooks	Oxidized
	wheel made	jars	pointing left	
Togau D	Coil and	Bowls and	Frieze of hooks	Oxidized
	wheel made	jars	pointing right	
Togau E	Coil and	Bowls	Frieze of simple	Oxidized
	wheel made		strokes	Oxidized

Table 1 - Togau Ware

The recent sherds of Togau from Londo site are apparently three and there is one Togau C sherd. These sherds are decorated with Togau motifs (i.e. friezes of Togau C hooks, triple lines, etc.), having similar fabric features, colours (red and grey), forms (bowls), making techniques (wheel and coil techniques) and firing (oxidized) (Pl. 3).

Naal Ware

S. Piggott (1950: 75-91) has claimed Amri and Naal ceramics are the 'products of the same culture'; nevertheless, he describes many differences in them. M. Wheeler (1968: 14) further adds that Amri culture belongs to plain environment and Naal culture belongs to hilly environment. They are different pottery cultures. Naal ceramics have been used for domestic and ritual purposes (Cortesi 2015: 165). It is made on wheel made; however, sometimes coil and turntable technique is used (Cortesi 2015: 165, 170-72).

Decoration Repertoire

After all the procedures, the pottery was dipped/slipped and partly painted to give it a homogenous effect (Cortesi 2015: 173). Frequently, a white slip was applied on the background for clearer paintings (Piggott 1950: 84). Furthermore, the colours of the wares range from greenish grey, buff and fine red (Asthana 1985: 127).

There are two types of ceramics in terms of painted decorations: black-on-buff and true polychrome (Asthana 1985: 187). The paintings were geometric, zoomorphic and floral; they were painted in black panel lines and outline on a white slip before firing. After firing the outlines were filled with yellow, red or green colours (Hideaki *et al.* 2009: 79).

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There is a wide range of geometric patterns (i.e. lozenges, stepped pyramids, interconnected concentric circles, serrated patterns (Uesugi 2017: 141-42), multiple crosses, loops, zig-zag patterns, triangles, squares, circles, horns, hourglasses, with bosses or knobs, etc. are often presented in different combinations (Cortesi 2015: 167-69). To be more specific, the painted animals are fish, bird, griffin, humped bull, and other unrecognized animals probably feline or dog (Uesugi 2017: 141). However, S. Asthana (1985: 129) has mentioned cows, Sindh ibexes, gazelles and scorpions as well. Furthermore, pipal leaves and tree are among plant motifs. Nevertheless, there are also multiple leafed trees as well (Uesugi 2017: 141-42).

Major Ware	Types/Variants	Making Techniques	Main Shapes	Decoration	Firing
	Naal Ware	Wheel made, Coil and turntable	Different jars, beakers, bowls, pots, etc.	Geometric, flora and fauna	900 to 1000° C
Naal Ware	Zari Ware	Wheel made	Bowls, jars, cups, etc.	Geometric and fauna	Oxidized
	Balakotian Ware	Wheel made	Bowls, jars, plates, cups, etc.	Geometric and naturalistic	Oxidized

Table 2 – Naal Ware

The Naal sherds from Londo site are having geometric decorations like zigzags, step-like designs, frieze of triangles, etc. using only black. Furthermore, they are wheel made with similar fabric features and fired in oxidized conditions (Pl. 5).

Kulli Ware

This ware has been divided into Kulli A (Period II) or Early Kulli and Kulli B (Period III) or Late Kulli-Mehi from the excavations at Nindowari. These two styles have been used for the establishing the chronology (J.

Jarrige *et al.* 2011: 186; Wright 2013: 57). It was constructed either on a wheel or a turntable from start till the end (Hideaki *et al.* 2013: 95).

Decoration Repertoire

There is rich of iconography of figurative motifs combined with symbols and other signs. There is some distinction in Kulli A and Kulli B. Some motifs disappear from Kulli A and new motifs appear in Kulli B. Generally, the painted decorations include geometric, naturalistic and zoomorphic representations (J. Jarrige *et al.* 2011: 95, 97-8, 186). However, straight and wavy cordons have also been applied (Piggott 1950: 100).

Major Ware	Iajor Ware Making		re Making Main Shapes Decoration		Firing
	Techniques				
	Wheel made	Bowls, jars,	Geometric,		
VIII W	and Turntable	pots, plates,	animal and floral	O: 4: 4	
Kulli Ware	made	dish-on-stand,	designs	Oxidized	
		vases, etc.			

Table 3 -- Kulli Ware

There are couple of specimens which look like Kulli cordoned ware. As analyzed, they are similarly made, cordoned and fired (Pl. 7).

Harappan Ware

Standard pottery was manufactured in this culture (Quivron 1994: 643). There is no uniformity in Harappan pottery since regional culture variations occur. There is diversity and homogeneity in Mature Harappan ceramic culture which show gradual evolution led to various regional groups (Quivron 2000: 177-78). It is fast wheel made. The evidences indicate several methods were recorded which include throwing or turning and molding (Méry 1994: 480).

Decoration Repertoire

Sometimes the decorations presented were overcrowded (Quivron 2000: 153). Many vessels were painted with black and occasionally with red. They were mostly red slipped or left plain (Méry 1994: 479). The motifs comprised of peacocks surrounded with pipal trees, undergrowth,

undulated lines, and sun-like motif with its rays. They are always paneled in two horizontal lines; the below horizontal and dotted lines are dangling. Changes occur in iconography in Period III of Nausharo. Reed design, incised circles, complex floral designs, parallel horizontal lines, incised grooving, concentric circles, intersecting circle patterns, comb-like patterns, scale pattern (Quivron 1994: 635-36), loops with or without hanging dots, small strokes, "borders of triangles with incurved sides and spaces filled in with hatched leaves", checkerboard pattern with cross lined rectangles, hide motif, the squarish spaces were dotted between the leaf designs, leaf-like water weed or seed design, erected lined leaves separated by curved leaves in horizontal (Quivron 2000: 153, 158), pipal leaf motif, fish and birds, etc. (Quivron 1994: 636).

Major Ware	Making	Main Shapes	Decoration	Firing
	Techniques			
Harappan Ware	Fast wheel made; throwing or turning and molding	Different bowl, jars, dishes, goblets, cups, etc.	Geometric, animal and floral designs; sometimes overcrowded	Oxidized

Table 4 - Harappan Ware

The newly discovered sherds match the descriptions. For example, they are red with similar fabric characteristics, wheel made with similar floral decorations, and fired in oxidized conditions (Pl. 9).

Londo Ware

This ware was first discovered by A. Stein who regarded it a prehistoric ware with some other wares. It is usually handmade but sometimes wheel made (Franke-Vogt 2001: 270).

Decoration Repertoire

There is striking and wide range of patterns and compositions presented in conservative style (de Cardi 1951: 66). The decorations are parallel lines, triangles, voluted scrolls or spirals, discs with rays, wide black lines occasionally with more border lines and dots, etc. (de Cardi 1951: 67; Franke-Vogt 2001: 270). The naturalistic decorations include horses, ducks, swans, frogs, turtles, fish and horsemen variously stylized (Franke-

Vogt 2001: 270). There is Black on Red and Brown on Buff categorization too. The white is used as infill on the former while red, brown, violet or maroon are used on latter as additional colours making it polychrome. Brown on Buff is considered Late Londo Ware (de Cardi 1983: 13; Franke-Vogt 2001: 270). Apart from them, incise and cordon patterns were also used on the vessels (de Cardi 1951: 67; Franke-Vogt 2001: 270).

Major Ware	Making Techniques	Main Shapes	Decoration	Firing
Londo Ware	Usually handmade; Sometimes wheel made	Bowls, pedestalled beakers, goblets, handled vessels and lids	Mostly geometric and animal designs	Oxidized

Table 5 - Londo Ware

The Londo sherds from its type site are wheel made and handmade having identical fabric. The painted designs are parallel lines, volutes, rows of triangles, a horse rider², etc. Moreover, they are wheel made and handmade in red and buff colours and fabric characteristics. They seem to be fired in oxidized conditions (Pl. 11).

Addendum 1: Other Finds on Londo Site

Bones, two bull figurines (one painted and one unpainted) (Stein 1931: 181: de Cardi 1951: 64), stone hones were found (de Cardi 1983: 37). However, metal implements were assumed to be used at the site (de Cardi 1951: 64).

Addendum 2: Vandalism of Londo Site

There is no doubt that treasure hunters and illicit traffickers have been very active in destroying the heritage of Balochistan. Long before, the people of Balochistan, either Balochs or Pashtoons, did not know much about the heinous act of treasure hunting and illicit trafficking. However, there were very few of them. After the arrival of outsiders, who had this

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² The horse rider has already been found once in Balochistan at Ajab Damb (Franke-Vogt 2001: 276).

knowledge, the people became active and participated in these activities either directly or indirectly. Sadly, Londo site has been affected by them too. One portion of the site has been carved and many ditches have been dug by illegal diggers (Fig. 2). According to locals, an outsider came and offered them half the dug materials, so they agreed and let him dig the site. The target of these illegal activities can be seen from the main road to Quetta, so there are often conducted at night. Illegal groups in the area are extremely confident. Once it happened that some of them even directed us to the richest mounds mistaking us as treasure hunters! Along with the irreparable distruction of the site and of its context, we noticed there several interesting stone structures exposed by the diggers.

Moreover, one of the authors found some of the materials in the private collection of Sultan Shahwani who bought them for their protection; they most probably are from Londo or other Londo Ware sites; however, other cultural ceramics and other objects were also protected with him. Sultan Shahwani believes in preserving culture in whatever condition and he discourages treasure hunting and illicit trafficking.

3. Catalogue of Londo Horizon Ceramics in Sultan Shahwani's Private Collection

This category includes five pieces of ceramics which clearly are Londo Wares (Cat. 1-5).

Cat. 1.

Globular pot on small stand

Central Balochistan (c.300 BCE-200 CE)

Stone ware, dark red and smooth; medium sections; hollow base; out-turned rim and has a lip

Size (cm): h. 42; d. rim 75; d. body 84; d. neck 61.5; d. base 47; base h. 5; d. base neck 26

Medium sized globular pot with a small stand. The decorations are in black like several horizontal bands, two friezes of lines of dotted decorations going around the body, frieze of arch-like design with florals inside them surrounding the body of the pot. There is also a row of dotted decoration on the rim. Slip is being removed slowly. Furtherme, there are traces of damages on the rim and one damage is on the base. Moreover, its body is cracked till the rim. In the cleaning process, the mud was very hard to remove on the surface of the pot which was causing removal of slip.

Decorations like rows of arche-like designs with a floral decoration inside and rows of volutes and dots usually in different combinations have been found on many sherds and sometimes complete ceramics forms. In the materials from Stein's survey, a similar shape are also present with similar decorations but larger in size (1931: in pls I-III, VIII-IX, XXII, XXVI, XXIV, XXXIII (see 1931: XXXIII, Sun. 3 for similar shape and designs); Jarrige *et al.* 2011: 259, Fig 20, 8). For decorations see: *ibid.*: fig. 19 (8, 13, 19), fig. 20 (3, 5, 8, 12), fig. 52; de Cardi 1951: 69, fig. 2, no. 5).

Cat. 2.

Bowl on small stand

Central Balochistan (c.300 BCE-200 CE)

Stone ware, red slipped; inverted rim; hollow base; medium sections

Size (cm): h. 12.9; d. (rim) 88; d. (base) 62; d. (base neck) 25.3; h. (base) 3.2

It is comprised of geometric decorations in black. There are thin and very thin bands on the interior and exterior. Sometimes voluted designs are borderd with two bands. There is also a hook or volutes around the rim of the pottery. The paintings are hardly visible on the interior as they have largely been removed with the passage of time. The rim is slightly broken and it has a crack from the rim to the body. Furthermore, it was hard to remove the mud from the ware during cleaning process.

Cat. 3.

Bowl on stand

Central Balochistan (c.300 BCE-200 CE)

Size (cm): h. 11; d. (rim) 59.9; d. (neck) 54. 1; d. (base) 26. 6; h. (base) 4.2

Stone ware, light red, lipped ware

It is in complete form which typical Londo decorations in black i.e. volutes (in one single headed and in one double headed) and dots in between bands all around the body on exterior. There is a frieze of voluted decoration on the rim and on the interior as well. There are also two doted friezes and a big star-like design in middle on the interior. The interior slip and decorations have partially been removed. Even after washing, the mud was hard to remove.

Similar pottery has been reported from Mehi but it looks to be plain (Stein 1931: pl. XXX).

Cat. 4.

Dish

Central Balochistan (c.300 BCE-200 CE)

Stone ware, red slipped; medium sections; lipped out turned rim;

Size (cm): h. 6.1; d. (rim) 85; d. (base) 63.1

The decorations have almost been removed including the slip. It seems to be decorated only on the inside with bands probably which have now completely vanished; however, there are some visible decorations on the rim as volutes inside two bands and frieze of dots inside two bands. Its rim is broken from several places. There is mud which was difficult to remove so futher cleaning was avoided to protect the artefacts aesthetics from damage.

Cat. 5.

Jar with small base

Central Balochistan (c.300 BCE-200 CE)

Stone ware, buff ware; outward wide mouth

Size (cm): h. 13.2; d. (rim) 49.7; d. (neck) 41.5; h. (neck) 4.8; d. (base) 17.2

There are nine to ten bands surrounding the body of the pottery. There may be other decorations but due to sticky mud which was hard to remove they could be traced. There is also a band on the interior of the rim. The rim is damaged and there are other slight damages on the body too. The mud on the pot was impossible to remove, if tried hard it could have damaged the pottery so with some visibly fo the decorations was satisfactory. Similar shapes but with different dicorations have been reported from Nindowari VI (Jarrige *et al.* 2011: 2612, Fig. 20; Franke 2015a: 370, Cat. No. 753).

The five specimens presented in this catalogue clearly show the characteristics i.e. fabric, colour, painted motifs, making techniques, shapes, firing conidtions, etc. of Londo Ware. They were either looted from Londo site or from other Londo Horizon sites in Khuzdar or in the adjacent regions.

4. Conclusion

On the basis of previous and present knowledge, the authors have modified the chronology of this site adding Naal, Kulli and Harappan (together Kulli-Harappan) periods (Table 6); The Togau and Londo Wares were already known to the scholars of the field. The new data, all potsherds, from Londo site proves that it has been occupied for a long time i.e. Togau, Naal, Kulli-Harappan (contemporary cultures), and Londo at the end. These wares represent different time periods starting from c.4300 BCE till c.200 CE. However, there are gaps i.e. between Naal and Kulli-Harappan and between Kulli-Harappan and Londo time. Kulli and Harappan people most probably lived together at certain sites in Balochistan. Nevertheless, Harappan Ware is not common in Khuzdar. The ceramics are of amazing quality with beautiful aesthetic sense in the painted motifs; there is diversity in them. Furthermore, there are visible structures. These can be seen from sections and illegally dug trenches. They looked to be either square or rectangular in plan and are made of selected stones. Stones seem to be associated with almost every period.

The recent observations have recorded the illegal diggings and destruction on the site in which the locals were equally a part of. The site

is near the main road to Quetta where the illegal diggers could easily be caught while in action. According to locals, they used modern machinery to dig out the materials from the site at night. Moreover, the catalouge which present Londo Horizon wares. It is assumed that these wares were dug out from Londo site itself or from another Londo Horizon site/sites in Khuzdar or around. Hence, the concern authorities should protect the site before it is destroyed. However, it is recently added in the protected sites of under the Balochistan Antiquities Act, 2014.

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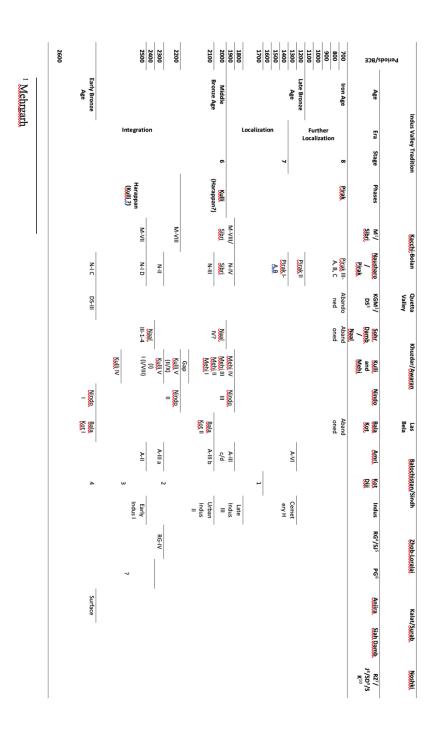
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[Tables 6-7 follows on the next pages]

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	RZ V SD IV SK III	RZ IV J IV SD III	RZ III J IIII SD II	RZ II J III SD I	RZ I
	- OS	III II-OS)-II II-SQ	I-SQ	
	A-IV	A-III iii	Y-III į	A-II	
Upper				Lower	
RG-III c	RG-Ⅲ b		RG-III a SJ-III	SJ-II	RG-I b
16		_ ~			
	A-I				
	ı				
	Naal 11-1-4	Gap Naal I- 2	Naal I-		
	1	'	DS-I KGM-IV	KGM-III	
<u>m</u>	N-I A	'		1	
	IA-M	V-M	M-IV	Ë	M-II B
Early- Mature Harappan Transition	Kot Dill Gemal Sothi: Siswal	Amri-Naal Quetta Naal Kecbi Beg	Tockit. Somal Hakra (Bavi)	Togay Sheri Khan Tarakai	KGM
un	4	m		'	2
	u	oiżezilenoige	ษ	I	Early Food Producing
				l	.2
		Late Chalcolithic	Middle Chalcolithic Age	Early Chalcolithic Age	Late Neolithic Age

² Kili Gul Mohammad ³ Damb Sadaat ⁴ Rana Ghundai

7250	6500	5500	5400	5300	5200	5100	5000	4900	4800
recollent Age	Aceramic				ě	Neolithic	Ceramic		
	0						1		
		Mebrgarh				of Ceramic	Emergence		
		M-I					M-II A		
Lower							KGM-I		
					?		RG-I a		
						ı			

Table 4 – Tentative Cultural-Chronology of Balochistan.

References: Jarrige et al. 2011: 208; de Cardi 1983: 7; Franke 2008: 669; Asthana 1985: 220, 222; Besenval and Didier 2004: 162; Shaffer 1992: 426-27; Michael Jansen et al. 1991: XII; Franke-Vogt 2001: 249; Hideaki et al. 2013: 109-111; Shudai et al. 2010: 59;

Ayumu et al. 2012: 144; Ayumu et al. 2011: 78

	Periodization	Londo Site New		
Londo	Harappan	Naal	Togau	Major Wares
c.300 BCE-200 CE	$c.2600-1900~{ m BCE}$	$c.3100-2700~{ m BCE}$	$c.4300-3100 \ \mathrm{BCE}$	Tentative Dates

Table 5 – The New Tentative Periodization of Londo Site.

Catalogue
Sultan Shahwani's Private Collection

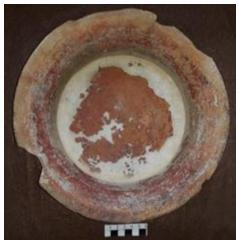




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Figures

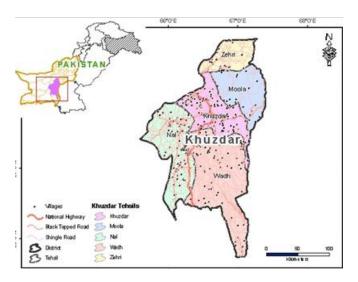


Fig. 1 – Map of Khuzdar District (after District Development Profile Khuzdar 2011: X)



Fig. 2 – The main mound of Londo site (illegally excavated).



Fig. 3 – Togau sherds (from Londo).

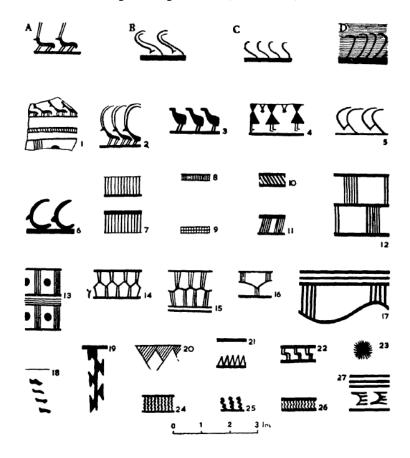


Fig. 4 – Togau develomental stages and earliest known common motifs (after de Cardi 1965: 129)



Fig. 5 – Naal sherds (from Londo).

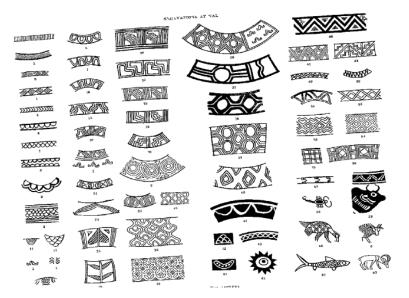


Fig. 6 – Earliest recorded decorations of Naal Ware (after Hargreaves 1929: pl. XVII).

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Fig. 7 – Kulli sherds (from Londo).

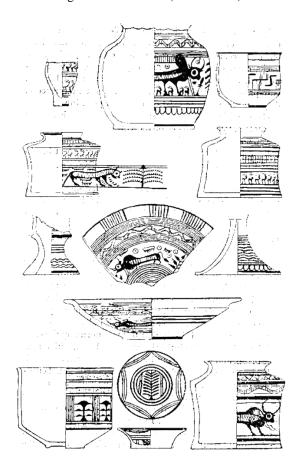


Fig. 8 – Kulli Ware (after Piggott 1950: 101).



Fig. 9 – Harappan sherds (from Londo).

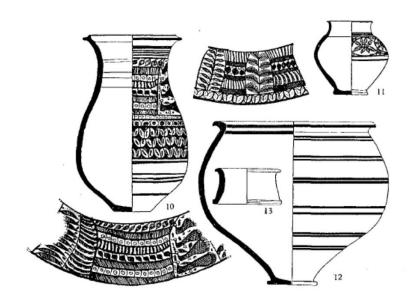


Fig. 10 – Harappan Ware (after Wheeler 1959: 103).



Fig. 11 – Londo sherds (Londo).

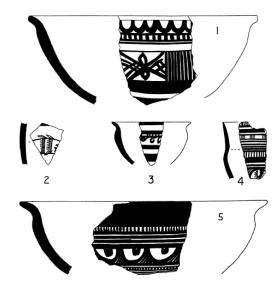


Fig. 12 – Londo Ware (after de Cardi 1951: 69, fig. 2).