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Late Neolithic Period Sites Along Koh-e-Suleiman in Dera Ghazi Khan, Pakistan: Recent Discoveries

Zakirullah Jan / Nidaullah Sehrai
Safdar Iqbal / Muhammad Waliullah

Abstract

A recent survey in the area of Dera Ghazi Khan District (Punjab) carried out by a team of the University of Peshawar located some important late Neolithic period sites (akin to Sheri Khan Tarakai phase of the Bannu Basin and Jhandi Babar I in the Gomal Plain) in the foothill of Suleiman Range tentatively dated from 4500 – 3500 BC. In addition, Paleolithic, protohistoric, historic, Islamic and Colonial periods sites have also been recorded in the survey, but this paper is confined to the late Neolithic period settlements in the Tribal Area of District Dera Ghazi Khan, bordering Balochistan along the foothills of Koh-e-Suleiman.

Keywords: Koh-e-Suleiman, late Neolithic, Sheri Khan Tarakai, Dera Ghazi Khan

1. Introduction

District Dera Ghazi Khan is strategically located in southwest of the Punjab Province of Pakistan. It is geographically bounded by Dera Ismail Khan of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province in the north; Barkhan and Musakhel of Balochistan Province on the west; Rajanpur on the south and River Indus, Muzaffargarh and Leiah of the Punjab on the east. This tract of land lies between River Indus and the Koh-e-Suleiman. Currently, the irrigation canals from *Taunsa Barrage* and *Chashma Right Bank Canal* have turned major part of previously uncultivated tract of land into agricultural land that has brought a positive change and prosperity in the socio-economic life of the modern population who grow cash crops like sugarcane, wheat, cotton, vegetables and fruits. The Koh-e-Suleiman has plenty of water sources and green pastures, therefore, a rich and diverse

flora and fauna developed there that attracted human population from the nearby regions.

Remains of the Neolithic culture in Pakistan is discovered at sites such as Mehrgarh, Kili Gul Muhammad, Rehmanzai and Jatti Kalat in Balochistan; Gumla, Jhandi Babar (Ali and Khan 2001) and Sheri Khan Tarakai (Khan et al. 2010) in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Mehregarh, Kili Gul Muhammad and Gumla produced aceramic/pre-pottery Neolithic culture whereas the rest of the sites yielded evidences of late ceramic Neolithic culture. The late Neolithic culture identified in Gomal, Tochi and Dera Ghazi Khan, is characterized by hand-built bowls and jars depicted with geometric, floral and faunal designs in deep chocolate colours. Radiocarbon dates for Sheri Khan Tarakai (or SKT) in the Bannu Basin suggest a time frame from 4500 to 3500 BC (Khan et al. 2010).

Previous Explorations

The tough terrain, inaccessibility, difficult routes and lesser means of transportation in District Dera Ghazi Khan previously barred scholars to carry out a comprehensive and systematic archaeological survey. As a result, many mounds and monuments having cultural and historical importance have not been documented. Very little historical data of the region is available in the District Gazetteer of Dera Ghazi Khan that is stretched back to relatively recent Hindu period (Government of India, 1893-97, pp. 23-30). The Department of Archaeology and Museums, Government of Pakistan first in 1961 (Khan F. A., 1965) and later in 1992-96 under Muhammad Rafique Mughal, carried out archaeological explorations in the District Dera Ghazi Khan. The published reports have mentioned only two Chalcolithic/ Bronze Age sites in the area i.e. Vahowa and Kot Qaisrani. While conducting explorations in the Punjab by the Department of Archaeology and Museums, Muhammad Rafique Mughal also carried out archaeological reconnaissance here and mentioned some fourteen sites comprising of seven mounds and seven standing monuments of Islamic period (Mughal, Iqbal, Khan, & Hassan, 1994-96) in the plain. Due to hard terrain, the western part of the district remained unexplored.

Fresh Explorations

Being located strategically in an important zone between Balochistan and the plain of Punjab, Dera Ghazi Khan appears to be

archaeologically also a rich region like the adjacent Gomal Plain. However, the previous exploration was very sporadic and only accessible areas along the main road was surveyed for archaeological sites and monuments. To survey the region comprehensively, the Department of Archaeology, University of Peshawar, after getting necessary funding from the Government of Pakistan, initiated documenting sites. The purpose of the survey was to record all the sites that are vanishing rapidly due to natural and human vandalism. Illegal diggers and encroachers in search of antiquity are constantly damaging these heritage sites. As a result of successive fieldworks since 1970s, the University of Peshawar has investigated very important archaeological sites in the nearby Gomal Plain (Ali and Jan 1991; Dani 1970-1971) and the Bannu Basin (Khan et al. 1991; Allchin et al. 1986). In order to establish a link and association with important cultural units of the Gomal and Balochistan, the University of Peshawar felt it necessary to probe in Dera Ghazi Khan region of the Punjab. Although hundreds of sites have been discovered in this exploratory work but here the authors would like to present only six (06) archaeological sites assigned to late Neolithic period.

2.1. Basti Dozkani

The site of Basti Dozkani is located in Barthi (Tribal Area) towards north-west of Sakhi Sarwar town between longitude 30.27693445° N, latitude 70.23886862° E, in a very tough terrain. The site, currently measuring 90 x 50 m, is some 50 km away from Dera Ghazi Khan city towards west. Situated on a small hill top on the right bank of a stream locally called as *Dat*, the site is the communal property of the local Buzdaar Baloch tribe. It has two mounds having different heights. The surface of the site is littered with various type of ceramics. Two periods can easily be discerned on the basis of surface collection. The earliest one is late Neolithic as the ceramics are akin to the assemblage from Sheri Khan Tarakai in the Bannu Basin (Khan et al. 2000) and Jhandi Babar I in the Gomal Plains (Jan 2002; Rahman 1997; Swati and Ali 1998; Ali and Khan 2001). It is a hand build pottery with bowls and jars as main types, depicted with geometric designs in black/brown colours so typical of the late Neolithic in the Gomal Plain. The second period bears similarity with the Kot Dijian phase of Kot Diji (Khan F. A., 1965) in Sindh and Rehman Dheri in the Gomal

Plain (Durrani, 1988). The main artifacts from the surface collection are the ceramics and stone tools of both the periods.

2.2. Khalath

The small settlement site of Khalath, lying between longitude 29.95650170° N and latitude 70.14278303° E, is situated in Tuman Leghari Zireen (Tribal Area) of Dera Ghazi Khan approximately 13 km west of Sakhi Sarwar town, near Quetta Road/ Dera Ghazi Khan road towards north on a small hill top. It is a circular shape archaeological site of 70 x 50 x 2 m size with surface scatters available on two mounds, northern and southern. The *Mithawan* seasonal stream is flowing on its northern side and was probably the source of water in ancient times for the site. The southern mound is relatively smaller than northern mound. However, both are covered with scanty shrubs and large amount of stream pebbles.

A wall on the western side of the site is partly visible, which is made of both dressed and undressed stones, running in north-south direction. It is 40 cm thick and is attached with a small stone platform as well. Another stone wall is also located on the western side of the mound with a thickness of 01 m and appears to be a perimeter (or possibly fortification?) wall. The site is covered with large quantity of broken ceramics. From the surface of the sites, handmade, wheel made, and wet wares (Kot Diji phase) are collected in addition to stone tools and cores. The main finds from the surface collection are broken pottery pieces and stone tools. Based on the surface collection, the site is tentatively dated to the Late Neolithic phase of Jhandi Babar I (Khan et al. 2000; Ali and Khan 2001) and Kot Diji Period elsewhere. The perimeter wall may belong to Kot Diji phase if not later.

2.3. Khandh Khalat

Khandh Khalat is another late Neolithic site discovered in the Koh-e-Suleiman, which is lying on 29.98882489° N, 70.17060129° E, toward west from Sakhi Sarwar town. The site measures 15 x 90 x 10 m. It can be approached via jeepable track in the tribal area of Tuman Leghari Zireen.

There is a large and high mound, in the center of a large valley. The artificial mound is actually lying on approximately a 10 m high natural mound. Most of its northern side is eroded away by the *Mithawan* stream. Pebbles of various sizes are scattered on the surface of the site. In addition to the late Neolithic cultural artifacts in the form of handmade ceramics, the site also yielded pottery of the historic age, therefore, the height of the site is high, which gives the impression of a deserted fortress commanding the valley. The onsite stone material was utilized in the construction of walls and other structures where remains of two large rooms on the surface are clearly visible.

In addition to stones, a large quantity of sherds is scattered on the mound's surface dateable to both historic and pre-historic periods. The thick ashy layer visible in the northern corner of the mound has produced two sherds of the Kot Diji period. From the lower area of the mound, Neolithic period sherds have been collected including basket mark ware, Jandi Babar I type sherds and other different types of wet and polychrome wares. A variety of cores and stone tools were also picked up from the mound. A broken terracotta figurine is also part of the collected material from the site. Illegal excavation carried out by the antique dealers at few places shows ashes, bones and crude pottery. However, the site is feasible for probing which might lead towards new aspects of the protohistory of Pakistan.

2.4. Drohi Dagur Market

This late Neolithic site located in tehsil Karkana, in the Durugh area on 30.83860721° N, 70.241741171° E, at about 70 km west of Taunsa Sharif. The mound, measuring 60 x 50 x 1.5m, is in the narrow valley called Dagur on the border between Punjab and Balochistan Provinces. The site is lying about 1.5 km away from the *Leni* stream, which was the possible source of water in the ancient times. Apparently, it seems to be a low mound but probably the cultural deposits are buried below the present ground level. The soil is semi compact and is brownish in color which includes pebbles. Its northern portion is covered with wild trees and grasses. On the eastern side of the mound the local people have built a small market which is covering a portion of the site.

A large wall with a thickness of 1.5 m oriented from east to west is also visible on the site towards the south. It seems to be part of an important structure. Another 40 cm thick wall is also visible, which runs in north-south direction and probably belong to a room. Both wall structures are constructed from the local river's pebbles. Only excavations can determine the chronology of the structures. Large quantity of broken ceramics is scattered on the surface of the mound. The collected samples from the surface include different varieties of pottery, a broken female figurine (painted with chocolate color lines) and stone tools. The main period is although Kot Diji but prehistoric (Palaeolithic) and late Neolithic remains have also been discovered. The late Neolithic cultural artefacts bear similarity with Jhandi Babar I and Sheri Khan Tarakai cultural phases as far as the pottery is concerned.

2.5. Dhori Phugla

The site is located in Phugla Janubi in Tehsil Birot Mundwan of the Tribal Area, towards west of Taunsa Sharif on a jeepable track about 60 km away. It is lying on the bank of *Lahr* stream on 30.81896022° N, 70.27850210° E. The mound that measures 200 x 120 x 5m is littered with stream pebbles. The southern end of the mound is disturbed by rain erosion which has formed ups and downs on the surface. At a place in the eroded section an ashy layer is clearly visible. At certain place on the ground there are visible traces of walls and structures. In the western part of the mound, a circular structure/platform with a low height is also visible on the surface of the site. In addition to Kot Dijian assemblage from the site, late Neolithic material like pottery of Jhandi Babar I (period I) have also been collected. Some pottery has cloths impression and basket marks as well. The jars with lower slurry part as known from late Neolithic Jhandi Babar and Sheri Khan Tarakai are also part of the collection.

2.6 Wattey Wala Kot

The site is located in Tehsil Durugh of Musa Khel at a distance of 90 km from Dera Ghazi Khan city on 30.85791272° N, 70.17383787° E. Measuring 250 x 120 x 2.5 m, the site is lying on the left bank of *Leni* stream near *Durugh*. The site is very promising and feasible for

excavations. The mound is covered with stones of various size and wild shrubs. The southern and eastern sides of the mound are occupied by the local people for cultivation and construction of houses. Some stone structures on the surface making rooms are clearly visible. The walls are made of undressed stone blocks. The site yielded handmade, basket marked and cloth impressed ceramics of the late Neolithic period identical with Jhandi Babar I in the Gomal and Sheri Khan Tarakai in the Bannu (Khan, Cartwright, Joyner, & Petrie, 2010). In addition, various types of stone tools like blades, bladelets and cores have also been collected from the surface of the site. Prehistoric (Palaeolithic) and Kot Dijian assemblage is also found here in addition to late Neolithic.

3. Conclusions

As expected, due to its strategic location, being dissected by several hill torrents, the region of Dera Ghazi Khan turned to be a very fertile and core region for development of several prehistoric, protohistoric and historic period cultures. In addition to prehistoric and historic period sites, the survey has brought to light new and very interesting archaeological sites of the late Neolithic cultural phase identified at Jhandi Babar I in the Gomal and Sheri Khan Tarakai in the Bannu Basin, contrary to the Neolithic of Mehregarh and Kili Gul Muhammad. All of these sites mentioned above are multi-period sites, which make them more interesting for understanding the links and relationships among these proto-historic cultures such as Jhandi/SKT, Tochi-Gomal, Togau and Kot Diji, in addition to their evolution and impact on urban revolution in south Asia. The late Neolithic cultures traced in the Koh-e-Suleiman is an extension of the culture unearthed at Jhandi Babar I, which is, so far, the largest site of this cultural phase. The late Neolithic sites are relatively smaller in size and are located in the piedmont area of Koh-e-Suleiman, suggesting a settlement pattern different from the subsequent Chalcolithic and Bronze Age cultures that developed in the flood plain area eastwards. The surface scatters include pottery like SKT A and SKT B wares in limited number along with stone tools. However, the human figurines that are recovered in hundreds from Jhandi Babar I and Sheri Khan Tarakai, are absent so far from the sites in Dera Ghazi Khan. These sites are very pivotal to understand the socio-cultural environment in the late Neolithic period and

hence need proper archaeological excavations to comprehend the early village life of nomadism and pastoralism in South Asia in general and Koh-e-Suleiman in specific.

Acknowledgements

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Pl. 1 - Map of Dera Ghazi Khan and the distribution of late Neolithic Sites
(from Google Earth – Wikipedia Map).

Pl. 2 - Dera Ghazi Khan, late Neolithic site of Basti Dozkani.

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Pl. 13 - Dera Ghazi Khan, pottery from Wattey Wala Kot.

The Archaeological Site of Londo, Balochistan:
A New Periodization

Zahir Hussain / Kiran Shahid Siddiqui

Abstract

This paper deals with Londo[1] 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

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[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 comb-marked, 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 wheel made	Bowls and jars	Frieze of caprid head and horns	Oxidized
Togau C	Coil and wheel made	Bowls and jars	Frieze of hooks pointing left	Oxidized
Togau D	Coil and wheel made	Bowls and jars	Frieze of hooks pointing right	Oxidized
Togau E	Coil and wheel made	Bowls	Frieze of simple 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).

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	*Naal Ware*	Wheel made, Coil and turntable	Different jars, beakers, bowls, pots, etc.	Geometric, flora and fauna	900 to 1000°C
	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	Making Techniques	Main Shapes	Decoration	Firing
Kulli Ware	Wheel made and Turntable made	Bowls, jars, pots, plates, dish-on-stand, vases, etc.	Geometric, animal and floral designs	Oxidized

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 Techniques	Main Shapes	Decoration	Firing
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 rider[2], 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 cleaining 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.

Acknowledgements

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[Tables 6-7 follows on the next pages]

Periods/BCE	Indus Valley Tradition				Kachi-Bolan	Quetta Valley	Khuzdar/Awaran	Las Bela	Balochistan/Sindh	Zhob-Loralai	Kalat/Surab	Noshki
	Age	Era	Stage	Phases		KGM³/DS³			Amri / Kot Diji / Indus	RG⁴/SJ⁵	Anjira / Siah Damb	RZ⁷/SD⁹/S Jⁱ⁸/SD⁹/S Kⁱ⁰
2600	Early Bronze Age	Integration	6	Harappan (Kulli?)	N-I C	DS-III	Kulli IV	Bala Kot I	4		Surface	
2500					N-I D / M-VII		Nal III-1-4 / Kulli V (I) / Mehi I	Nindo I	Bala Kot I / A-II / Early Indus I — 3	RG-IV		
2400					N-II / M-VIII		Kulli V (II/X) / Mehi II	Nindo II	Bala Kot II / A-III a / Urban Indus II — 2		?	
2300					N-III / M-VIII/Sibri		Mehi III	Nindo III	A-III b / A-III b			
2200			Localization	7	N-IV / Sibri		Gap / Mehi IV / Nal IV?		A-III c/d			
2100	Middle Bronze Age			Kulli (Harappan?)								
2000							Abandoned		Late Indus III			
1900							Abandoned					
1800					Pirak I-A,B	Pirak II			A-VI / Cemetery H — 1			
1700	Late Bronze Age	Further Localization	8	Pirak	Pirak III-A, B, C							
1600												
1500												
1400												
1300												
1200												
1100												
1000	Iron Age											
900					M-I/Sibri	Nausharo/Pirak						
800												
700												

[1] Mehrgarh

	5	Early-Mature Harappan Transition	N-I B			RG-III c	Upper	

2700

| | 4 | Kot Diji
Gomal
Sothi-
Siswal | N-I A | M-VI | | | A-I | | | RG-III b | | A-IV | SD-III | RZ V
SD IV
SK III |

2800 · 2900 · 3000

Late Chalcolithic — Amri-Naal Quetta — M-V — DS-II — Naal II-1-4 — ? — A-III iii / A-III ii — SD-II iii — RZ IV / J IV / SD III / SK II

3100 · 3200 · 3300

3 — Naal Kechi Beg — Naal I-2

Middle Chalcolithic Age — Tochi-Gomal Hakra (Ravi) — M-IV — DS-I KGM-IV — Naal I-1 — RG-III a SJ-III — A-III i — DS-II ii-i — RZ III / J III / SD II / SK I

3400 · 3500 · 3600

Early Chalcolithic Age — Togau Sheri Khan Tarakai — M-III — KGM-III — RG-II SJ-II — Lower — A-II / A-I — DS-I — RZ II / J II / SD I

3700 · 3800 · 3900 · 4000 · 4100 · 4200

2 KGM — KGM-II — RG-I b SJ-I — RZ I / J I

4300

Late Neolithic Age — M-II B

4400 · 4500 · 4600 · 4700

Regionalization

Early Food Producing

2 Kili Gul Mohammad
3 Damb Sadaat
4 Rana Ghundai
5 Sur Jangal
6 Periano Ghundai
7 Rehmanzai
8 Jatthi
9 Siyah Damb
10 Seyah Kalat

16

4800	
4900	
5000	Ceramic Neolithic Age
5100	
5200	
5300	
5400	
5500	
6500	Aceramic Neolithic Age
7250	

1 — Emergence of Ceramic — M-II A — KGM-I

0 — Mehrgarh — M-I

I Lower

RG-I a — ?

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

Londo Site New Periodization	Major Wares	Tentative Dates
	Togau	*c.*4300-3100 BCE
	Naal	*c.*3100-2700 BCE
	Harappan	*c.*2600-1900 BCE
	Londo	*c.*300 BCE-200 CE

Table 5 – The New Tentative Periodization of Londo Site.

Catalogue

Sultan Shahwani's Private Collection

Cat. nos. 1-2
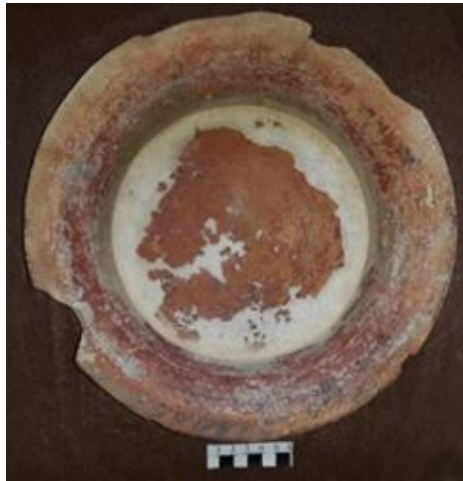
Cat. nos. 3-5

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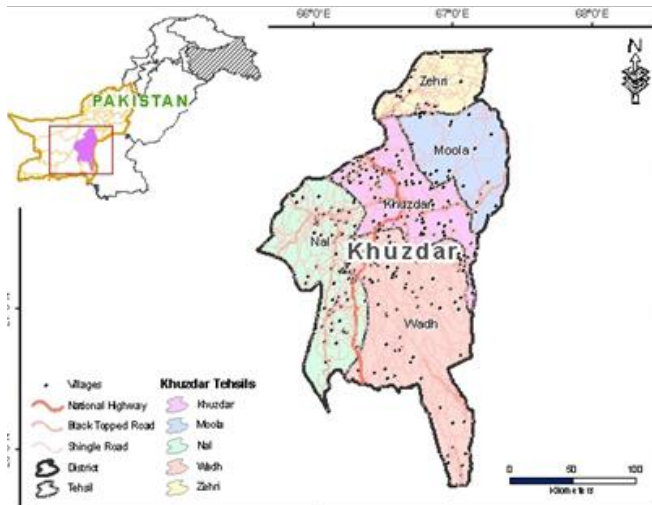
Fig. 1 – Map of Khuzdar District (after District Development Profile Khuzdar 2011: X)

Fig. 2 – The main mound of Londo site (illegally excavated).
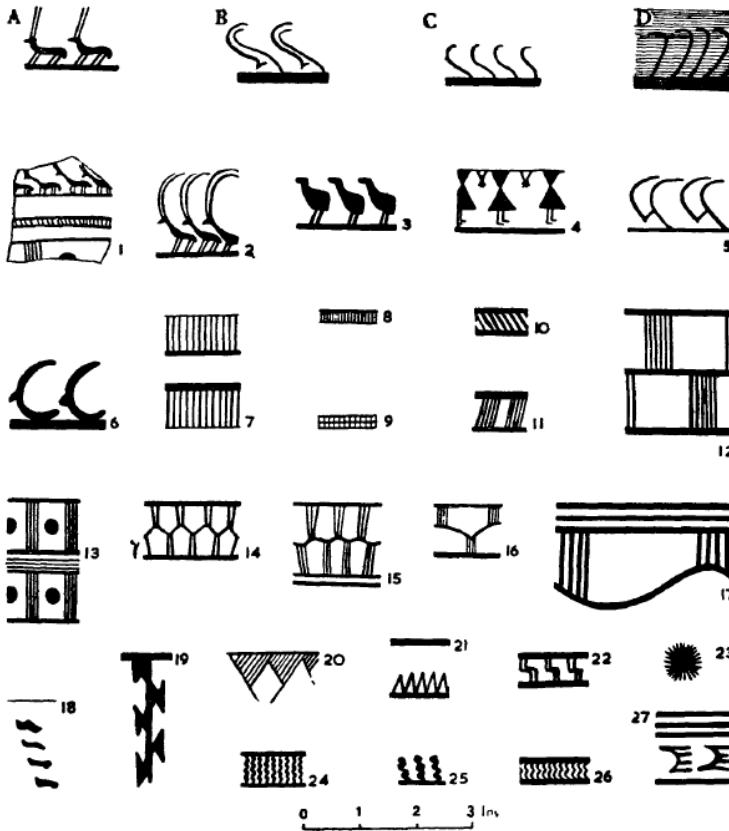
Fig. 3 – Togau sherds (from Londo).

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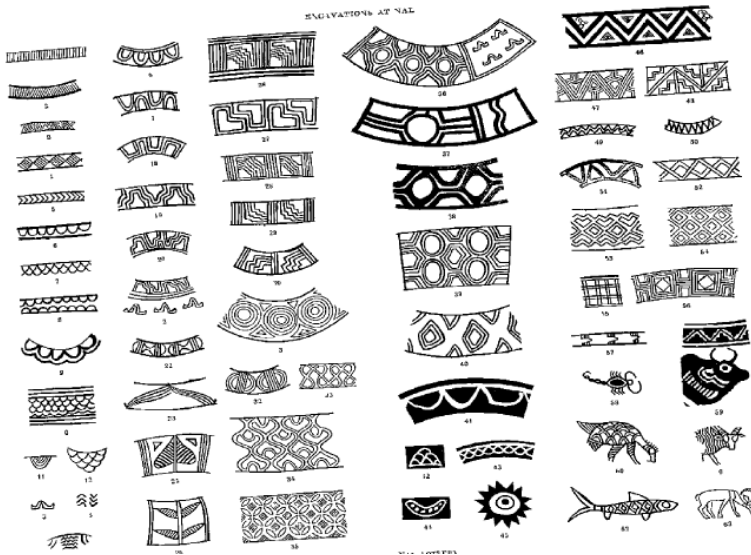(after de Cardi 1965: 129)

Fig. 5 – Naal sherds (from Londo).

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

Fig. 7 – Kulli sherds (from Londo).
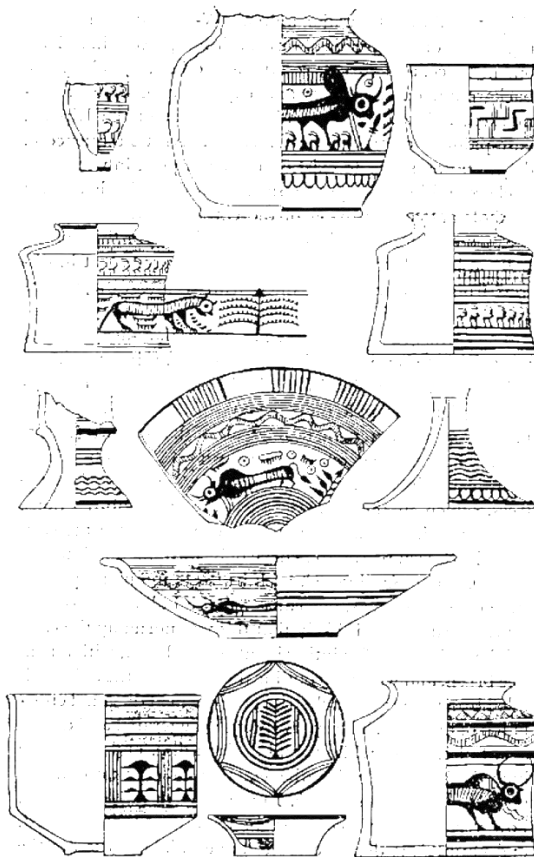
Fig. 8 – Kulli Ware (after Piggott 1950: 101).
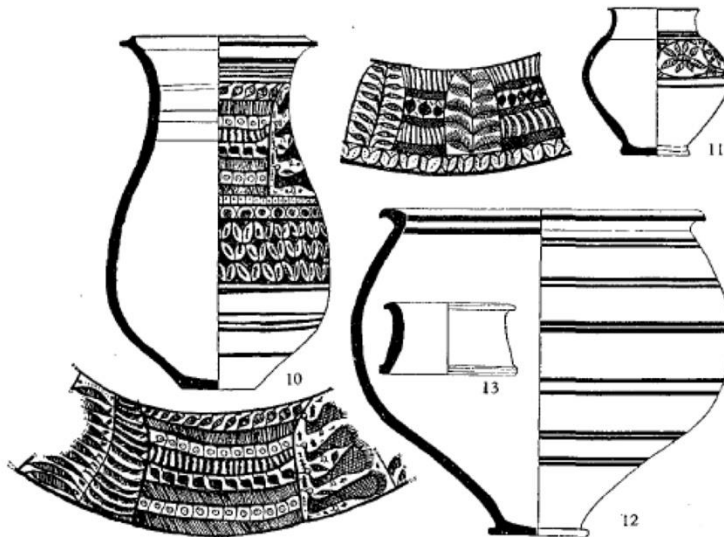
Fig. 9 **–** Harappan sherds (from Londo).

Fig. 10 – Harappan Ware (after Wheeler 1959: 103).
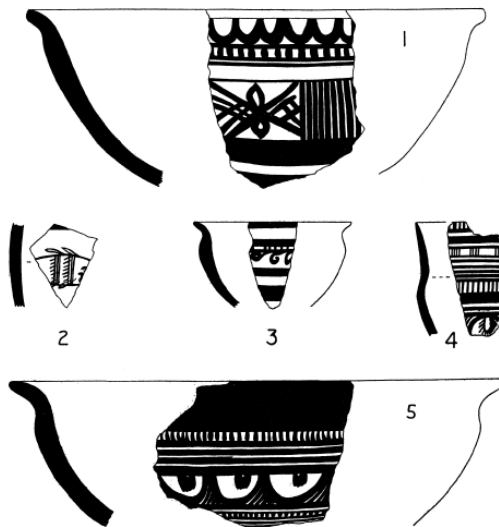
Fig. 11 – Londo sherds (Londo).

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

Archaeological Excavations at Sikandar Janubi 2016:
A Preliminary Report

Abdul Samad / Zakirullah Jan /Niaz Wali

Abstract

The Indus Civilization of South Asia is believed to have been developed in the Indus Plain of Punjab and Sindh in Pakistan and parts of western India such as Rajasthan, Haryana and Saurashtra. Whereas the remains of what is called as 'early Indus Phase' have been unearthed, on the other hand, in Balochistan and southern parts of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces of Pakistan. In the latter two regions, remains of the mature Indus Phase have been found relatively less in number. Although a number of mature Harappan sites in the Gomal Plain have been located but no attention is paid yet. In order to understand the nature of mature Harappan occupation in the Gomal Plain, Dera Ismail Khan, excavations have been carried out at Sikandar Janubi by our team and the preliminary report is presented here.

Keywords: Indus Civilization, Gomal Plain, Sikandar Janubi

1. Introduction

The Gomal Plain in the southern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province of Pakistan is archaeologically a very important and potential region where remains of human cultures from the prehistoric to the colonial periods have been unearthed in various archaeological expeditions (Stein 1927; Dani 1970-1971; Ali and Jan 2005; Ali and Jan 2009). Diversity in the cultural landsape of the Gomal Plain is due to the rich ecological setting, abundance of natural resources and its strategic location between South and Central Asia that provided stimuli to the grwoth of human cultures. In addition to prehistoric (Morris 1938) and Neolithic settlments (Dani 1970-1971; Ali and Khan 2001; Swati and Ali 1998; Rahman 1997), the 'Tochi-Gomal', 'Kot Diji', 'mature Indus', early historic, Hindu and early Islamic

period sites have also been discovered in large amount in the Gomal Plain (Ali and Jan 2005; Durrani 1988; Durrani 1981). Contrary to the settlments of the mature Harappan Civilization, archaeological mounds of the Kot Diji phase are found relatively in large amount that led the scholar to believe that the Gomal Plain is occupied by people possessing the Kot Diji type culture whereas the mature Harappan Culture flourished on the maniland Indus of the present Punjab and Sindh. However, recent discoveries of the mature Harappan archaeological sites on the Gomal Plain in Dera Ismail Khan, revealed a different picture of the settlement history. It appears that the Gomal was occupied also by the Harappan people in the 3rd miellenium BC simultaniously with the Kot Dijian.

2. Location and Survey

The archaeological site of *Sikandar Janubi* is located about 45 km south of Dera Ismail Khan city; 18 km west of Proa and about 24 km east of Chaudhwan town. The site is called after the village of Sikandar Janubi wherefrom it is 2 km away on Proa-Chaudhwan road, just across Chashma Right Bank Canal (CRBC). The site is locally known as '*theri*', a Sariaki word for a mound (in Pashto: '*dheri*'). The site was previously discovered by a joint team of the Directorate of Archaeology and Museums, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the University of Peshawar in 2003 under the name of Kauri Hout (Ali and Jan, 2005). Kauri Hout village is about 5 km away towards west of the mound and since it is the property of Sikandar village so the site is now called as Sikandar Janubi, lying on latitude 70º 36" 04' E and longitude 31º 33" 19' N. According to the local people, it was once a site of a considerable size scattered with potsherds. However, it was destroyed by a contractor some fifty years ago when the nearby road between Proa and Chaudhwan was being constructed. The soil of site was used as filling first for the road and then for the constructing of the embankment of the canal in 1990s. The potsherds can still be seen in both the mentioned places. When the site was first visited in 2003, a considerable area was still intact, which was found missing in our visit in 2016. The local owners of the surrounding fields have levelled it for agricultural use. The remaining part of the current site is left intact upto certain extend only due to graves. This part of the site was used as graveyard or '*ghostan'* as locally called, about 60 to100 years ago.

According to a local man, this graveyard was specified for the children. It has also been confrimed in the excavation when the skeleton of an infant is found in the northwestern part of trench A, aproximately 90 cm deep from the surface lying in north-south direction. Although the graves are levelled with the ground and nothing is visible on the surface but the same have been traced out in excavation as well as geophysical survey of the site. It is due to the graveyard that this small part of once larger mound is preserved for probing.

Currently the mound is squeezed to 40 x 25 x 1.5 m. However, potsherds and terracotta cakes can be collected from the surrounding fields, which suggests that the settlement occupied a larger area than what it seems now (Pls 3-6).

3. Geophysical Survey

Sikandar Janubi, like Rehman Dheri and Hissam Dheri is also surveyed through geophysical tools such as Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) and Magnetometer in order to study the subsurface features on one hand and excavate archaeologically a potential spot on the other. Since the area of the site was left very limited, so geophysical investigations are relatively easy but more significant. The geophysical investigations were carried out with the support of National Centre of Excellence in Geology, University of Peshawar. The results of both the tools are mentioned here.

Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR)

Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) is a sophisticated geophysical equipment used for identification of shallow subsurface features of varying nature such as clay, sand, gravels, rocks, ice, water, ancient routes, water channels and more importantly here the man-made structures like walls, pavements, roof/floor structures in archaeological sites. In this technique of investigating a feature either natural or man-made, the waves of a radar are being passed through the surface of the earth to make images of the invisible features below the surface of an archaeological site. Technically, it is electromagnetic radiations of the spectrum in the band (UHF/VHF) frequencies, which are generated and transmitted through a medium and are reflected when coming across any obstruction, generating an image of

the plain/layers with different dielectric contrasts.

Here at Sikandar Janubi archaeological site (Pl. 1), shielded antenna of 500 MHz with usual cart is used on the plain as well as rough terrains that can penetrate the electromagnetic rays up to 6 meters (short window) below the surface, as we know that the depth of the archaeological profile is low. The acquisition was done in segments of different interval for each profile (for full coverage) which was then joined to make one complete profile. The acquired data is processed using Rad Explorer and Reflex2D Quick software, housed at the Geophysics Laboratory at National Centre of Excellence in Geology (NCE), University of Peshawar. From the raw data it is observed that the area mostly contains low noise values of electromagnetic velocities and therefore processing routines of static correction and band pass filtering (125-750 Hz) were applied to remove the noisy and unwanted data.
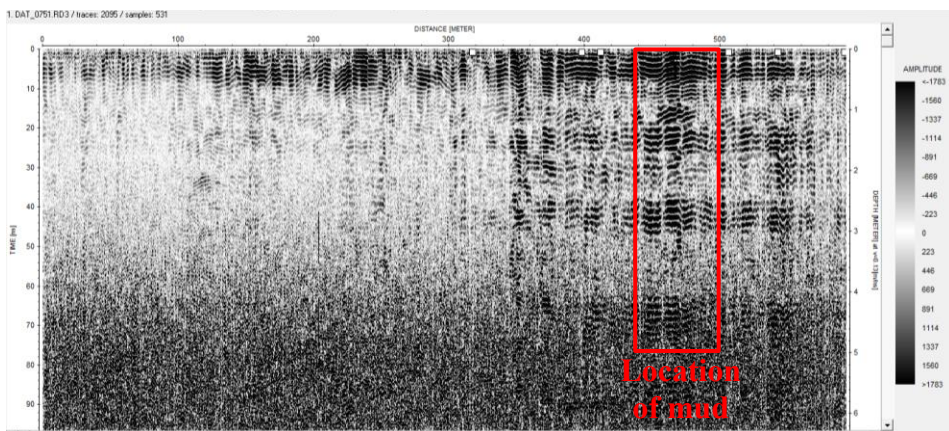

Fig. 1 - Interpreted GPR profile (profile: 751) at Sikandar Janubi, in this profile top sediment layer of 0.3 m is identified. Below this layer mud wall has been identified that extends up to 4.5 meter below the surface with a thickness of 4 meters.

The profiles at Sikandar Janubi (Figs 1-4) identify two layers each with distinct contrast in terms of velocities of microwaves laterally and vertically. The first layer is identified as surface (0.3 meters). The second layer was identified as eroded old sediment layer from 0.3-1.1 meter in depth. In this site few mud walls were identified by GPR data below 1.2-meter sediment layers at different location with variable thickness. Few

profiles also indicate the presence of eroded mud walls. No other information was obtained from the GPR section.
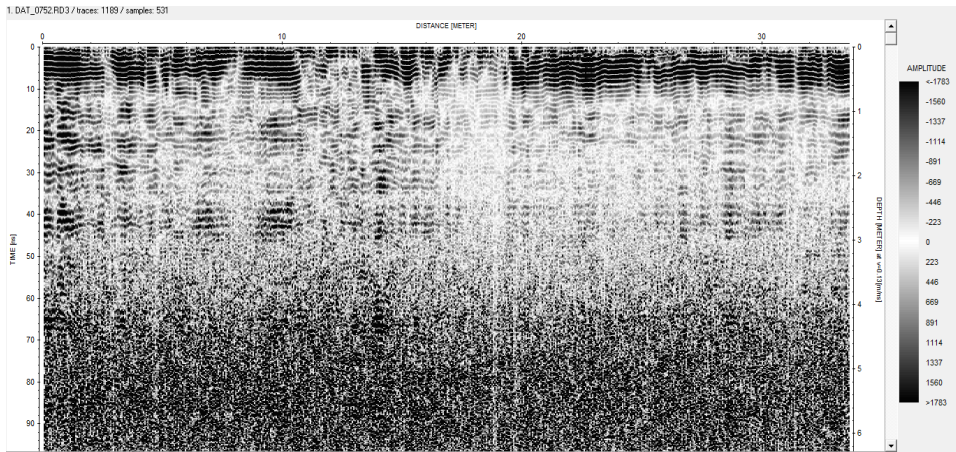

Fig. 2 - GPR profile (752): here the top sediment layer of 0.3 m is identified also, below which is identified a sedimentary layer, no mud walls are identified.
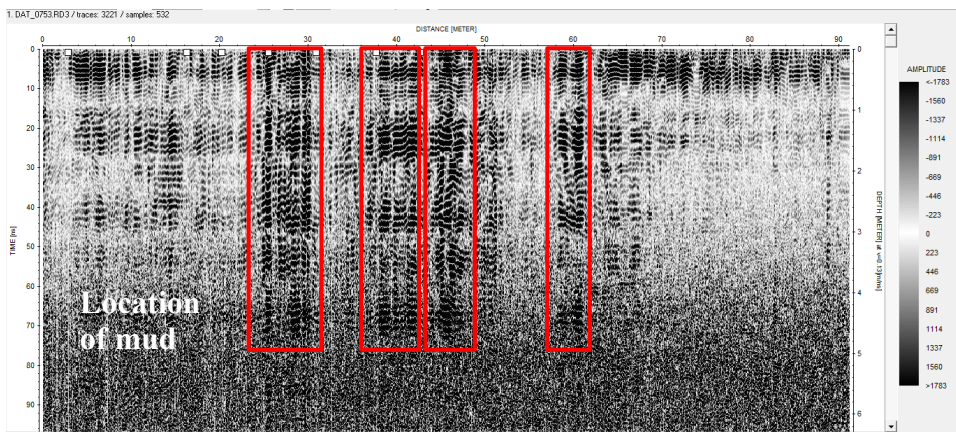

Fig. 3 - GPR profile (753): In this profile top sediment layer of 0.3 m is identified. Below this layer four mud walls have been identified at depth of 1 meter that extends up to 4.8 meter below the surface with thickness of 6, 4, 3.5 and 4 meters at a distance of 24, 38, 44 and 58 meters respectively.
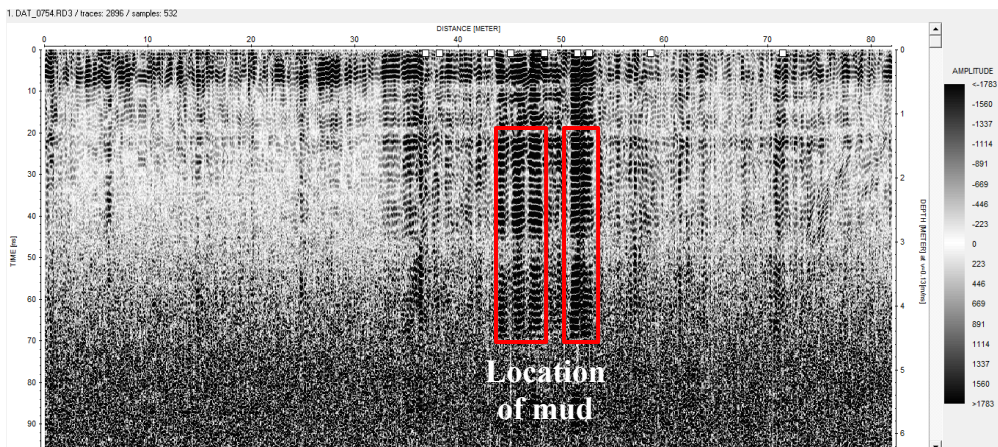
Fig. 4 - GPR Profile (754): In this profile top sediment layer of 0.3 m is identified. Below this layer two mud walls have been identified at depth of 1.2 meter (extends up to 4.4 meter below surface) with thickness of 4, and 1.5 meters at a distance of 44 and 51 meters respectively.

Magnetometer

Magnetic survey is also very extensively used for gathering subsurface geological and archaeological information based on anomalies in the earth magnetic field from the magnetic properties of underlying objects such as rocks, soil, sand, metal etc. It responds to the contrasts in the magnetic properties of soils that can be laid/carried by human activities such as burning, humic decomposition, compaction and building of structures. Magnetic surveying (or prospecting), as practiced on archaeological sites, consists of measuring the magnitude of the earth's magnetic field at each point on grid established on the site. Variations in the magnetic properties of the subsurface material (sediments, rocks, or artificial materials such as brick) can produce an observable variation, called as anomaly, in the measured magnetic field. Anomalies may be caused by artificial structures such as walls, ditches, foundations, hearths, pits, or even an area of more intensive habitation.

A Cesium vapor magnetometer of Geometrics systems model version G-858 Magnetometer has been used at Sikandar Janubi (Pl. 2) for the measurement of magnetic variations in the area. The G-858 Magnetometer is used to measure the earth magnetic field having low

noise/ High sensitivity (.05nT), resolution of 0.1sec and < +/- 0.5 nT absolute accuracy over its full temperature range use for: geophysical, geotechnical, mineral exploration, archaeological exploration, long term magnetic field monitoring at magnetic observatories, volcanology and seismic research etc.

The survey area is divided into different blocks and magnetic observations have been recorded at every 10 meters and 20-meter intervals along the profiles. Initial point of every profile was used for repeat observation and was utilized for diurnal correction of the respective observation points. Geophysical profiles were planned across the target zones after discussion and in consultation with the field archaeologist by the surveyor so as to obtain optimum coverage of the area. Magnetic intensity variations recorded along profiles in the respective blocks have been plotted and contoured. The reduction of magnetic field data is done to remove all causes of magnetic variations from the observations other than those arising from the magnetic effects of the subsurface. Anomalies occurring over the profiles with varying amplitudes and dimensions have been analyzed from the contour maps and profiles across the anomalous zones.

Anomaly contours clearly shows parallel to sub-parallel, elongated and lenticular bodies of limited extensions occurring side by side at shallow depths. As the magnetization in the area is reduced and the average magnetic field increased observed over the encountered anomalies in the study area varies from 24 to 100 nT and in general, it is reasonable that bricks or stone rubble from foundation walls could cause anomalies in the range of 20-160 nT. So, from the intense contour closure and longitudinal profile it is concluded that these anomalies may be associated with oblong compact cluster of objects either foundation walls, bricks, pottery and filled ditches or backed clays and fire pits. The results are shown in the form of circles, elliptical, triangles, rectangles and other shapes in each figure below. The results of Sikandar Janubi are much better than Rehman Deri because we took 2 m interval of spacing as well as 2m from line to line. Shorter interval provides us good archaeological results. Five grids (Grid 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5) were taken in toto in this site and the coordinates are shown below (Fig. 5).
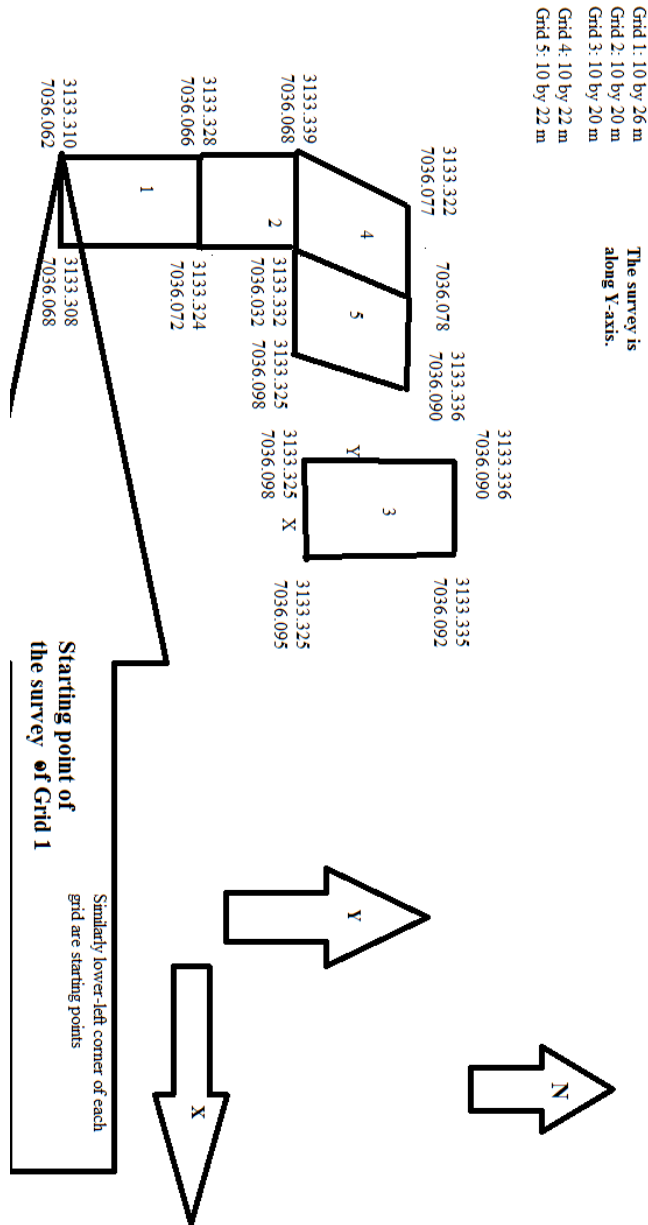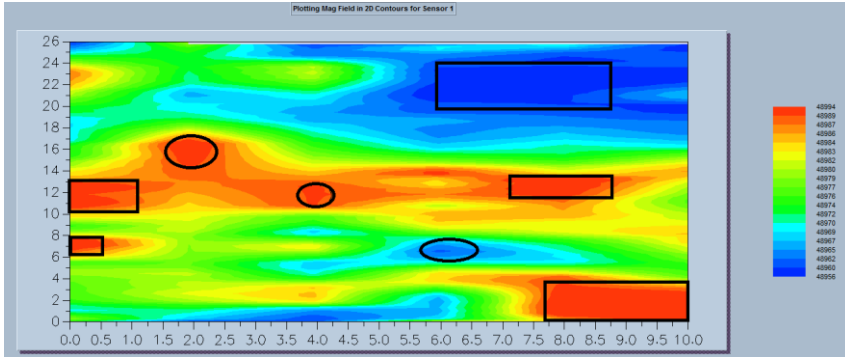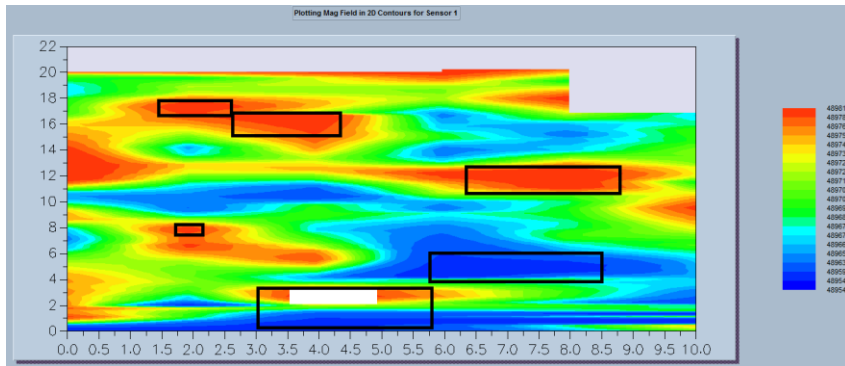
Fig. 5 - Sikandar Janubi, plan of the 5 grids surveyed through magnotometer

Grid 1: 10 x 26 m^2 grid

Grid 2: 10 x 22 m^2 grid

Grid 3: 10 x 20 m^2 grid
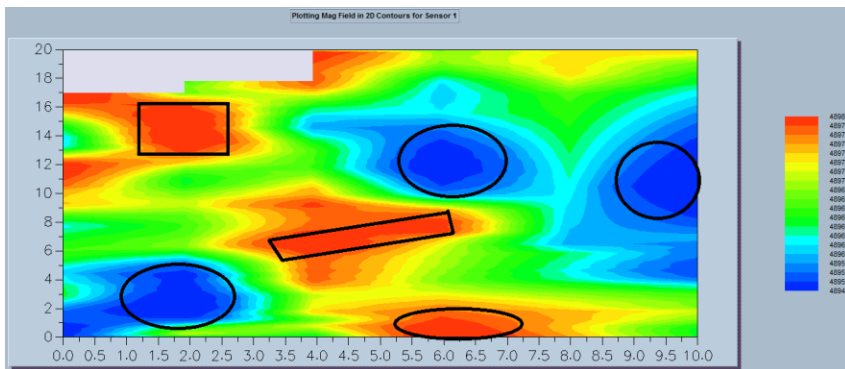
Grid 4: 10 x 22 m^2 grid
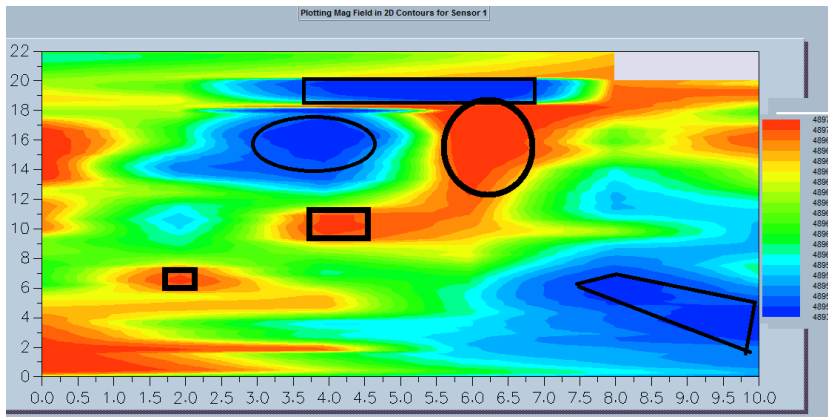
Grid 5: 10 x 22 m^2 grid

4. Topographic Survey

With the help of total station, a topographic survey of the site is also conducted and different contours, depressions and high points were accordingly marked. The visible mound was also divided into various grids of 10 x 10 meter. However, we randomly marked area for excavations and assigned A, B and C.

5. Excavation

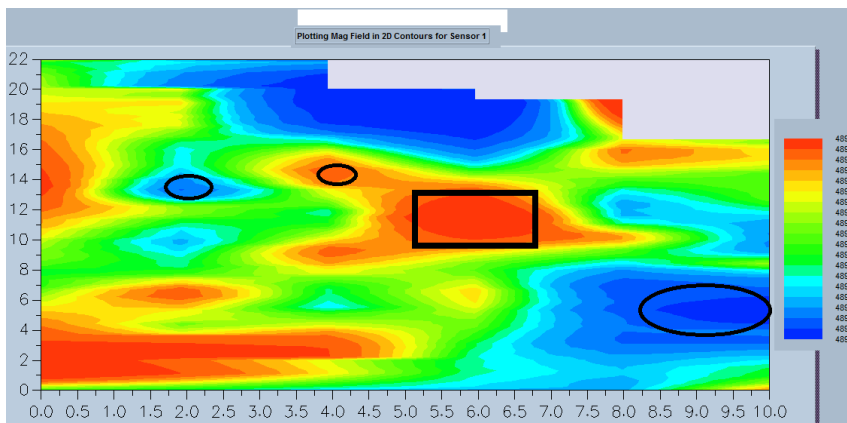After conducting geophysical and contour survey of Sikandar Janubi, in the northwestern part of the existing site, which we feel more feasible for investigation, archaeological excavations were carried out for over two months in November 2015 to January 2016 by the Directorate of Archaeology and Museums, Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in collaboration with the Department of Archaeology, University of Peshawar. This area is relatively flat, clear from shrubs and trees and undisturbed. Moreover, the GPR study has also indicated here some subsurface structure that further enhanced our curiosity for probing a promising spot. Three trenches (Fig. VI) of 5 x 5 m each, designated as A, B and C, was marked on the surface and excavated deep to the virgin soil. These trenches fall respectively in grids F-IV, E-IV and E-III of our contour plan. As expected the results are very interesting where typical Harappan cultural material in the form of structures, kilns, hearths, paved floors, ceramics, stone tools and beads are collected. Some of the top surfaces have either been disturbed by graves or local people for leveling the site for agricultural fields. However, the artifacts show a single period belongs to mature Indus phase. Construction of mudbrick structures, their overlapping and floor levels show 3 sub-phases in the two-meter profile.

Trench A

In the course of archaeological probing in Trench A at the site, a total number of five layers have been exposed from top to bottom, which yielded four different floor levels of the mature Harappan occupation. Each of these layers have their own characteristics, which are briefly discussed here.

Layer 1
The layer 1 of trench A is light brown in colour with semi compact soil. It is composed of soil mixed with ashy substance having broken potsherds and t/c cakes of Harappan nature. Pieces of animals' bones and charcoal have also been found during excavation. The ashy substances are due to two hearths and four small pits recovered in this layer.
        One rectangular shape hearth, measuring 50 x 30 cm, is exposed in

the northwestern pat of the trench at a depth of 8 cm. It can be placed on the intersection of 407 cm from northeastern and 546 cm from southeastern corners of the trench. The second hearth is located near the south eastern corner, measuring 40 x 35 cm, lying on the intersection of 477 cm from northeastern and 60 cm from southeastern corners. Both hearths belong to the same floor level but the former is located to the west of a mudbrick wall whereas the latter is to the east.

There are also four pits exposed in this layer. Three among them are dug out for burials which were taken down to layer 3 whereas one contains debris of this occupational level. The depth of the pit varies from 10 to 30 cm at certain places. It is a considerable size pit measuring 250 x 180 cm, having ashy composition with grey colour containing ashes, white particles, charcoals, bones, sherds and t/c cakes.

Layer 2

A thin ashy streak in the northwestern side of the trench separates layer 2 from layer 1. However, in the rest of the trench layer 2 is lying below layer 1. Layer 2 is light brown in colour throughout the trench. It is slightly semi compact in the north western part but very compact in the rest of the trench. It is composed of soil, having 5 to 10 percent of ashes and charcoal at certain points, yielding t/c cakes and broken potsherds. A brunt area is also noticed here in this layer at a depth of 40cm, in the east of the mud brick wall. It measures 190 x 109 cm and lying on the intersection of 177 cm from northeastern and 380 from southeastern corners.

This layer had a mud brick wall, which is 48 cm thick and 36 cm high. Composed of four mudbrick courses, it has a thick clay plaster, mixed with straw. It also goes in trench B. First a solid filling as foundation is provided then, the wall is constructed. The brick measures 7x14x28 cm.

Layer 3

Due to an ashy streak the upper surface of this layer is slightly blackish whereas rest of the layer is light brown in colour. Overall, it is a semi-compact layer with loose material as well at certain places. Since the mudbrick wall also continues in this layer, therefore, some compact clay filling near it is also observed.

In addition to the three pits of layer 1 that continue in layer 3

containing burials, there is an old pit of 150 x 160 cm size also located in the northwestern part of the trench at a depth of 70 cm. it contains ashes, bones, many broken t/c cake and some white particles of soil. This pit can also be seen in the section too. Adjacent to the mud brick wall is a pit that contained burial of an infant of modern time. It was not exposed then.

Layer 4

Further below is found layer 4. In the north western unit, the layer is light brown in colour, mixed with ashes, charcoal, t/c cakes. In some areas of the unit it colour turns to grey because of the ashes. It is a loose layer in nature in the northwestern unit whereas in the rest of the trench it is composed to semi compact clay. The features of this layer are rich, as one kiln, a wall and 5 hearths are exposed. The kiln is located in the western part of the trench at a depth of 100 cm from the top. The kiln is almost circular in shape with 120 cm diameter and depth of 20 cm. It is filled with ashes and pieces of charcoal. The central part of the kiln as well as the walls are burnt red and compact due to constant use of fire. A large amount of broken t/c cakes are found near the kiln. The t/c cakes are recovered from an area of 60 x 140 cm adjacent to the kiln. In addition to the kiln, there are also a group of six fire places/hearths/ kilns discovered nearby, which are relatively smaller in size than the larger kiln. These measure respectively 60 x 40; 90 x 70; 60 x 40; 30 x 40; 50 x 55 and 40 x 50 cm.

Here in this layer a mud brick wall is also exposed, which is located in the north eastern part of the trench. The wall, running in north south direction; is lying 70 cm deep from surface of the site and is composed of eight brick-courses. The size of the mud brick, used in the construction of wall, measures 7 x 14 x 28 cm. the current height of the wall is 85 cm and half of the wall is running in the eastern section of the trench.

Layer 5

Layer 5 is found at the lowest level in this trench, which in fact yield the earliest cultural material. It is light brown in colour and very compact in nature, which is composed of soil. In the northwestern part of the trench here in this layer a large amount of ashes has been found revealing a group of three hearths. In addition to the hearths, there is also a platform of beaten earth, which has a mud lump wall at the southern side with a

thickness of 40 cm. It is the earliest structure of the site, being composed of mud-lump and running in east-west direction.

The hearths have a platform attached to the east and south whereas to the north is the wall. The hearth opens to the west and therefore, there is no wall or platform. The hearths are backed to the east (i.e. the platform) having 5 cm thick brunt walls. There are some t/c cakes at each hearth's boundary wall either biconical or triangular in shape. The northern hearth, measuring 40x50 cm, has four t/c cakes on its sides with three biconical and one triangular. The central hearth, measuring 60x65 cm has two cakes, one biconical and one triangular whereas the southern one, 50x65 cm, has four biconical cakes. The platform also has a wooden post towards southeast. It appears that the platform was thatched with wooden roof being supported by wooden pillars.

Virgin soil
Below layer 5 is found virgin soil at a depth of 2 meter, which was devoid of any cultural artifacts. The virgin soil was taken to a depth of 60 cm. It is a compact soil with light brown in colour.

Trench B

Adjacent to trench A towards the north, trench B is also opened to trace out certain architectural features found in the former. Due to location of a grave towards further north, the trench B was marked as 5 x 4 meter. The top humus containing some sherds, is removed below which is a semi compact soil.

Layer 1
The layer is composed of brown colour soil with greyish and whitish particles at certain places due to findings of hearths and pits. It has also affected the nature of the layer, which semi compact at one place and loos at other. A hearth in the southeastern part of the trench, 8 cm below, is exposed having bones, ashes, charcoal. The base of the hearth is burnt red and compact owing to frequent use. Fragments of baked clay are collected from the hearth, from which it is made. In the southwestern corner of the trench good number cultural artefacts are collected.

In the southwestern part, a pit is exposed going deep up to 40 cm

and containing ashes, charcoal, bones, t/c cake fragments and potsherds. It ended up against a wall, beyond which the section and composition of the layer is different. Relatively a larger pit is exposed in the north-eastern part of the trench, also visible in the section. This pit was exposed on the NE grid, however, this pit is of recent time and has been dug for a burial (Pl. 21).

The same wall of trench A also is also exposed, which is made of sundried bricks and runs in north south direction. The brick measures 7 x 14x 28 cm, maintain the standard ratio of 1:2:4 as found in the Indus cities. It is about 48 cm in width/thickness. Currently only 4 brick courses survive having a height of 34 cm. the foundation is lying on a hard and compact soil. A good collection of ceramics is made from this layer that include sherds belonging to jars and dishes.

Layer 2

Layer 2 has a variation in colour from brown to dark brown with semi-compact to compact nature. it has similar context as observed in layer 2 in trench A. Ashes, charcoal, bones and potsherds have also been found here. A large hearth in the south-eastern part of the trench is exposed having 100 cm diameter. A second one in the northeastern part is also found with a diameter of 85 cm. Both the hearths are part of same context. A small platform of beaten earth is also exposed in this trench. Attached to the platform is a hearth in the southeastern part with a diameter of 125 cm having depth of 50 cm.

About 45 cm below the humus in this layer a wall is exposed which goes deeper to the 3rd layer of the trench as well as far as 80 cm, made of 4 mudbrick courses. This wall is different than the one going straight (north to south) in trench A as well but is rather turned westwards to trench C. This layer yielded over a hundred potsherds of jars and dishes with typical Harappan shapes.

Layer 3

Due to walls in the trench, the nature of layer 3 varies from semi-compact to compact at various points. It is brown in colour. In the northern part of the trench a mudbrick pavement suggests this layer to have been used as a floor level by the occupants. The compact part in the southwestern part of the trench is a floor level also where a hearth is found containing ashes

and whitish clay particles. The surrounding area is dark greyish due to ashes. Another circular hearth is also observed at the northeastern part of the trench where cultural artefacts like potsherds, t/c cakes fragments along with bones and charcoal have also been found. Charred seeds of wheat are also found from this layer.

A wall is exposed in the south eastern part of trench B, running in north-south direction with a length of 306 cm. It has 8 brick courses with a height of 76 cm and thickness of 50 cm. This wall also continues in trench A, where it was disturbed by a burial.

Layer 4
Layer 4 in most part of the trench is semi compact with grey and light grey in colour. Ashes, charcoals, bones, potsherds and t/c cakes are unearthed in the remains of this layer. A hearth is exposed in the southwestern part with a depth of 109 cm, having a diameter of 70 cm containing ashes and charcoal. Similarly, in the northwestern part another hearth is also exposed. Both the hearths belong to the same context. A small pit is also exposed in this layer where the soil was very loose containing ashy substance. It is a shallow one with 45 cm diameter and 22 cm depth. At the lower end a floor level of beaten earth is found.

A mud packed platform is also exposed here, measuring 150 x 50 x 90 cm area making a rectangle. It is made of hard and compact/packed clay. The platform can easily be associated with wall.

Layer 5
Layer 5 varies from semi-compact to loose in nature in the trench due to variation in the composition of soil. This context yielded very little number of cultural artefacts. Overall, it is loose in nature with grey colour. The southwestern part of the trench is compact rather due to fallen debris of the wall. A circular hearth is also found here.

A mud brick wall is exposed here, which is the earliest structure of the settlement, being unearthed in the southwestern corner of the trench. Containing six brick courses, the wall is preserved up to a height of 55 cm, with a thickness of 50 cm. the size of the brick measures 7 x 14 x 28 cm.

Layer 6
It is an ashy layer with loose soil, which has been found in a limited area

of the trench at a depth of 190 cm from the top. It has light greenish colour with greyish streaks. Here Harappan material like t/c cakes are also discovered. Above mentioned wall is constructed in this layer, which is the same on either side of the wall.

Virgin soil
At a depth of 207 cm from top, virgin soil is reached, which is dark brown in colour with compact soil, producing nothing (Pl. 11).

Trench C

Adjacent to trench B on the west side is marked a further small trench, designated as trench C, in order to trace out the structures here. Maximum four occupational layers have been exposed in this trench. The upper layers are disturbed both by pits and modern graves.

Layer 1
Since there are walls in this trench therefore, the structure and composition of the layer varies from spot to spot in this trench. Overall the layer is composed of loose soil in brown colour. Layer 1 has a thick cultural deposit on the east side of the wall whereas it has thin deposit on the west and south of the wall. Mature Harappan cultural material in the form of pottery including pedestalled footed wares, perforated vessels and t/c cakes have been unearthed.

Layer 2
Wall of a structure/room separates this layer into two parts. One layer is formed inside the room whereas the other one is outside the room. The inside layer is towards the east of the wall, where a floor level of sundried bricks is found. It is the continuity of the same floor exposed in trench B. The wall has a thickness of over 40 cm, made up sundried bricks fixed in mud mortar. It is semi compact layer, composed of silt clay having brownish colour where potsherds, t/c cakes, large pieces of bones, charcoal are exposed. Layer 2 outside the room is slightly changed and is not associated with the layer inside the room. A hearth in the southern part of the trench with a circumference of 190 cm is exposed here, which is partly imbedded in the section. It contains ashes and charcoal. It has also

changed the nature and colour of the layer, which loose and ashy grey respectively. Tow pits are also exposed in this layer.

Layer 3
Layer 3 is exposed outside the room where the floor was not disturbed. It has a thick profile, semi-compact soil with grey colour. Silty soil and ashy substance usually are found near the hearths. A round hearth of 145 cm circumference with a depth of 55 cm at the western side is found, which is made on floor level of beaten earth. Here two complete small pots and a fragmentary grinding stone is also found in addition to potsherds, t/c cakes, bangles, charcoal, pieces of bones and beads.

Layer 4
The wall also continues in this layer. Very little part of this layer is exposed. Layer 4 has loose soil of grey/light grey color, mixed with salty pigments, ashes and charcoal. It produced a good quantity of sherds, t/c cakes and piece of a bangle.

6. Chronology

Samples for radiocarbon dating have been collected from almost all the contexts and layers at Sikandar Janubi but their dates are yet to be determined. However, comparative and typological study of the material remains have been conducted that suggests close affinity with identical material from Gandi Umar Khan, Mahra Sharif, Harappa and Moenjodaro. Diagnostic ceramic types such as perforated vessels, cooking pots, open mouthed bowls, dishes-on-stand, lids and decoration of intersecting circles, geometric patterns and see weeds in black-on-red surfaces suggests a mature Harappan period for the site of Sikandar Janubi. The cultural profile is relatively thick (around 200 cm) suggesting the occupation of the site for a longer span of time. Based on structures three sub-phases have been identified (Fig. 7).

7. Structures

Sikandar Janubi in the Gomal Plain is a mature Harappan settlement with mudbrick structures (Pls 7-10, 12-17). Since the area of excavation was a

limited therefore, little information is obtained regarding the settlement planning and domestic architecture. Like at Gandi Umar Khan (Ali and Jan 2009b), no mudbrick platform, which were already known from major urban centers like Harappa and Moenjodaro, is exposed here. Small platforms in individual rooms are known. Likewise, the structures are made of sundried bricks of standardized form maintaining the Harappan period ratio of 1:2:4 in sizes. The bricks are usually coated with a thick layer of mud plaster mixed with husk. the same material is used in all the three phases identified on the basis of structures. The rooms are either square or rectangular in plan (Figs 7 and 8). in addition to mud bricks, thatched roof structures are also observed, which were erected by means of wooden posts (Pl. 18). most of the rooms have floors made of beaten earth whereas some have mudbrick floors. A mudbrick floor is identified in trench B layer 3, which also continued in trench C. it continued in trench B but disturbed by the grave.

8. Pottery and other artifacts

A good collection of pottery (Pls 19, 20) is unearthed at Sikandar Janubi, which is typical Harappan ceramics found in large amount from elsewhere. Since the site is disturbed, therefore, only two vessels are found complete up to certain extent. The rest are broken. The repertoire includes plain and painted vessels in typical Harappan fashion in black-on-red, depicting geometric, pipal leaf, intersecting and see weed patterns. They are made on wheel from well levigated clay with uniformly baked. The forms and shapes include cooking vessels, dish/bowls-on-stand, platers, lids, bowls, jars, perforated vessels etc (see Figures below). Terracotta human or animal figurines have not been discovered at all from the remains of the site. A few stone tools such as flakes and blades, beads, and t/c cakes are among other findings. Cakes in oval, triangular and round shapes are found.

9. Floral and Faunal Remains

The site of Sikandar Janubi also yielded evidence of charred grains of wheat from proper archaeological context. These seeds are unearthed from

the floor level in layer 2 of trench B, near the wall. The remains are yet to be analyzed for further detail study to get information regarding variety and specie. Similarly, a large amount of bones of various medium size animals have been collected from different context showing exploitation of the surrounding environment in the 3rd millennium BC.

Acknowledgement

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Appendix

1. Catalogue of the Small Finds (Season 2015)

No.	Object	Material	Trench - Layer	Dimensions	Description
1	Bead	Stone?	C-3	L: 35.91mm W: 7.17 mm	It is a biconical stone (?) bead with a central axial hole. The colour is white and body consists of chocolate color circular parallel lines along its origin/ axial hole. The body apparently looks like having alternate chocolate and white color bands.
2	Bead	?	+	Dia.12.86mm	It is a small barrel shape bead with an axial hole. Its colour is white.
3	Bangle	Bone/ ivory/ Shell	B-5	L: 33.71mm W: 4.65mm	Fragment of a white circular/semicircular bangle/tool. Its outer edge has thin finishing while the inner has flat finishing.
4	Figurine's Breast	t/c	+	L: 16.64mm W: 13.27mm	Probably, it is a breast of a female human figurine, having a pointed nipple. It does not have any slip.
5	Ladle	t/c	A-4	L: 57.48mm W: 7.35mm H: 15.54mm	It is a half piece of a terracotta ladle. It is roughly finished and does not have any slip.
6	Toy cart Frame	t/c	C-1	L: 39.19mm W: 15.75 mm	Fragment of a toy cart frame made of coarse baked clay. Apparently, it looks like a cylinder, having circular core while its one face is flat. It has a hole at one end having internal diameter of 4.28 mm

7	Metal tool	Bronze/ Copper	B-2	L: 19.86mm W: 13.52mm	A piece of metal probably of bronze or copper. It is rusted and has greenish look. It is irregular in shape.
8	Flake	Stone	A-5	L: 2.80mm W: 19.50mm H: 13.16mm	A stone flake, reddish in colour and irregular in shape.
9	Flake	Stone	A-5	L: 23.94mm W: 20.14mm H: 11.80mm	Another stone flake with irregular shape, red and black in colour.
10	Flake	Stone	A-5	L: 21.65mm W: 22.48mm H: 12.63	It is square shape flake, broken with blackish in colour.
11	Metal tool	Bronze?	+	L: 37.78mm W: 4.55	It is a rusted cylindrical metallic tool, probably an antimony rod. It is broken, and both of its ends are missing.
12	Pot/ small jar	t/c	A-4	L: 79.46mm W: 82.78mm	It is an out curved rimmed broken small jar of thin texture. Its entire rim and half of its body is missing. It has a pedestal/ disk shape base. It has traces of red slip on its exterior. No additional decoration has been provided to it, except the slip. It has plain interior.
13	Pot/ miniature jar	t/c	A-3	L: 57.10mm W: 57.77mm	It is an out curved rimmed small globular jar of thin texture. Its entire rim is missing. It is likely a carinated jar with a pedestal base. Its interior and exterior are plain.
14	Pot/ small jar	t/c	C-3	L: 79.04mm W: 77.22mm	It is an out curved rimmed broken, small jar of thin texture. Its entire rim is missing. It has a pedestal/ disk shape base. Traces of orange colour slip can be found on its exterior while it interior is plain.

15	Pot	t/c	A-5	L: 85.19 mm W: 83.42mm	It's a small jar, having out curved rim and slightly long neck. Traces of red slip can be seen on its exterior as well as interior surfaces. It has a small pedestal base. A piece of its rim is missing, while a small portion if its body is also missing.
16	Pot		C-3	L: 97.65mm W: 99.95mm	It's a small jar having out curved rim. Half of its rim missing, and it has slightly long neck. It has a red slip on its exterior while the interior is plain. It has a disc shaped base. Its texture is comparatively medium thick.
17	Miniature Pot	t/c	B-4	L: 41.53 mm W: 35.26	A small miniature globular shape pot having out curved rim with a pedestal base. It could also be a ritual pot used for certain purpose. Its interior and exterior are plain and rough.
18	Base of a Dish on stand	t/c	A-4	L: 156.53mm W: 25.53mm H: 85.88 mm	It is a base of a dish-on-stand. It has a thick out curved rim. It has a medium thick texture with plain interior as well as exterior surfaces. It seems to have been made separately in pieces and then joined later on to the stem part of the dish, as it has marks of joining on its upper most part.

19	Pot	t/c	B-3	L: 124.68mm W: 19.24mm H: 52.59 mm	It is a broken small open mouthed carinated pot of thin texture, having red slip on the exterior along with black colour floral decoration. The decoration includes five horizontal black lines on the throat and two on the point of carination. The area between the throat and carination has black circles which are further provided with a single black dot in the center. The rim of jar is broken but apparently it seems that it has an out curved rim. The pot has concave body and flat base.
20	Barrel Shaped Bead	T/c	C-1	L: 141.24mm W: 31.01mm H: 55.67 mm	It is a broken barrel shaped large bead of terracotta. It has a narrow axial hole in its one end while the other end is missing. Its middle body has a large hollow space. Most of its body is missing. It might be a fishing-net sinker bead.
21	Ladle	t/c	A-4	L: 95.68mm W: 8.74mm H: 21.45mm	It is a roughly rectangular, concave ladle. There are two small holes near the edge of one of its longer sides, while its opposite side has a small fragment missing. It does not have any signs of slip on its interior as well as exterior.

22	Button	t/c	A-2	L: 24.06mm H: 37.75mm	It is small size cylindrical chessboard button, made of well levigated clay mixed with straw. Its body is blackish in color. It is half backed. In the middle, it is concave while at the both ends it has flat thicker and wider edges.
23	Button	t/c	C-3	L:24.43mm H: 42.18mm	Same as No. 22
24	Button	t/c	A-1	L: 25.05mm H: 40.46mm	It is small size cylindrical chessboard button, made of well levigated clay mixed with straw. Its body is blackish in color. In the middle, it is concave while at the both ends it has flat thicker and wider edges
25	Button	t/c	+	L: 28.05mm H:42.24mm	It is small size cylindrical chessboard button, made of well levigated clay mixed with straw. Its body is pinkish in color. In the middle, it is concave while at the both ends it has flat thicker and wider edges
26	Button	t/c	+	L:35.51mm H:55.72mm	It is small size cylindrical chessboard button, made of well levigated clay. Its body is yellowish in color. In the middle, it is concave while at the both ends, it has flat thicker and wider edges
27	Toy cart frame	t/c	A-3	L: 57.76mm W: 26.30mm H: 32.47 mm	It is a fragment of a toy cart frame, buff in colour, made of well levigated clay and is well fired. It has two holes, one at each end, but at one end the hole is partly broken.

28	Toy cart Frame Fragment	t/c	A-3	L: 68.29m W: 26.38mm H: 59.46 mm	It is a fragment of a toy cart frame. It has a vertical and a horizontal bar with holes. They are mutual perpendicular to each other. It has traces of red slip and is made of levigated clay and is well fired. It has two holes in the vertical bar, one at each end. It also has a hole in the horizontal bar. At one end the hole is partly broken.
29	Barrel Shaped Bead	t/c	+	H: 73.64mm W: 17.16mm H: 24.40 mm	It is a broken barrel shaped large bead of terracotta. Three fourth of its body is missing. Its internal middle body has a larger open space than the ends at the axial hole. It might be a fishing-net sinker bead. It is plain.
30	Barrel Shaped Bead	t/c	+	L: 57.51mm W: 14.34mm H: 26.59 mm	It is a broken barrel shaped large bead of terracotta. Half of its body is missing. It has a narrow axial hole. The central body has an open space. Both the ends are flat. It might be a fish-net sinker. It is plain.
31	Toy cart frame	t/c	A-4	L: 47.17mm W: 16.45mm H: 15.38 mm	It is a handmade fragment of a toy cart frame, made of well levigated clay and is well fired. It has a hole in its middle for a wooden stick/post. It is plain.
32	Toy cart frame	t/c	+	L: 54.16mm W: 14.96 H:19.79 mm	It is a fragment of a handmade toy cart frame. It is buff in colour and is made of well levigated clay and is well fired. It has two holes, but at one end the hole is partly broken. It is plain.

33	Toy cart frame	t/c	+	L: 30.70mm W: 15.05mm H: 22.87 mm	It is a fragment of a handmade toy cart frame. It is buff and made of well levigated clay and is well fired. It has traces of two holes, one at each end, but they are partly missing.
34	Toy cart frame	t/c	+	L: 56.16mm W: 16.92mm H: 16.16 mm	It is a fragment of a handmade toy cart frame. It is black in colour and made of well levigated clay and is well fired. It has a hole at one end vertically. It has a coarse body.
35	Toy cart frame	t/c	+	L: 52.24mm W: 15.56mm H: 18.12 mm	It is a fragment of a handmade toy cart frame, black in colour, made of well levigated clay and is well fired. It has two horizontal holes. Half of one of the holes is missing. It is plain.
36	Toy cart frame	t/c	+	L: 54.88mm W: 1877mm H: 13.33 mm	It is a fragment of a handmade toy cart frame. It is pinkish and made of well levigated clay and is well fired. It has two vertical holes and one horizontal hole. It is plain.
37	Toy cart frame	t/c	+	L: 62.83mm W: 16.32mm H: 33.19 mm	It is a fragment of a handmade toy cart frame. It is buff and made of well levigated clay and is well fired. It has a horizontal hole at one of its ends. This horizontal bar has a small portion of a vertical bar attached to it.
38	Blade	Stone	A-5	T: 4.66mm L: 102.18mm W: 18.08 mm	It is a long stone blade, broken into two pieces. It has sharp edges and convex dorsal and flat ventral surfaces. It has signs of utilizations on the edges. Its colour is brownish.

39	Blade	Stone	A-5	T: 3.64mm L: 49.16mm W: 12.65 mm	It is a broken blade of black colour with retouched edges and convex dorsal and flat ventral surface.
40	Blade	Stone	+	T: 2.88mm L: 38.44mm W: 13.08 mm	It is a broken blade with blunt retouched edges and convex dorsal and flat ventral. One of its edges has signs of utilizations.
41	Blade	Stone	+	T: 3.35mm L: 18.28mm W: 13.47mm	It is a broken blade with retouched edges and convex dorsal and flat ventral surfaces.
42	Blade	Stone	+	T: 2.90mm L: 16.56mm W: 12.92mm	It is a broken blade with retouched edges and convex dorsal and flat ventral surfaces.
43	Tiny bladelet	Stone	+	T: 1.82mm L: 11.98mm W: 6.62mm	It is a broken tiny bladelet with retouched sharp edges and convex dorsal and flat ventral surface.
44	Flake	Stone	+	L: 20.69mm W: 5.64mm H: 18.51mm	It is a red colour rectangular shape flake with blunt edges. At one side, it has an off white colour cortex attached to it. It has a small bulb of percussion on it.
45	Core	Stone	+	L: 27.65mm W: 15.56mm H: 29.58 mm	It is a stone tool's core of irregular shape. It has a sharp pointed tip. It has multi-faceted surface.
46	Ivory piece?	Ivory?	+	L: 22.02mm W: 4.19mm H: 8.21mm	It is a fragment of an ivory tool. It has a curve in its middle body like a bangle.

47	Unidentified t/c object	t/c	+	L: 37.09mm W: 21.77mm	It is an unidentified object of terracotta. It is made of well levigated clay and is over brunt. Like a bead, it has an axial hole, but at one end it is thicker and wider as if it was broken off from its main body part. Due to over firing, the inner part of it got blackish. It is plain.
48	Bead	Stone	+	Dia: 8.09mm L: 3.32mm	It is a reddish colour stone bead of circular shape with an axial hole.
49	Bead	Stone	+	Dia: 6.89mm L: 9.54mm	It is a barrel shaped stone bead with an axial hole. It has brownish colour.
50	Bead	Ivory?	+	Dia: 3.15mm L: 2.32mm	It is a tiny, white colour bead with an axial hole.
51	Bead	t/c	+	Dia: 9.88mm L: 7.10mm	It is a biconical t/c bead with an axial hole. It is plain.
52	Bead	t/c	+	Dia: 6.68mm L: 28.56mm	It is an elongated barrel shaped t/c bead with an axial hole. It is plain.
53	Bead	t/c	+	Dia: 11.02mm L: 35.26mm	It is an elongated barrel shaped t/c bead with an axial hole. It has incised circles along with the axial hole on the body. It is plain.
54	Bead	t/c	+	Dia: 28.71mm L: 20.02mm	It is a barrel shaped t/c bead with an axial hole. It is broken, and half of its body is missing. It is plain.
55	Bead	t/c	+	Dia: 24.11mm L: 11.64mm	It is a ring-shaped t/c bead with an axial hole. It is broken, and half of its body is missing. It is plain.
56	Bead	t/c	+	Dia:27.85mm L: 11.90mm	It is a ring-shaped t/c bead with an axial hole. It is broken, and half of its body is missing. It is plain.

57	Base	t/c	A-5	L: 29.5cm W: 1.6cm H: 14.8 cm	It is a base of a dish-on-stand. It looks-like a bell. It has a medium thick flaring rim. Its texture is medium thick. It has traces of red slip on the exterior while its interior is plain. It was recovered in pieces and joined latter on.
58	Jar	t/c	A-5	L: 15.9cm W: 0.8cm H: 7.5 cm	It is a fragment of an everted rimed jar. Most of its body is missing, including some part of the rim. It is buff and has plain interior.
59	Burin	Stone	A-4	L: 21.35mm W: 4.92mm H: 9.36 mm	It is a pointed burin, having one side sharp and other blunt. It has a convex dorsal and flat ventral.
60	Lug	t/c	+	L: 72.50mm W: 20.35 mm	It is a fragment of a lug, having buff slip and stem-like elongated body. Apparently, it was made separately and attached to a pot latter on.
61	Sherds	t/c	+	1:L: 51.50mm T: 15.12 mm 2:L: 71.56mm T: 10.67 mm	They are handmade and very crude two sherds, probably, one but broken into two pieces. Both have red slip on the interior and exterior. Their exterior is slurry. They are made of ill levigated clay and the central part of their sections is black. One of them has a blackish scare on the exterior. The other has dark black smoke on the exterior and cloth impression on the interior.

62	Grinding Stone	Sand Stone	C-4	L: 28cm W: 22cm H: 9cm	It is a half piece of a large sized grinding stone. Its upper surface is more polished than the lower one. Its edge is thick and raised while its middle body is thin and has concavity in it. It has flat base.

2. Catalogue of the graphically documented potsherds (Figs. 21-26)

Sherd No.	Locus Trench-layer	Description
1.	A-2	Large sized deep bowl, having hooked shaped beaked rim with a black band on it and red slip on the interior. It exterior is plain with pinkish wash.
2.	A-5	Large sized deep and straight walled bowl with high beaked rim, having dull pinkish-wash on exterior with an incised horizontal line on the neck. It has a broad red horizontal band on the interior with a horizontal black band below, pinkish body, it also has a faded horizontal black band on the outer and inner tip of the rim.
3.	B-3	large size deep bowl with everted rim, having a horizontal black band on the neck and outer tip of the rim with buff exterior. It has a horizontal broad red band on the internal rim, flank by a single horizontal black line. It is pinkish in the center portion on the interior.
4.	B-4	Deep bowl of small size relatively, with buff exterior and has red slip on the interior. In addition, it has a horizontal black band on the inner and outer tip of the rim.
5.	A-5	It is a deep bowl of small size with bi-lateral rim having buff slip on the exterior and pink wash on the interior. It also had a broad horizontal band on the rim and inner side.
6.	A-3	deep bowl with everted beak shape rim having pinkish exterior and buff slip in the central portion of interior. It has a horizontal broad red band on inside rim with a black line above and three below on the interior.

7.	A-2	large sized deep bowl, having low beaked thick rim, with pinkish wash on the interior as well as exterior.
8.	A-1	a plain and deep bowl with beaked shaped rim, having pinkish exterior and black slip on the interior.
9.	A-5	Upper portion of a dish-on-stand, having flaring rim with reddish-brown interior and broad horizontal band shown on the exterior. It has a black painted circle with four incised circles in the middle body on the interior. In addition, it has vertical incised dots between the painted and incised circles.
10.	C-4	upper portion of a dish-on-stand, having flaring rim, orang/reddish broad band on the interior and exterior with a black band on the tip of the rim. The central portion on its interior is having pinkish wash, with six incised circles. On the exterior, it also has a round reddish band on the point where a stem was attached.
11.	A-1	flaring rim of a plate with flat base, brownish slip on the interior and exterior and a horizontal black line on the tip of the rim and a black circle on the exterior.
12.		a body of a flaring rim plain plate, having flat base and incised circles on the interior and an incised line on the exterior.
13.	C-2	a large plate having bi-lateral rim, provided with pinkish wash on the interior as well as exterior surfaces.
14.	C-1	a shallow plate with bi-lateral rim, plain with buff exterior, having a black band on the outer tip of the rim. Its interior has red slip with a black horizontal band on the chest.
15.	B-5	A plate having bi-lateral rim, plain, with yellowish wash on inner surface.
16.	B-1	A small and shallow plate having bi-lateral thick rim, plain having traces of reddish-brown slip on the interior with a horizontal band of the same colour on the external rim.
17.	B-1	It is a plain shallow plate with slightly inverted bilateral rim, having buff interior and pinkish exterior.
18.	C-1	a small and shallow polychrome open-mouthed bowl, with slightly flaring rim, having a thin black band on it. It has buff slip on the interior and exterior. In addition, it is provided with five thin black bands and three thin red and one broad band on the interior
19.	B-2	a greyware medium size bowl having bi-lateral rim, plain.

20.	B-4	a shallow bowl with bi-lateral rim having plain and rough exterior and pinkish slip with a black band on the inner tip of the rim and a black circle on the interior.
21.	A-1	an open-mouthed jar, having long neck and short perpendicular rim. It has buff interior and reddish-brown slip with a horizontal black thin band on the tip of the rim on the exterior.
22.	B-1	Neck of a plain and perforated jar with everted rim and an incised horizontal line below the shoulder.
23.	A-3	Long neck of a flanged rim vessel/jar, having buff slip on the interior and upper rim on the exterior. In addition, its middle body is provided with pinkish slip and black vertical curved strips with a horizontal black thin band on the lower rim and two thin bands below the vertical curved strips.
24.	A-4	a perforated plain sherd with pinkish body.
25.	C-3	A globular jar, probably had everted rim, having black band and three lines on the neck. It has red slip on the exterior with a sea-weed and fish motifs in black on the exterior.
26.	B-1	A body-sherd of a jar, having pink slip on the exterior and pinkish wash on the interior. It has two registers, which are separated from each other by horizontal black line. The upper register is provided with a series of two concentric circles, having a black dot in their centers. The lower register is provided with a four-leaf floral pattern in black with bars in the blank spaces. Two horizontal black bands are also provided under the lower register.
27.	C-3	A painted body-sherd, probably of a dish-on-stand. Its interior is plain and has rough incisions. On the exterior, it has red slip with black floral decoration with pipal leaf motifs.
28.	A-5	It is a small sherd, probably of a carinated jar/bowl, having red slip and a horizontal black band on the exterior and a pink wash on the interior.
29.	C-2	a body-sherd, having plain interior with rough incised lines. On the exterior it has red slip with horizontal bands and vertical wavy lines.
30.	B-1	body-sherd, having pinkish interior and red slip and black fish-scale motifs with dots on the exterior.

31.	A-2	A rounded cooking pot with beaked rim, having a ledge on the shoulder. It has orange slip on the upper body with a black band on the upper and lower rim as well. It has a horizontal broad band on the throat with pinkish wash on the interior.
32.	A-5	A cooking pot with rounded body and beaked rim, like above one, with a ledge on the shoulder, having pinkish wash with a horizontal broad band on the interior. On the exterior, it has buff lower body, red slip between the two rims and a black horizontal line on the tip of each rim.
33.	A-1	A cooking pot with rounded body having high beaked rim, with plain body.
34.	A-3	out-curved rim of a plain jar, probably with rounded body, having buff exterior and pinkish interior
35.	A-2	an out-curved rim of a spheroid jar, having red slip on the exterior, a black band on the tip of the rim with two horizontal black lines on the neck and two on the shoulder. It has a horizontal red band on the throat while the rest of its interior has pinkish wash.
36.	A-5	It is a plain out-curved rim ovoid jar, having red slip on the exterior and pinkish wash on the interior. It has three horizontal incised lines on its interior.
37.	A-5	It is a plain out-curved rim ovoid jar, having buff exterior and pinkish interior.
38.	A-2	Out-curved rim of a plain jar with a slight groove on outer rim
39.	A-2	out-curved rim of a plain jar, having long neck, orange slip on the exterior and buff on the interior.
40.	A-5	It is a plain out-curved rim jar, having buff slip on the exterior with a horizontal incised band on the neck.
41.	A-2	An out-curved rim jar, having red slip with a black band on the rim on the exterior. It also has a horizontal broad red band on the throat while the rest of its interior is plain with pink wash.
42.	A-3	a large storage jar with everted beaked rim, plain, having pinkish interior and reddish-brown exterior.
43.	B-1	It is a large everted beaked rim of a jar, having red slip on the exterior and pinkish interior with a broad horizontal black band on the throat and neck.

44.	A-1	Beaked rim of a jar/cooking pot, having reddish brown slip on the exterior with a horizontal black band on the tip of the rim. A broad horizontal reddish-brown band is also provided on its throat.
45.	C-4	It is a plain everted/short beaked rim of a spheroid jar having buff exterior and pinkish interior.
46.	A-4	A plain spheroid shape jar with short beaked everted rim having buff slip on the exterior and pinkish wash on the interior. It has an incised line just below the rim on the exterior.
47.	A-5	It is a plain spheroid jar with thickened everted rim, large size relatively, has buff slip on the exterior and upper part of the interior body.
48.	A-3	Short everted beaked rim of a plain spheroid shape jar, having buff exterior and pinkish exterior.
49.	C-4	a medium size spheroid jar, plain, having everted beaked shaped rim with buff exterior.
50.	B-3	lower portion of a vessel having disc shape base, pinkish interior and red slip on the exterior. It also has two horizontal thin bands on the exterior surface.
51.	C-2	lower portion of a plain jar, having disc shape base, buff lower body and red slip on the upper body on the exterior. On the interior, it has pinkish wash.
52.	A-4	Lower portion of a small jar, having disc shaped base, red slip on the exterior and pinkish wash on the interior
53.	B-3	It is a lower portion of a plain bowl, having disc shape base and greenish colour body. Its exterior, interior and section are green in colour.
54.	B-3	Lower part of a bowl with disc rim, plain
55.	B-1	It is a lower portion of a bowl having disc shape base and pinkish wash on the exterior with a horizontal black band on the middle body. It has pinkish and plain interior.
56.	B-3	It is a lower portion of a plain bowl/jar, having disc shape base, buff exterior and pinkish interior.
57.	A-1	a plain flat base of vessel, having pinkish body.
58.	A-1	lower portion of a black ware bowl, having flat base.
59.	A-5	It is a flat base of a bowl, plain and has pinkish wash on the interior.

60.	A-5	It is a plain disc shape base of a jar or bowl.
61.	A-4	a plain ring-shaped base, having creamy exterior and buff interior
62.	B-3	It is a plain ring shape base, having buff exterior and pinkish interior.
63.	C-1	lower portion of a plain jar/bowl, having ring shaped base and pinkish wash on the interior and exterior.
64.	A-1	Lid with flaring rim with a raised knob in the center and flat base. It has incised lines and pinkish wash on the interior as well as exterior.
65.	B-3	It is a plain lid, having disc shape base and flaring rims. Its knob is missing.
66.	A-5	It is a plain lid, having buff slip on the exterior and pinkish wash on the interior. It has flaring rim and a long central knob. Its base is roughly cut with a thread, which is uneven and has marks of thread cutting.
67.	C-4	Lower portion of a jar/bowl, having disc shape base, red slip with two horizontal black lines on the exterior. On the interior, it has pinkish wash and two incised horizontal lines.
68.	A-2	plain base of a dish-on-stand, having pinkish wash on the body.
69.	C-4	a stem of a dish-on-stand, having red slip on the exterior.
70.	A-2	base of a dish-on-stand, having flaring rim, orange slip and a black band on the tip of the rim on the exterior and pinkish wash on the interior.
71.	C-2	a plain flat lid having perpendicular rim and pinkish wash on the body.
72.	B-1	Ring base of a vessel
73.	C-2	a ledged/flanged rim of the base of a dish on stand, plain.
74.	A-4	Lower portion of a bowl or plate, having disc shaped base, red slip with a black circle on the interior and exterior.
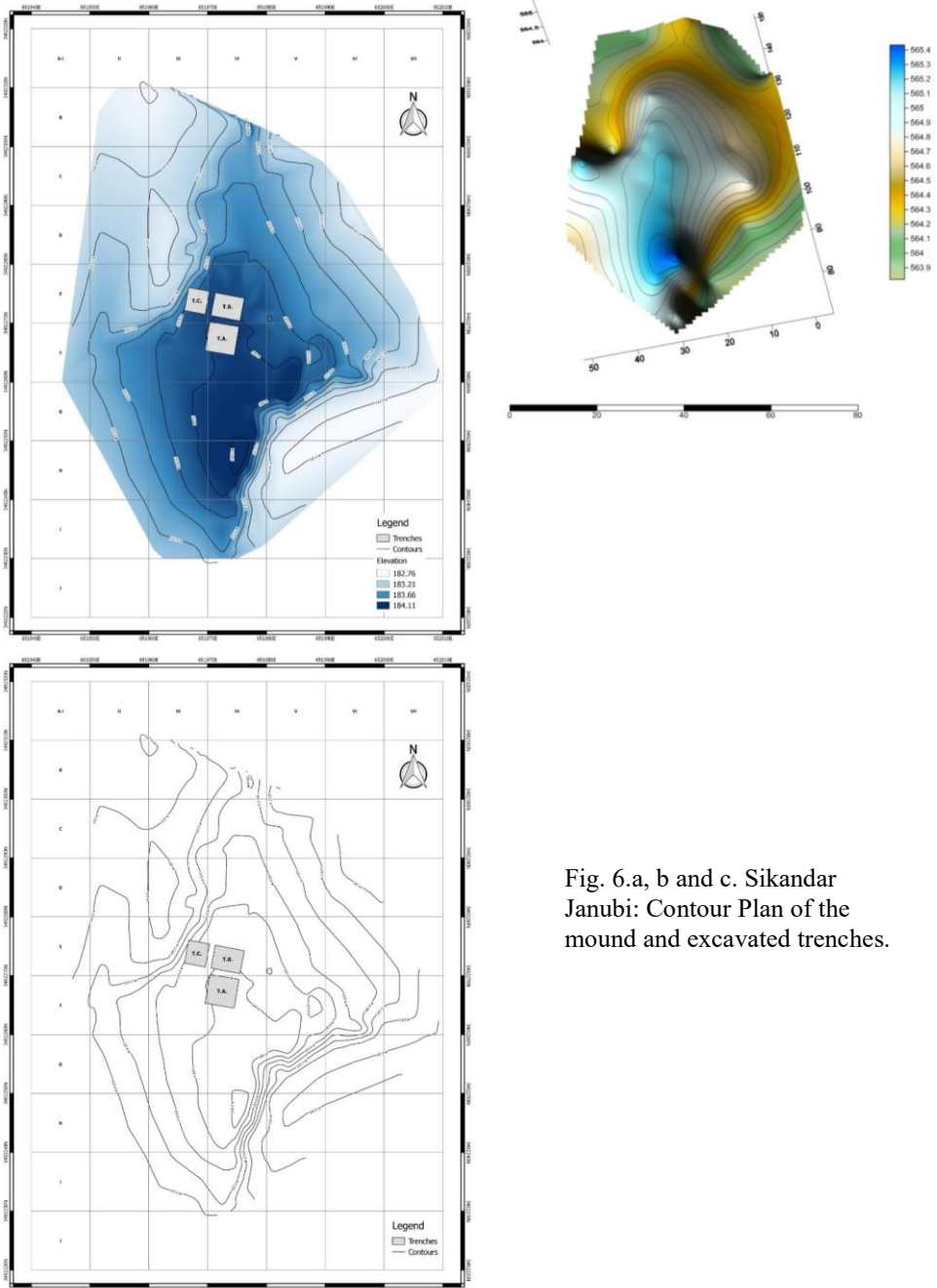
Fig. 6.a, b and c. Sikandar Janubi: Contour Plan of the mound and excavated trenches.
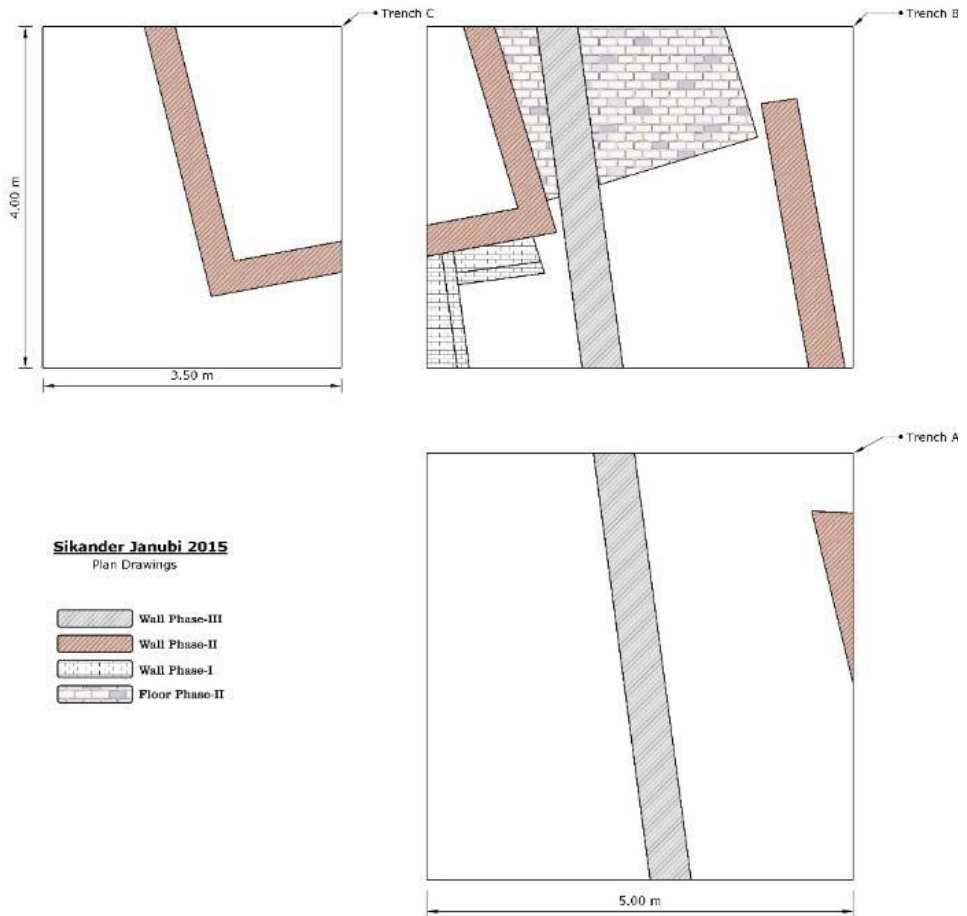
Fig. 7 - Sikandar Janubi: Plan of the structures.
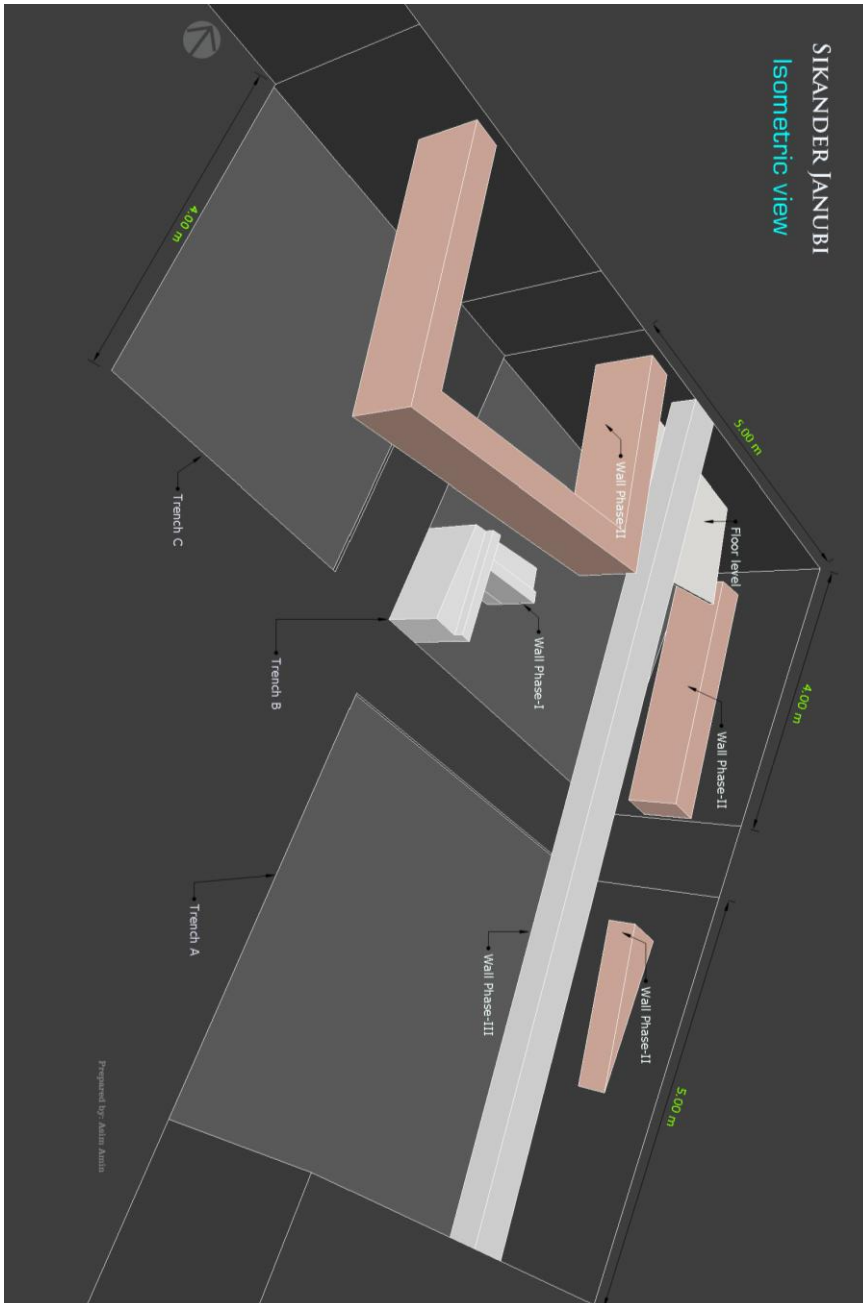
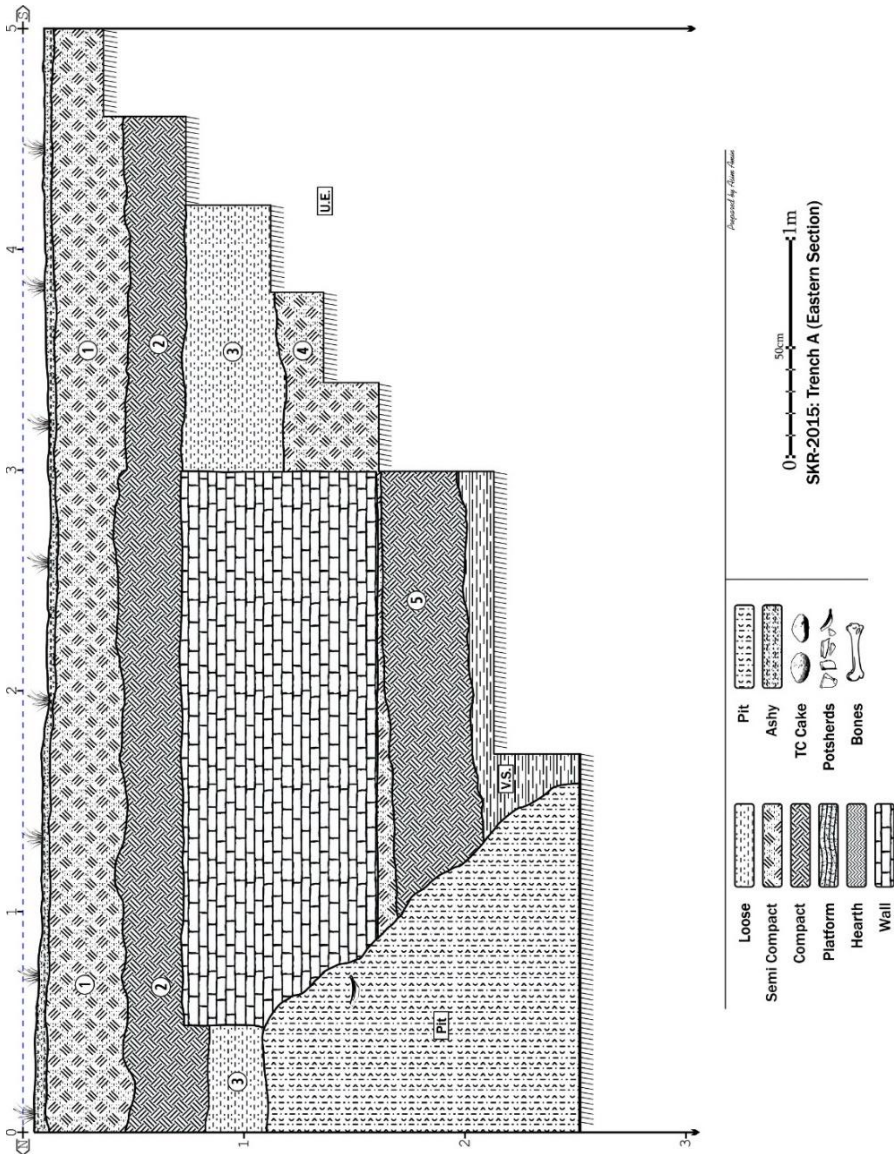Fig. 8 - Sikandar Janubi: Isometric view of the structures.

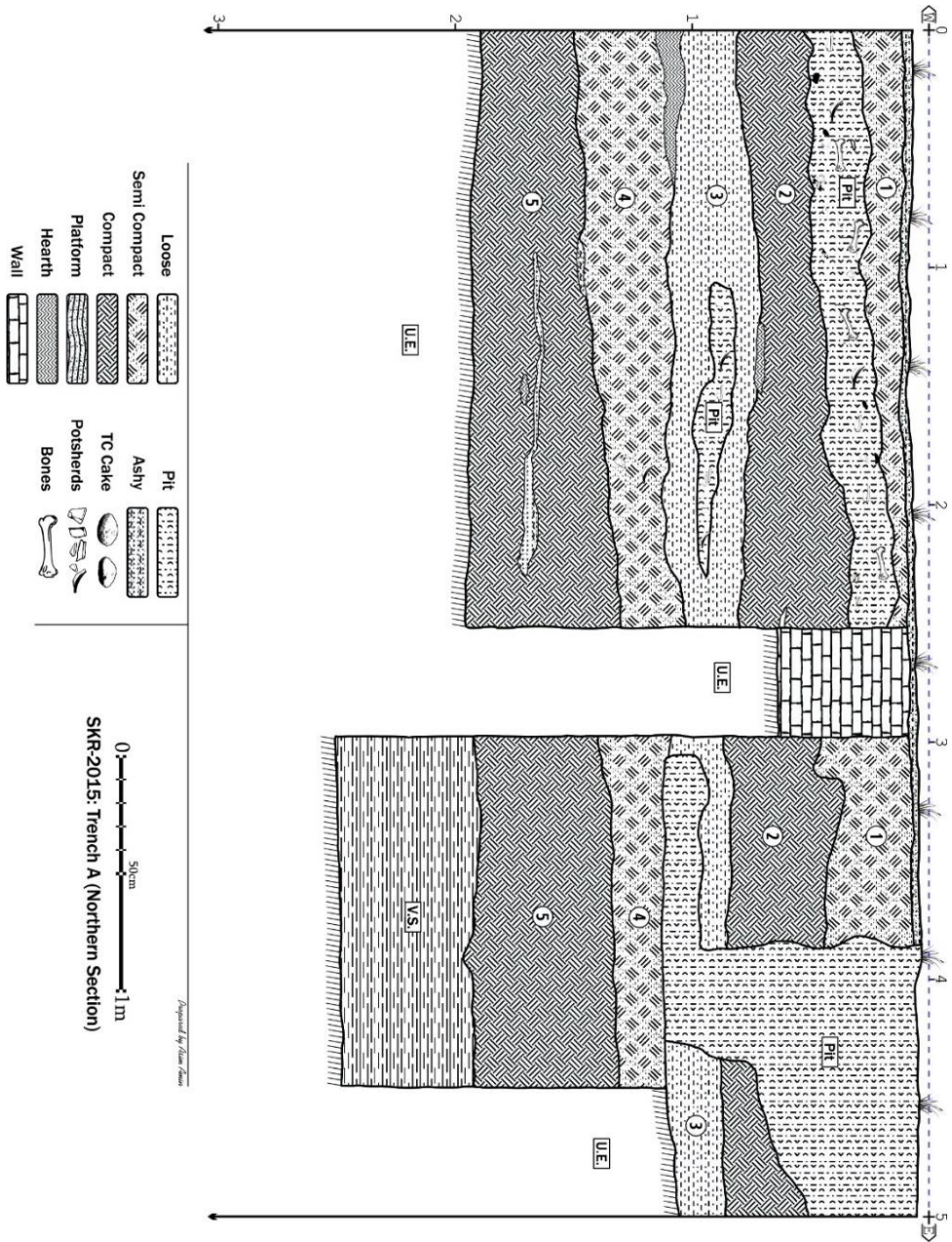Fig. 9 - Sikandar Janubi: Trench A, Eastern Section.
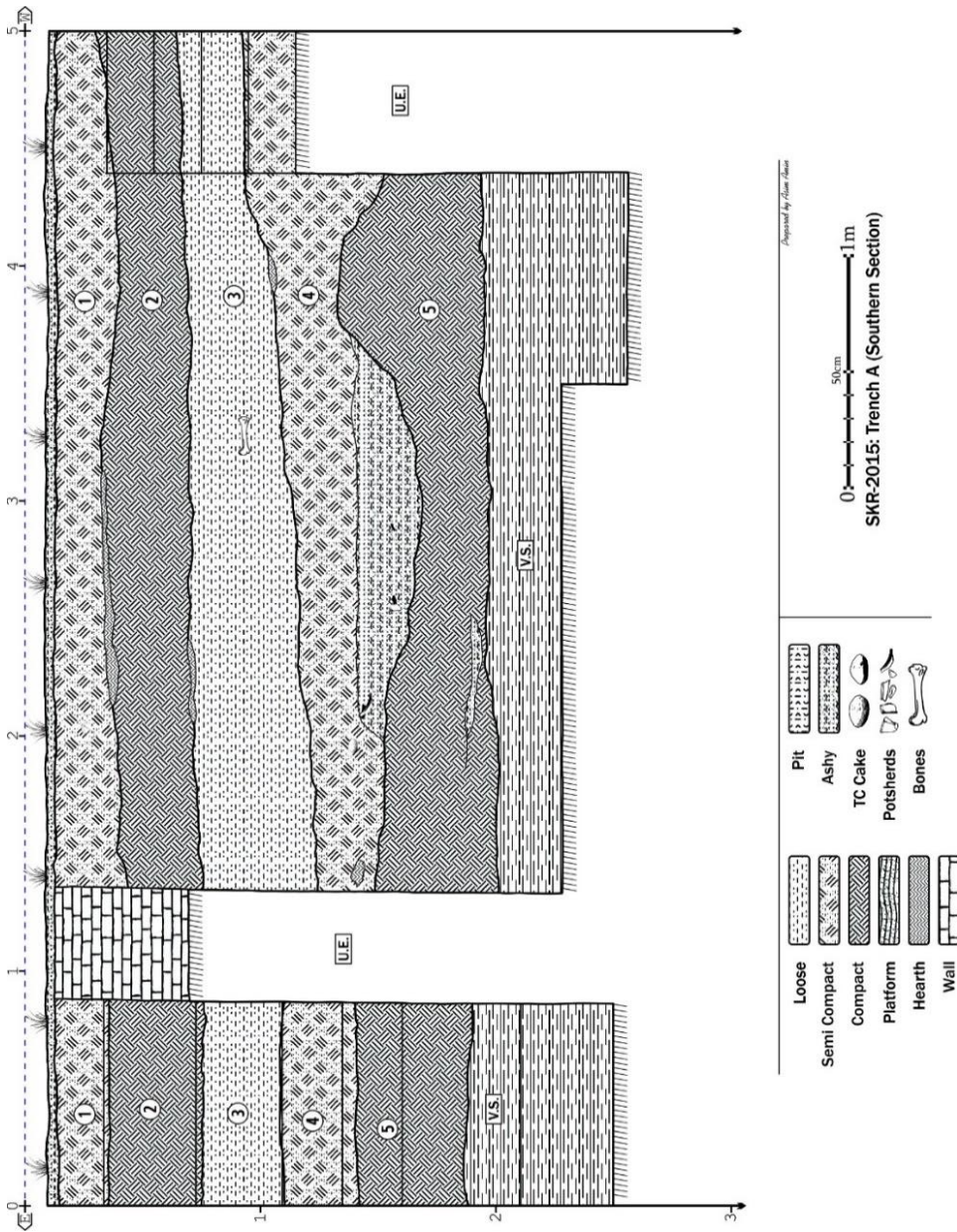
Fig. 10 - Sikandar Janubi: Trench A, Northern Section.
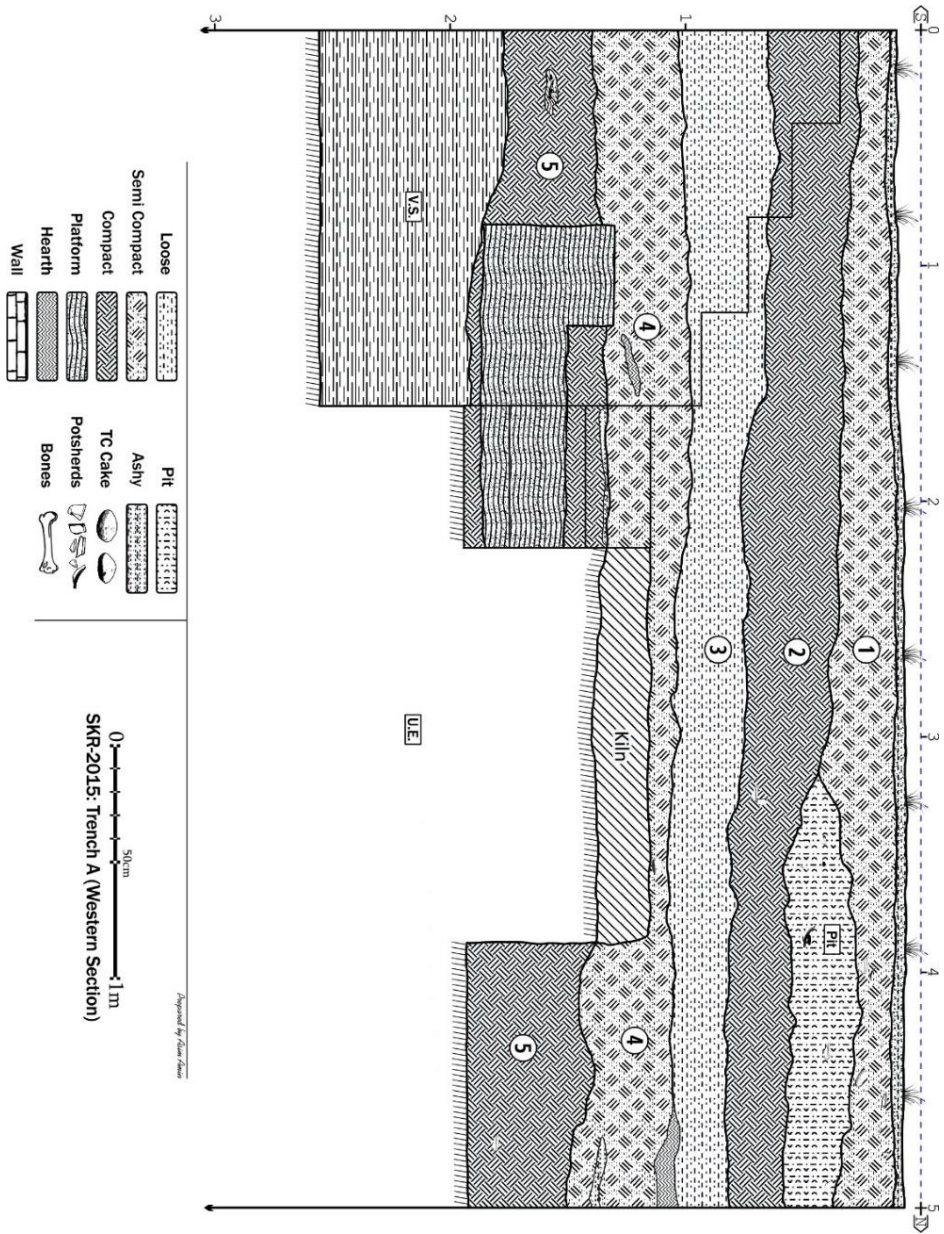
Fig. 11 - Sikandar Janubi: Trench A, Southern Section.

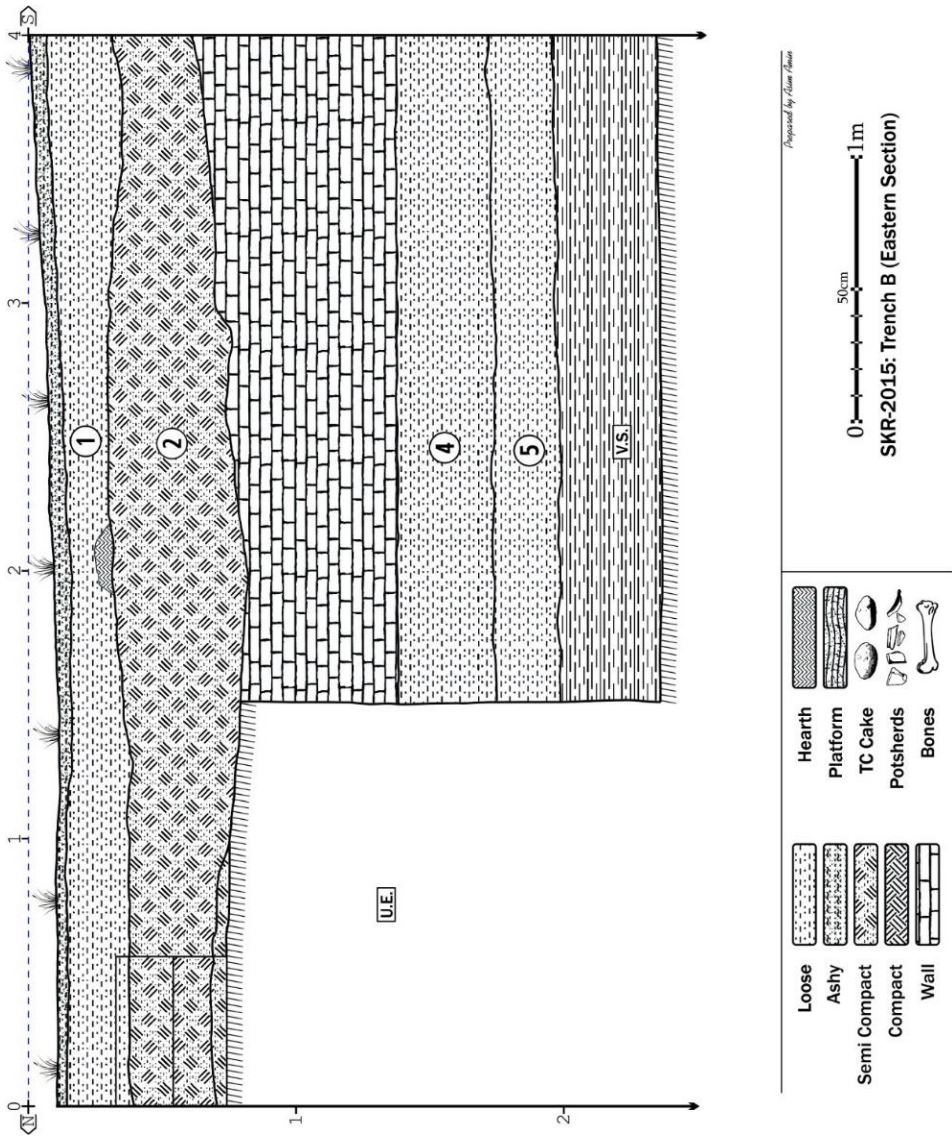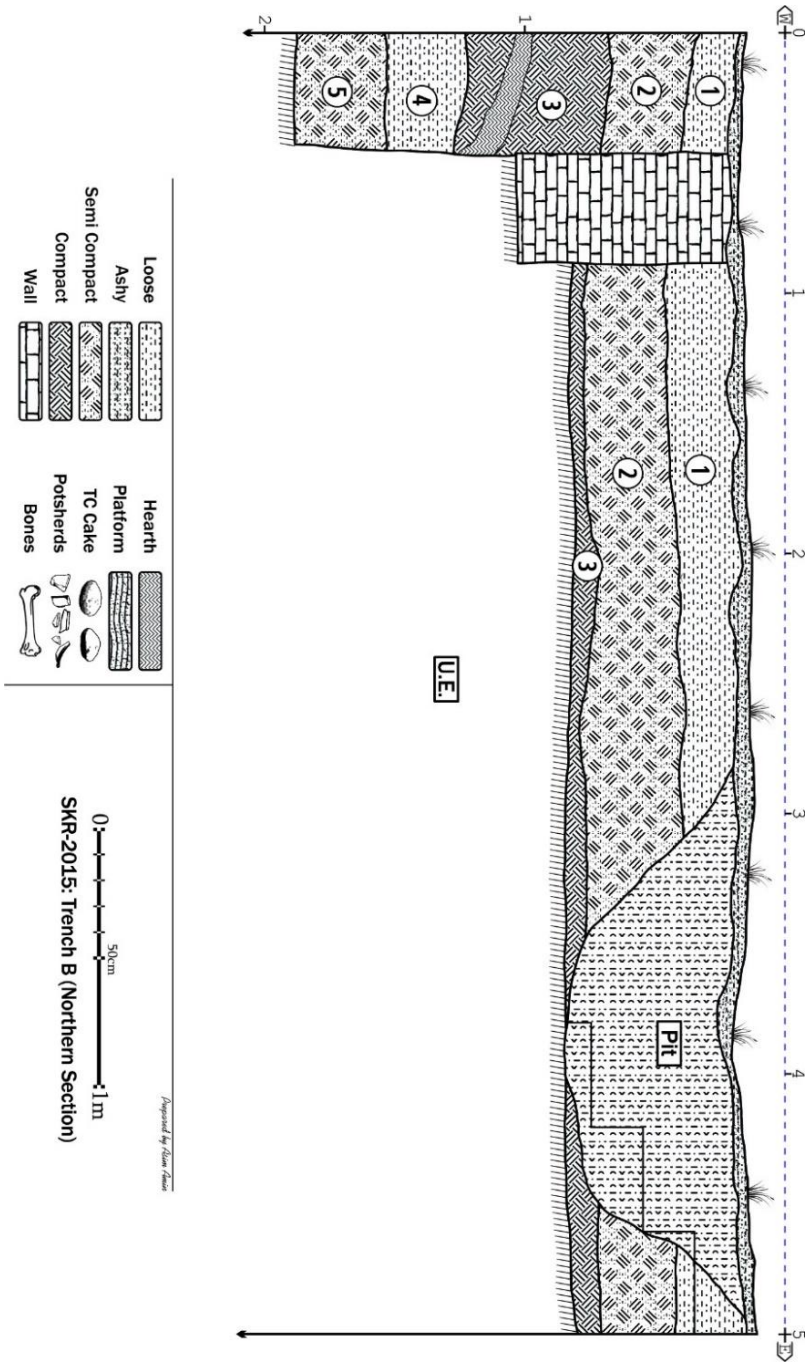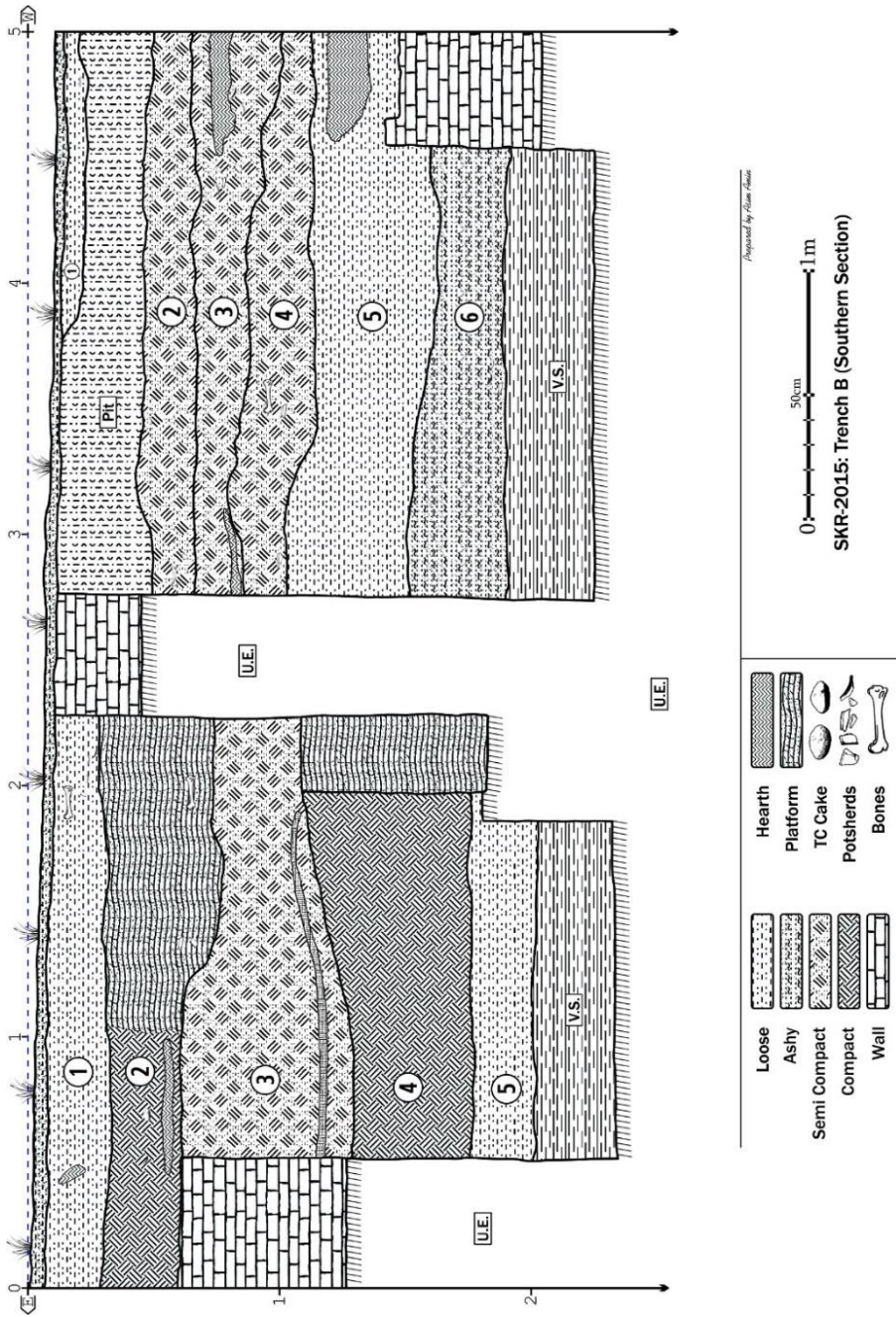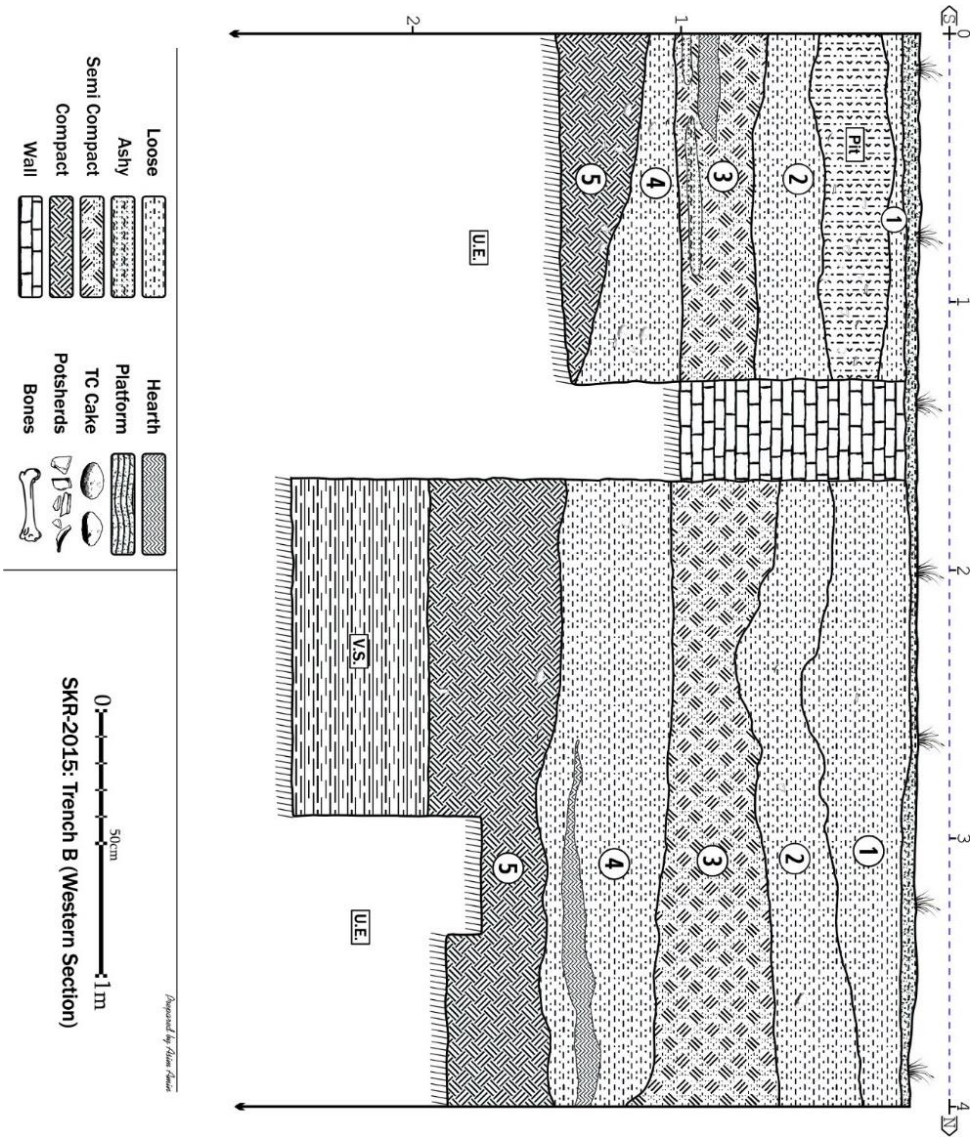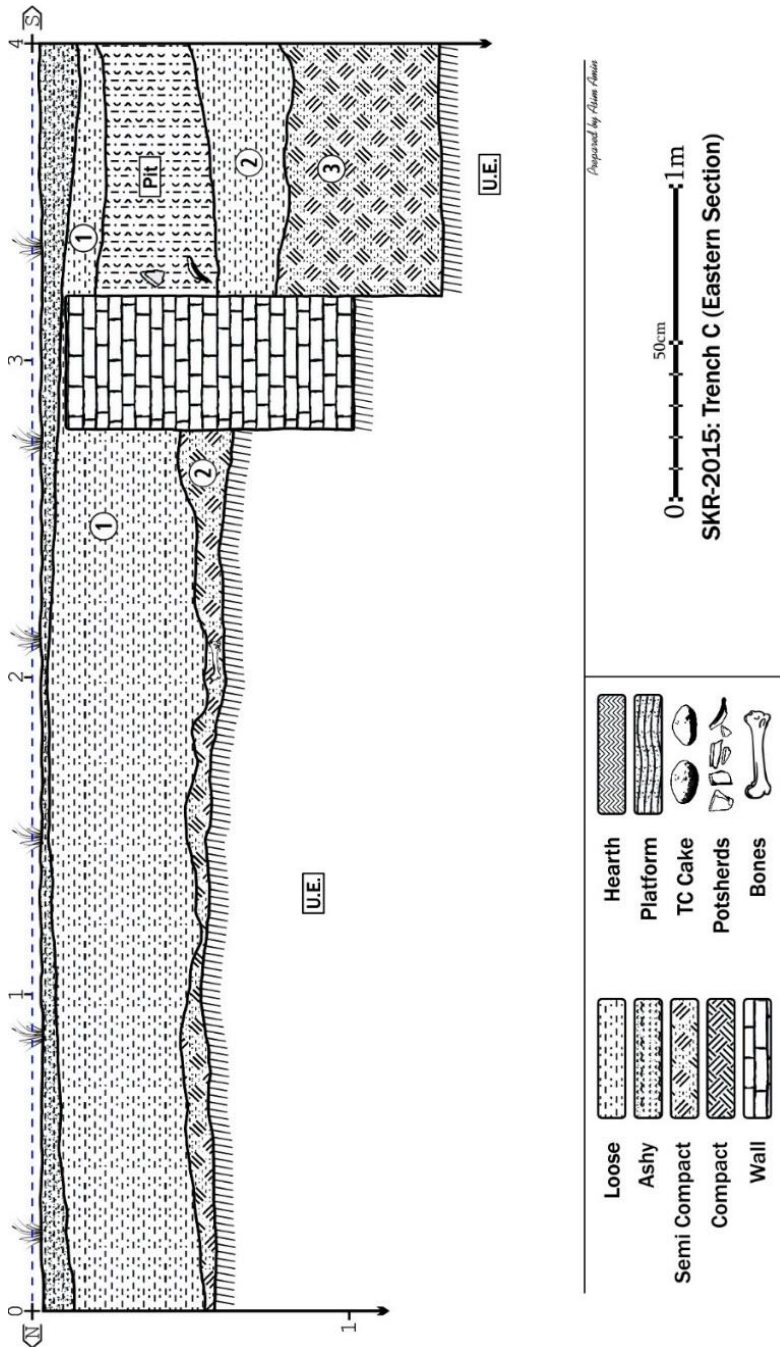Fig. 12 - Sikandar Janubi: Trench A, Western Section.

Fig. 13 - Sikandar Janubi: Trench B, Eastern Section.

Fig. 14 - Sikandar Janubi: Trench B, Northern Section.

Fig. 15 - Sikandar Janubi: Trench B, Southern Section.

Fig. 16 - Sikandar Janubi: Trench B, Western Section.

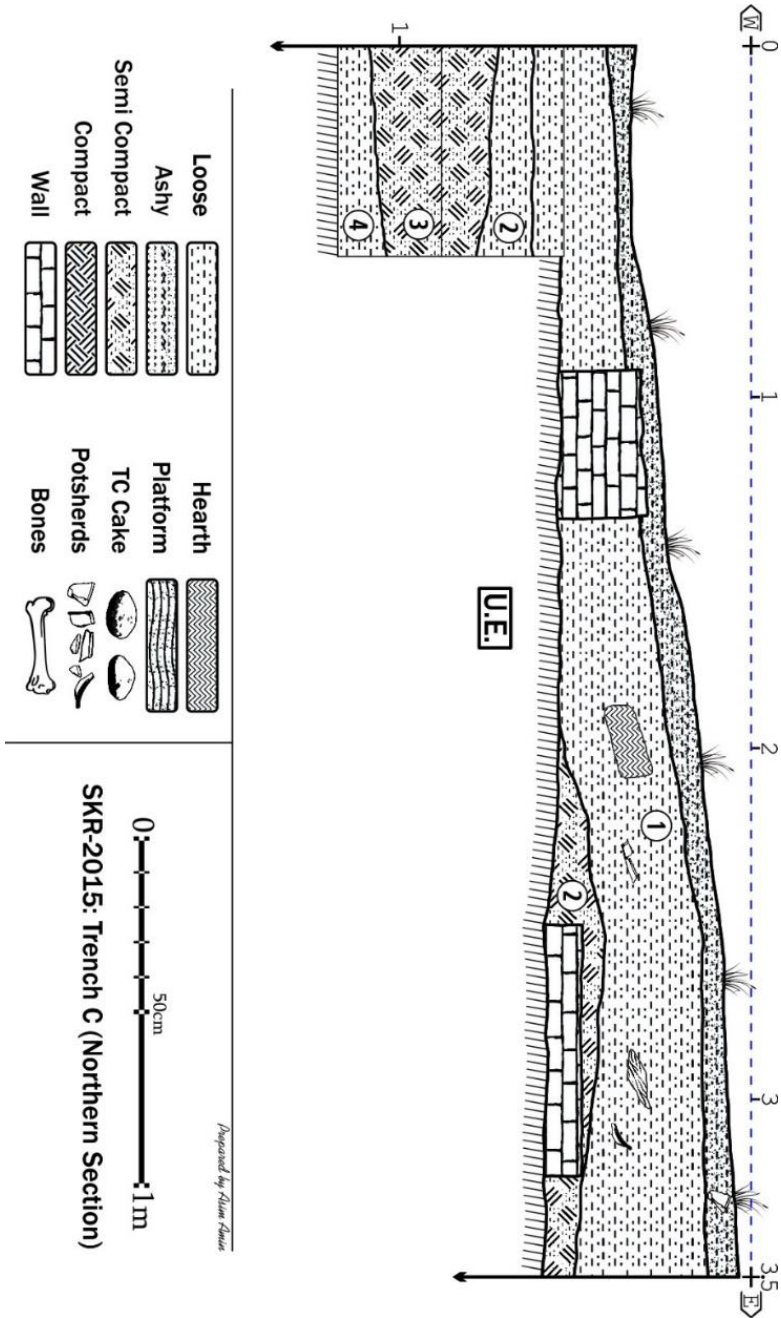Fig. 17 - Sikandar Janubi: Trench C, Eastern Section.

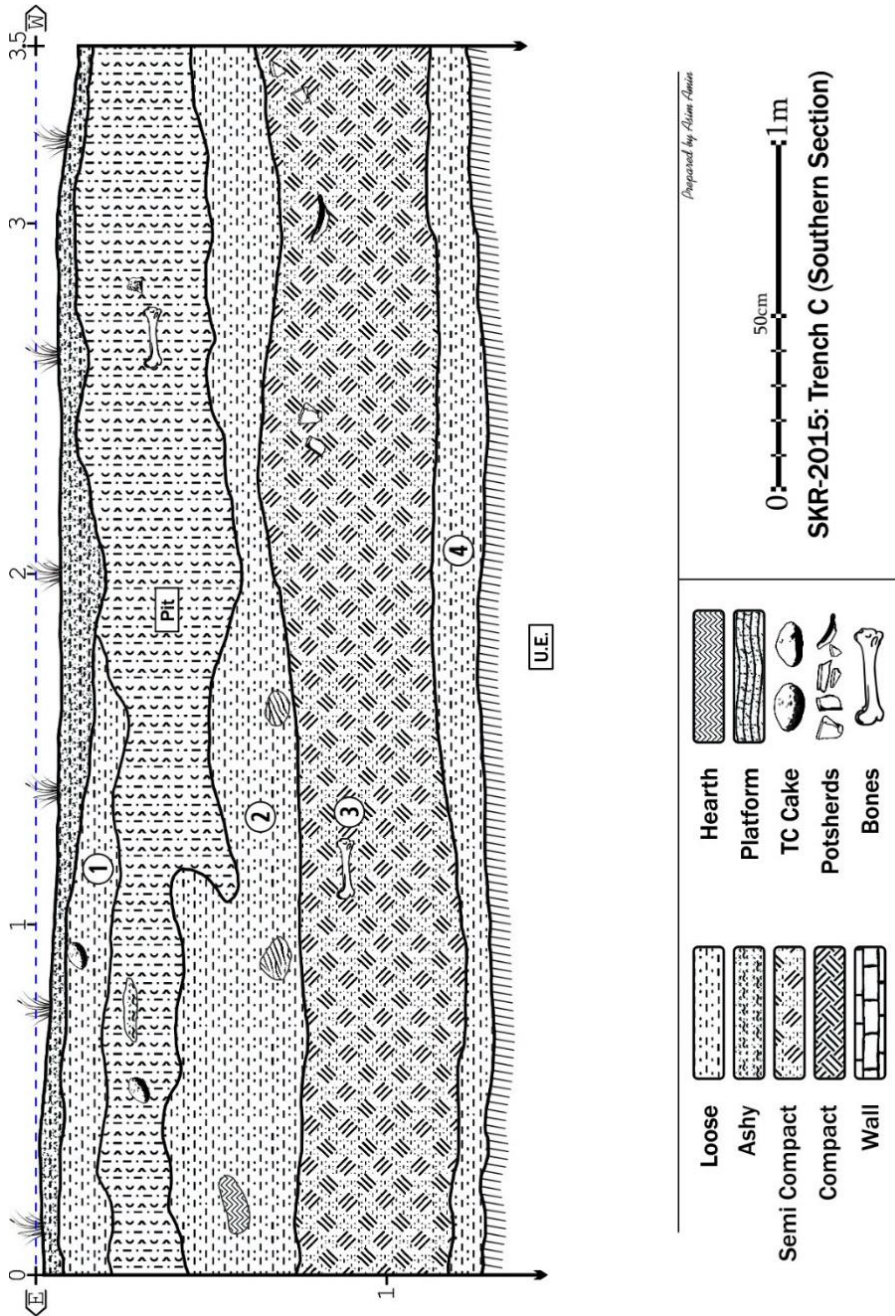Fig. 18 - Sikandar Janubi: Trench C, Northern Section.

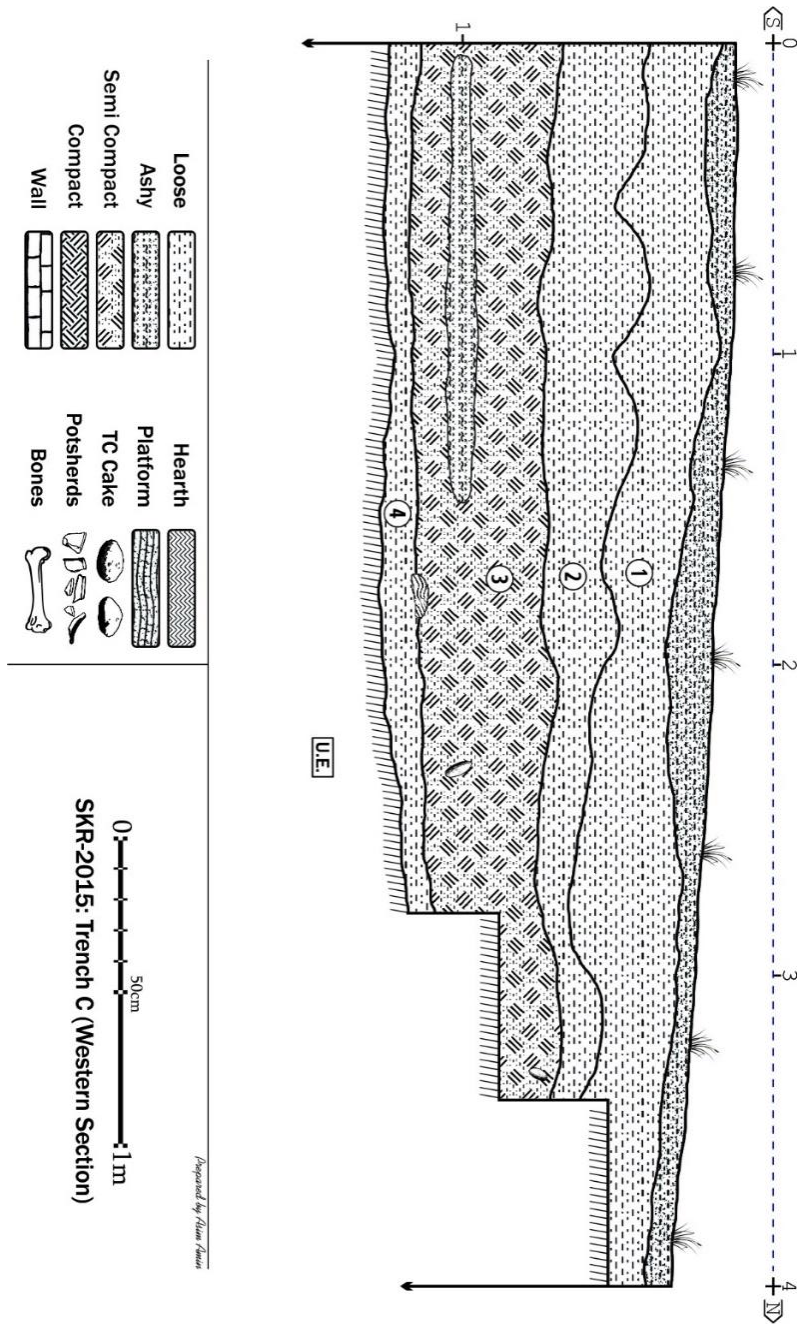Fig. 19 - Sikandar Janubi: Trench C, Southern Section.

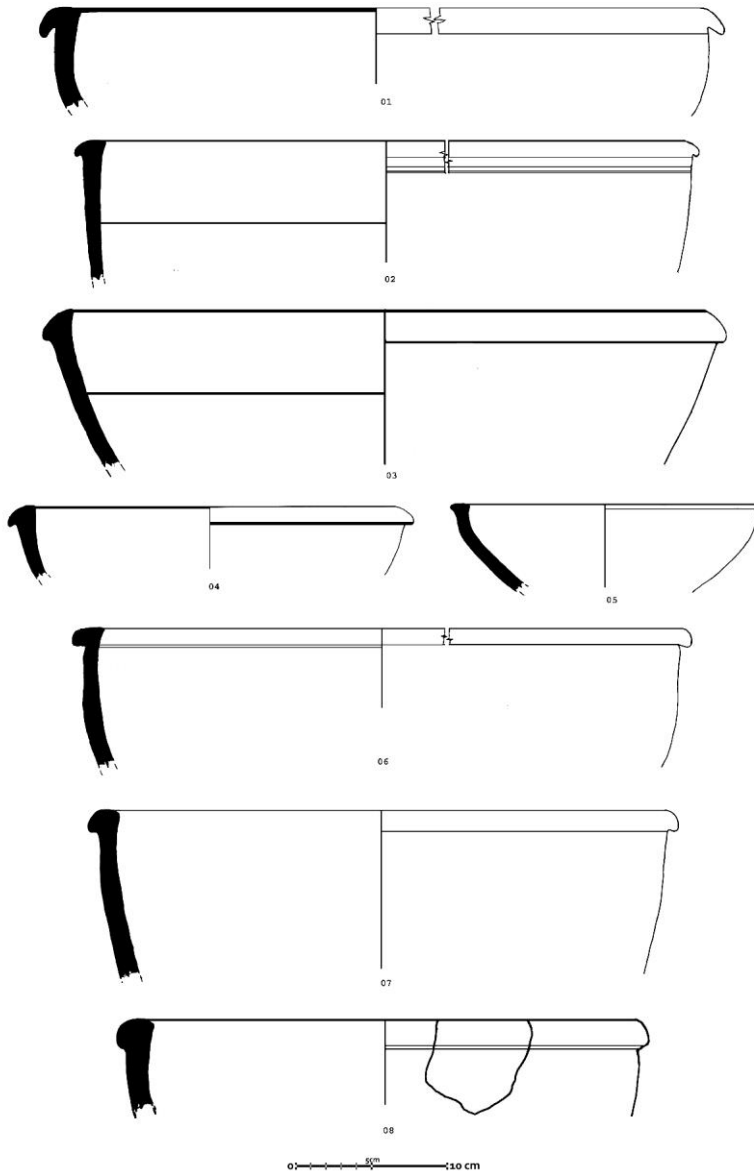Fig. 20 - Sikandar Janubi: Trench C, Western Section.

Fig. 21 - Sikandar Janubi: the pottery, bowls.
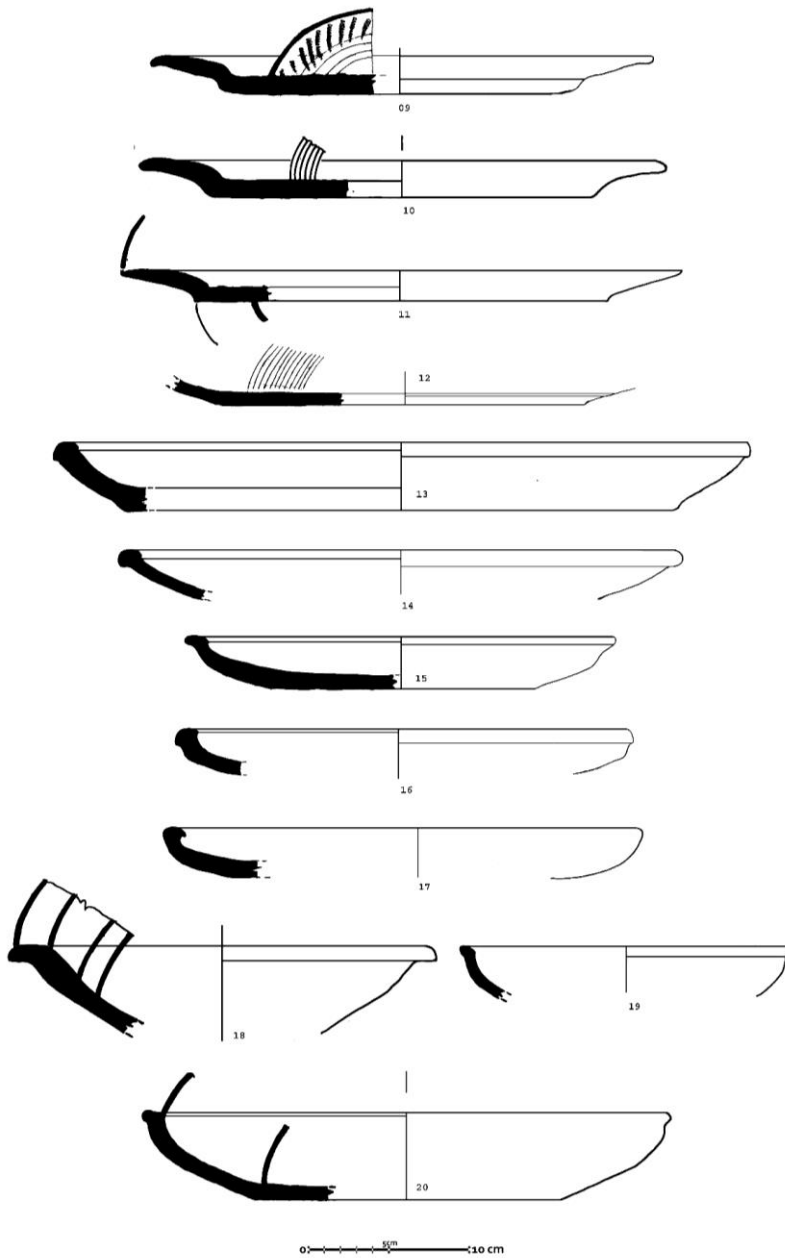
Fig. 22 - Sikandar Janubi: the pottery, plates/dishes/bowls.
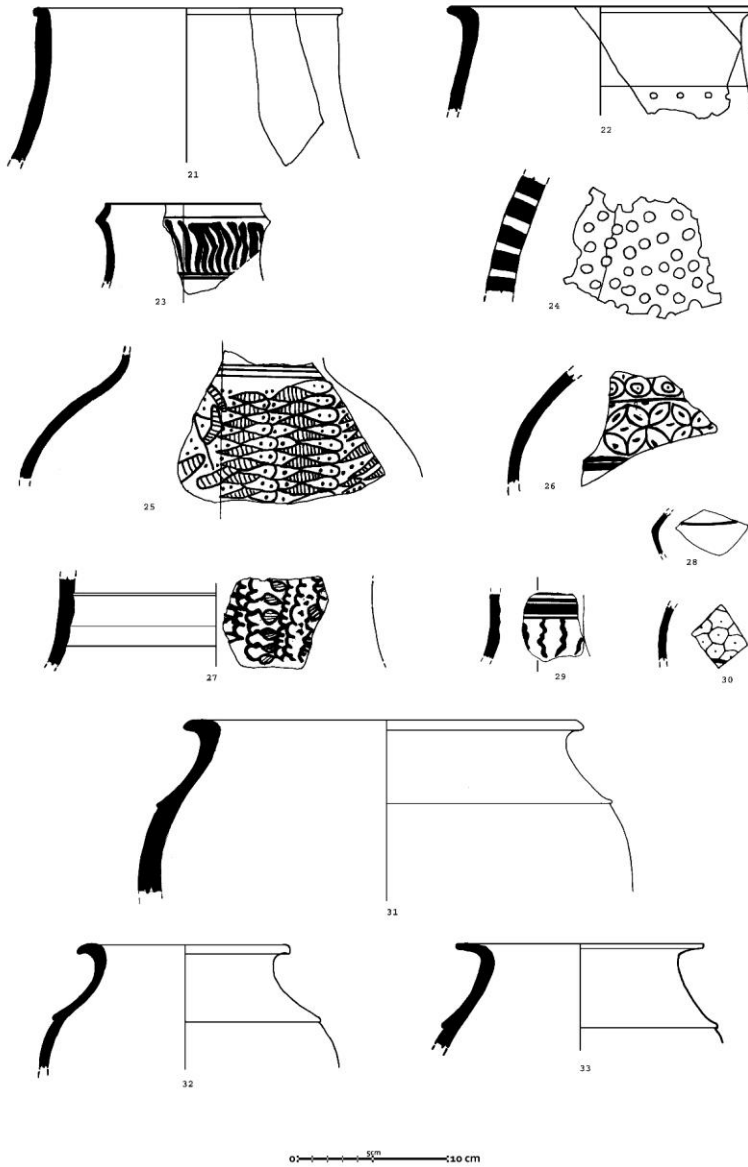
Fig. 23 - Sikandar Janubi: the pottery.
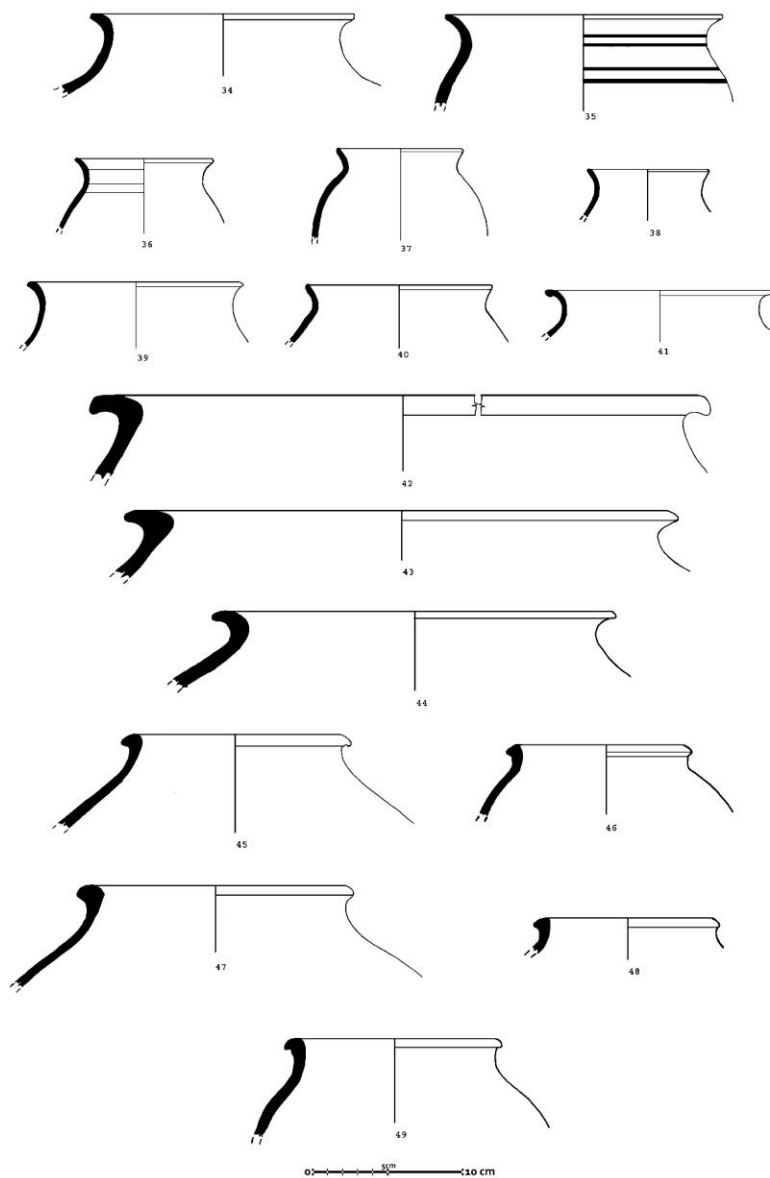
Fig. 24 - Sikandar Janubi: the pottery, jars.
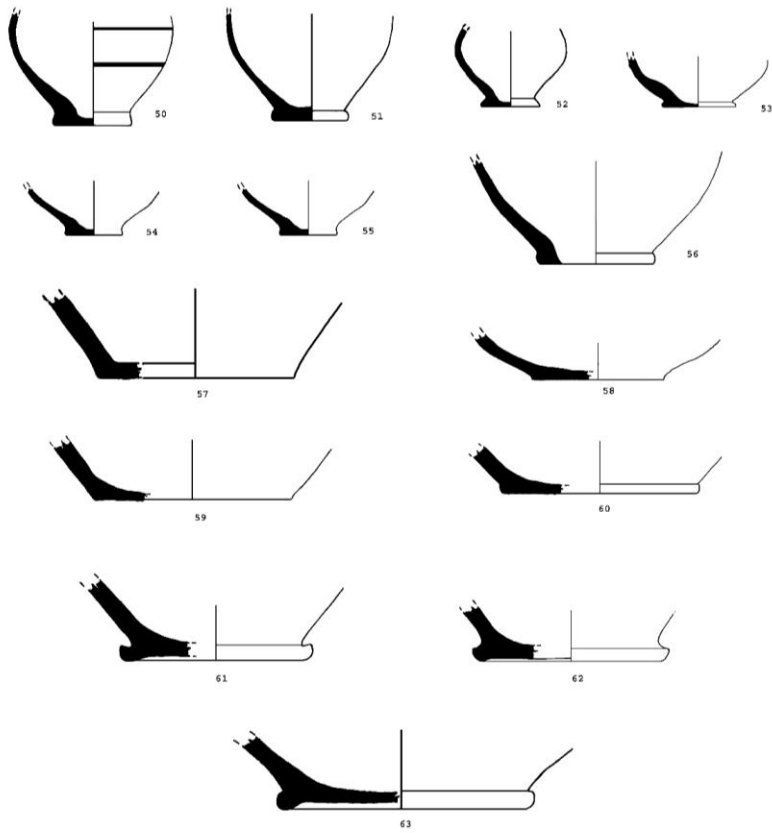
Fig. 25 - Sikandar Janubi: the pottery, bases.
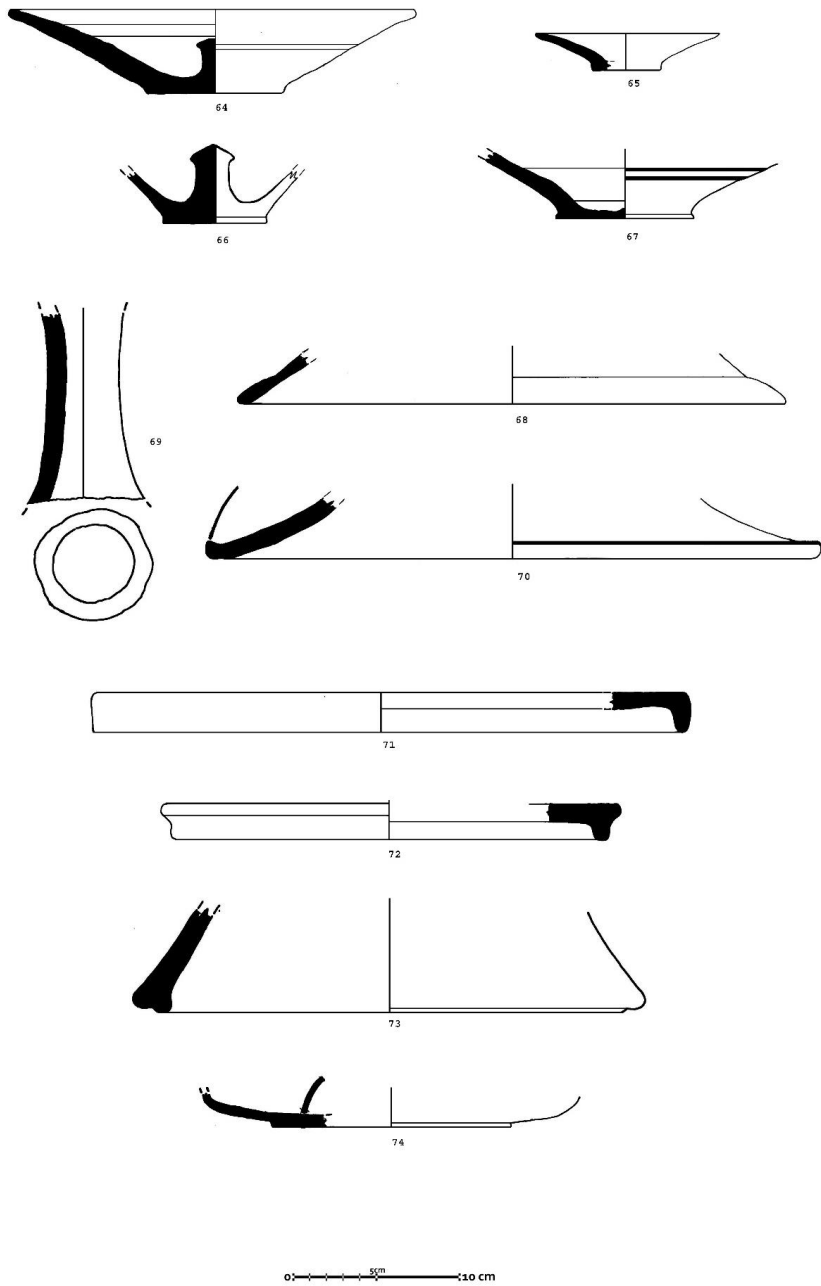
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Pl. 2 - Sikandar Janubi, Geophysical Survey, using magnetometer.

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Pl. 5 - Sikandar Janubi, General view of the excavated trenches.

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Pl. 8 - Sikandar Janubi, detail view of the mud brick wall of phase III.

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Pl. 11 - Sikandar Janubi, virgin soil.

Pl. 12 - Sikandar Janubi, mud brick structures.

Pl. 13 - Sikandar Janubi, mud brick structures.

Pl. 14 - Sikandar Janubi, floor level with hearths in trench A.

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Pl. 20 - Sikandar Janubi, a small pot in situ.

Pl. 21 - Sikandar Janubi, remains from a burial pit.

The idea of India in ancient Indian texts:
āryāvarta, jambudvīpa, bhāratavarṣa and the relation with non-*āryas*

Giacomo Benedetti

Abstract

This article reflects on the idea of India and its inhabitants in ancient South Asian sources, starting from the concept of ārya opposed to dāsa, dasyu, śūdra and mleccha in its different senses (social, ethnic/linguistic and moral/spiritual) in Brahmanical, Jain and Buddhist contexts. We analyze then the notion of āryāvarta or abode of the āryas in Vedic Dharmasūtras and Manusmṛti (proposing parallels with archaeological cultures), and the analogous concept of āryāyatana and Central Region in Buddhist texts. In the second paragraph we consider a later notion comparable to that of modern India, that of Jambudvīpa and especially Bhāratavarṣa, with its unique characteristics in ancient Indian cosmology when compared with other regions of the world. In the third paragraph we observe how the land of the āryas was seen as a model of universal conduct, and also as the place of origin of barbarian peoples regarded as degraded Kṣatriyas, and finally we will consider how the ancient ethnic and geographical concepts can help us about the question of the origins of Indo-Aryans.

1. The idea of India and the concept of region of the Āryas in ancient India

The concept of India, as is known, is of Greek origin, derived from the name of the Indus River, from the Persian term *Hinduš*. Therefore, it is a concept connected with the westernmost area, as also Herodotus showed. He maintained that the eastern part of the Indian country was a sandy desert, evidently, making allusion to the Thar Desert (Her. III.98).

According to Tarn (1984: 154), still to Alexander 'India' meant only the Indus region, which Darius had ruled. Megasthenes then widened the knowledge of the Indian subcontinent, with his lost work, so that Eratosthenes (cited by Strabo XV.10-11) placed India between the Indus River and the Ocean. This is the idea of India that European culture has inherited, which was included in British India, while, after the Partition, the modern state called 'India' does not include anymore a great part of the course of the Indus River that has given its name. Today it is a political entity, a nation, more or less unified, but we have to wonder if in the ancient 'Indian' culture existed an idea similar to the one that the Greeks had elaborated about India, and to a 'national' identity opposed to the Other, the Foreigner. The autochthonous name, adopted also in the Constitution of India[1] and still used, is *Bhārata* or *Bharat*, indicating the descendance from king Bharata,[2] a name already well known in the *Ṛgveda*, where the *bharata*s are the main tribe, especially in the most ancient books (Maṇḍalas II-VII),[3] so that Agni is called *bhārata* ('belonging to the *bharata*s'),[4] and in the Āprī hymns, that are present in most of the Maṇḍalas, a goddess *bhāratī* is regularly invoked. However, their name is not yet used to indicate a geographical entity, and does not encompass all the races or ethnicities mentioned in the hymns.

What is clear is that the most general self-definition of the 'people' of the poets of the *Ṛgveda* is *ārya*, often opposed to *dāsa* or *dasyu*. Therefore, these terms have been interpreted as indicating the aborigines conquered by the 'Aryans', the Indo-European invaders. The fact that the meaning of *dāsa* is normally that of 'slave' was explained by the fact that the aborigines were enslaved.[5] But this interpretation is very debatable: we can propose to the contrary that *dāsa* originally meant 'slave' (perhaps

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[1] For the history of the name and the political debate, see Clémentin-Ojha 2014. The first article of the Constitution recites: "India, that is Bharat, shall be a Union of States."

[2] The most important king with this name is Bharata Dauḥṣanti or Dauṣyanti, mentioned already in AiBr 8.23 as a great conqueror of the Earth who offered many horses in sacrifice on Yamunā and Ganges. Cf. ŚBr 13.5.4.11-14; Keith and Macdonell 1912: II, 94-97; MBh 12.29.40-44, where, besides Yamunā and Ganges, also the river Sarasvatī is mentioned in relation with his horse sacrifices.

[3] See RV III.33.11-12; III.53.12 (*bhārataṃ janam*); 24 (*bharatasya putrā*); V.11.1; VII.33.6.

[4] See RV II.7.1; 5; IV.25.4; IV.16.19; 45.

[5] "Since the Dāsas were in many cases reduced to slavery, the word Dāsa has the sense of 'slave' in several passages of the Rigveda." (Keith and Macdonell 1912: I, 357).

from the verb *das* 'to become exhausted'),[6] and consequently it was applied as a derogatory epithet to demons[7] and non-Aryan peoples, similarly to English *villain* that from 'servant of the farm (*villa*)' has come to indicate an evil person. Ṛgvedic culture is clearly aristocratic, and the duality noble/servant must have been a central category of the ideology, that from society could be reflected also on the mythical cosmos and the peoples perceived as foreign and barbarous. This interpretation is reinforced by the fact that in post-Ṛgvedic texts *dāsa* is replaced by *śūdra* in opposition to *ārya*, apparently because *śūdra* was still not used in the Ṛgvedic hymns (it appears only in the late *Puruṣasūkta*, RV X.90), and because it acquires a specific classificatory value in the social order. It is also reinforced by the fact that foreign peoples, as we will see, were considered *śūdra*s, as earlier they were considered *dāsa*s. The term *dasyu*, maybe etymologically connected to *dāsa*,[8] in the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* is used to indicate non-Aryan peoples of eastern and southern India,[9] and it

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[6] Cfr. also Greek δοῦλος, Mycenaean *doero* (**dohelos*) 'slave', perhaps from *dos-* (KEWA II: 39), Persian *dāh* 'servant', Sogdian *dʾy(h)* (**dāhy-*) 'female slave' (Vogelsang 2011; Yakubovich 2011: 172). To be considered is also the term *dahaka*, referred to negative persons opposed to priests, chariot warriors and farmers in Y 11.6: *nôit ahmi nmâne zânâite* **âthrava** *naêdha* **rathaêshtå** *naêdha* **vâstryô fshuyãs**, *âat ahmi nmâne zayåñte* **dahakâ** *ca mûrakâ ca pouru-saredha varshnâ ca* "In his house is born no fire-priest, warrior ne'er in chariot standing, never more the thrifty tiller. In his home be born Dahâkas, Mûrakas of evil practice, doing deeds of double nature." (Mills 1887: 245).

[7] A possible comparison can be found in the name of the Avestan demon *Aži Dahāka*.

[8] The term *dásyu* appears to be derived from the root *das-* with the Vedic suffix *-yu*, like *yájyu* 'pious', *sáhyu* 'strong'. Grassmann (1976: 584) explains it as derived from *das* in a causative sense (*verschmachten machen, erschöpfen*, 'to make perish, to exhaust'). It should be noticed that *dasyu* does not indicate a slave but it can indicate a robber, cf. Pāli *dassu* 'enemy, foe; robber'; Ardhamāgadhī *dassu* 'thief'. Cf. MBh 12.98.8: *yo bhūtāni dhana-jyānād vadhāt kleśāc ca rakṣati / dasyubhyaḥ prāṇa-dānāt sa dhana-daḥ sukha-do virāṭ //* "He who protects people from plunder of wealth, slaughter, and affliction, in consequence of the protection of life from robbers, is a sovereign giver of wealth and happiness."

[9] AiBr 7.18: *ta ete 'ndhrāḥ Puṇḍrāḥ Śabarāḥ Pulindā Mūtibā ity udantyā bahavo bhavanti Vaiśvāmitrā dasyūnām bhūyiṣṭhāḥ* "They are these numerous peoples beyond the borders (of Āryāvarta), called Andhra, Puṇḍra, Śabara, Pulinda, Mūtiba; most of the *dasyu*s are descendants of Viśvāmitra." Cf. MBh 12.162.30, 28-44, where a Brahmin from the Central Region (*madhya-deśa*, see below) goes to the northern region among barbarians called *mleccha* (st.28), *dasyu* (st.30, 35-37; 39-40) and *śabara* (st.34). The Brahmin, living among them as a hunter, is degraded to the state of a *dasyu* (*dasyu-*

remained in use also in the post-Vedic age to indicate barbarians and castes that were out of the system of the four *varṇa*s: in the *Manusmṛti* the outcasts called *caṇḍāla* are presented as an example of *dasyu*,[10] and in 10.45 we read:

> *mukha-bāhūru-paj-jānāṃ yā loke jātayo bahiḥ / **mleccha**-vācaś cārya-vācaḥ sarve te **dasyavaḥ** smṛtāḥ //*

> All those castes in this world, which are excluded from (the community of) those born from the mouth, the arms, the thighs, and the feet (of Brahman), are considered *dasyu*s, whether they speak the language of the barbarians or that of the Āryas.

In this stanza we see that the term *ārya* could have a connection with a specific language,[11] but also that, at least in this Brahmanical context, the fact of using the same language as the *ārya*s is not sufficient to identify someone as such (obviously also *śūdra*s spoke an Indo-Aryan language, even if Prakrit, and evidently also many outcasts). We also find another category opposed to the Aryans, which is clearly linguistic, the category of *mleccha*, that derives from the verb *mlich, mlecchati* 'to speak indistinctly', similarly to the etymology of Greek βάρβαρος 'foreign, barbarous', but originally 'stammering'.[12] An interesting example is found in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* (3.2.1.23-24):

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bhāva, st.44).

[10] Manu 5.131: *śvabhir hatasya yan māṃsaṃ śuci tan manur abravīt / kravyādbhiś ca hatasyānyaiś caṇḍālādyaiś ca **dasyubhiḥ** //* "Manu has declared that the meat (of an animal) killed by dogs is pure, and also (that of an animal) killed by carnivorous animals or by outcasts like Caṇḍālas and so on."

[11] Cf. also Yāska's *Nirukta*, that belongs to the late Vedic age, and already distinguishes between the language of Āryas and that of Kambojas (Nir 2.2): *athāpi prakṛtaya evaikeṣu bhāṣyante / vikṛtaya ekeṣu / śavatir gati-karmā kaṃbojeṣv eva bhāṣyate /[…] vikāram asyāryeṣu bhāṣante / śava iti /* "Moreover, primary forms alone are used in speaking among some people, derived forms among others. (The verb) *śavati*, (meaning) the action of going, is used only among the Kambojas. (Those who live) among the Āryas use in speaking its derivative (noun) *śava*."

[12] Mayrhofer (EWA: 339), confirms that the way of speaking is primary in this root, and cites a comparison with Latin *blaesus* (possibly derived from **mlais-*, while Skt. *mleccha* should come from **mlaisḱ-*) 'lisping, stammering'. In Greek, βλαισός means 'bent, distorted'. We can also consider Greek βλᾱ́σ-φημος 'speaking ill-omened words, blasphemous', from a root *blas-*<**mḷs-* connected with **mel-* 'to fail; to deceive'

*te 'surā ātta-vacaso he 'lavo he 'lava iti vadantaḥ parābabhūvuḥ.
tatraitām api vācam ūduḥ upajijñāsyāṃ sa **mlechas** tasmān na
brāhmaṇo mleched asuryāhaiṣā* [...]

The Asuras, being deprived of speech, were defeated, crying: '*He
'lavaḥ! he 'lavaḥ!*'[13] Such was the enigmatical[14] speech, which
they then uttered, and he (who speaks thus) is a barbarian. Hence a
Brahmin should not speak in a barbarous way, since this is (the
speech) of the Asuras.

We see thus that the *mleccha* language is identified with the
Asuras, the enemies of the gods. In the Brahmanical law there is also the
prohibition of learning a foreign language: *na mleccha-bhāṣāṃ śikṣeta* '(a
Brahmin) should not learn the language of the barbarians' (VāDhS 6.41;
KūrmP 2.16.61).

(Pokorny 1959: 719-720). On the other hand, Pokorny (1959: 719) cites Old Church
Slavonic *mlъčati*, Russian *molčátь* 'to be silent' from an alleged root **melə-k-, *mlāk-*
'soft, weak, goofy' giving also Greek βλάξ 'stolid, stupid'. The Pāli form
milakkha/milakkhu (Ardhamāgadhī *milakkhu*) is close to this root, although it should
come from **mlakṣa/mlakṣu-*.

[13] The correct form, according to the gloss of Sāyaṇa, should be *he 'rayo he 'rayaḥ* 'Oh,
the enemies!' (from *ari* 'enemy', although the normal Vedic form of the
nominative/vocative plural is *aryaḥ*). In the Kāṇva recension, IV.2.1.18 (Vatsyayan 2000:
30 f.), we read: *te hāttavāco 'surā hailo haila ity etāṃ ha vācaṃ vadantaḥ parābabhūvus
tatrāpy upajijñāse 'nyāṃ vācam upājijñāsanta sa mlecchas tasmād brāhmaṇena na
mlecchitavyam asuryā hy eṣā vāg...* "Those Asuras, being deprived of speech, saying this
utterance: "*hailo hailaḥ*", were defeated. Then too, they wished to invent (thinking) "I
wish to invent another speech." He (who speaks another speech) is a barbarian. Therefore
a Brahmin should not speak in a barbarous way. For this (kind of) speech is proper to the
Asuras." It is not clear what *ila* means here, Eggeling (1885: 31, n.3) proposed *ilā* in the
sense of 'speech'.
A third version is found in Patañjali's Mahābhāṣya (Kielhorn 1892: 2, 7-8): *te 'surā
helayo helaya iti kurvantaḥ parābabhūvuḥ / tasmād brāhmaṇena na mlecchitavai
nāpabhāṣitavai / mleccho ha vā eṣa yad apaśabdaḥ* / "Those Asuras, uttering "*He 'layo!
He 'layaḥ!*", were defeated. Therefore a Brahmin should not speak in a barbarous way, in
an incorrect way. In fact, this barbarous (way of speaking) is incorrect speech." The term
apaśabda indicates 'vulgar speech, ungrammatical language', and the form *alayaḥ* looks
like an eastern Prakrit modification of *arayaḥ* 'enemies', as well as *alavaḥ* of the ŚBr (cf.
Parpola 1975: 213; Hock 1993: 221 f.). In this context, *mleccha* would thus be connected
with Prakrit corrupted dialects rather than with non-Indo-Aryan languages.
[14] The term used is *upajijñāsya*, literally meaning 'to be excogitated or found out',
therefore 'enigmatical'. As we have seen in the previous note, the Kāṇva recension has a
different use of the verb *upa-jñā*.

In a Buddhist context, *ārya* (*ariya* in Pāli) has mostly a precise spiritual meaning, indicating those who have achieved the direct understanding of the four 'noble truths' or 'truths of the noble ones' (*ariya-saccāni*, *ārya-satyāni*) and follow the 'noble eightfold path' (*ariya aṭṭhaṅgika magga*, *āryāṣṭāṅga-mārga*), in opposition to ordinary persons (*puthu-jjana*, *pṛthag-jana*). However, we find the compound *ariya-vohāra* in the Pāli commentaries to indicate the Aryan language (first of all the language of Magadha[15]), and in the Vinaya of the Mūlasarvāstivādins the compound *dasyu-vāc* (MSV I 258) 'barbarian language' is opposed to *āryā vāc*.[16] In the *Abhidharmakośa* (170) we read that all the gods speak in the Aryan language (*sarve devā ārya-bhāṣā-bhāṣiṇaḥ*).

In a Jain context, the *Paṇṇavaṇā-sutta* mentions various kinds of *āriya*, among which there is also the *bhāsāriya* 'Ārya for speech', identified as someone who speaks Ardhamāgadhī and uses the Brāhmī script.[17]

Therefore *ārya* had also a linguistic value, designating what we would call an ethnic identity, as the ancient Persian *ariya* and the Avestan *airya*, although it had also a social value, less evident in the Iranic context. Summing up, in a social context (with possible extensions to the ethnic domain) we have the opposition *ārya/dāsa* and *ārya/śūdra*, in an ethnic and linguistic context *ārya/dasyu* (which has however a social meaning in *Manusmṛti*) and *ārya/mleccha*.

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[15] CPD: 429. Cf. *Pārājikakaṇḍa-aṭṭhakathā* 54 (ChS): *Tattha ariyakaṃ nāma ariya-vohāro, māgadha-bhāsā. Milakkhakaṃ nāma yo koci anariyako andha-damiḷādi.* "Here, *ariyaka* is the Aryan mode of speech, the language of Magadha. *Milakkhaka* is whatever (language) that is non-Aryan, Andhra, Tamil, and so on." *Kaṅkhāvitaraṇīpurāṇa-ṭīkā*, l. 881 (ChS): *ariyakena vā vadati, milakkhakena vā… Ettha ca ariyakaṃ nāma māgadha-vohāro. Milakkhakaṃ nāma anariyako andha-damiḷādi.* "He speaks in the Aryan or in the barbarian (language)… Here *ariyaka* is the language of Magadha. *Milakkhaka* is the non-Aryan (language), Andhra, Tamil, and so on." Cf. *Abhidhānappadīpikā-ṭīkā* 186 (ChS): *Milakkha abyattiyaṃ vācāyaṃ, milakkhanti abyatta-vācaṃ bhāsantī ti milakkhā.* "*Milakkha* (means) 'in an unintelligible speech', *milakkhanti* 'they speak an unintelligible speech' (therefore they are called) *milakkha*."

[16] Cf. the opposition between *dasyu-jana* and *ārya-jana* in SBV I 36, in relation with the 'Central Region' (*madhya-deśa*), that is 'deprived of *dasyu* people' (*dasyu-jana-vivarjitaḥ*) and 'inhabited by *ārya* people' (*ārya-janādhyuṣitaḥ*); cf. also AdSPG II 107: *dasyuṣu mleccheṣu pratyanteṣu vā janapadeṣu upapadyeta iti.* "He is born among foreigners, barbarians, in the border countries."

[17] Deshpande 1993: 9-13. At p.14 is also cited the statement of the *Bhagavaï-sutta* that the Ardhamāgadhī is the language of the gods.

What remains constant is the self-definition *ārya*, that also gave rise to the idea of a region, the *āryāvarta* 'abode or land of the *ārya*s'. In its earliest attestation,[18] in the late Vedic *Baudhāyana Dharmasūtra* (BauDhS I.2.9-12)[19] we find this description of the *āryāvarta*:

> *prāg ādarśāt pratyak kanakhalād [K: kālaka-vanād] dakṣiṇena himavantam udak pāriyātram etad **āryāvartam** / tasmin ya ācāraḥ sa pramāṇam //*
> *gaṅgā-yamunayor antaram ity eke //*
> *athāpy atra bhāllavino gāthām udāharanti //*
> *paścāt sindhur vidharaṇī sūryasyodayanaṃ puraḥ /*
> *yāvat kṛṣṇā vidhāvanti tāvad dhi brahma-varcasam // iti //*

The region to the east of where the Sarasvatī disappears, west of Kālaka forest,[20] south of the Himalayas, and north of Pāriyātra

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[18] On the other hand, Nir 6.32 has already the concept of a region inhabited by *anārya*s: *kīkaṭā nāma deśo 'nārya-nivāsaḥ* / "Kīkaṭa is the name of a country, an abode of non-Āryas." Kīkaṭas were mentioned in RV III.53.14 as a people that does not follow Vedic rites, and according to BhP 1.3.24 the Buddha will appear among them (*kīkaṭeṣu*), which the commentator explains *madhye gayā-pradeśe* "in the region of Gayā", in Bihar (Muir 1871: 350). Cf. GarP 1.83.1ab: *kīkaṭeṣu gayā puṇyā puṇyaṃ rājagṛhaṃ vanam* / "Among the Kīkaṭas, the auspicious Gayā, and the auspicious forest of Rajgir."

[19] Cf. VāDhS I.8-15: *āryāvartaḥ prāg ādarśāt pratyak kālakavanād udak pāriyātrād dakṣiṇena himavataḥ // uttareṇa ca vindhyasya // tasmin deśe ye dharmā ye cācārās te sarvatra pratyetavyāḥ // na tv anye pratilomaka-dharmāṇām // gaṅgā-yamunayor antare 'py eke // yāvad vā kṛṣṇa-mṛgo vicarati tāvad brahma-varcasam ity anye // athāpi bhāllavino nidāne gāthām udāharanti // paścāt sindhur vidhāraṇī sūryasyodayanaṃ puraḥ / yāvat kṛṣṇo 'bhidhāvati tāvad vai brahma-varcasam iti //* "The region east of where the Sarasvatī disappears, west of Kālaka forest, north of Pāriyātra mountains, and south of the Himalayas is the land of the Āryas; or else, north of the Vindhya mountains. The Laws and practices of that region should be recognized as authoritative everywhere, but not others found in regions with Laws contrary to those. According to some, the land of the Āryas is the region between the Ganges and Yamunā. According to others, vedic splendour extends as far as the black antelope roams. The Bhāllavins, moreover, in their Book of Causes cite this verse: 'Vedic splendour extends only as far as the black antelopes roam east of the boundary river and west of where the sun rises.'" (Olivelle 1999: 248).
Cf. PatMbh I.475: *kaḥ punaḥ āryāvartaḥ. prāg ādarśāt pratyak kālakavanāt dakṣiṇena himavantam uttareṇa pāriyātram.* PatMbh III.173: *kaḥ punaḥ āryāvarttaḥ. prāg ādarśāt [R adarśānāt] pratyak kālakavanāt dakṣiṇena himavantam uttareṇa pāriyātram.*

[20] The variant reading mentioning Kanakhala (a Tīrtha near Haridwār, see MBh 3.88.19)

mountains is the land of the Āryas. The practices of that land alone are authoritative.

According to some, the land of the Āryas is the region between the rivers Ganges and Yamunā. In this connection, moreover, the Bhāllavins cite this verse: 'The boundary river in the west and land of the rising sun in the east—between these as far as the black antelope roams, so far does vedic splendour extend.' (Olivelle 1999: 134).

Opinions were various enough as we can see, but the region mentioned first was comprised in a territory to the north of Pāriyātra mountains (identified with the Aravallis, the *Vāsiṣṭha Dharmasūtra* adds the Vindhyas), south of the Himalayas, east of the place where the Sarasvatī disappears,[21] west of Kālakavana. This 'dark forest' is not mentioned out of these definitions of *āryāvarta*, but Manu 2.21 gives us an analogous definition of *madhya-deśa*, the central region:[22]

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is not attested in the versions of VāDhS e PatMbh, and Olivelle (1999: 379, n.) remarks: "Hultsch's second edition of B reads *kanakhalād*, 'from Kanakhala'. But this reading is supported only by two manuscripts. The evidence of Patañjali shows that the correct reading should be *kālakavanād*."

[21] The term *ādarśa*, that commonly means 'mirror' and indicates also a mountain. Olivelle (1999: 379, n.): "The meaning of *ādarśa* is unclear. Bühler (on Va 1.8) takes it to mean a mountain range called Ādarśa. In all likelihood, however, the term is a secondary derivative of *adarśa*, 'non-seeing', and refers to the place where the sacred river Sarasvatī disappears in the Punjab. This place gets the name *vinaśana* ('perishing') in later texts: M 2.21." According to Keith and Macdonell (1912: II, 300), Vināśana was in the Patiala district of Punjab, citing as source the *Imperial Gazetteer of India* (XXII, 97), but what is written in that journal, at the entry about the Sarasvatī, is that this river joins the Ghaggar in the Patiala territory, after having disappeared in the sands and emerged again twice in present Haryana. However, Vināśana refers to a place west of the confluence of Sarasvatī and Dṛṣadvatī (see PBr XXV.10.1; 12-16), which can be placed near Hanumangarh in Rajasthan (Kar and Ghose 1984: 223 f.). Near Fort Derawar in Bahawalpur, Pakistan, the river terminated in an inland delta with numerous Harappan sites, although the subsequent abandonment of the area suggests that after the Mature Harappan period the flow was no more sufficient to reach the delta (Possehl 2002: 239). However, Vināśana must have been between Hanumangarh (the place of the confluence) and Derawar, also in the Mahābhārata period, when the Dṛṣadvatī continues to be mentioned as the southern border of Kurukṣetra (MBh 3.81.175).

[22] The earliest attestation of the concept of a central region is in AiBr 8.14.3: *asyāṃ dhruvāyām madhyamāyām pratiṣṭhāyām disi ye keca kuru-pañcālānām rājānaḥ sa-*

> *himavad-vindhyayor madhyaṃ yat prāg vinaśanād api /*
> *pratyag eva prayāgāc ca* **madhya-deśaḥ** *prakīrtitaḥ*

(That region) that lies between the Himalayas and the Vindhyas, east of Vinaśana (where the Sarasvatī disappears), and west of Prayāga, is celebrated as Central Region.

Therefore, in the same position as Kālakavana we find here Prayāga, the confluence of Ganges and Yamunā, that according to some delimited *āryāvarta* itself. The Gangetic valley to the east of the confluence was covered by forests and was gradually colonized, and we can observe that in Rām 2.83.21 the *prayāga-vana* ('forest of Prayāga') is mentioned.[23]

It is a limited area of Northwest India that does not include the Indus valley, suggesting that in the Brahmanical tradition the *ārya* identity did not develop there nor was associated with western regions, as would be expected if a recent migration of Indo-Aryans arrived from there or, on the other hand, if the Indus Valley civilization had been purely 'Vedic'. It can be significant that the most relevant hint of a Vedic religious practice in 'Harappan' sites, namely, the so callled 'fire altars', were found in special structures in Kalibangan in Rajasthan and Banawali in Haryana,[24] both sites associated with the ancient course of the Sarasvatī river. On the

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vaśośīnarāṇāṃ rājyāyaiva te 'bhiṣicyante, rājety enān abhiṣiktān ācakṣata. "In this firm central stable region, whatever kings (there are) of the Kuru-Pañcālas, of Vaśas and Uśīnaras, they are anointed for kingship, 'king' they call them when anointed." Cf. Keith and Macdonell 1912: II, 125. The stress on stability of this region is noteworthy, since it suggests that it was a region inhabited for a long time and without significant political and ethnic changes in the late Vedic period. Also to be noted is the presence of Uśīnaras of Punjab, that later disappear from the concept of central region (Keith and Macdonell 1912: II, 126), showing that at the time of AiBr Punjab was still considered part of it. In MBh 13.33.20 (see below), Uśīnaras are among degraded Kṣatriyas. Cf. VP 2.3.15: *ime kuru-pāñcālā madhya-deśādayo janāḥ /* "These Kuru-Pañcālas, the people of the Central Region and so on."

[23] See Guruge 1991: 60-62. A geographical name that is found in the Epics is also *yamunā-vana* 'forest of the Yamunā'.

[24] See Singh (2008: 173), where he mentions also the fire altars of Lothal and Vagad in Gujarat, Amri in Baluchistan and Rakhigarhi in Haryana, but stating that "only at Kalibangan and Banawali they may have signified some community event; in the other cases, they seem to have been associated with domestic rituals. Again, as in the case with female figurines, the fact that the 'fire altars' have been found at a few sites but are absent at most, indicates variations in religious practice within the vast area of the Harappan culture."

other hand, although the Sarasvatī is the sacred river in the most ancient books of the Ṛgveda (VI and VII), the Sindhu/Indus is quite present in the later books I, IV, V, VIII and X, especially in the *Nadī Sūkta* (X.75) where it is the most celebrated river, although also Ganges, Yamunā and Sarasvatī are mentioned. It is possible that the Indus valley lost the connection with the Brahmanical culture in late Vedic times because of foreign invasions: as Pargiter (1922: 285 f.) remarks, the Purāṇic tradition of the dynasties after the battle of the *Mahābhārata* does not include the countries to the west of the Kurus (Haryana) and Avanti (western Madhya Pradesh), and in the *Mahābhārata* the Punjab nations are 'unsparingly reprobated'.[25]

Map 6 Distribution of Painted Grey Ware. *Courtesy ASI*
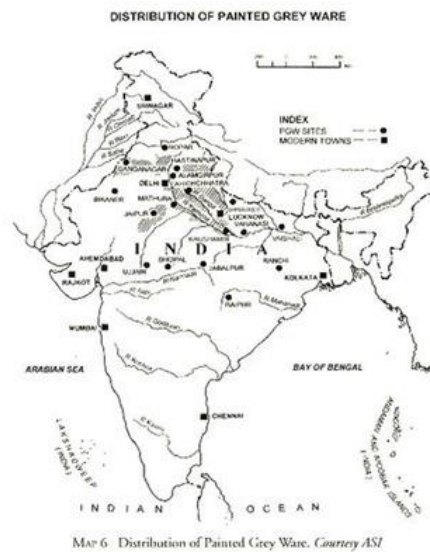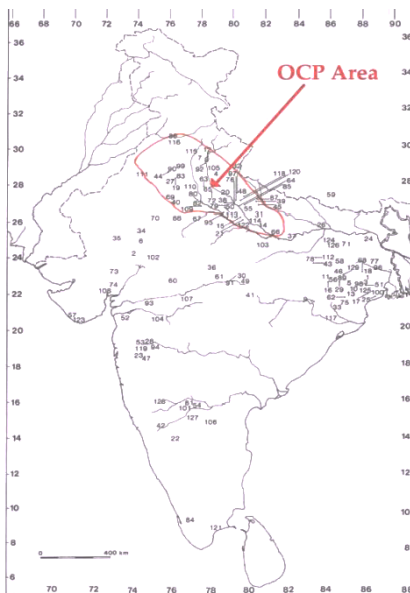
After the 'Mature Harappan' period, in the first half of the 2nd millennium BC, the *āryāvarta* of Baudhāyana and Patañjali was inhabited by people of the Ochre Coloured Pottery culture[26] and later of the Painted Grey Ware

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[25] See MBh 8.27-30, e.g.: *madrakāḥ sindhu-sauvīrā dharmaṃ vidyuḥ kathaṃ tv iha / pāpa-deśodbhavā mlecchā dharmāṇām avicakṣaṇāḥ* "How, indeed, would the Madrakas and the Sindhu-Sauvīras know the (religious) Norm, being born in a sinful country, being barbarians and ignorant of duties?"

[26] See Kumar 2017: 102-105. As the author says, there is a common material culture characterized by Ochre Coloured Pottery (and 'copper hoards') from Bara in Punjab to

(1300-300 BC), as shown in the maps above. Although these two traditions were quite different, the first one closer to the Harappan tradition, the second to the Gangetic one,[27] it seems that there was a long-lasting cultural area, which, according to the Indian historical tradition, was occupied by Paurava kingdoms. Moreover, Painted Grey Ware started from the Ghaggar (Sarasvatī) valley, the core area of Vedic and Brahmanical culture where also the Bara-OCP cultural complex originated (Uesugi 2018: 9-12).

The definition of the Doab between Ganges and Yamunā as *āryāvarta* could belong to a late Vedic age, when the political and cultural center was in the Kuru-Pañcāla region, but it seems that it remained a minority view.[28] The definition of the Bhāllavins actually does not concern the *āryāvarta* but the area of Vedic culture (*brahmavarcas*). It is interesting that the 'boundary river' (*sindhu vidharaṇī*) in the west seems

Faizabad (Ayodhya) in Uttar Pradesh, and the map (at p.104) clearly shows the eastern end around the confluence of Ganges and Yamunā. Also the subsequent Painted Grey Ware had a similar extension (as shown in the dark area in the map on the right, retrieved from http://www.historydiscussion.net/history-of-india/the-later-vedic-phase-transition-to-state-and-social-orders/2149).

[27] See Uesugi 2018: 11-12 and 18, where it is said: "The progressive colonisation of the vast alluvial plain of the Ganga valley resulted in the emergence of regional societies represented by PGW and BRW/BSW. The primary colonisation of the region was done by the Neolithic community local to the Ganga valley, but the expansion of the Bara-OCP cultural complex into the western part of the region may have facilitated the colonisation process. It is not unlikely that the spread of BRW/BSW into the western part of the Ganga valley in the mid- to late second millennium BCE was triggered by the expansion of the Bara-OCP cultural complex." This means that first there was the eastward expansion of Bara-OCP people, then a westward expansion of Gangetic people and culture, but we can suppose that the first expansion created a cultural area that was not eliminated by the second wave, and PGW, although influenced by Gangetic culture, moved from the west (Haryana and western Uttar Pradesh).

[28] An interesting comparison is MBh 1.82.5, where the land between Ganges and Yamunā is identified with the center of the earth: *yayātir uvāca / gaṅgā-yamunayor madhye kṛtsno 'yaṃ viṣayas tava / madhye pṛthivyās tvaṃ rājā bhrātaro 'ntyādhipās tava //* "Yayāti said: 'This whole country between the rivers Ganges and Yamunā is yours. You are king in the middle of the Earth, while your brothers are lords of the outlying (regions).'" Cf. MatP 36.5, where we find the same verses, with a difference in the last *pāda*: *bhrātaro 'nte 'dhipās tava //* "your brothers are lords at the border." Cf. also MBh 13.67.3: *madhyadeśe… gaṅgāyamunayor madhye* "in the Central Region […] between Ganges and Yamunā."

to refer to the Indus that was the border of India according to Hellenistic authors, as we have seen. The reference to the habitat of the black antelope widens much the horizon, including, if taken to the letter, great part of India, considering that such habitat extended also to the zones not covered by forests of southern India and Bengal. However Baudhāyana in the continuation (I.2.13-15) indicates as polluting the simple fact of going to several regions outside the *āryāvarta* in a strict sense:

> *avantayo 'ṅga-magadhāḥ surāṣṭrā dakṣiṇāpathāḥ /*
> *upāvṛt-sindhu-sauvīrā ete saṃkīrṇayonayaḥ //*
> *āraṭṭān kāraskarān puṇḍrān sauvīrān vaṅgān kaliṅgān prānūnān*
> *iti ca gatvā punastomena yajeta sarvapṛṣṭhayā vā //*
> *athāpy udāharanti / padbhyāṃ sa kurute pāpaṃ yaḥ kaliṅgān*
> *prapadyate /*
> *ṛṣayo niṣkṛtiṃ tasya prāhur vaiśvānaraṃ haviḥ //*

> The inhabitants of Avanti, Aṅga, Magadha, Surāṣṭra, the Deccan, Upāvṛt, and Sindh, as well as the Sauvīras, are of mixed blood. If someone visits the lands of the Āraṭṭas, Kāraskaras, Puṇḍras, Sauvīras, Vaṅgas, Kaliṅgas, or Prānūnas, he should offer a Punastoma or a Sarvapṛṣṭha sacrifice.
> Now, they also quote:
> When someone travels to the land of the Kaliṅgas he commits a sin through his feet. The seers have prescribed the Vaiśvānarī sacrifice as an expiation for him. (Olivelle 1999: 134).

This clearly shows that most of the regions around the *āryāvarta*, in central India (Avanti, Kāraskara), southern India (Deccan), eastern India (Aṅga, Magadha, Puṇḍra, Vaṅga, Kaliṅga), of Gujarat (Surāṣṭra), Sindh (Sindhu-Sauvīra) and Punjab (Āraṭṭa) were seen as foreign and polluting. As a matter of fact, in the Brahmanical worldview, the Other, the non-Ārya, was also impure, because he did not follow the Brahmanical norms that, according to Baudhāyana, were present in the *āryāvarta*. Also this goes against a recent origin outside South Asia, and against an origin of Brahmanical culture in the Indus valley, which was not seen as a place of origin, but as a peripheral area inhabited by people of mixed blood. This idea of a region inhabited by pure *ārya*s between Haryana and Prayāga

implies a long tradition of settlement that reaches the age of Baudhāyana and Vāsiṣṭha (2nd-1st centuries BC). Some centuries later, the idea has changed, because Manu 2.22-24 gives us a different definition of the region of the Āryas:

> *ā samudrāt tu vai pūrvād ā samudrāc ca paścimāt /*
> *tayor evāntaraṃ giryor āryāvartaṃ vidur budhāḥ //*[29]
> *kṛṣṇa-sāras tu carati mṛgo yatra svabhāvataḥ /*
> *sa jñeyo yajñiyo deśo mleccha-deśas tv ataḥ paraḥ //*
> *etāṇ dvi-jātayo deśān saṃśrayeran prayatnataḥ /*
> *śūdras tu yasmin kasmin vā nivased vṛtti-karśitaḥ //*

> But (the region) between the eastern ocean and the western ocean, and between those two mountains (Himalayas e Vindhyas), the wise know as region of the Āryas.
> That land where the black antelope naturally roams, must be known to be fit for sacrifices, while what is different from that is a country of barbarians.
> Twice-born men should diligently dwell (only) in those countries; but a Śūdra, distressed for subsistence, may reside anywhere.

We see that Manu widens the *āryāvarta* compared to Baudhāyana, Vāsiṣṭha and Patañjali, but he does not include the southern Dravidian India, which apparently was not a place suitable for the Āryas. The definition here could be mainly ethnic and linguistic, but it certainly implies also the lack of the Brahmanical normative system. The late *Viṣṇu Smṛti* (84.4) clarifies that *āryāvarta* is where the system of the four *varṇa*s is present:

> *cātur-varṇya-vyavasthānaṃ yasmin deśe na vidyate /*
> *sa mleccha-deśo jijñeya āryāvartas tataḥ paraḥ*

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[29] Cf. MBh 14.96.15d@004_2494-5: *ā samudrāc ca yat pūrvād ā samudrāc ca paścimāt / himavad-vindhyayor madhyam āryāvartaṃ pracakṣate.* Cf. *Amarakośa* 2.1.17: *āryāvartaḥ puṇya-bhūmir madhyaṃ vindhya-himālayoḥ* "The region of the Āryas, the auspicious land, is between the Vindhyas and the Himalayas."

> The country where the differentiation of the four classes is not found, should be known as a country of barbarians; (the country that is) different from that (should be known) as region of the Āryas.[30]

This, as Deshpande (1993: 85) observes, implies that a region can be 'aryanized' bringing the system of the four *varṇa*s, that was surely perceived as distinctive of the Indian world, in contrast with, for instance, Greeks and Iranians, as also the *Assalāyana Sutta* of the Buddhist Pāli Canon says (MN II 149): *Yona*s (Greeks) and *Kamboja*s and other peripheral countries (*pacchantimesu janapadesu*) have only two classes (*vaṇṇa*), freemen or masters (*ayya*)[31] and slaves (*dāsa*).

It remains, however, to wonder how much the notion of Aryan land outside the Brahmanical ideology was more ethnolinguistic than normative (that is, based on a social order). We have already seen how in a Jain context it was possible to be Ārya for language, and another category was that of the Āryas for region (*khettāriya*), with a long list of regions going from Sindh (*Sindhusovīra*), to Gujarat (*Suraṭṭha*), to Bengal (*Vaṅga*), to Orissa (*Kaliṅga*), thus including territories regarded as impure by Baudhāyana (Deshpande 1993: 10-11). Among the barbarians (*milakkhu*) we find non-Indian peoples like the Greeks (*Javaṇa*) and the Scythians (*Saga*), but also Dravidian peoples (*Damila*, *Pulinda*),[32] what confirms that also for Jains there was no special difference between non-Aryans living in India and those outside the subcontinent, and suggests that the *āriya* identity of a region was based on linguistic and cultural affinities.

However, the Jain attitude was inclusive: in the *Aupapātika-sūtra / Ovavāiya-sutta* and in the *Samavāyāṅga-sūtra*, Mahāvīra teaches to *āriya*s

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[30] Cf. *Kāvyamīmāṃsā* 93: *pūrvāparayoḥ samudrayor himavad-vindhyayoś cāntaram āryāvarttaḥ / tasmiṃś cātur-varṇyaṃ cātur-āśramyaṃ ca*. "(The land that is) between the eastern and the western ocean, the Himalayas and the Vindhyas, is the region of the Āryas, there are the four classes and the four stages of life."

Cf. *Abhidhānappadīpikā-ṭīkā* 186 (ChS): *Byavatthā catu-vaṇṇānaṃ, yasmiṃ dese na vijjate; Milakkha-deso so vutto, majjha-bhūmi tato paraṃ*. "That country where the distinction of the four classes is not found, is called 'country of barbarians', (the country that is) different from that (is called) 'central land'."

[31] Pāli *ayya* corresponds to Sanskrit *arya* 'lord, master' (CPD: 412).

[32] Deshpande 1993: 9.

and *aṇāriya*s in Ardhamāgadhī, but miraculously everyone understands in its own language.[33] Moreover, among the various categories of *āriya*s we find also those based on purely ethical and spiritual qualities: Ārya or rather noble for wisdom (*ṇāṇāriya*), for realization (*daṃsaṇāriya*) and for conduct (*carittāriya*).

In a Buddhist context, rather than *āryāvarta*[34] the term *āryāyatana* (Pāli *ariyāyatana*) is used, identified with the central region(s) (*madhya-janapada-*, *majjhima-desa*, *majjhima- janapada-*).[35] The most frequent opposition is with the border or peripheral countries (*pratyanta- janapada-*, *paccantima- janapada-*) inhabited by barbarians (*dasyu, mleccha, milakkha*).[36] In the Theravāda Vinaya[37] and in the *Divyāvadāna*[38] we find

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[33] Alver 2015: 71; Deshpande 1993: 13-14.

[34] An exception is Mvu II.262: *na khalu punar bhikṣavaḥ sa pṛthivī-pradeśo **pratyantikehi janapadehi** saṃsthihati atha khalu… **anumajjhimehi janapadehi** saṃsthihati / na khalu… **mlecchehi janapadehi** saṃsthihati atha khalu… **āryāvartehi janapadehi** saṃsthihati /* "That place of the earth, monks, (where the Bodhisattva reaches enlightenment) is not situated in peripheral provinces, but… in central provinces… it is not situated in barbarian provinces, but… in provinces of the land of the Āryas."

[35] Śbh I 10: *āryāyatane pratyājātiḥ katamā / yathāpīhaikatyo **madhyeṣu janapadeṣu** pratyājāto bhavati, pūrvavad yāvad yatra gatiḥ sat-puruṣāṇām / iyam ucyate **āryāyatane** pratyājātiḥ.* "What is rebirth in the abode of Āryas? Because anyone here takes rebirth in the central regions, as aforesaid, as far as there is the place (of rebirth) of virtuous people, this is called 'rebirth in the abode of Āryas'." Here *ārya* has a moral connotation, since it is identified with *sat-puruṣa* 'virtuous, good man', consistently with the Buddhist tradition (cf. PTSD: 680, about *sappurisa*). AN III 441,6: *ariyāyatane paccājāti dullabhā lokasmiṃ.* "Rebirth in the abode of Āryas is difficult to obtain in the world." Mp: *ariyāyatane ti majjhima-dese.* " 'In the abode of the Āryas' (means) 'in the central region'." Sv: *Yāvatā ariyaṃ āyatan ti yattakaṃ ariyaka-manussānaṃ osaraṇa-ṭṭhānaṃ nāma atthi.* " 'As far as there is the Aryan abode' (means) 'as far as there is the place visited by Aryan men'." As we have seen in n.15, *ariyaka* has a specific ethnolinguistic meaning, distinct from the moral and spiritual meaning that *ariya/ārya* has usually in Buddhism.

[36] AN I 35,15-17: *evam eva kho bhikkhave appakā te sattā ye majjhimesu janapadesu paccājāyanti, atha kho ete va sattā bahutarā ye paccantimesu janapadesu paccājāyanti aviññātāresu milakkhesu* "So, monks, few are those beings who are reborn in the central regions, but more numerous are these beings who are reborn in the peripheral countries, among barbarians who do not understand." Cf. above n.16.

[37] Vin I 197, 20-29; 31-34: *tatr'ime paccantimā janapadā: puratthimāya disāya kajaṅgalaṃ nāma nigamo, tassa parena mahāsālā, tato parā paccantimā janapadā, orato majjhe. puratthima-dakkhiṇāya disāya sallavatī nāma nadī, tato parā paccantimā janapadā, orato majjhe. dakkhiṇāya disāya seta-kaṇṇikaṃ nāma nigamo, tato*

a definition of the borders of such central region, some of them of difficult identification, but even southern Avanti in present Madhya Pradesh was excluded, analogously to the *āryāvarta* of Baudhāyana. On the other hand, this central region clearly extended much more to the east, possibly up to Bangladesh,[39] while to the west it should be up to Kurukṣetra

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parā paccantimā janapadā, orato majjhe. pacchimāya disāya thūnaṃ nāma brāhmaṇa-gāmo, tato parā paccantimā janapadā, orato majjhe. uttarāya disāya usīra-ddhajo nāma pabbato, tato parā paccantimā janapadā, orato majjhe… avanti-dakkhiṇā-pathe bhikkhave kaṇhuttarā bhūmi kharā go-kaṇṭaka-hatā. anujānāmi bhikkhave sabba-paccantimesu janapadesu gaṇaṃ-gaṇūpāhanaṃ. "In this passage the following are the border countries referred to. To the East is the town Kagaṅgala, and beyond it Mahâsâlâ. Beyond that is border country; this side of it is the Middle country. To the South-east is the river Salalavatî. Beyond that is border country; this side of it is the Middle country. To the South is the town Setaka*nni*ka. Beyond that is border country; this side of it is the Middle country. To the West is the Brâhman district of Thûna. Beyond that is border country; this side of it is the Middle country. To the North is the mountain range called Usîradhaga. Beyond that is border country; this side of it is the Middle country. […] In the Southern country and in Avanti, O Bhikkhus, the soil is black on the surface and rough, and trampled by the feet of cattle. I allow the use, in all the border countries, O Bhikkhus, of shoes with thick linings." (Rhys Davids and Oldenberg 1882: 38-39). The translation "In the Southern country and in Avanti" is actually wrong, since *avanti-dakkhiṇā-patha* means 'Southern Avanti', having as capital Māhissati (Māhiṣmatī) (cf. DPPN; CPD: 456).

[38] Divy 13: *tatra katamo 'ntaḥ katamaḥ pratyantaḥ? pūrveṇopāli puṇḍa-vardhanaṃ nāma nagaram, tasya pūrveṇa puṇḍa-kakṣo nāma parvataḥ, tataḥ pareṇa pratyantaḥ / dakṣiṇena śarāvatī nāma nagarī, tasyāḥ pareṇa sarāvatī nāma nadī, so 'ntaḥ, tataḥ pareṇa pratyantaḥ / paścimena sthūṇopasthūṇakau brāmaṇa-grāmakau, so 'ntaḥ, tataḥ pareṇa pratyantaḥ / uttareṇa uśīra-giriḥ so 'ntaḥ, tataḥ pareṇa pratyantaḥ.* " 'At this regard, what is border, and what is bordering (country)?' 'To the east, Upāli, (there is) the town called Puṇḍavardhana, to the east of it the mountain called Puṇḍakakṣa, beyond that it is a bordering country. To the south (there is) the town called Śarāvatī, beyond that the river called Sarāvatī, that is a border, beyond that is a bordering country. To the west, the two villages of Brahmins Sthūṇa and Upasthūṇaka, that is a border, beyond that is a bordering country. To the north, Uśīragiri is a border, beyond that is a bordering country'."
Cf. Vins 7.1-5: *maryādā madhya-deśasya / pūrveṇa puṇḍa-kaccho nāma dāvaḥ purataḥ puṇḍa-vardhanasya / śarāvatyās tad-upākhyā nadī dakṣiṇetra / paścimena sthūṇopasthūṇau brāhmaṇa-grāmakau / uśīra-girir uttareṇa.*

[39] Kajaṅgala has been identified with Kankjol near Rajmahal in Jharkhand, close to the border of Bangladesh (Majumdar 1943: 64; 411-413). Churn Law (1932: 28, n.18) reports that Xuanzang placed it at a distance of above 400 li (129 km.) east from Champā (Bhāgalpur in Bihar). Puṇḍavardhana or Puṇḍravardhana of the *Divyāvadāna* is instead more to the east, in the Bogra district of Bangladesh, on the river Karatoyā (Majumdar

(Thaneswar).[40] In terms of archaeological cultures, it includes both the area of Painted Grey Ware and the core area of Northern Black Polished Ware in the eastern Gangetic valley around the mid-first millennium BC. The two areas finally merged in a unified North Indian cultural region over the Gangetic valley in the following centuries, when Buddhism was developing (Uesugi 2018: 11; 14-17).
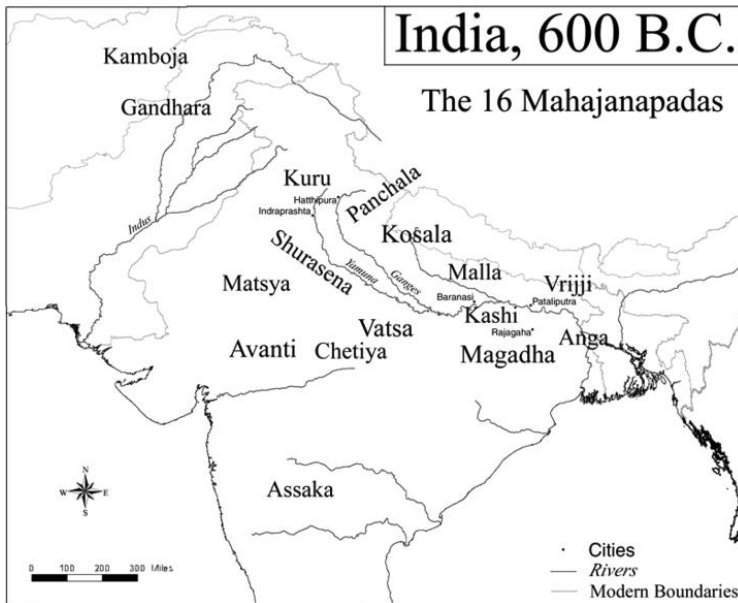
1943: 5).
[40] Thūṇa in Ud I 78 is a village of Brahmins of the Mallas (*Thūnaṃ nāma Mallānaṃ brāhmaṇa-gāmo*), who lived to the east of Kosala, a region that surely belonged to the *majjhima-desa* since it is one of the most frequented by the Buddha, particularly Sāvatthi/Śrāvastī, where is set this speech itself in the Theravāda Vinaya and in the *Divyāvadāna*. So, if that village is really meant in the Vinaya passage, there is probably a mistake in the tradition of the text. Churn Law (1932: 2, n.2; 34), cites Mazumdar's proposal that Thūṇa is actually to be identified with Thaneswar (in present Haryana), since it was indicated as the westernmost part of the Buddhist central region by Xuanzang. Cf. Churn Law 1932: xxi, about the geography of India in Xuanzang: "Central India comprised the whole of the Gangetic provinces from Thaneswar to the head of the Delta, and from the Himalaya mountains to the banks of the Narbadā." We can also add that the Buddha went also to the realm of the Kurus, where some important Suttas were pronounced (see DPPN, under the entry 'Kuru'; cf. Churn Law 1932: 17 f.).

The linguistic aspect seems here to be not completely relevant, since many of the excluded regions should have been mainly inhabited by Indo-Aryan speakers: the differences that are remarked in the Vinaya lie in the difficulty to find *bhikkhu*s for the ordination, in the uneven soil and different customs, like the use of animal skins. According to the Pāli commentaries, it is in this *majjhima-desa* that Buddhas, *paccekabuddha*s, great disciples, Cakravartins, other Kṣatriyas and Brahmins appear.[41]

2. The concepts of Jambudvīpa and Bhāratavarṣa

However, the geography of the Pāli Canon (e.g. AN I 212 f., etc.) mentions 16 *mahājanapada*s: Kāsī, Kosala, Aṅga, Magadha, Vajji, Mallā, Cetiya (Cedi), Vaṃsā (Vatsa), Kuru, Pañcāla, Macchā (Matsya), Sūrasena, Assaka (Aśmaka), Avanti, Gandhāra and Kamboja (see the map above[42]). They comprise a great part of 'Indo-Aryan' northern and central India, the first 14 according to Churn Law (1932: 2 f.) may be included in *majjhimadesa*, while the last two, Gandhāra e Kamboja, may be considered part of the northern region.[43] The *majjhima-desa* was part of *jambu-dīpa*[44] ('continent of the rose-apple tree', Sanskrit *jambu-dvīpa* or

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[41] Sv, *Bodhisattadhammatāvaṇṇanā* (ChS): *Majjhimadeso nāma – 'puratthimāya disāya gajaṅgalaṃ nāma nigamo' ti ādinā nayena vinaye vuttova. So āyāmato tīṇi yojana-satāni, vitthārato aḍḍha-teyyāni, parikkhepato nava-yojana-satānīti. Etasmiñhi padese buddhā pacceka-buddhā agga-sāvakā asīti mahā-sāvakā cakkavatti-rājāno aññe ca mahesakkhā khattiya-brāhmaṇa-gahapati-mahāsālā uppajjanti.* "The Central Region: 'In the eastern direction, the town called Gajaṅgala', and so forth, is said in the Vinaya. In length it is of three hundred Yojanas, in breadth two and a half (hundred Yojanas), its circumference is nine hundred Yojanas. In this region Buddhas, Paccekabuddhas, the main disciples, the eighty great disciples, the Cakravartin kings, and the other powerful Kṣatriyas, Brahmins, rich householders are born."

[42] Retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Ancient_india.png.

[43] However, at p.3, n.1, he remarks that Assaka and Avanti should be placed in the Dakkhiṇāpatha or Southern country because "both the settlements that are found mentioned in Buddhist sources lay outside the borders of the Madhyadeśa" (cf. pp.21-23). It is noteworthy that they are placed after the others and before the northern countries. On the other hand, Mvu I.198 refers to the *madhyadeśa*s (in the plural) in connection with the 16 *mahājanapāda*s: the *deva*s of Tuṣita are invited to be reborn in the 16 great provinces, in the central regions (*ṣoḍaśahi mahājanapadehi madhyadeśehi upapadyatha*). This probably reflects a later geographical concept similar to that of the *āryāvarta* of the Manusmṛti.

[44] In Mp, *Ekadhammapāḷi-catutthavaggavaṇṇanā* (ChS), we read another view, after the

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jambū-dvīpa), essentially corresponding to our geographical concept of India, thus existing at least at the time of the formation of the Pāli Canon. It was conceived as the subcontinent to the south of mount Meru in Buddhist cosmology[45] (and in the *Mahābhārata*[46]), while in Purāṇic cosmology Jambudvīpa is the central continent that includes the Meru region (*Ilāvṛta*) in the middle and eight regions (*varṣa*) in different directions. In this context, India is rather to be identified with the *bhārataṃ varṣam*, the southern part of Jambudvīpa. This name appears in the *Mahābhārata*[47] and Purāṇas and is clearly connected with the royal race of the Bhāratas that evidently was able to establish itself as the main one for the definition of India, as if it were their own possession. VP 2.1.28-31 explains that it is so called because it was given by king Ṛṣabha to his son Bharata before devoting himself to asceticism in the forest,[48] and was transmitted then to his descendants. It is so defined in VP 2.3.1-2:

usual quotation of the borders of the central region from the Vinaya: *Sakalo pi hi jambu-dīpo majjhima-padeso nāma, sesa-dīpā paccantimā janapadā*. "Even the whole continent of the rose-apple tree is indeed the Central Region, the remaining continents are peripheral regions." This means that at the time of this commentary (5th century CE or later) in some Buddhist milieus the whole Indian subcontinent was considered a uniform reality, identified as the Central Region of civilization.

[45] Cf. AKBh 161-162: *catvāro dvīpāś caturṣu sumeru-pārśveṣu… jambūdvīpo… pūrveṇa sumeru-pārśve pūrva-videho dvīpaḥ… paścimena sumeru-pārśve 'para-godānīyo dvīpaḥ… uttareṇa sumeru-pārśve uttara-kuru-dvīpaḥ* "At the four sides of Sumeru there are the four continents: Jambudvīpa… to the east, at the side of Sumeru, there is the continent Pūrvavideha… to the west, at the side of Sumeru, the continent Aparagodānīya… to the north, at the side of Sumeru, the continent Uttarakuru."

[46] MBh 6.7.11: *tasya pārśve tv ime dvīpāś catvāraḥ saṃsthitāḥ prabho / bhadrāśvaḥ ketu-mālāś ca jambū-dvīpaś ca bhārata / uttarāś caiva kuravaḥ kṛta-puṇya-pratiśrayāḥ* "Beside this (mount Meru) are situated, O lord, these four continents: Bhadrāśva, Ketumāla, Jambudvīpa, O descendant of Bharata, and Uttarakuru, which is the abode of those who have accomplished meritorious acts."

[47] MBh 6.7.6ab: *idaṃ tu bhārataṃ varṣaṃ tato haimavataṃ param*. "This is the Bhārata land, beyond this (Himālaya) is the Haimavata (country)."

[48] VP 2.1.28-31: *abhiṣicya sutaṃ vīraṃ bharataṃ pṛthivīpatiḥ / tapase sa mahābhāgaḥ pulahasyāśramaṃ yayau [...] tataś ca bhārataṃ varṣam etal lokeṣu gīyate / bharatāya yataḥ pitrā dattaṃ prātiṣṭhatā vanam*. "(Ṛṣabha) having anointed as lord of the earth his son, the heroic Bharata, went to the hermitage of Pulaha for asceticism. […] The country is called Bhārata here in the world from the time that it was given to Bharata by his father, on his retiring to the forest." Cf. Pargiter 1922: 131. This tradition corresponds to the Jain genealogy from Nābhi to Ṛṣabhadeva to the Cakravartin king Bharata (Sangave

uttaraṃ yat samudrasya himādreś caiva dakṣiṇam /
varṣaṃ tad **bhārataṃ** nāma bhāratī yatra saṃtatiḥ //
nava-yojana-sāhasro vistāro 'sya mahā-mune /
karma-bhūmir iyaṃ svargam apavargaṃ ca gacchatām //

The country that lies north of the ocean, and south of the Himalayas, is called Bhārata, where (dwells) the Bhārata lineage. It is nine thousand Yojanas in extent, great sage, this is the land of (meritorious) works, of those who go to heaven, or obtain emancipation.

The last statement is clarified later (VP 2.3.19-20; 22):

catvāri **bhārate varṣe** *yugāny atra mahā-mune /*
kṛtaṃ tretā dvāparaṃ ca kaliś cānyatra na kvacit //
tapas tapyanti yatayo juhvate cātra yajvinaḥ /
dānāni cātra dīyante para-lokārtham ādarāt //
atrāpi bhārataṃ śreṣṭhaṃ jambū-dvīpe mahāmune /
yato hi karma-bhūr eṣā hy ato 'nyā bhoga-bhūmayaḥ //

Here in Bhāratavarṣa there are four ages, great sage: Kṛta, Tretā, Dvāpara, and Kali, elsewhere (they are not found) anywhere. Here hermits practice asceticism, and sacrificers offer oblations; and here gifts are distributed, for the sake of the other world. […] And Bhārata is the best part of Jambudvīpa, for this is the land of (meritorious) works, while the others are lands of enjoyment (of the fruit of meritorious works).

India is presented as the only place where it is possible to accumulate merits for paradise, in the other places life lasts thousands of years, there is neither old age nor the decay of the four Yugas, but also the distinction between *dharma* and *adharma* is absent.[49] Therefore, the

2001: 105-106).

[49] VP 2.1.24-26ab: *yāni kiṃpuruṣādīni varṣāṇy aṣṭau mahā-mune / teṣāṃ svābhāvikī siddhiḥ sukha-prāyā hy ayatnataḥ // viparyayo na teṣv asti jarā-mṛtyu-bhayaṃ na ca / dharmādharmau na teṣv āstāṃ nottamādhama-madhyamāḥ // na teṣv asti yugāvasthā*

difference between India and the other countries is really profound: only in India, one would say, there is history and civilization; the remaining part of the continent is immersed in a mythical reality out of time.

Bhāratavarṣa is divided into nine parts, and the Indian peninsula can be more precisely identified, within Bhāratavarṣa, with the ninth *dvīpa*, surrounded by the ocean,[50] and VP 2.3.8-9 adds:

> *yojanānāṃ sahasraṃ tu dvīpo 'yaṃ dakṣiṇottarāt /*
> *pūrve kirātā yasyānte paścime yavanāḥ sthitāḥ //*
> *brāhmaṇāḥ kṣatriyā vaiśyā madhye śūdrāś ca bhāgaśaḥ /*
> *ijyāyudha-vaṇijyādyair vartayanto vyavasthitāḥ //*

> This continent is a thousand Yojanas from north to south. On its eastern border dwell the Kirātas; on the western border, the Yavanas; in the center Brahmins, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas, and Śūdras,

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kṣetreṣv aṣṭasu sarvadā / "These eight countries, Kimpuruṣa and the rest, great sage, have natural prosperity, abounding in happiness without effort. In them there is no alteration, nor the dread of decrepitude and death: there are not law and unrighteousness, nor (difference of degree of) highest, lowest and intermediate. In those eight regions there is never the entrance into the state of (one of the four) ages."

VP 2.2.52-54: *yāni kiṃpuruṣādyāni varṣāṇy aṣṭau mahā-mune / na teṣu śoko nāyāso nodvegaḥ kṣud-bhayādikam // svasthāḥ prajā nirātaṅkāḥ sarva-duḥkha-vivarjitāḥ / daśa dvādaśa-varṣāṇāṃ sahasrāṇi sthirāyuṣaḥ // na teṣu varṣate devo bhaumāny ambhāṃsi teṣu vai / kṛta-tretādikā naiva teṣu sthāneṣu kalpanā //* "In these eight realms of Kimpuruṣa and the rest (except for Bhārata), great sage, there is no sorrow, nor weariness, nor anxiety, nor hunger, nor fear, and so on; their inhabitants are healthy, free from disease, exempt from all (kinds of) pain, and live a stable life for ten or twelve thousand years. The god never sends rain upon them, since there are waters coming from the earth. In those places there is no formation of Kṛta, Tretā, and so on."

Later on it is also said that in Plakṣadvīpa there are no Yugas, everything is fixed at the level of Tretāyuga. VP 2.4.13-14: *apasarpiṇī na teṣāṃ vai na caivotsarpiṇī dvija / na tv evāsti yugāvasthā teṣu sthāneṣu saptasu // tretā-yuga-samaḥ kālaḥ sarva-daiva mahā-mate /* "They have neither decrease nor increase, Brahmin, neither is there the entrance into the condition of (various) ages in these seven places (of Plakṣadvīpa): the time is there always similar to that of the Tretā age, great sage."

[50] VP 2.3.6-7: *bhāratasyāsya varṣasya nava bhedān niśāmaya / indra-dvīpaḥ kaseruś ca tāmra-parṇo gabhastimān // nāga-dvīpas tathā saumyo gāndharvas tv atha vāruṇaḥ / ayaṃ tu navamas teṣāṃ dvīpaḥ sāgara-saṃvṛtaḥ* "Learn the nine parts of this Bhāratavarṣa: Indradvīpa, Kaseru, Tāmraparṇa, Gabhastimat, Nāgadvīpa, Saumya, Gāndharva, and Vāruṇa; and this is the ninth continent among them, surrounded by the ocean."

established according to their divisions, subsisting on sacrifice, arms, trade, and so on.[51]

Again, the system of the four *varṇa*s is looked upon as a distinctive feature of the central region, while Yavanas (Bactrian Greeks) and Kirātas (the Tibeto-Burman people of the mountains) are on the fringes, evidently excluded from this system. Moreover, among the peoples inhabiting the continent there are non-Aryans, as is explicitly said in the sixth book of the *Mahābhārata*, where we learn that *ārya*s and *mleccha*s as well as people resulting from a mix of both drink the waters of the rivers of Bhāratavarṣa.[52] We see thus that within India remained an internal distinction between racial or cultural entities that could be mixed but not merged into a 'national' unity.

On the other hand, the system of the four *varṇa*s is not necessarily exclusive of India in Purāṇic geography, because it is found in the other *dvīpa*s, the continents surrounding Jambudvīpa, even if with other names,[53] with the exception of the most extreme Puṣkaradvīpa, that is literally defined as a terrestrial paradise (*bhauma- svarga-*), free of classes, religious norms and punishments, disease and old age.[54]

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[51] Cf. MatP 114.11-12: *dvīpo hy upaniviṣṭo 'yaṃ mlecchair anteṣu sarvaśaḥ / yavanāś ca kirātāś ca tasyānte pūrva-paścime //* "This continent is inhabited by barbarians on the borders on all sides, Yavanas and Kirātas are on its eastern and western border."

[52] MBh 6.10.5ab: *atra te varṇayiṣyāmi varṣaṃ bhārata bhāratam*; 6.10.12cd-13: *āryā mlecchāś ca kauravya tair miśrāḥ puruṣā vibho // nadīḥ pibanti bahulā gaṅgāṃ sindhuṃ sarasvatīm / godāvarīṃ narmadāṃ ca bāhudāṃ ca mahānadīm…* "I will now describe, O descendant of Bharata, the Bhārata country. […] Āryas and barbarians, O descendant of Kuru, and many people mixed of these (races), mighty (lord), drink the waters of the (following) rivers: the wide Ganges, Indus, Sarasvatī, Godāvarī, Narmadā and the great river Bāhudā…"
Cf. MatP 114.20: *tair vimiśrā jānapadā āryā mlecchāś ca sarvataḥ / pibanti bahulā nadyo gaṅgā sindhuḥ sarasvatī.*

[53] Among these, apparently inspired by real names are only *āryaka* and *kurava*, the name of Brahmins and Kṣatriyas in Plakṣadvīpa (KūrmP 1.47.9; VP 2.4.17), and *maga*, the name of Brahmins in Śakadvīpa (derived from the Zoroastrian Magi) (MBh 6.12.33-34; VP 2.4.69).

[54] VP 2.4.83-84: *varṇāśramācāra-hīnaṃ dharmācaraṇa-varjitam / trayī-vārtā-daṇḍa-nīti-śuśrūṣā-rahitaṃ ca yat // varṣa-dvayaṃ tu maitreya bhaumaḥ svargo 'yam uttamaḥ / sarvasya sukha-daḥ kālo jarā-rogādi-varjitaḥ /* "It is deprived of the institute of classes and life stages, exempt from the practice of religious Law, bereft of the three Vedas, profession, administration of justice, and service. This is, in both its divisions, Maitreya,

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3. Foreign peoples as degraded Āryas

According to the *Manusmṛti* (2.17-20) in that heart of Brahmanical India that are *brahmāvarta* and *brahmarṣideśa* are found the correct norms for all men on earth:

> 17. *sarasvatī-dṛṣadvatyor deva-nadir yad antaram /*
> *taṃ deva-nirmitaṃ deśaṃ* **brahmāvartaṃ** *pracakṣate*
> 18. *tasmin deśe ya ācāraḥ pāramparya-kramāgataḥ /*
> *varṇānāṃ sāntarālānāṃ sa sad-ācāra ūcyate*
> 19. *kuru-kṣetrañ ca matsyāś ca pañcālāḥ śūra-senakāḥ /*
> *eṣa* **brahma-rṣi-deśo** *vai brahmāvartād anantaraḥ*
> 20. *etad-deśa-prasūtasya sakāśād agra-janmanaḥ /*
> *svaṃ svaṃ caritraṃ śīkṣeran pṛthivyāṃ sarva-mānavāḥ*

> 17. That land, created by the gods, which lies between the two divine rivers Sarasvatī and Dṛṣadvatī, (the sages) call Brahmāvarta.
> 18. The conduct handed down in regular succession in that country, of the (four chief) classes and the mixed (castes), is called the virtuous conduct.
> 19. Kurukṣetra, (the country of the) Matsyas, (of the) Pañcālas, and Śūrasenakas, this is, indeed, the country of the Brahmanical Ṛṣis, contiguous to Brahmāvarta.[55]
> 20. From the presence of a Brahmin, born in that country, all men on earth should learn their own conduct.

This shows that Brahmanical India was ideally conceived as a model of behaviour for every human being, as already implicit in the

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an excellent terrestrial paradise, where time yields happiness to all (its inhabitants), exempt from old age, sickness and so on."
[55] This region corresponds to a great part of the *āryāvarta* of BauDhS, VāDhS and PatMbh; it extends from Haryana (Kurukṣetra) to northern Rajasthan (Matsya) to western Uttar Pradesh (Pañcāla and Śūrasenaka). As already noticed, this region was occupied first by Ochre Coloured Pottery and later by Painted Grey Ware, before the unification of material culture in North India in the late 1st millennium BC (cf. Uesugi 2018: 14-19), that corresponds to the *āryāvarta* of the Manusmṛti, extending from the Himalayas to the Vindhyas.

concept of *pramāṇa* 'right measure, standard, authority' attributed to the practices of the *āryāvarta* by Baudhāyana.

Not only, barbarian peoples are often looked upon as degraded descendants of the *ārya*s of the central region. In the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* (7.18), fifty sons of Viśvāmitra were cursed by their father for not having approved the adoption of the Brahmin Śunaḥśepa as elder brother; consequently they had to inhabit the borders of the Earth, and are identified as Andhra, Puṇḍra, Śabara, Pulinda e Mūtiba, *dasyu* peoples of southern and eastern India.[56]

According to MBh 1.80.26, because of the curse of Yayāti, the Yavanas descend from his son Turvasu, while from the other son Anu descend *mleccha* tribes.[57]

In MBh 14.29, fleeing from the wrath of Rāma Jāmadagnya to forests and mountains many Kṣatriyas lost their status because they were deprived of Brahmins, and their descendants became barbarians like Dravidas, Khasas, Puṇḍras and Śabaras.[58] Compared to the list above, we

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[56]*tasya ha Viśvāmitrasyaika-śatam putrā āsuḥ pañcāśad eva jyāyāṃso Madhu-chandasaḥ pañcāśat kanīyāṃsas tad ye jyāyāṃso, na te kuśalam menire. tān anuvyājahārāntān vaḥ prajā bhakṣīṣṭeti. ta ete 'ndhrāḥ Puṇḍrāḥ Śabarāḥ Pulindā Mūtibā ity udantyā bahavo bhavanti Vaiśvāmitrā dasyūnām bhūyiṣṭhāḥ.* "Viśvāmitra had a hundred and one sons, fifty older than Madhuchandas, fifty younger. Those that were older did not think this right. Them he cursed (saying) 'Your offspring shall inherit the ends (of the earth).' These are the (people), the Andhras, Puṇḍras, Śabaras, Pulindas, and Mūtibas, who live in large numbers beyond the borders; most of the barbarians (*dasyu*) are the descendants of Viśvāmitra." (Keith 1920: 307).

[57] MBh 1.80.26: *yados tu yādavā jātās turvasor yavanāḥ sutāḥ / druhyor api sutā bhojā anos tu mleccha-jātayaḥ.* "From Yadu the Yādavas are born, from Turvasu the Yavanas, from Druhyu the Bhojas, while the *mleccha* tribes (come) from Anu." Cf. MatP 34.30: *yados tu yādavā jātās turvasor yavanāḥ sutāḥ / druhyoś caiva sutā bhojā anos tu mleccha-jātayaḥ.* Pargiter 1922: 260, n.1, observes: "which seems unintelligible compared with all other tradition, and is probably late and certainly very doubtful." The compound *mleccha-jāti* here apparently indicates a remaining group of unspecified non-Ārya populations, besides the Yavanas. Bhojas are well known as a branch of the Yādavas and their connection with Druhyu appears to be a pure invention, contrasting with the different geographical position and with the usual genealogy of Druhyu that includes Gandhāra and Pracetas, whose sons became kings in northern *mleccha* realms (cf. Pargiter 1922: 108; MatP 48.6-9; VP 4.17).

[58] MBh 14.29.14-16: *tatas tu kṣatriyāḥ ke cij jamadagniṃ nihatya ca / viviśur giri-durgāṇi mṛgāḥ siṃhārditā iva // teṣāṃ sva-vihitaṃ karma tad-bhayān nānutiṣṭhatām / prajā vṛṣalatāṃ prāptā brāhmaṇānām adarśanāt // ta ete dramiḍāḥ kāśāḥ puṇḍrāś ca*

have the addition of the Khasas of the Himalayas, but we are still in the domain of the Indian subcontinent.

A longer list is found in MBh 13.33.19-20,[59] where also Greeks (Yavanas) and the Iranic Śakas and Kambojas are included among the populations that were originally Kṣatriyas, but because of the absence of Brahmins were degraded to Śūdras:

> *śakā yavana-kāmbojās tās tāḥ kṣatriya-jātayaḥ / vṛṣalatvaṃ parigatā brāhmaṇānām adarśanāt // dramiḷāś ca kaliṅgāś ca pulindāś cāpy uśīnarāḥ / kaulāḥ sarpā māhiṣakās tās tāḥ kṣatriya-jātayaḥ // vṛṣalatvaṃ parigatā brāhmaṇānām adarśanāt /*

> Śakas, Yavanas, Kāmbojas, various Kṣatriya tribes, have come to the state of Śūdra because of the absence of Brahmins. Dravidas, Kaliṅgas, Pulindas and Uśīnaras, Kolisarpas, Māhiṣakas, various Kṣatriya tribes, have come to the state of Śūdra because of the absence of Brahmins.

śabaraiḥ saha / vṛṣalatvaṃ parigatā vyutthānāt kṣatra-dharmataḥ // "Then, some of the Kṣatriyas, having assailed Jamadagni, entered mountain fastnesses, like deer afflicted by the lion. Of them that were unable, through fear of him (Rāma), to discharge the duties ordained for their order, the progeny attained the state of Śūdras owing to the absence of Brahmins. They are these Dravidas, Khasas, Puṇḍras, together with the Śabaras, who came to the state of Śūdras because they fell away from the duty of the Kṣatriyas." In MBh 2.66.12d@039_0090-91 we have a more convincing variant of the first stanza: *tatas tu kṣatriyā rājañ jāmadagnya-bhayārditāḥ / viviśur giri-durgāṇi mṛgāḥ siṃha-bhayād iva //* "Then, the Kṣatriyas, O king, afflicted by the fear of Jāmadagnya, entered mountain fastnesses, like deer because of the fear of the lion."

[59] Cf. the very similar passage in MBh 13.35.17-18, where some more tribes are added: *mekalā dramiḍāḥ kāśāḥ pauṇḍrāḥ kollagirās tathā / śauṇḍikā daradā darvāś caurāḥ śabara-barbarāḥ // kirātā yavanāś caiva tās tāḥ kṣatriya-jātayaḥ / vṛṣalatvam anuprāptā brāhmaṇānām adarśanāt.* In MBh 12.200.39-42 is also said that northern barbarous races arose in Tretā Yuga: *uttarā-patha-janmānaḥ kīrtayiṣyāmi tān api / yauna-kāmboja-gāndhārāḥ kirātā barbaraiḥ saha // ete pāpa-kṛtas tāta caranti pṛthivīm imām / śva-kāka-bala-gṛdhrāṇāṃ sadharmāṇo narādhipa // naite kṛta-yuge tāta caranti pṛthivīm imām / tretā-prabhṛti vartante te janā bharata-rṣabha.* "Those that are born in the northern region, I shall also mention: Yavanas, Kambojas, Gāndhāras, Kirātas together with Barbaras. These, O sire, are sinful, and move on this Earth, characterized by practices similar to dogs, crows, and vultures. In the Kṛta age, O sire, these (peoples) did not wander on this Earth. It is from the Tretā age that those people exist, O bull of the Bharatas."

Also the *Manusmṛti* (10.43-44) shows a similar concept:

> *śanakais tu kriyālopād imāḥ kṣatriya-jātayaḥ /*
> *vṛṣalatvaṃ gatā loke brāhmaṇādarśanena ca //*
> *pauṇḍrakāś cauḍra*[60]*-draviḍāḥ kāmbojā yavanāḥ śakāḥ /*
> *pāradā-pahlavāś cīnāḥ kirātā daradāḥ khaśāḥ //*

But in consequence of the omission of the sacred rites, and of the absence of Brahmins, these tribes of Kṣatriyas have gradually come in this world to the condition of Śūdras: the Pauṇḍrakas, the Coḍas, the Dravidas, the Kāmbojas, the Yavanas, the Śakas, the Pāradas, the Pahlavas, the Cīnas, the Kirātas, the Daradas and the Khasas.

Some Purāṇas give also another mythical explanation, like VP 4.3.27-32,[61] where Sagara defeats and kills the Haihayas, and their allies Śakas,

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[60] A variant reading is *puṇḍrakāś coḍa-* (Yano and Ikari 1996).

[61]   VP 4.3.27-32: *tataḥ pitṛ-rājya-haraṇāmarṣito haihaya-tālajaṅghādi-vadhāya pratijñām akarot | prāyaśaś ca haihayāñ jaghāna || śaka-yavana-kāmboja-pārada-pahlavā hanyamānās tat-kula-guruṃ vasiṣṭhaṃ śaraṇaṃ yayuḥ || athaitān vasiṣṭho jīvan-mṛtakān kṛtvā sagaram āha | vatsālam ebhir jīvan-mṛtakair anumṛtaiḥ || ete ca mayaiva tvat-pratijñā-paripālanāya nija-dharma-dvija-saṅga-parityāgaṃ kāritāḥ || sa tatheti tad guru-vacanam abhinandya teṣāṃ veṣānyatvam akārayat yavanān muṇḍita-śiraso 'rdha-muṇḍāñ chakān pralamba-keśān pāradān pahlavāṃś ca śmaśru-dharān niḥ-svādhyāya-vaṣaṭ-kārān etān anyāṃś ca kṣatriyāṃś cakāra || te ca nija-dharma-parityāgād brāhmaṇaiś ca parityaktā mlecchatāṃ yayuḥ ||* "Upon hearing which he was highly incensed, and vowed to recover his patrimonial kingdom; and exterminate the Haihayas and Tālajanghas, by whom it had been overrun. Accordingly when he became a man he put nearly the whole of the Haihayas to death, and would have also destroyed the Śakas, the Yavanas, Kámbojas, Páradas, and Pahnavas, but that they applied to Vaśishtha, the family priest of Sagara, for protection. Vaśishtha regarding them as annihilated (or deprived of power), though living, thus spake to Sagara: "Enough, enough, my son, pursue no farther these objects of your wrath, whom you may look upon as no more. In order to fulfil your vow I have separated them from affinity to the regenerate tribes, and from the duties of their castes." Sagara, in compliance with the injunctions of his spiritual guide, contented himself therefore with imposing upon the vanquished nations peculiar distinguishing marks. He made the Yavanas shave their heads entirely; the Śakas he compelled to shave (the upper) half of their heads; the Páradas wore their hair long; and the Pahnavas let their beards grow, in obedience to his commands. Them also, and other

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Yavanas, Kāmbojas, Pāradas and Pahlavas seek refuge in the *guru* of the king, Vasiṣṭha, who consents and explains to the king that he will separate them from Brahmins and from their own *dharma*. Sagara then imposes on them a distinctive mark: Yavanas will have the head shaven (*muṇḍita-śiras*), Śakas half-shaven (*ardha-muṇḍa*), Pāradas will keep pendulous hair (*pralamba-keśa*), Pahlavas will wear a beard (*śmaśru-dhara*). All these Kṣatriyas are deprived of the recitation of the Vedas, abandon their *dharma* and are abandoned by Brahmins, thus attaining the state of *mleccha*.

This legend is clearly an etiological myth explaining the origin of the ways of wearing hair and beard of these non-Indian peoples, however it reveals a conviction: that at least some foreign tribes were originally part of the Vedic and Brahmanical civilization, but they left it because they lost, by compulsion or by choice, the knowledge of the Vedas and Brahmins. The purpose of these statements and myths is to stress the necessity of Brahmins for Kṣatriyas, and perhaps also to invite invaders to honour Brahmins and adopt their religion,[62] but they also reveal an ethnocentric perspective, that can be the cultural background of the contemporary Indocentric theory of Indian nationalists, who often advocate a South Asian origin of Indo-Europeans, in opposition to the theory of the Aryan invasion of India from the West, brought by the British and still dominant in the academic context. In the last legend, one could even notice that only Greeks and Iranic peoples are mentioned, that is, Indo-Europeans, but this is probably due to the fact that they were the main invaders and best known foreigners of the period. The other statements cited above about the degraded Kṣatriyas do not distinguish between Indo-European or non-Indo-European peoples (like Dravidians, Cīnas and Kirātas). This shows that there was no precise historical or linguistic basis behind this conviction, and that quite different human populations were all derived from Kṣatriyas (possibly because they appeared as warrior races), without trying to give different genealogical

Kshatriya races, he deprived of the established usages of oblations to fire and the study of the Vedas; and thus separated from religious rites, and abandoned by the Brahmans, these different tribes became Mlechchhas." (Wilson 1840: 374-375).

[62] Cf. Parasher 1979: 113-114.

branches, except for the aforementioned vague and isolated statement about the origin of Yavanas and *mleccha*s from Turvasu and Anu.

A more precise mythical tradition is that of several Purāṇas,[63] where seven sons of Priyavrata, son of Manu, become lords of the seven continents, and the nine sons of Āgnīdhra, who was lord of Jambudvīpa, receive the nine regions of this continent. However, most of these nine sons bear simply the names of the nine *varṣa*s, therefore this myth appears to be essentially geographical, without ethnic implications.

4. Conclusion

What we can conclude is that an idea of what we presently call India or Bhārata in ancient Indo-Aryans developed gradually, through the extension of the *āryāvarta* in post-Vedic times, finally including the whole North India, and through the creation of the concept of Jambudvīpa and Bhāratavarṣa, that included the whole subcontinent. This was not considered ethnically uniform, but included *ārya*s and *mleccha*s of various kinds, including recent invaders like Yavanas and Śakas. However, from the Brahmanical point of view, these invaders were not considered completely foreign: they had to descend from Āryas, although degraded because of the loss of Vedic rites and Brahmins. The same for the inhabitants of southern and eastern India that did not belong to the Central Region or *madhya-deśa*. The *ārya* identity of a region and its people was certainly based on language, but according to several texts the most important characteristics were the ideal rules of behaviour, and especially the social order of the four *varṇa*s. In the plurality of languages and kingdoms, the social and religious system of *varṇāśrama-dharma* was felt as the unifying principle that made the land of the Āryas different from the Others, the *mleccha*s. Bhāratavarṣa itself was a stable geographical entity, with some features like short duration of life and progressive decay, but Āryāvarta could change its borders, because it depended on cultural structure and, in the Brahmanical view, continuity of lineages within the *varṇa*s, which is not the same as the modern concepts of nation and ethnicity. This fact can be due to the original meaning of *ārya*, that indicated the son of a freeman, a noble, rather than the member of a specific ethnic group. It was an essentially social concept, and the social structure of the three classes of the *ārya*s with the class of *śūdra*s, with all

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[63] See e.g. VP 2.1; KūrmP 1.38.

its rules and duties, was the cultural identity of Brahmanical India. In Buddhist and Jain contexts the linguistic aspect was apparently more important, and the distinction between Āryas and non-Āryas in worldly terms was based on language.

The modern concept of India or Bhārata, instead, goes beyond language distinctions, it includes speakers of Indo-Aryan, Dravidian, Munda and Tibeto-Burman languages, and it goes also beyond the traditional system of castes. It is based on common history and culture in a wide sense, which does not correspond to the ancient views. Sanskrit, the *ārya* language *par excellence* of Brahmins, of course has left traces everywhere in the country, including Dravidian languages, but is mainly a cultural point of reference that is also not shared with traditions of foreign origin. However, even before the arrival of Greeks, Śakas, Parthians, Huns, Parsis, Muslims and Christians, we have seen that unity was always a problem, except for a limited region of north India called *āryāvarta*, *āryāyatana*, *madhya-deśa*. Only in that core area, that seems to have its roots in the prehistorical cultures of the region between the Ghaggar/Sarasvatī river and the Ganges, a unity was felt and affirmed from the oldest attestations of Indo-Aryan culture. This concept should be considered by academic theories about Indo-Aryan migrations: if Indo-Aryans had come from the west in the 2nd millennium BC, it is not easy to explain why the land of the Āryas did not include originally the Indus valley, why Iranic peoples were not considered Āryas, although they used a similar designation, and why the relation with them appears to be completely forgotten. The fact that the *ārya* identity was placed in the central part of the Indo-Gangetic plain suggests a long development *in situ* instead of a recent invasion. Comparing the Iranic and the Indian tradition, we have the paradox of two lands of the Āryas that ignored each other, one in eastern Iran and central Asia,[64] the other in South Asia. The most likely explanation is that, like their language, they shared a self-designation *ārya/ariya* as free, noble and civilized people, but they were divided in a remote time, so that they forgot their relation and developed

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[64] The Iranic concept of a region of the Aryans is known to us through Strabo (15.2.1) as Ἀριανή (*Arianē*). He, citing Eratosthenes, placed it from the Indus river west to Carmania and the Caspian Gates, adding (15.2.8): "The name of Ariana can be extended [west] as far as parts of the Persians and the Medes and, to the north, the Bactrii and Sogdiani, since they are speakers of, by and large, the same language (*homóglōttoi*)." (Brunner 2004).

two different concepts of 'land of the Āryas'. Archaeology shows a cultural continuum between Iran, central Asia, Indus valley and northwest India from the Neolithic to the Bronze Age; in this continuum, the Bactria-Margiana and Harappan civilizations, although linked by trade relations, developed strong local identities, that could be the roots of Iranic and Indo-Aryan cultures. Bara-OCP culture was close to the Harappan civilization, and could represent the central Indo-Aryan culture, that of the Pauravas and Bhāratas, characterized by Brahmanical and Vedic traditions. In the post-Harappan period of Painted Grey Ware, the affinity was with the Gangetic valley, and the relation with the West was broken: the opposite of what was believed in the past, when PGW was associated with the Aryan invaders. At that time, the late Vedic period, the land of the Āryas was identified with the Doab and adjoining regions, and the far Iranic relatives had become foreigners and barbarians. Pargiter (1922: 300-302) and more recent Indocentric theorists have suggested that Iranians came from India, but also this is not supported by archaeology nor by the Avestan tradition. What is more likely is that both Iranians and Indo-Aryans had a long history in their respective countries, and it is clear that the Āryas of South Asia had completely identified with their land already in the Vedic period, so that every people coming from outside was equally foreign. Genetic studies on ancient DNA have shown so far that Harappans had mainly an Iranian farmer-related component mixed with an ancient ancestral South Indian component that became stronger with the spread towards south and east after the decline of the Indus valley civilization (Narasimhan et al. 2019). In this way, we can understand how there was a progressive fusion with other South Asian populations, and the bond with Bhāratavarṣa became indissoluble.

Chronology of the cited texts

The dating of ancient Indian texts is largely hypothetical, we present here a possible chronology of the main texts cited in the article in order to help the general reader:

Ṛgveda: 2nd mill. BC
Aitareya Brāhmaṇa: 800 BC
Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa: 700 BC
Nirukta: 5th century BC
Theravāda Vinaya: 4th/3rd century BC

Mahābhāṣya: 150 BC
Baudhāyana Dharmasūtra: 150 BC
Vāsiṣṭha Dharmasūtra: 1ˢᵗ century BC
Manusmṛti: 2ⁿᵈ/3ʳᵈ century CE
Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya: 2ⁿᵈ century CE
Divyāvadāna: 200-350 CE
Matsya Purāṇa: 200-500 CE
Mahābhārata: 4ᵗʰ century BC-4ᵗʰ/5ᵗʰ century CE
Mahāvastu: 2ⁿᵈ century BC-4ᵗʰ century CE
Abhidharmakośa: 4ᵗʰ century CE
Śrāvakabhūmi: 4ᵗʰ century CE
Vinayasūtra: 5ᵗʰ century CE
Paṇṇavaṇāsutta: 4ᵗʰ/6ᵗʰ century CE[65]
Amarakośa: 5ᵗʰ/7ᵗʰ century CE
Viṣṇu Purāṇa: 450 CE
Kūrma Purāṇa: 550-850 CE
Viṣṇu Smṛti: 700-1000 CE
Bhāgavata Purāṇa: 800-1000 CE
Kāvyamimāṃsa: 9th-10th century CE

Abbreviations

AdSPG II: Conze, E. (1974) *The Gilgit manuscript of the Aṣṭādaśasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitā, chapters 70 to 82, corresponding to the 6th, 7th and 8th Abhisamayas*, Serie Orientale Roma XXVI (Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente).

AiBr: Aufrecht, Th. (1879) *Das Aitareya Brāhmaṇa. Mit Auszügen aus dem Commentare von Sāyaṇācārya und anderen Beilagen*, Bonn. http://titus.uni-frankfurt.de/texte/etcs/ind/aind/ved/rv/ab/ab.htm.

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[65] Deshpande (1993: 9) dates this Jain work "about the 1st century BC", but the mention of Hūṇas among the *mleccha* peoples cannot be placed before the 4th century CE, when the Kidarites Huns invaded Bactria, and subsequently Gandhāra and parts of India, followed by Hephthalites or Alchon Huns who were repelled in the 6th century. Hūṇas are mentioned also in MBh 2.29.11; 2.47.19; 3.48.21; 6.10.64, and in VP 2.3.17 and KūrP 1.45.41 in the list of the peoples who live in Bhāratavarṣa.

AKBh: Pradhan, Prahlad (1975) *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam of Vasubandhu*. Patna: Kashi Prasad Jayaswal Research Center.

AN: *Aṅguttara Nikāya*, Pāli Text Society edition.

ChS: Chaṭṭha Saṅgāyana electronic edition of the Pāli Canon.

BauDhS: *Baudhāyana-dharmasūtra*. Typed and analyzed by Masato Fujii & Mieko Kajihara.
http://gretil.sub.uni-goettingen.de/gretil/1_sanskr/6_sastra/4_dharma/sutra/baudhd_u.htm.

BhP: *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*.
http://gretil.sub.uni-goettingen.de/gretil/1_sanskr/3_purana/bhagp/bhp_01u.htm

CPD: Trenckner, V. and Andersen, D. and Smith, H. (1924) *A Critical Pāli Dictionary*. Vol. I. Copenaghen: A.F. Høst.

Divy: Vaidya, L. (1959) *Divyāvadāna*, Mithila. http://gretil.sub.uni-goettingen.de/gretil/1_sanskr/4_rellit/buddh/divyav_u.htm.

DPPN: Malalasekera, G.P. (1937) *Dictionary of Pāli proper names*. London: Pali Text Society, retrieved at
http://www.palikanon.com/english/pali_names/dic_idx.html.

GarP: *Garuḍa Purāṇa*. Based on the edition Bombay: Venkatesvara Steam Press.
http://gretil.sub.uni-goettingen.de/gretil/1_sanskr/3_purana/garup1_u.htm.

KEWA: Mayrhofer, Manfred. (1956–1980) *Kurzgefasstes etymologisches Wörterbuch des Altindischen*. Heidelberg: Carl Winter.
KūrmP: *Kūrma Purāṇa*. Part 2. Input by members of the Sansknet project.
http://gretil.sub.uni-goettingen.de/gretil/1_sanskr/3_purana/kurmp2_u.htm.

Manu: *Manusmṛti*. Typed, analyzed and proofread by M. YANO and Y. IKARI.
http://gretil.sub.uni-goettingen.de/gretil/1_sanskr/6_sastra/4_dharma/smrti/manu2p_u.htm.

MatP: *Matsya Purāṇa*. Based on the ed. Calcutta: Caukhamba Vidyabhavan, 1954.
http://gretil.sub.uni-goettingen.de/gretil/1_sanskr/3_purana/mtp176pu.htm.

MBh: *Mahābhārata*. Electronic text (C) Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Pune, India, 1999.
http://gretil.sub.uni-goettingen.de/gret_utf.htm#MBh.

MN: *Majjhima Nikāya*, Pāli Text Society edition.

Mp: *Manoratha-puraṇī*, Buddhaghosa's commentary to the *Aṅguttara Nikāya*.

MSV I: *Mūlasarvāstivādavinayavastu*. Dutt, N. (1947) *Gilgit Manuscripts*, Vol. III, Part 1, Srinagar.

Mvu: *Mahāvastu*. Based on the ed. by Émile Senart, 3 vols., Paris 1882-1897.
http://gretil.sub.uni-goettingen.de/gretil/1_sanskr/4_rellit/buddh/mhvastuu.htm.

PatMBh: Patañjali's *Mahābhāṣya*, Based on the edition by F. Kielhorn (Bombay 1880-1885), revised by K.V. Abhyankar (Poona 1972-1996).
http://gretil.sub.uni-goettingen.de/gretil/1_sanskr/6_sastra/1_gram/pmbhasuu.htm.

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The Sharda Temple: An Ancient Archaeological Site in Neelum (Kishenganga) Valley

Rukhsana Khan

Abstract

This paper focuses the documentation of an ancient archaeological site: the Sharda Temple in Neelum (Kishenganga) Valley, Azad Jammu & Kashmir. The study is based on field survey, exploration and salvage excavation carried out by this author during 2013-15 under the umbrella of Taxila Institute of Asian Civilizations, Quaid-i-Azam University Islamabad. This research is based on field notes, findings, temple plans and original drawings by the author. Temple is located in a conflict zone, making it inaccessible to researchers and archaeologists since 1948. Prior to political division of State of Jammu and Kashmir, the Sharda temple had remained a significant icon of the Neelum (Kishenganga Valley). The comparative study of the Sharda temple architectural style with other edifices of the region is part of this research. By thorough examination of its construction elements the paper intends to prove that this site was renovated or reconstructed during different phases of history. The findings during field survey, and cultural material unearthed through salvage excavation provide a firm base for further investigations on the subject.

Keywords: Sharda Temple, Neelum Valley, Hinduism

1. Introduction

The Sharda Temple is located in Tehsil Sharda, Neelum Valley, Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK). The Neelum Valley (Valley of Kishenganga) is spread on either side of the Neelum River (Kishen Ganga). At some places, the valley is politically divided by the Line of Control from Indian held Kashmir. In the west the lower Himalayan mountain ranges separate the Neelum Valley from Kaghan Valley, whereas the Babusar Pass joins

the latter zones with Gilgit Baltistan in the North (http://www.ajk.gov.pk, State Profile, accessed 15-8 -2016) (Map No. 01).

Before the partition of sub-continent in 1947 the Kishenganga Valley (present Neelum Valley) was part of Indian-held-Kashmir (IHK). The historical, socio-cultural legacy of the former State of Jammu and Kashmir is prevailing in ancient texts, travelers' accounts and historical archives. In these historical documents the Neelum- Kishenganga Valley is not mentioned as a separate entity, but it is described in the overall geographical context of the Kashmir (Bates 1873: 2-7; Neve 1945:152-153). In this study researcher uses both the post partition name, Neelum Valley, and its ancient name Kishenganga Valley according to context.

2. Location

The Sharda Temple is located in Tehsil Sharda, Neelum Valley, Azad Jammu and Kashmir. It is placed on the left bank of the river Neelum at the confluence of the ancient river Madhumati and river Neelum. The Kankotri or Surgun stream brings water of Saraswati Lake from the Narda Mountain, joins the river Neelum on the right bank, a few kilometers upstream from the place known as Sharda Sangam. The Sharda Temple is located on a high land facing south west from where one can view the whole of Sharda town including Narda Mountain in the north, and the cliff of Sericella fort in the south west. In the north the Neelum Valley road runs parallel to the river Neelum on the right bank and joins the Sharda village with Khel, Junahavi, Phalvi, and Gurez Valleys, Helmet, and Taobat, Kamri, Minimerg, and Burzal pass into Astor Valley. Towards the south, the same road links Dudnial, Dawarian, Lawat, Nagdar, Kern, Athmaqam and Teetwal downwards to Muzaffarabad, the capital of Azad Jammu and Kashmir.

3. Description

In 1882 when Aurel Stein started working on the chronicles of the kings of Kashmir, or Kalhana's *Rājataraṃgiṇī*, he became deeply interested in the ancient remains and the traditions of the valley. He reviewed Kalhana's work of 11th CE, which contains information about few archaeological sites in Neelum Valley. Being an archaeologist Stein described the temple

structure and its significance He also cited the routes and sacred places where pilgrims stayed and performed the rites before reaching the Sharda Temple for final bath rituals. The first ever planned archaeological exploration carried out by the Taxila institute of Asian Civilizations (TIAC) in Azad Jammu and Kashmir, was focusing on the Tehsil Sharda and Neelum Valley. The documented Sharda Temple and findings, including copper coins, a Ganesh sculpture, pottery fragments, terracotta pipes and miniature vessels, are described in the following pages.

The construction of the Sharda Temple is unique due to its material and architectural style, which is comparable to other stone edifices of Jammu and Kashmir. The architectural plan is a square room erected on a platform with one door facing west. The two columns on each side of the entrance door resemble the Doric style of the Greek architecture. The three-sided walls of the temple mirror the pyramidal *Shikhara* of the Kashmiri style of architecture. This kind of construction raised on high platform was extensively used in many parts of Kashmir and northern India (Brown 1940: 189-192). The southern, eastern and northern walls of the temple have a three-cornered design with extended details forming a pattern of a blind arch. The four-cornered pillars along two blind niches not only support and maintain stability but also keep the majesty of the huge edifice. These trefoil recess arches with giant three-cornered pediments follow the trabeated style of architectural construction (Neve 1993: 80-81) (Fig. 1-2).

The Sharda Temple had already lost its original roof in 1870, when Charles Bates visited the site, and the top of the temple was sheltered by a makeshift roof (Bates 1873: 338). The oldest photograph of the Sharda temple shows wooden planks joined together that had been placed on the top of the temple. This photo was taken by Aurel Stein in 1892 during his visit to Neelum Valley, and it was later published by Borden (officially Bodley's) library, United Kingdom (Pundit, Ashok, personal communication, May 4, 2015) (Figs 3-4).

The façade of the Sharda Temple again followed the beam and lintel style of construction in which two vertical stone slabs were placed on one horizontal stone. The remaining stone slabs on the uppermost rows of the walls, and the lintel stone, indicate that the Sharda Temple had a plane or pediment roof (Fig. 5). In Late Ancient times, the lintel style, wedge-shaped pediment roof and wooden structures replaced the stone

construction. The trabeated method of architecture implies a wedge-shaped roofing instead of a round or oval one, and it was extensively used in India before the Muslim era in the subcontinent (Croix 1991: 142) (Fig. 6).

The construction materials of the Sharda Temple are heavy dressed stone slabs, lime mortar and pebbles. Plaster filling and cement patches indicate that the renovation of the temple had taken place in the later periods. The construction material of the earliest phase of the Sharda Temple is actually a kind of schist stone, which was rare in the Valley. Later outer walls of the temple were altered for the display of cultic statues during the period of Jainism (Stein 1900: 287; Bates 1873: 383).

The double grand pillars of the Sharda Temple at the entrance are a combination of rectangular and square chiseled stone structures and the top stone attached to the roof is irregularly round. The southeastern door pillars of the structure are misplaced, which is also mentioned by Stein and Bates (*ibid.*). According to former researchers the two stone square pillars with single stone capital were present in the northern side but were lost in the southern side: they were probably lost with the demolition of the outer boundary wall of the temple (Fig. 7-8).

There is a trefoil arch chamber or cell which has a base shaft in the middle of the northern outer boundary wall. The chamber housed two *lingam*s of moderate size that indicate that the building was used as a Shiva cult site in different periods (*ibid.*; Khan 2014: 59). There is a gateway in the eastern fortified wall of the Sharda Temple, which was sealed permanently in later period with stones and river pebbles. That eastern doorway remained in the use of pilgrims during the performance of religious rites in the old days.

Interior of the Sharda Temple

The current state of the interior of the Sharda Temple does not show any ritual cult sculpture. There was still a stone slab in the Sharda Temple during the visit of Charles Bates in 1872. He mentioned an unpolished stone slab that lies in the middle of the temple floor with the design of a

Shri Chakra (Bates 1873: 339). But, during the visit of Aurel Stein in 1892, the stone slab was already missing (Stein 1900: 286-287).[1]

The outer gateway

There is an ancient structure, which is apparently a gateway of the Sharda Temple site, that can be approached by a stone slabs stairway. The 63 stone slabs stairs first lead towards this ancient entrance structure. The construction technique shows that the combination of round and quadrangular stones of this grand gateway structure is different from that of the main Sharda Temple. This gateway structure maintains a kind of earlier Gandharan (Greek) influence, which is reflected in the outer, blustered double grand pillar and a base shaft (Bates 1873: 339) (Figs 9-10). The stones of pillars are firmly fixed with each other from top to bottom. A close examination shows that a recess or socket is carved on each stone in different directions and joined with each other through tenons or cramps – a technique widely used in Gandharan architecture. The joinery construction technique provides strength to the structure to survive over the centuries (Fig. 11). During the 8th century CE, this building technique was also extensively used in Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh, India. The use of this technique still continues in various parts of Jammu and Kashmir with little change (Croix 1991: 141-142). This

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[1] In 2005, a scholar, Malcolm McEwen, visited again Sharda in the Neelum Valley. He was particularly interested in the stone slab of Sharda Temple, and on its connection with the *Shri Chakra*, as expression of a specific religious philosophy (McEwen 2009: 17-37). Moreover, nothing is descriptive regarding architecture of Sharda and other sacred sites in his commentary. The only focus of McEwen study was to explore the stone diagram of *Seri Chakra* in the Sharda Temple site. This stone slab is also known as Sharda *Khund* (water pond), and it is believed to be associated with a Hindu Goddess (*Sharika*) in the narratives of legends across the divide in Jammu Kashmir (Pundit, Omkar, personal communication, March 2, 2015). Traditionally, Kashmiri Pundits worshipped the deities in their natural forms like boulders, lakes and springs. It is believed that Goddess *Sharika* is inscribed naturally on boulders as a *Shri Chakra* smeared in vermilion color. It is widely reported that the *Shri Chakra* of Sharda Temple is in fact the *Shri Yantra*, means 'Place to visit' or pilgrimage to fulfill religious obligations (ibid.). This *chakra* symbol of Sharda temple reflects the reverence of Kashmiri Pandits for this site, who visited the temple prior to the division of 1948 in Jammu and Kashmir. The study upholds the historical records and myths related to the Sharda temple heritage site in Neelum valley.

gateway structure has exposed two trefoil niches which remained in use for placing oil lamps, figures or other objects of rites in olden days.

There is a possibility that the gateway could be part of earlier structure most probably from Buddhist period. It is possible then that the outer gateway belonged to ca. 4th CE, or at least that was built before to the construction of the Sharda temple. The major structure of this gateway appears to have been destroyed due to human vandalism or natural calamity. On the southern side along the Madhumati river about hundred meters away from main temple structure, there should be another structure, possibly connected to the temple: a mound which features a cluster of stones partially visible under debris.

Addendum: A short comparative study

The architectural characteristics of Sharda Temple are comparable to the Martand Temple in Srinagar, Kashmir, which was constructed during the reign of King Lalitāditya in 8th century CE. The period of king Lalitāditya (724-760 CE) was revolutionary in terms of the architecture of Kashmir, when he introduced both Brahmanism and Buddhism related religious buildings (Brown 1940: 189-192). It can reasonably be inferred that the Martand Temple followed the architectural traditions of the Sharda temple. The style of the Hindu temples evolved from 5th to 10th century CE. The basic projected square plan of the typical temple consisted of an entrance framed with an elaborate doorway and a circular path closely connected to the *Nagara* style of architecture (Meister 1979: 204; Ahmad and Samad 2015). The *Nagara* style of architecture was applied for the construction of Hindu temples in north India and Kashmir area. That happened when Buddhism was slowly replaced by Hinduism starting from the 4th-5th century CE, and subsequently, many Buddhist shrines were heavily modified and converted into Hindu temples (Meister 1979: 204; Ray 1969: 45). Another popular style of architecture in Kashmir was the *Vesara* style, which was also employed for the construction of temples in the Salt Range, Punjab, Pakistan (Brown 1940: 185-188) in the later period of cultural and political collaboration (Hakal et al. 2018: 73-74).

The Sharda Temple is also comparable with the Mandhol Temple in District Poonch, Azad Jammu and Kashmir. It is a quadrangular shrine, with an eastern opening door and *Shikhara* design on the other three walls.

Besides Kashmiri *Shikhara* design, the temple reflected also the late Gandhara style echoed by its peculiar Greek elements. The grand columns and pillars are ornamented in Corinthian style with elaborate design of acanthus leaves. This highly decorated style was developed around the 5th century CE, which is also considered as a supportive element for the façade and roof (Neve 1993: 81-82). The Burand Temple complex ruins in Kotli and Deera Temple, Rawalakot, Azad Jammu and Kashmir, are a continuity of the Sharda Temple architecture style in Neelum Valley.

4. Finds

Ganesh sculpture

A Ganesh head in grey schist stone is unearthed in the adjacent area of Sharda Temple during digging in the fields by a local farmer. The head has documented by research team of TIAC during field survey 2015. It is in fragmentary form and from the examination of its ventral side it seems that it might have been detached from some sort of panel. Most probably the head looks as if detached from the pillar's capital. The trunk of the elephant rises towards the upper side and the figure appears to be decorated with ornaments. The carving reflects the use of refined craftsmanship. The skillfulness is visible from the treatment of various parts. The minor details of the eyes and trunk were expertly done (Fig. 12a, b).

Coins (Fig. 13)

Four copper coins were discovered from the surface of the temple during the survey. Three of the coins were found on the north-western wall of the temple, while the fourth coin was discovered near the south-eastern wall of the Temple. One of the coins (probably Shahi) looks like it bears an image of the goddess Ardoxsho of "Kushana style" of the second century CE (precisely 140–180 CE) with Brahmi legend *Sr Ja<ypaladeva?>* on the obverse and a standing figure of "Kushana style" on the reverse (Fig. 13). The remaining three coins belong to the Islamic period i.e. one to the Ghaznavids (? - 10th century CE) with Arabic legend *Muhammad*, the

other belongs to the Shah Period (14th century CE) with Persian legend *Shah*. The fourth coin is badly defaced and the legend thereon is not legible.

Terracotta Bricks and Pipe

A large number of terracotta bricks in fragmentary and deteriorated condition have been collected from the surface of the site and the nearby areas of the Sharda Temple. The bricks probably belonged to the earlier building at this site that might have belonged to the Buddhists, e.g. monastery, etc.

A terracotta pipe (l. 25, w. 9 cm, th. 2cm) is in fragmentary form and the preserved portion is in good state. The terracotta pipe is red and slightly sandy in texture and there are rope designs on the exterior and interior surfaces of it. Beside the terracotta pipe a good number of red ware potsherds, plain and simple, of various shapes and sizes have been collected from the surface and slopes near the Sharda Temple.

5. Conclusion

It is a well-established fact that the Sharda Temple in Neelum Valley is a wonderful piece of architecture belonging to the Late Ancient or Early Medieval architectural style of Kashmir, ca. 8th century CE. Our field research revealed though the existence of earlier architecture. One of these remains is certainly linked to the outer gateway, which shows architectural and technical features distinct from the Temple itself. The collected cultural material (terracotta pipes, bricks, coins, pottery fragments) is still too poor to confirm an earlier chronology. There is an urgent need of further exploration and excavation in the parts external to the Temple so to complete the assessment of the cultural profile of this important archaeological site.

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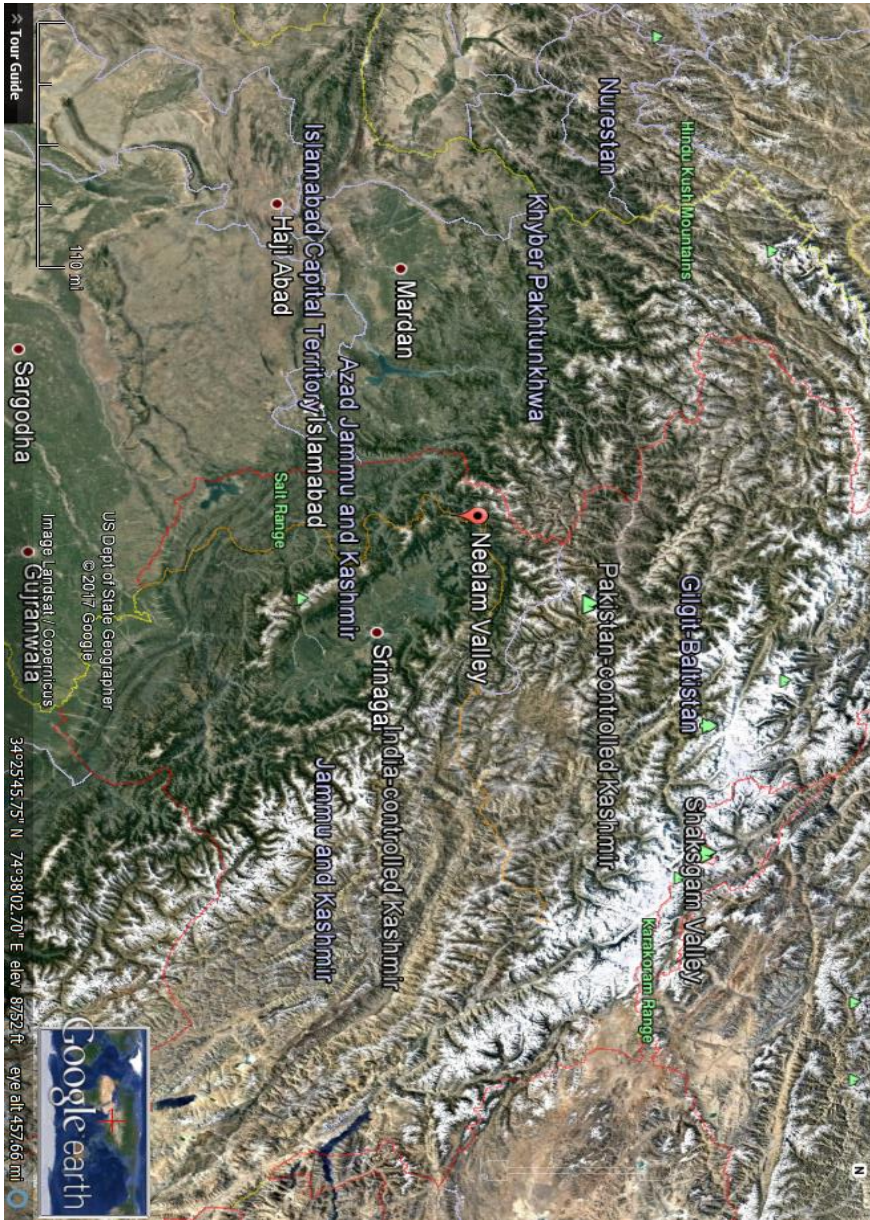
Map 1- Neelum Valley, Azad Jammu & Kashmir (Source: Google Earth Pro)

Fig. 1 - Front view of the Sharda temple (photo by the author).

Fig. 2 - Side view of the Sharda temple (photo by the author).
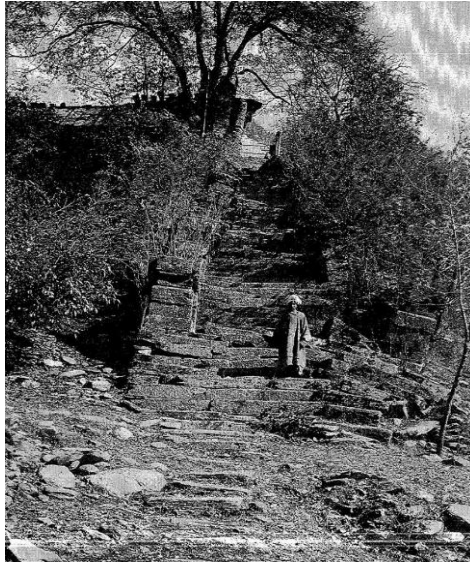
Fig. 3 – An old photo of the Sharda Temple steps
(elaborated by the author).
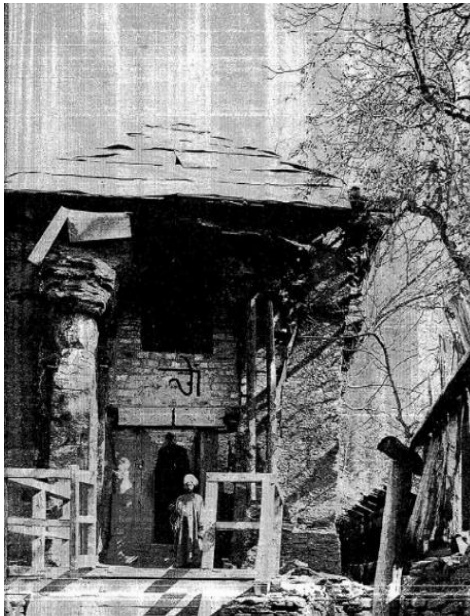
Fig. 4 – An old photo of the Sharda Temple with roof top (elaborated by the author).
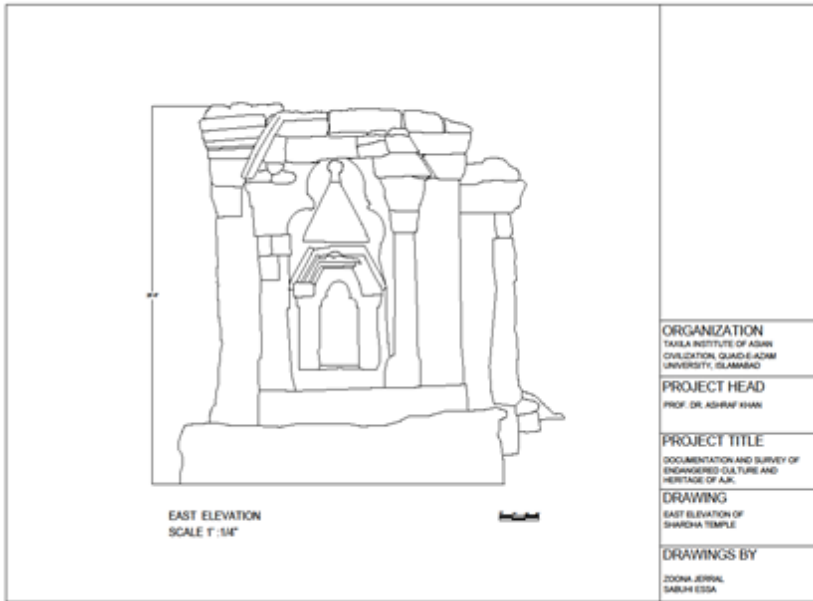
Fig. 5 - East elevation drawing of the Sharda Temple (drawings by the author).
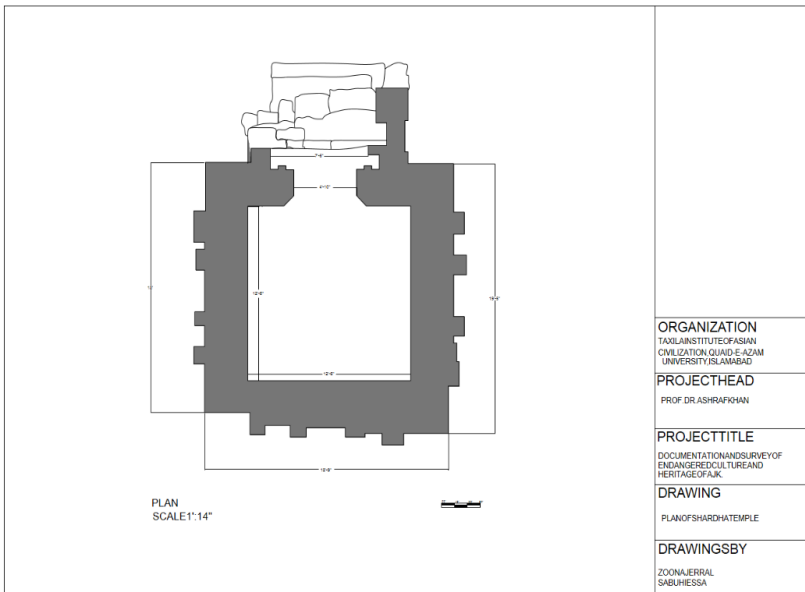
Fig. 6 - Plan of the Sharda Temple (drawings by the author).
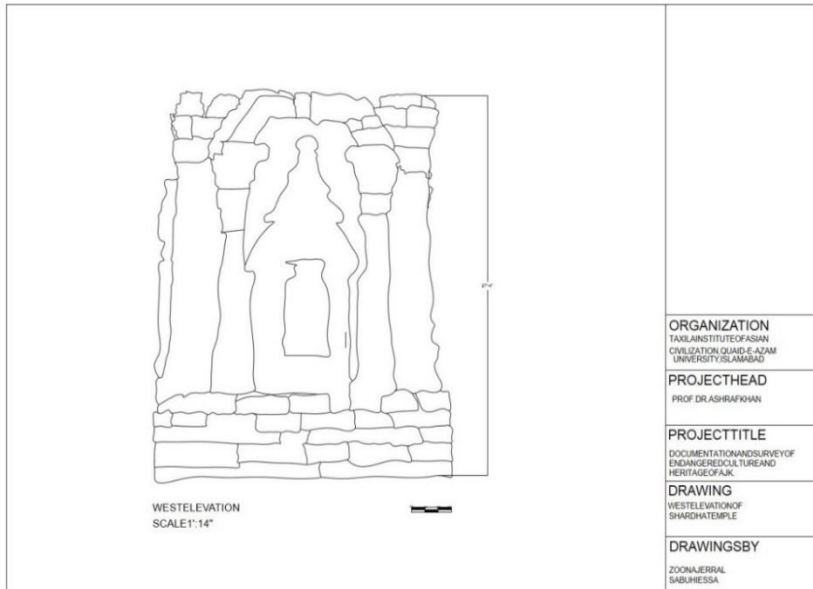
Fig. 7 - Western elevation of the Sharda Temple (drawings by the author).
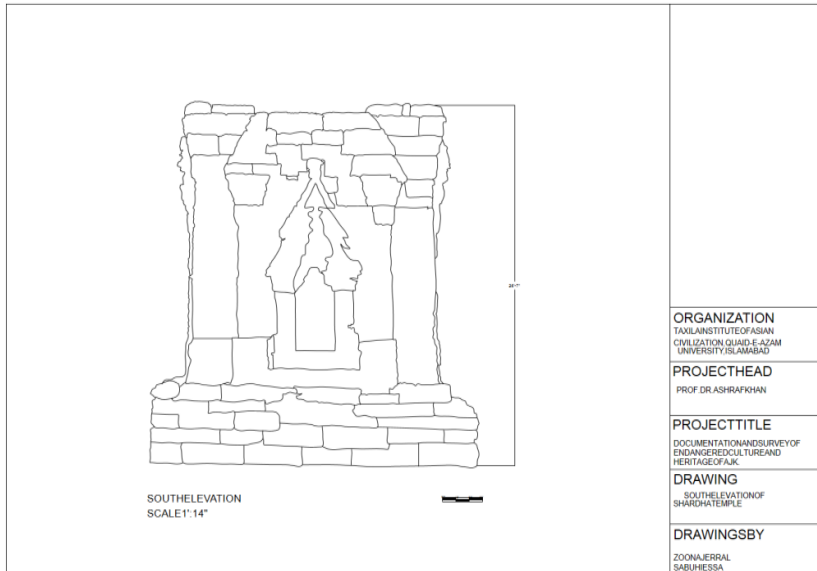
Fig. 8- Southern elevation of the Sharda Temple, Neelum Valle.y
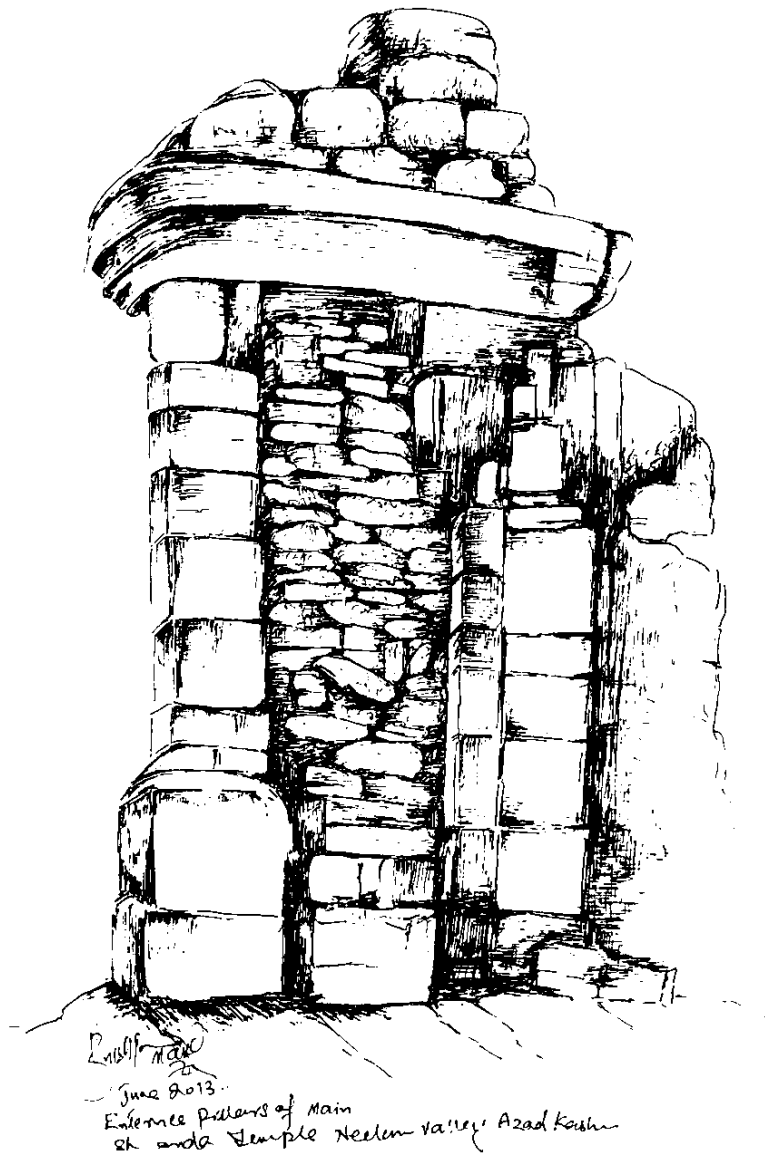
Fig. 9 - Reconstruction of the Temple, Neelum Valley (drawings by the author).

Fig. 10 - Main stairs of the Sharda Temple (photo by the author).
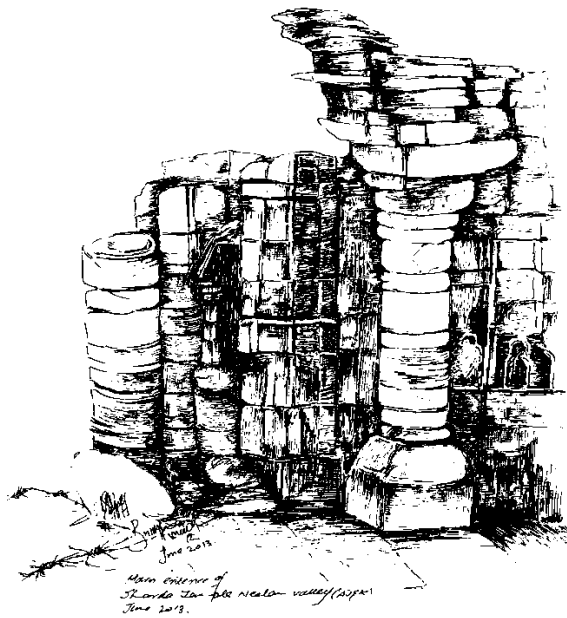
Fig. 11- Sharda Temple entrance (drawings by the author).
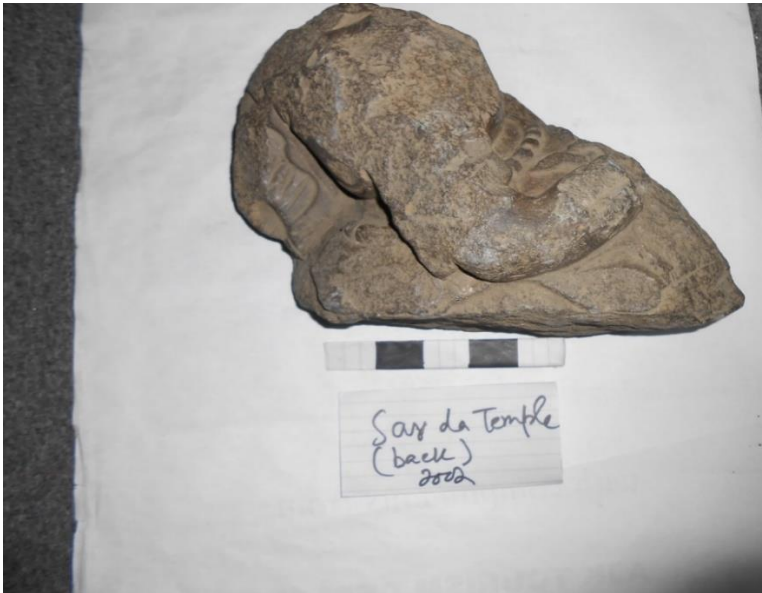
Fig. 12a - A head of Ganesh from Neelum Valley (photo by the author)

Fig. 12b - Sketch of Ganesh head from Neelum Valley (drawings by the author)

No.	Coin	Obverse	Reverse
1	Material: Copper Weight: 10.1 gm Dia:2 cm Period: 10th-11th century CE Description. Obverse: Enthroned Ardoxsho ("Kushana" style?) Brahmi legend *Sri Ja….* Reverse: Standing figure ("Kushana" style)		
2	Material: Copper Weight: 6.4220 gm Period: 8th Century CE Description Obverse. Arabic legend … *Muhammad …* Reverse. *Fisanah,* date probably ca. 8th-11th CE		
3	Material: Copper Weight: 5.3703 gm Period:14th Century CE (Islamic Period) Description Both sides of the coin are defaced and unclear		
4	Material: Copper Weight: 0.6281 gm Period: 14th Century CE (Islamic Period) Description Obverse. Arabic legend *Shah...* Reverse. Defaced		

Fig. 13 - Copper coins (surface collection from Sharda temple).

The Mausoleums of Collective Burials in Ghizer District, Gilgit-Baltistan (Pakistan)

Mueezuddin Hakal

Abstract

Burials normally provide a unique set of data, with varying attributes depending on time and space, normally help us to explore the cultural complexities, mainly connected to belief systems in societies. It is an attempt here to elucidate a unique collective burial culture, with evidences from the surveyed villages of District Ghizer in the northern mountain areas of Pakistan, now known as Gilgit-Baltistan. This essay attempts to study the explored data with the indication of their presence among the graves of Islamic period, and with historic reference to the emergence of Islam in this region around the sixteenth century. Moreover, an effort is offered here to better understand the cultural continuity of this tradition with one of the contemporary Islamic burial styles in Ghizer and Hunza Districts. This study is offered here in four main parts, leading towards the conclusion of study. The first part introduces the research, mainly focusing on the nomenclature, previous studies, and academic visits to Ghizer, revealing new sites of this burial type. The second part deals with the geographical expansion of this burial culture and elaborates the architectural features. The third part deals in the descriptive study of the structural remains. The fourth part focuses over the development of mausoleums and offers the study of cultural connection of this tradition with one of burial type in this area that continues till now.

Keywords: Collective burials, Ghizer, Gilgit-Baltistan, Mausoleums

1. Introduction

It is always a unique cultural phenomenon to have a structure for collective burial, in any part of the world. However, it appears occasionally in the history among the smaller groups, as it appeared here

in the Northern mountain Areas of Pakistan, for a short period of time, more precisely in Ghizer and Chitral. This type of a collective grave probably for a family group buried together in fractional form in a monumentally constructed structure of almost square in plan is known as '*gumbat*' or '*bumbat*' in Punyāl Valley (Hakal 2016: 78). Such tombs are famous in Upper Gahkuch as *gumbat,* though, in other villages of Gurunjur and Gulapur they are known with *bumbat*. However, this name is entirely unknown in Yasin. Furthermore, *gumbati* or *bumbati* in Ṣinā language with suffix 'i' is giving a plural meaning. Either, meaningful word *gumbat,* or slightly altered *bumbat,* mostly appearing to be synonymous with 'dome' in Persian, as very common in the Islamic world of monumental burial (Hakal 2016: 78). Yet, architecturally, such burials are entirely different than any analogous structure in Islamic tradition. However, these tombs are comparable to the description (Shahab 2007: 428-429) of similar mausoleums at Imām Shāfi'ī in Qahira, Egypt, where the practice of collective burial continues in a tribal elite until now.

In previous investigations on the history and culture of this region, only a fragmentary information in parts was available about the tombs of this nature (Gufran 1893: 67, Ghulam Muhammad 1905: 121, Jettmar 1967: 69, Jettmar and Sagaster 1993: 123, Dani 1989 [Repr. 2007]: 164, Hakal 2015a). However, a scientific survey to Ghizer District, during the first quarter of the year 2014, offered new data to our previous uncertain understanding[1]. In this survey, the first of its kind was visited in the cemetery of the Badure clan at Upper Gahkuch, geographically located at X 36.15973 and Y 73.76652 in decimal degrees. Another, in the same village, at Jaṛau Malik graveyard, nearly at a kilometer to the northern direction from the former one, was next to it (X 36.16794 and Y 73.77222 degrees). Next, one more called Ḍom-rā in the village cemetery of Bubur, can be located at X 36.13993 and Y 73.87093 degrees, helped in clarifying the rising confusions during field activity. Furthermore, a cluster of thirteen examples of such kind of burials in Gurunjur (X 36.16707 and Y 73.40801 degrees) confirmed its antiquity. While revisiting Upper Gahkuch, with the objective to know more about its

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[1] This exploration based research was conducted for the partial fulfilment of PhD Degree in archaeology from University of Peshawar, which was part of author's dissertation (2015), later published as a book (2016). However, this paper has been presented here again with some updates and requied changes.

archaeological significance, one more example connected to the village road, near the modern graveyard (X 36.23405 and Y 73.43793 degrees) was discovered. Nani mo-Ziyārat – which means "mother's shrine" – in Yasin town, is situated at X 36.36594 and Y 73.33228 degrees. Another grave of this kind mentioned by Ghulam Muhammad (1905: 52-54) in Gulapur, namely *Thosho-ei Bumbat*, let us understand the geographical expansion. Thus, more than twenty examples of such graves, from eight different localities, attest it to be a formal style of burial in this area. (Fig. 1)

2. Geographical expansion and architectural features

Upper Gahkuch, located above the lower town of Hōl—now the Head Quarter of District Ghizer and Tehsil Punyāl—has not less than three examples of such mausoleums. Gurunjur is located at around six kilometers to the east of the principal town, across the bridges over the river Hanisārī, there is the largest graveyard of such burials with thirteen mausoleums built in one area. At Bubur, located next to Gurunjur, on the opposite side of the road leading to Gilgit from Gahkuch or on the left bank of the river, there is another example of its kind, standing among the graves of Islamic model. Furthermore, at thirty kilometers on the road towards Gilgit from Gahkuch, there is another example at Gulapur. A mausoleum of this kind located in Gupis Town, at a distance of thirty kilometers to the west of Gahkuch; and at proper Yasin, in the Yasin Valley, nearly at a distance of thirty five kilometers from Gupis; marks the wider geography of this burial culture in Ghizer District. Similar graves are also recorded by Ghufran (1893: 67) at Proper Chitral, are known with reference to the Raisān, ruled Chitral and Ghizer before the Kaṭurs, called Gumbate Raisān. Thus, the tradition of this burial covers the mountain areas of Ghizer and Chitral. In Ghizer, it expands from Gupis and Yasin to Gulapur. The eastern limit of this burial tradition is marked by an example, at Gulapur, while its western limit seems to be located in Chitral. The concentration of such evidences, however, is higher at Punyāl, more precisely at Gurunjur.

Such tombs are built with the following characteristic features. All the mausoleums are in the graveyards of the Islamic period. They are erected on a square plan, constructed in alignment with the North. They

have burial room below, and its replicating superstructure right above at the ground level, was possibly used for the rituals.

Walls are normally constructed with stones and plastered with mud mortar. Niches for depositing the bones are provided underneath the eastern and the western walls in the lower burial room. The roofs of the lower burial rooms are made of wood and clay slurry is plastered over. The concept of providing wooden cribbage to structure is marked by the usage of wood in the construction of niches and interconnected rafters at the top of the burial room, underneath the planks. The wood used in the roofs is normally of the juniper (*Juniperous marcocarpa*), locally called *chilī* in Ṣinā and *gal* in Buruśaski, is the sacred tree in local myths. The planks of approximately 7 centimeters thick, varying in width, length according to the size of a grave (average 5 meters) are arranged in the east-west alignment.

The entrance to the upper room is provided from the south, normally. However, in the southernmost portion of the roof, planks are arranged in opposite direction (north-south) to the former for its easy re-opening, as we have the evidence at Ḍom-rā. A door is rarely provided: the unique example, at Gurunjur (grave 3), belong to a structure which is slightly different from the other mausoleums constructed with fixed steps. Though, in the absence of the fixed steps, normally constructed with stone, probably wooden stairs or ladders (removed at the burial time [?] or now perished) were used to enter the dead body into the lower burial room of the tomb.

3. Details of collective burials

One of the sites of such mausoleums in Upper Gahkuch is in the burial ground of Badurē clan, can be reached by crossing narrow streets to the southern slope from the road, in the southern terraced fields and orchard areas of Upper Gahkuch. In the whole graveyard there is single *gumbat*, located in the north-eastern corner of this cemetery.

This grave in Upper Gahkuch is exposed by the broken roof of the lower burial room (Pl. 1). The burial house is square in plan and its size is 6.5 by 6.5 meters. This square house is aligned to the cardinal directions, seems to be constructed, keeping the rising and setting of the sun or the true north in view.

This burial house has two rooms built in cobblestone: the burial room is the underground portion (basement); the upper room, at the ground level is the first floor. Only the partially intact structure of the upper room, is visible at the ground level. The depth of the lower burial room is uncertain, however, can be estimated from 1.5 to 2 meters. Interconnected rafters are placed over the walls of the lower burial room, in order to provide support to the structure, to hold the weight of the upper room and to give even base to place planks above.

The cemetery of Jaṛau-Malik is full of scattered Islamic graves. This graveyard is located above a cliff, which demarcates the lower town of Hōl and the upper village of Gahkuch. In the rock of the cliff, very near to this graveyard, there is a cave with scattered human bones inside is known as Jaṛau Malik. Among these graves of the Islamic period, there is a trench of 4.9 by 5.4 meters, visible with collapsed wooden roof, and walled around (Pl. 2). There are evidences of thick deposit of soil over the grave, must be the remnants of superstructure constructed over the lower burial house. It was also constructed parallel to the true north. The depth of the grave is difficult now to be established on actual grounds. The walls are constructed in proper plan of cobblestone. Top of the lower burial room is bordered by the wooden frame of rafters. The remnants of thick wooden planks are in the east-western alignment, over the grave.

On the road in Upper Gahkuch, near the modern village graveyard and close to the modern Health Center, there is another mausoleum of this kind (Pl. 3). The structure is in a compound of orchard connected to the road, leading towards the core area of Upper Gahkuch. Inside the lower burial house of the mausoleum, is growing a tree of *Prosopis juliflora* or Kikar (Acacia Karoo) (Pl. 4). Two walls of the upper house are intact, however, the remaining two are now removed, only their foundations can be clearly seen.

In Gurunjur, the *bumbati* graves are located, at the village cemetery (Pl. 5 to Pl. 13) in the western portion of the village. The scattered structures of mausoleums stand over the alluvial deposit, underneath the human remains of the early historic period are recently discovered (Hakal 2014: 141-151).

There are two ways to approach this site: firstly, from the track diverges from Kānćhi Bridge; and secondly, from the wooden bridge leading to the core of the village. Some of the elders remember that most

of the graves were single storied and some of them were also double storied. Now, it is difficult to determine their floors, due to their bad condition of preservation.

There are thirteen examples of such tombs (Fig. 4) located in the same place, possibly the largest concentration of such kind of burials in the region. The whole group of graves can be classified into four sets, based on their location and grouping of construction: set 'A' consists of three graves, lined together numbered 1, 2, and 3; set 'B' includes two adjacent graves at the northern side of set 'A' numbered 5 and 6; set 'C' comprises two more structures, only touching their corners, their number in series is 8 and 9; and the graves included in the fourth set 'D' consist of six scattered tombs, numbered as 4, 7, 10, 11, 12 and 13.

The first among the three examples of set 'A' consists of two components: first, the proper structure of the grave, and second, the portico in the front (Pl. 7 and Pl. 8). The function of the frontal portico is quite difficult to determine, maybe it was a platform for exposing the dead bodies. Grave 1, right behind the frontal portico, has the size of 4.9 by 4.5 meters. The structure is provisionally placed as the second earliest among the whole thirteen graves. This mausoleum, built with cobblestone, with the opening from the southern side, consists of two portions: first the burial underground room below was covered by the wooden planks (now broken) placed on the base of interconnected rafters and second the upper room at the ground level. The current condition of preservation of these graves is very bad.

The next tomb in the same set is numbered 2 (Pl. 9). The size of grave is 4.9 meters on the northern, western and southern sides, but the eastern wall (shared with grave 1) is 4.5 meters (Pl. 10). To the north-eastern corner, a rafter of eastern niche of lower burial room is visible. Like previous example, the current condition of preservation is disappointing.

The plan of third grave is perfectly square with (4.9 by 4.9 meters) (Pl. 11). This grave is possibly the earliest one, with its evidence of the door used to enter the dead bodies into the grave. The remaining structure is similar to the earlier mentioned examples, including masonry and the roof of burial room, which is also broken.

The two graves (no. 5 and 6) of set 'B', at the back of set 'A', are in better condition than the earlier mentioned three examples. The roofs of burial portion of graves are still intact (Pl. 12 and Pl. 13).

The remaining scattered graves in the surroundings, include the grave number 4, 7, 10, 11, 12 and 13. All of the graves have entrance at the ground level to the southern side excluding the tomb 12, which has the entrance in the eastern wall. In future, archaeological investigations on this site, particularly on the intact graves, can reveal more data about the origin, development and decline of this burial culture.

Ḍom-rā or Dong-rā (Fig. 2 and Fig. 3) can be reached through a jeepable road, in the eastern direction, across the bridge of village Bubur. It is located at the upper terrace of the graveyard area, in the eastern areas of the village.

The upper terrace of the village graveyard seems to be earlier than Islamic age, as it possibly hides the remains of an ancient settlement site. Thickness of cultural material is exposed by the dig on the Northern edge of the mound, clearly demarcates the stratum of more than a meter (Pl. 14). This cultural deposit is cut by several later graves of Islamic periods.

There are two prominent tombs among such Islamic graves, called as grave I and II. Grave I is located at the top of the mound of the upper terrace and it is larger in size (4.8 by 5.4 meters). Grave II, located behind the grave I, measures 3.3 by 4.2 meters.

The entrance provided to the grave I is on the southern side (Pl. 15 to 17). The grave was opened by the illegal diggers searching for antiquities (Pl. 18). At the ground floor, there are four chambers or niches for placing the bones under the eastern and western walls or two niches on each side: each niche is nearly 15 centimeters deeper than the floor level of the burial room (approximate width of niche is 50 centimeters, and the length of each is around 1.2 meters) (Pl. 20). Walls are plastered all around. The roof is constructed of wooden planks arranged in east-west alignment, over the interconnected rafters, which, according to the traditional technique of cribbage, are used for the support of stone structure, while clay slurry is plastered over.

Now, the bone materials of these graves are very deteriorated do not allow to understand the positions, sex and age of the bodies. However, the

picture of Jettmar (Pl. 19) marks that the heads were originally detached and lined against the northern wall.

In fact, when this grave was visited and documented by Karl Jettmar (1967: 70), it was almost intact (Pl. 16), and probably maintained by the tribesmen. Now the situation is completely different, only remnants of the walls are still standing, and the roof of burial room is missing.

This house for collective burial is located in the western areas of the town Gupis, at the graveyard of the Makān Khēl tribe, near a shrine (Pl. 21 and Pl. 22) surrounded by a wall of dry masonry (Fig. 5). The mausoleum is rectangular in plan, and its size is 7.0 meters to the east-west and 6.4 meters to the north-south. The superstructure is in bad condition of preservation and the only intact wall is that to the southern side. The walls are constructed with sun dried bricks, which is a different material of construction among the so far known examples.

At the location of Nani-mo-Ziyārat (Pl. 23 and Pl. 24) in the central town of Yasin, connected to the Yasin Pirs' cemetery – inside a compound wall – at village, there is another mausoleum of the same kind. This house for the collective burial was exposed by the locals in early 1990s. They claim that half of the skeletons were buried, and half were exposed. The characteristic features are the same to the examples in Punyāl area: square in plan, aligned to the true north, whose size is 3.1 meters at each side. However, the lower burial room is different than the exposed example at Bubur. It is only with two niches, one under both the eastern and western walls.

At Gulapur, in the opening of Ghizer valley, another specimen of such mausoleums is also situated, called *Thusho-ei Bumbat*. As per the details mentioned by Ghulam Muhammad (1905: 120-121) its size is 5 yards (4.57 meter) square and 9 feet (2.74 meters) high. This grave is associated with the tradition of the family of Wazir Thosho, a wealthy man of this area who challenged his master Badshah (?), the *Mehtar* of Yasin. In short, this rebelled Wazir of Gulapur was killed by the king with his faithful sons, after several setbacks in earlier attempts, through bribing one of his sons named Hakim Beg and torturing his younger brother Kushal Beg, later installed at the position of Wazir at Gulapur.

4. Growth of mausoleums

The entrance provided to grave 3 (Pl. 11) at Gurunjur marks its uniqueness amongst the mausoleums. This uniqueness helps us to consider this grave provisionally as the earliest (?) evidence of this burial tradition, which copies a model of a living room. The components of this tomb include plastered walls, roof, door, different positions for different family members according to their age and sex. The door to enter this grave open to exterior, therefore, can be sealed from the external side. Certainly, the dead bodies were brought from this door to keep them inside for the decay or after the decay (?). Anyhow, such a practice to provide a door to the grave must fail, because, such door cannot stop neither the beasts, nor the putrefying smell of decaying bodies. Undoubtedly, as a result of the failure of this experiment, another practice of keeping the skylight with the fixed steps or portable stairs to southern side seems to be introduced, as a replacement for a door. We can see this model in all the mausoleums of this kind everywhere in Ghizer. The grave 1 at Gurunjur (Pl. 8), is constructed after the earliest, which clearly shows the human experience and evolution in the burial tradition. The space between them was occupied by the construction of the third 'grave 2' (Pl. 9). The remaining intact graves conceal the story of their development and the decline of this culture. Most probably, when the period of transition towards Islamization over, the orthodox principles were introduced and individual graves emerged in Ghizer as per the Islamic guidelines. However, this new grave for every individual continued to influence by keeping of the skylight as an entrance to the Islamic grave, as it was similar in *gumbati* mausoleums. (Fig. 6)

  Our contemporary style of burial covers the scope of basic concepts of orthodox approach in Islamic tradition: the grave is constructed in orientation to *qibla* or Ka'ba by closing nearly 80 percent of the burial pit with provided walls of dry masonry by covering with stone slabs and keeping a square skylight opening in the extreme southern portion, right before the burial of the deceased. This skylight becomes the entrance to grave for entering the dead body. Usually, two men support for placing the dead body inside the grave: first person standing at the skylight entrance passes the body to the second person kneeling inside the grave. A person inside the grave places the body by turning his head to the right

towards the *qibla*, placing the left hand on the nave and the right hand of the dead person placed straight in parallel to the leg, while coming out from the grave dispels his foot impressions on the soil inside the grave. In addition to this, in Hunza, inside the grave of a person who dies on Wednesday an iron nail is dragged/placed, in order to seal the line of deaths in continuity after him, according to their local myths. The same is also made for a person belonging to the clan of Dhatusing-kutz, the flag holders of Hunza. People believe that if a person dies from this clan will take many with himself.

After the burial, usually on third day a cenotaph is constructed and later a wall is added around the grave at the ground surface called *panji*. This wall around the cenotaph is not unique to this area, also known in surrounding regions, but the rituals (Jettmar 1967: 71-72) performed after the construction of wall are exceptional.

The geographical expansion of this unique Islamic burial tradition includes all the areas of Ghizer, excluding the Wakhic or Ismā'ilis of Imit or upper Ishkōman. Wakhi speakers of Ishkōman do not perform the same and cover the pit grave with stone slabs after placing the body inside, which is common to the Muslim world. At Imit the Sunni population practice the tradition of Punyāl but not Ismā'ilis. Here at Imit majority of the Ismā'ilis are immigrants of Wakhan and Sunnism reached this area from the southern valleys particularly from Punyāl. Furthermore, Ismā'ilism when reached Hunza during 1820/30s the model of Islamic burial emerged in Punyāl was introduced also in proper Hunza. In Chitral this culture is not known among the Ismā'ilis. Thus, this practice is popular in Ghizer including Yasin, Gupis, Punyāl and partly in Ishkōman, and known among the Ismā'ilis of proper Hunza. This can be included as a type of pit burial in Islamic tradition, practiced alongside the type of *lahad*.

The unique type of pit burial in Ghizer and Hunza seems to be evolved on two grounds. Firstly, it continued the concept of skylight entrance for burial in *gumbati* mausoleums; and secondly, the grave covers the basic principles of pit burial in Islamic culture. In other words, the skylight entrance was the need of architecture in *gumbati* burials, whereas, it is not the requirement of pit grave of Islamic type. The concept of making the grave house-like before the conduct of burial seems to be

the influence of the *gumbati* burial model upon the model of Islamic tradition, as the continuation of vernacular style.

Ismā'ilism was introduced in Central Asia, due to a unique preaching of the *baṭinī* (esoteric) interpretation of Islam, by Nasir-e Khisrow (A.D. 1004 to 1077) and his disciples, centered in Yumgan, Khurasan and Badakhshan; extended to Gilgit region too with the invasion of Taj Moghul (Hunzai, 2004: 151). However, the archaeology of this region adds the hypothesis of Daftari (1998: 205) about dating the re-introduction of Ismā'ilism here during the Anjdan period, between 15th to 17th century A.D. (Daftari 1998: 170-177). It is connected to bringing of the renaissance in Ismā'ili preaching in Central Asia and India by Imām Mustansirbillah II (868 A.H./1463- 885 A.H./1480) of Nizārī line of Ismā'ilis, who dispatched several trusted *Da'is* to Central Asia, Afghanistan and Persia beside Indian subcontinent (Daftari 1998: 170-171). Thus, the Shi'i interpretation of Islam with the Ismā'ili model of Qāsim Shāhī Nizārī interpretation again reached Chitral, Ghizer and further expanded to the region of Hunza (Hunzai 2004: 152). This introduction of Islam probably forced the locals to change their burial customs. Thus, most probably a transitional model of burial tradition of *gumbati* (mausoleums) emerged during the said period between the unknown pagan funeral model(s) and the orthodox burial practices based on the Islamic principles.

5. Summary and conclusion

Based on the available data, gathered through field-oriented activities in the study area, it appears that one of our contemporary Islamic burial styles in this mountain area has been influenced by the earlier model of *gumbati* mausoleums. The evidences mark the three stages of transition towards the orthodox Islamization of burial practices in this area. Firstly, a mausoleum was constructed with a door to enter the dead. This system was replaced by the skylight to be sealed after the burial and the concept of keeping a space for re-opening emerged. Finally, with the decline of this culture, and with the introduction of the orthodox model of Islamic burial tradition in Ghizer, the concept of skylight continued in the succeeding burials. This development seems be existed for almost around a century somewhere between fifteenth and seventeenth century in this

region, marking the transition from pre-Islamic burial traditions to Islamization of this area. The inspirations from this culture appears to be continued in Islamic burials emerged in Ghizer and further reached Hunza through the preaching of the Ismā'ili tradition, probably centered in Punyāl.

Acknowledgement

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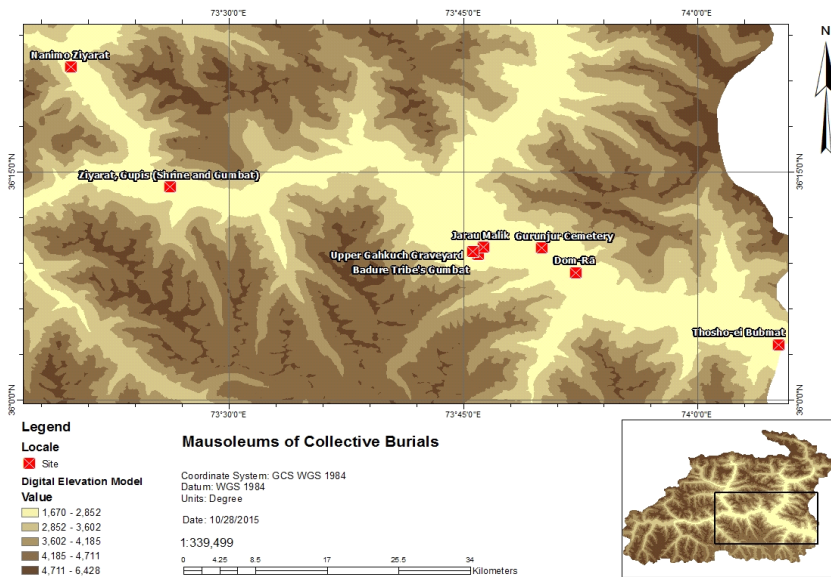
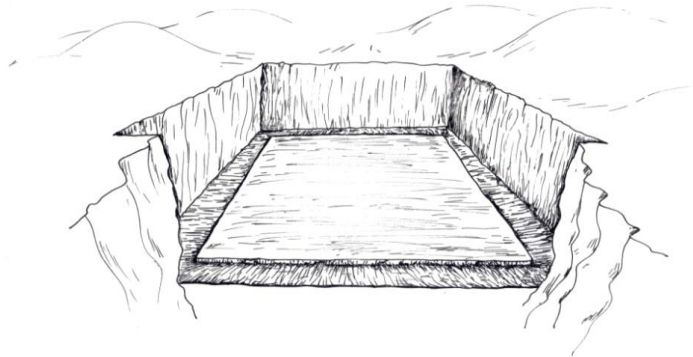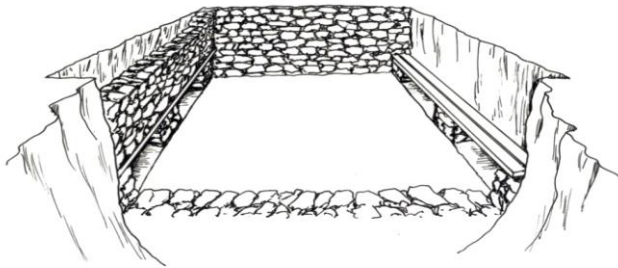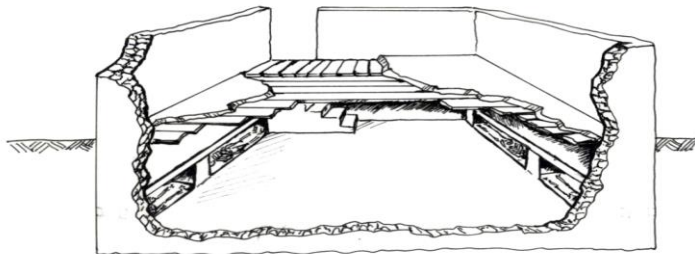Figs. 1a and 1b - Location maps of Gumbati mausoleums in District Ghizer.
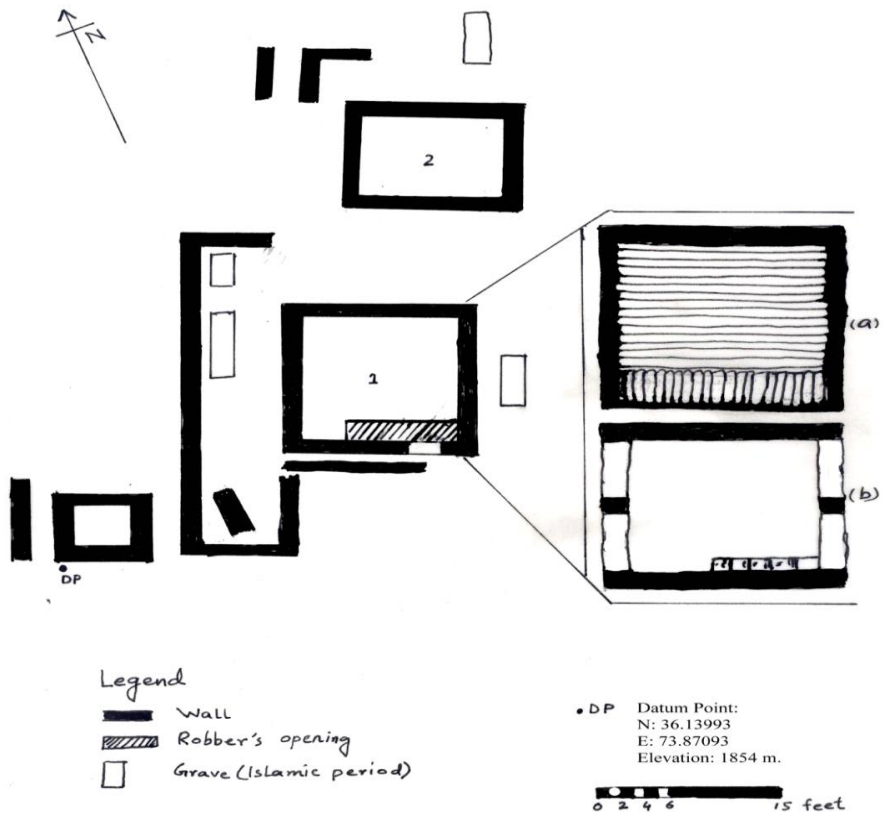
Fig. 2 - Bubur: Ḍom-rā, plan of complex; (a.) plan of central grave at ground; and (b.) foundation levels.

a.

b.

c.

Fig. 3 - Ḍom-rā: phases of construction, (a.) first phase (b.) second phase (c.) and third phase (courtesy Muhibuddin, not to scale).
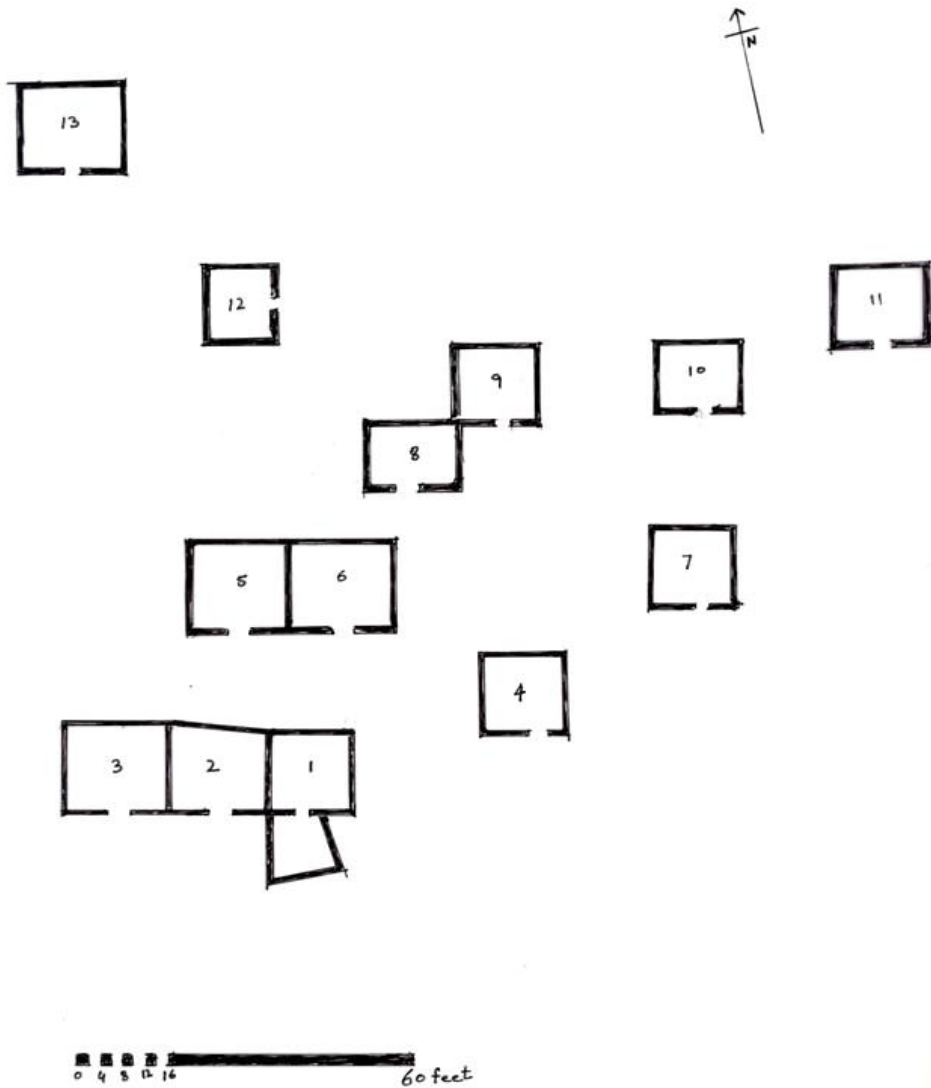
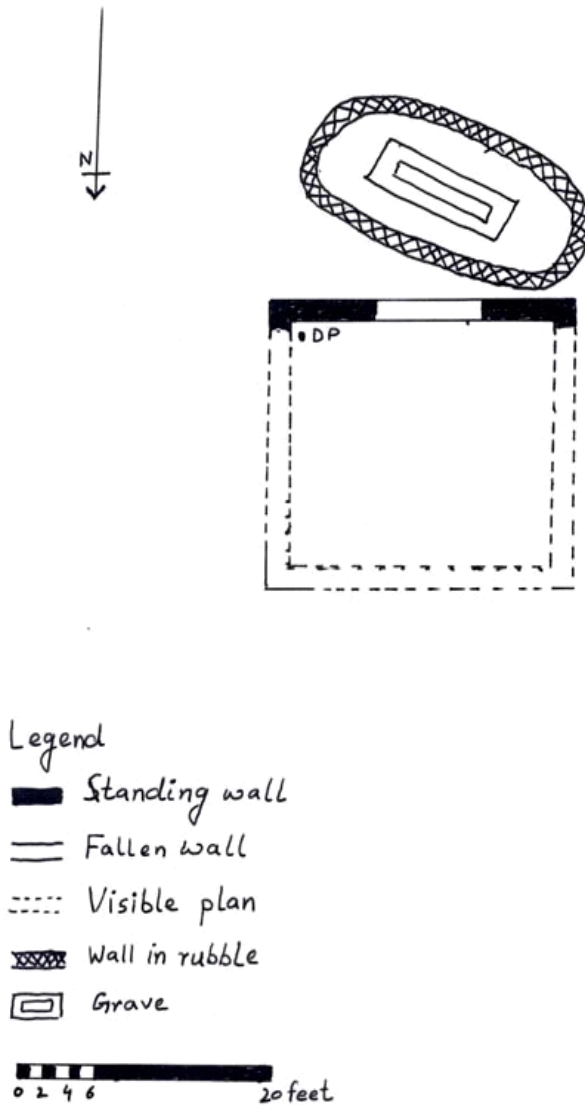Fig. 4 - Gurunjur: rough sketch of plan of cemetery of *bumbati* mausoleums 1-13.

Legend

■■ Standing wall

── Fallen wall

∷∷∷ Visible plan

▨▨ Wall in rubble

▭ Grave

0 2 4 6　　　　20 feet

Fig. 5 – Gupis: plan (rough sketch) of a *gumbat* and adjacent shrine.
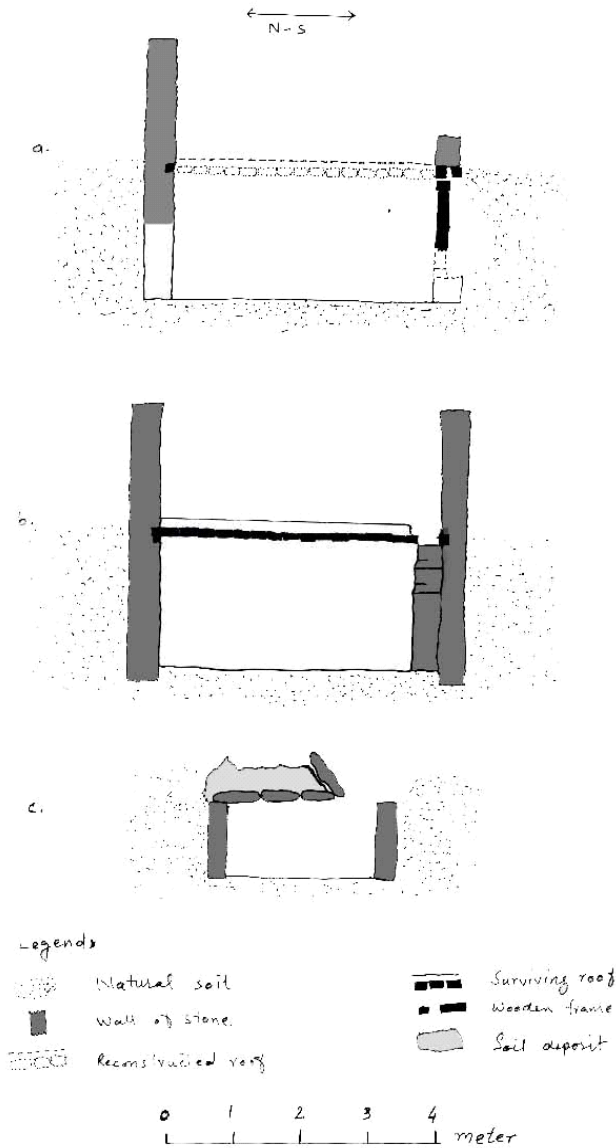
Fig. 6 - Roughly sketched sections showing the development in burial culture: (a.) Grave 3, Gurunjur (b) Ḍom-rā, Bubur (c.) our contemporary local style of Islamic grave, right before the burial.

Pl. 1 - Upper Gahkuch**:** a *gumbat* located in the graveyard of Badurē clan.

Pl. 2 - Upper Gahkuch: a *gumbat* at Jaṛau Malik graveyard.

Pl. 3 - Upper Gahkuch: a *gumbat* at the road side near the village graveyard (arrow shows the mausoleum).

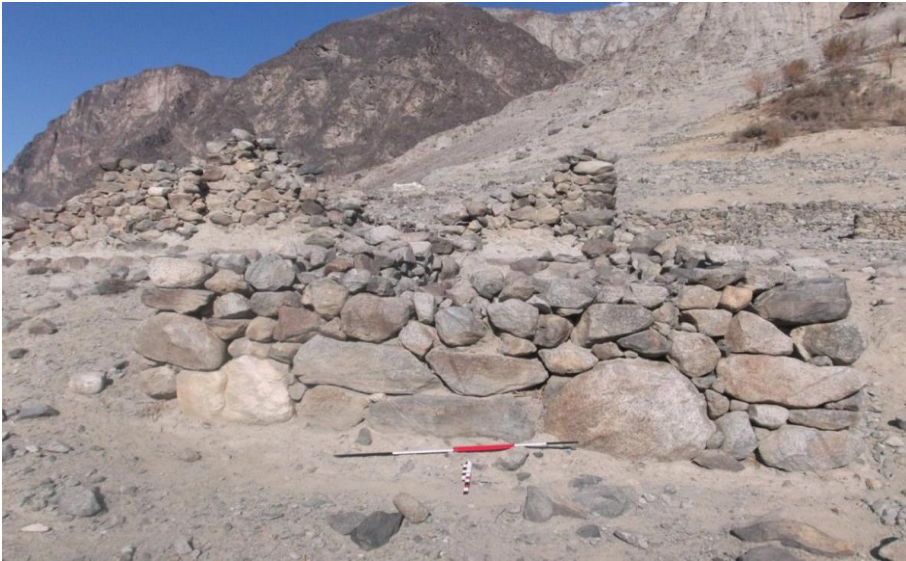Pl. 4 - Upper Gahkuch**:** interior of *gumbat* connected to road.

Pl. 5 - Gurunjur: a general view of cemetery of *bumbati* (mausoleums).

Pl. 6 - Gurunjur: a bird eye view of the *bumbati* mausoleums.

Pl. 7 - Gurunjur: exterior of grave no. 1.

Pl. 8 - Gurunjur**:** interior of grave no. 1.

Pl. 9 - Gurunjur: exterior of grave no. 2.

Pl. 10 - Gurunjur: interior of grave no. 2.

Pl. 11 - Gurunjur: interior of grave no. 3.

Pl. 12 - Gurunjur: exterior of grave no. 5.

Pl. 13 - Gurunjur**:** interior of grave 6.

Pl. 14 - Ḍom-rā, Bubur: cultural material deposit, nearly one meter thick.

Pl. 15 - Ḍom-rā: a general view.

Pl. 16 - Ḍom-rā: façade of mausoleum (after Jettmar 1967: fig. 12).

Pl. 17 - Ḍom-rā: façade, present condition of preservation.

Pl. 18 - Ḍom-rā: opening into the grave.

Pl. 19 - Ḍom-rā: interior of grave during 1964 (after Jettmar 1967: fig. 13).

Pl. 20 - Ḍom-rā: current condition of preservation of above side chamber or niche.

Pl. 21 - Gupis: a mausoleum attached to road leading to Yasin and Chitral.

Plate 22 – Gupis: attached shrine to the *gumbat.*

Pl. 23 - Yasin: mausoleum of Nani-mo Ziyārat.

Pl. 24 - Nani-mo-Ziyārat, Yasim: niche under the western wall.

In the memory of
Mohammad Abdul Shakur, B. A., M. R. A. S[1].

Muhammad Waqar

Abstract

After establishing the Archaeological Survey of India in 1861, the Britishers soon wanted to strengthen it by involving native people in it. For this they tried to train and later hired them on various posts. In the beginning of 20th century, Lord Curzon, Viceroy of India between 1899-1905, appointed Sir John Hubert Marshall as Director-General (1902-1928) of the Archaeological Survey of India, who served this department for a long period and made marvelous discoveries and established many museums throughout the Subcontinent. Similarly, Peshawar Museum was also amongst his achievements. Mohammad Abdul Shakur (late) was one of his followers in his early career. The present research paper is confined to the life and achievements of M.A. Shakur, one of the greatest and renowned archaeologist-cum-museologist of Pakistan. He remained the Curator of Peshawar Museum three times before and after independence of Pakistan. He holds many achievements to his credit in the field of archaeology and museum management. There is no doubt that M. A. Shakur had greatness in him, as a scholar, an archaeologist, a museologist and a man. No such study exists that outlines his life and works. This paper attempts to highlight his life, works and achievements.

Keywords: Peshawar Museum, Museums Studies, Archaeological Survey of India.

1. Birth, Childhood, Family and Education

Mohammad Abdul Shakur, also known as *Lala[2]* Shakur, was born in a village named *Dob* Hoti, district Mardan, on 1st January 1908. Later, his

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[1] Bachelor of Arts and Member of Royal Asiatic Society.

family shifted to Serai (Mardan). His father name was Muhammad Yousaf, of Afghan Yousufzai ancestry. He had four sons and six daughters. His eldest son Abdul Haq Afandi retired as Chairman Bannu Board, his second son M. Haroon is a Ph.D (Doctor) and a UK National, who retired from Queens College, London. His third son Dawood Kamal (late) retired as Draftsman from the Department of Archaeology, University of Peshawar. Dawood Kamal started his career with Prof. Dr. Ahmad Hasan Dani and worked with many renowned archaeologists during his service. His fourth son, Muhammad Luqaman retired as Tehsil Officer from local government.

Mr Shakur got his early education from his home-town and did matric from Government High School, Mardan in 1928, while his graduation is from Edwardes College, Peshawar in 1932. It is supposed that he was the first graduate in district Mardan in the year 1932. He acted as Editor of the college magazine for several years and a prefect of the college hostel. There, he won first prize for contributing to the college chronicle (MAPJ 1962: 50). He was member of the football and tennis teams during college life. Since student life, he had keen interest in archaeology and he utilized productively his holidays in getting lessons from the renowned archeologists and attending excavation at different sites i.e. Taxila. For such activities he was encouraged by famous archaeologists like Marc Aurel Stein[3] and Sir John Marshall during his early days. He died of heart-related illness on 8th November 1997 (*May Allah Bless His Soul in Heaven, Amin*) (Durrani, 1997). He is buried at *Syed Jalal Bukhari* graveyard, Mardan[4].

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[2] Elder brother in local *Pashto* language.

[3] Aurel Stein also remained as the first Curator in 1906-07 of Peshawar Museum and first Superintendent of the A.S.I Frontier-Circle in 1904. It is said that before leaving for Kabul (Afghanistan) where he died on 26th October 1943, Aurel Stein exchanged these last words with Shakur, "Shakur probably this is my last visit and I may never come back again".

[4] The author would like to express his utmost gratitude to Mr Majid Khan, his grandson (Federal Government employee) for providing all relevant information about the life and family of Mr Shakur for this research paper.

2. As an Archaeologist and his service in the Peshawar Museum

On completion of his education, he joined Peshawar Museum as a research scholar in 1932 and after two years extensive training he was appointed as Assistant Curator. Later he became the Curator[5] of Peshawar Museum in 1938. After eighteen years services in Peshawar Museum, he was selected by the Federal Public Service Commission for the post of Assistant Superintendent of Archaeology, but the Provincial Government did not spare his services to join the new employment. During 1957, he was taken as an Officer on Special Duty (Museums) by the Government of West Pakistan to prepare a scheme for the establishment of a Directorate of Museums and Libraries in West Pakistan. He was also assigned the charge to recommend and assist in drawing up a proposal for the development and re-organization of existing museums and libraries in West Pakistan (MAPJ 1962: 50). An Historical Exhibition, inaugurated by His Excellency Sir George Cunningham[6] in 1945, organized by the Government of North West Frontier Province about the 22nd Session of the Indian Historical Records Commission was held at the Victoria Memorial Hall during M.A. Shakur's tenure with the assistance of S. M. Jaffar[7] (Sen 1945: 18). He was awarded a Fulbright scholarship to do research work at FOGG Art Museum, Harvard University and won glorious remarks.

He was one of the oldest stalwarts in the field of museology and museum management. In his professional career, he worked with legendary figures in Indian Archaeology before the independence of Pakistan and India. He was known to everyone for taking active part in the planning and development of archaeology, museums and government committees in various capacities. He has been awarded several government awards before and after the independence of Pakistan. During his professional career, he was exposed to short-term training programmes in several prestigious institutions in U.K., U.S.A and Europe etc. He played a major role in the Italian contributions to Pakistan Archaeology after independence and closely collaborated with Dr. Ahmad Hasan Dani

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[5] He remained the Curator of Peshawar Museum for three times i.e. 1938-52, 1953-57 and 1958-63.

[6] Administrative and 1st Governor of North West Frontier Province (now Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) before and after partition of Pakistan and India.

[7] He also remained the Director of Peshawar Museum between 1964-70.

in setting up the Department of Archaeology, University of Peshawar, in 1962. He briefly served as a faculty member of the department after retiring from Peshawar Museum (Durrani, 1997). He also accompanied Dr. Ahmad Hasan Dani, when he discovered Sanghao Cave[8] in 1962 (Dani 1964: 01).

3. Contribution in the field of Museology (Museums Association of Pakistan)

Selfless, devoted and enthusiastic, Mr Shakur had been the General Secretary of the Museums Association of Pakistan since its inception in 1949. He nourished this Association in its embryonic stage and by his own efforts saw it grow into an effective and powerful organization in the service of the Pakistani Museums. In achieving this, Mr Shakur's contribution is worthy of all commendation (MAPJ 1962: 50). He organized a conference on Museums Association of Pakistan and his first meeting was held in the premises of Peshawar Museum, on the 10th April 1949, under the presidentship of the Hon'ble Khan Abdul Qaiyum Khan, the then, North-West Frontier Province Prime Minister. It was inaugurated by renown archaeologist and former Director-General Archaeological Survey of India Sir Mortimer Wheeler, the then Archaeological Adviser to the Government of Pakistan. M. A. Shakur (late) was the first Secretery of the Museums Association of Pakistan (Shakur 1949: 10).

He also initiated two short-term courses and a Diploma course in Museology in Peshawar Museum during the year 1955-56 for the first time. In these courses he also trained people from other departments to promote Archaeology and Museum studies in our country. During his tenure, batches of students of local schools and colleges were given conducted tours to the museum and archaeological sites in Peshawar Division. He also gave talks to the Radio Pakistan, Peshawar, related to the Museum studies (Shakur 1955-56: 01).

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[8] A middle Palaeolithic site located in District Mardan, excavated by A.H Dani in 1962-63.

4. Cultural and Academic Activities

Mr Shakur took an active part in cultural and literary activities and was an active member of several Associations and Societies in Pakistan as well as abroad. He was a fellow of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, member of the Royal Numismatic Society of Great Britain, the Numismatic Society of America, the American Federation of Artists and the Asiatic Society of France. He was the Secretary of Pakistan National Committee for Cooperation amongst the Museums formed under the constitution of ICOM and was also the Executive of the Education Committee of the ICOM. Mr M. A Shakur was the founder Secretary of Abasin Art Society[9], a cultural organization founded in 1955 for the preservation, propagation and development of regional arts and crafts in the old N.W.F.P. He has travelled extensively in Europe, Middle East, America and the Far East and attended International Museum Conferences and Seminars held in London, Bern, Paris and Brooklyn (MAP 1962: 51).

5. Publications

He was the author or chief editor of the following books, reports and articles:

1. *A Short Guide to Takht-i-Bhai* (1946).
2. *The Red Kafirs* (1946).
3. *Handbook of Inscriptions in the Peshawar Museum* (1946).
4. *A Dash Through the Heart of Afghanistan* (1947).
5. *A Catalogue of exhibits, displayed at the first North-West Frontier Province Arts and Crafts Exhibition* (1948)
6. *The Museums Association of Pakistan (Constitution)* (1949).
7. *The Museums Association of Pakistan (Aims and Objectives)* (1949)
8. *Proceedings of the Museums Association of Pakistan* (First Session, April 1949).
9. *Museum Studies* (1953).
10. *Guide to the Peshawar Museum* (1954).
11. *Report on the working of the Peshawar Museum for the year 1955-1956* (1957)
12. *Handbook for Curators* (s.d.).
13. Museums Problems (*Museum Journal of Pakistan* XIV: 1962).
14. *Gandhara Sculpture in Pakistan* (1963).

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[9] In 1967 its name was changed to Abasin Arts Council.

15. *Sirat al-Tauhid* by Bayazid Ansari (edited the Pashto manuscript). [10].
16. *Dastar Namah* by Khushal Khan Khattak (edited the Pashto manuscript).
17. *Fazal Namah* by Khushal Khan Khattak (edited the Pashto manuscripts).
18. *A Catalogue of Coins in the Peshawar Museum.*
19. *Archaeological Sites in the North-West Frontier Province.*
20. *Survey of various Museums in India and Pakistan.*
21. *The Chinese Three (Fa-hian, Hiuen Tsang and Song Yun).*
22. *Buddhist Art in India.*
23. *Notes on Gems and Jewels with special reference to the collection in the Peshawar Museum.*

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[10] Full record of nos. 15 to 21 is missing.

Fig. 1 - M.A. Shakur. Courtesy: Museums Journal of Pakistan (1962).

Fig. 2 - In the photo, Richard A. Davis Sr, Curator of the Minneapolis Institute of Art is showing to M.A. Shakur a sculpture on display (1953).
Courtesy: Internet Archives.

Fig. 3 - M.A. Shakur. Courtesy: Family archives.

Fig. 4 - The Museum Class Harvard University, Cambridge, (Mass), U.S.A.
From left to right: Dr Charles L. Kohn (Chairman, Department of Fine Arts, Harvard
University), Mr Rudolf W. Oxenaar (Netherlands), Miss Lucile M. Golson (U.S.A.), Mr
James Early (U.S.A.), M.A. Shakur (Pakistan). Courtesy: *Museum Studies* (1953).
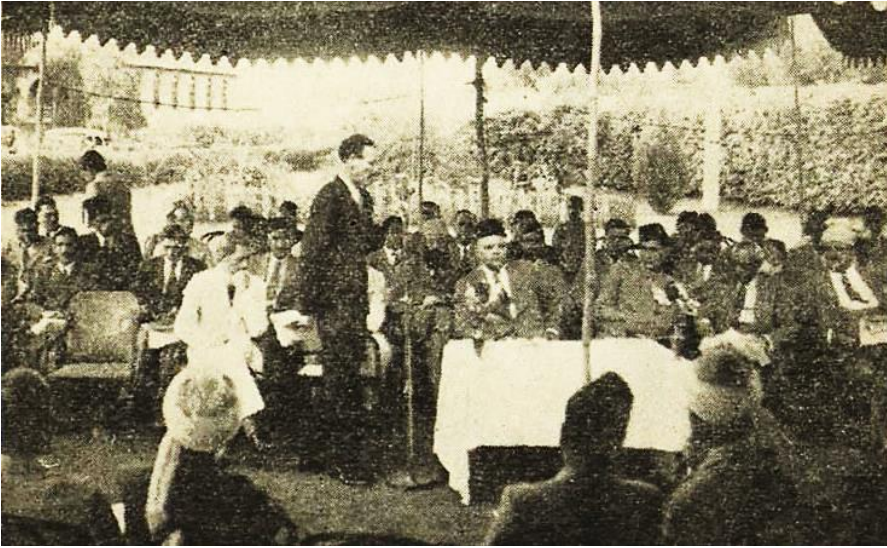
Fig. 5 - Sir Mortimer Wheeler, Archaeological Advisor, Government of Pakistan, reading his inaugural address in the Proceeding of the Museums Association of Pakistan first session (1949), held in Peshawar Museum, Peshawar.
Courtesy: *Proceeding of the MAP first session* (1949).

Fig. 6 - Members of the Indian Historical Records Commission, 22nd Session, Peshawar, 29th Oct. 1945.
Courtesy: *Indian Historical Records Commission*, Vol. XXLI.

Fig. 7 - M.A. Shakur in his last days. Courtesy: Family archives.

Fig. 8 - The List of Curators of the Peshawar Museum, shows the long tenure of Mr M.A. Shakur in the Museum. Courtesy: Peshawar Museum, Peshawar.

Fig. 9 - His Grave
(Syed Jalal Bukhari graveyard, Mardan).

Sebastiano Tusa
(Photo: "Museo Nazionale Radio3" – RAI)

In this Volume 42 (2019) the Editorial Board of the Journal intends to honour the memory of Prof. Sebastiano Tusa (1952-2019), a great archaeologist and cultural heritage manager. Pakistan held a special place in Sebastiano Tusa's professional life. He was member of the IsMEO Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan under the tenure of Domenico Faccenna. He first co-directed with Giorgio Stacul, and then directed the excavation project of Aligrama in Swat. He carried out extensive surveys in various parts of Pakistan, including the valleys of Darel and Tangir in Indus Kohistan (1980). Sebastiano Tusa, a dear friend and colleague of many Pakistani archaeologists, passed away on the 10th of March 2019, in the tragic crash of the Ethiopian Airlines Flight 302 near Addis Ababa (Ethiopia), while he was traveling to Nairobi as UNESCO delegate.

A Protohistoric Grave from Aligrāma, Swat (KP).
Funerary goods and chronological implications

Emanuele Lant / Irene Caldana

To the memory of Sebastiano Tusa (1952-2019).

Abstract

The protohistoric site at Aligrāma (Swat, KP, Pakistan) discovered by G. Tucci, was excavated from 1966 to 1983 by G. Stacul and S. Tusa and other scholars. In the last year of fieldwork, the mission rescued a grave exposed during construction works, which so far remained unpublished. Comparing the grave furnishings here published with those from other graves recently excavated at Gogdara and Udegram, dated in a systematic way by radiocarbon, it is possible to date this funerary assemblage from the 11th to the 9th centuries BCE. This grave is relevant for the presence of two iron objects and a chlorite vessel, very rare in the inventories of the graveyards so far published.

Keywords: Swat, Aligrama, Swat Protohistoric Graves, Iron age

1. Introduction

The site of Aligrāma in Swāt (henceforth: Aligrāma/Swāt) – one of the best dig of the 70-80s in South Asia – is unfortunately disappearing. Meanwhile very little has been published. As a site, Aligrāma is literally obliterated by the over-expansion of the urban settlements around the city of Mingora. Still, there are few free areas, where we hope we will be able to dig in the near future.
In 2017, the Italian Mission and the Directorate of Archaeology and Museums, Government of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, planned a study project aiming the inventorying of registered materials from the Mission's house at Saidu Sharif, in order to give them a proper dedicated space in one of the galleries of the new Swāt Museum.

Fig. 1 – The baskets with the materials of Grave 36 in the warehouse of the Italian Mission in Saidu Sharif (Photo by E. Lant).
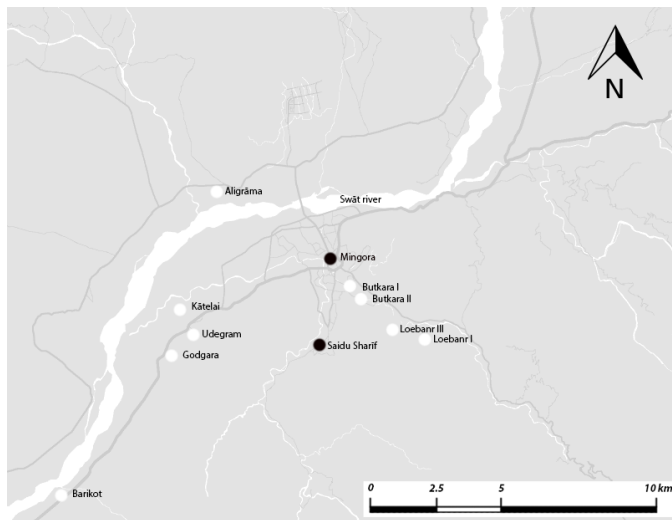

Fig. 2 – A map of the Middle Swat valley, with the locations of the protohistoric graveyards and settlement. Archaeological sites are marked with white dots, modern villages are marked with black dots. Grave 36 was found in the outskirts of the Aligrāma (Drawings by E. Lant).

The project had just started and a new publication plan launched, when Sebastiano Tusa the principal investigator at the site, tragically died in 2019 in the dramatic air crash in Ethiopia. Before this tragic event, we had already inventoried 36 objects from Tusa's dig ("Aligrāma" series = A), 11 objects from the site ("Varia" new series = VNS), and studied several assemblages of potsherd (Tusa et al. forth.). Amongst the latter, noteworthy were the funerary goods from an un-numbered grave found in a basket of non-recorded artefacts. From the latter originated the following study, which we, and the ISMEO Mission, intend to dedicate to the memory of Sebastiano Tusa, the excavator of Aligrāma.

The new Aligrāma study project started in 2017, thanks to the Italian Archaeological Mission in Swāt Valley directed by Luca Maria Olivieri (ISMEO) and the Directorate of Archaeology and Museums, Government of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa with the collaboration of the Department of Cultural Heritage of the University of Padua, represented by Massimo Vidale. The aim of the project was to study the non-inventoried materials from the Aligrāma site, to propose a new ceramic typology and to analyze other finds stored in the Mission house (Saidu Sharif). During this season we came across an unpublished grave assemblage from the graveyard's area of the settlement, recovered in 1983, including twenty objects (Fig.1). There is no specific information about the localization of the discovery. We only know that the grave was found during some construction works in 1983. The two potential areas could be northern part of the hilltop or the area near the southern street of the modern village (Fig. 2).

The first graves of Aligrāma were discovered by G. Stacul and S. Tusa in season 1972. Five graves (G1-G5) were uncovered in trench B[1]. In 1981 P. Zolese started a new excavation campaign of the protohistoric necropolis near the village, recovering 35 graves, re-starting numeration from 1 (G1-G35). Therefore, the total amount of the graves from Aligrāma is 40. We called the new assemblage, re-discovered in 2017, G36, following the counting proposed by P. Zolese.

Before studying the grave's furnishing, we considered the possibility that the assemblage could include objects which came from two different burials, even though from the same final funerary space.

In fact, during the latest excavations of Gogdara IV and Udegram by M.

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[1] Silvi Antonini and Stacul 1972: fig. 14, north-east from the hill.

Fig. 3a – The furnishings of Aligrāma Grave 36 (Photos by E. Lant).

Vidale, R. Micheli and L.M. Olivieri in 2011-2013, was documented a scheme involving manipulation and spatial resetting of both skeletal remains and offerings. These components expressed a complex behavior, resulting from an elaborated flow of symbolic and social actions.

For the grave here discussed we lack contextual and stratigraphic data; but in the light of the mentioned recent studies (Vidale et al. 2016), and given their relatively high number (as discussed below), we may take into account the chance that the grave underwent one or more phases of re-opening.

2. Description of the grave furnishings (with Inv. Nos.)

The assemblage rescued in 1983 is composed of fifteen well preserved vessels, two iron objects, two spindle whorls and a chlorite vessel; all are described in detail below. All the measures are in cm. (Fig. 3a and b).

A/2062
Small cooking pot with a truncated cone-shaped neck, everted rim and large mouth. Height 11.3, max. diam. 13. Medium-fine red ware (2.5YR6/6), well fashioned, with smooth surfaces and a rounded base. The base seems to have been moulded, while the wall was made by coils or slabs, modified in a second time on the potter's wheel. This cooking pot contained a terracotta spindle whorl (A/2081).

A/2063
Miniature squat globular pot with a vertical pointed rim. Height 5.5, max. diam. 6.7. Fine red ware (2.5YR6/8). Wheel-thrown. The interior of the foot seems to be trimmed on with a blade.

A/2064
Sub-cylindrical carinated beacker on a ring base with a vertical rim. Decorated with a horizontal ridge in relief over the maximum diameter. Height 7.4, max. diam. 7.1. Fine ware with a grayish slip (5PB5/1). Wheel-thrown.

Fig. 3b – The furnishings of Aligrāma Grave 36 (Drawings by I. Caldana).

A/2065
Bi-conical low carinated beaker with an everted rim. One horizontal ridge is visible on the shoulder while a second notched one runs along the carination. Height 5.4, max. diam. 6.8. Fine grey ware (5YR5/1). Wheel-thrown.

A/2066
Carinated pear-shaped beaker with a strongly restricted, truncated-cone shaped neck. The vessel is decorated with a series of oblique lines. Height 13.2, max. diam. 13.2. Fine red ware (2.5YR6/8). Wheel-thrown.

A/2067
Bottom of a carinated pear-shaped beaker, strongly restricted in the upper part. It bears on the carination a series of parallel oblique lines. Preserved height 6.8, max. diam. 10.2. Fine grey ware (7.5YR6/1). Wheel-thrown. On the fracture are visible signs of abrasion, probably aimed to the purpose of re-creating a rim. The lost part might have been similar to A/2066 or, more probably ended with an out-turned rim.

A/2068
High stemmed cup, with a restricted mouth, underlined by two horizontal parallel ridges alternating with shallows grooves. Preserved height 24.5, max. diam. 13.8. Fine ware with red slip (2.5YR6/8). Foot, stem and cup were separately made on the potter's wheel and later joined.

A/2069
Small cylindrical beaker with concave sides, low stem and pedestal. Height 10.4, max. diam. 6.1. Fine ware with red slip (2.5YR5/8). Wheel-thrown.

A/2070
Beaker with concave sides, low stem broken. Preserved height 8, max. diam. 7.1. Fine ware with a grey slip (10YR5/2). Wheel-thrown.

A/2071
Miniaturistic hemispherical cup on a solid high foot. Height 7.5, max. diam. 8.1. Fine ware with a yellowish red slip (5YR6/6). Wheel-thrown.

A/2072
Small ovoidal cup on conical high foot and a disk-like base. Height 10.2, max. diam. 7.7. Fine ware with greyish brown slip (2.5Y5/2). The vessel was made in two distinct parts on a potter's wheel (cup and foot), later joined together.

A/2073
Sub-globular cup on a high foot with a strongly restricted mouth. Height 8.9, max. diam. 8.1. Fine yellowish ware (10YR7/8). The vessel was made in two distinct parts on a potter's wheel (cup and foot), later joined together. The foot is coarsely trimmed on the interior with a blade.

A/2074
Miniaturistic sub-globular cup on a high foot with a strongly restricted mouth. Height 5.6, max. diam. 4.9. Fine grey ware (10YR3/2). The vessel was made in two distinct parts on a potter's wheel (cup and foot) later joined together.

A/2075
Miniaturistic cylindrical beaker set on a low stem and pedestal. The lower edge of the foot slopes in wards. Height 7.2, max. diam. 5.2. Fine grey ware (2.5YR6/1). Wheel-thrown.

A/2076
Small bottle with a globular body, elongated neck and everted rim. The base is disk-like. Height 9.2, max. diam. 7.4. Fine ware with a grey slip (10YR6/1). Wheel-thrown.

A/2077
Tanged iron blade (a knife, or following Silvi Antonini and Stacul 1972: pl. LV.d, a spearhead), swollen at the centre. Length 19.2 (blade 13.4, tang 5.8), max width 2.7, max thickness 0.4.

A/2078
Flat rectangular axe-like tool (?) with a cutting edge at one of the short sides. On the opposed side, what looks like a restricted, rectangular tang is flat and has a rectangular section. Length 15.6 (blade 12.1, tang 3.5), max

width 2.9, max thickness 0.6. The tool or weapon is corroded, thus the precise form of the cutting edge cannot be defined with certainty, but part of this edge, in its present condition, look toothed. The object, in its unusual spatula-like form, is not a unicum, because another quite similar specimen was found by G. Stacul in one of the graves at Kātelai (TMb18, Kātelai 189/11; see below (Fig. 8). For the moment being, we consider it an axe in absence of diverse or better definitions.

A/2079

Cylindrical chlorite vessel with slightly convex walls and a simple flat base. The mouth has an irregular contour and appears slightly damaged. Height 5.3, max. diam. 8.9. Some vertical traces of chisel are visible on the interior; they end in a rounded stop. On the inner edge are visible other signs, oblique and thinner, made with a smaller tool, probably while trimming the mouth. Finally, over the external surface, there are horizontal and oblique abundant traces left by some other kind of tool. The colour of the stone is grey (GLEY5/N).

A/2080

Biconical ceramic spindle-whorl with cylindrical hole. Diam. 2.7, height 1.7, hole diam. 1, weight 11.7 g. Brown (7.5YR5/2).

A/2081

Biconical ceramic spindle-whorl with cylindrical hole. Diam. 2.9, height 1.8, hole diam. 1.1, weight 10.8 g. Dark brown (7.5YR3/2).

Inv. No.	Comparisons	Calibrated absolute BCE date (2σ) from protohistoric graveyards of Swāt
A/2062	Silvi Antonini and Stacul 1972 type VTf68, Loebanr 127/7; Vidale, Micheli and Olivieri 2016 Fig. 43c G. C/3, Fig. 43d G. C/8, Fig. 63b G.2/8, Fig. 63b G. 2/12, Fig. 69 G. 7/3, Fig. 163a G10/3 e G10/4, Fig. 194b G28/2 e 28/3, Fig. 201 G26/1, Fig. 209 G29/1, Fig. 217 G27 1/10; Castaldi 1968 Tav. XIII/7 G.53, Tav. XIV/3 G.58, Tav. XVI/2 G.63, Tav. XIX/1 G.70.	1011-909 Grave 7 Udegram; 1192-939 Grave 10 Udegram (Ind.1); 1027-848 Grave 10 Udegram (Ind. 2); post (pit 1) 921-831 Grave 28 Udegram (Ind.1); post (pit 1) 992-830 Grave 28 Udegram (Ind.2); 976-832 Grave 26 Udegram (Ind. 1); 1195-978 Grave 29 Udegram (Ind. 1); 1200-800 Grave 27 (c.d.)[2]; 968-833 Grave 53 Kātelai; 1011-909 Grave 127 Loebanr Ind. 2
A/2063	Silvi Antonini and Stacul 1972 type VT15, Loebanr 49/1, 63/3, 140/20, Kātelai 2/7, 3/5,	894-798 Grave 63 Loebanr (Ind. 3); 1006-904 Grave 63 Loebanr (Ind. 2?); 1000-800

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[2] N.B.: c.d. = context date.

	21/2, 25/2, 27/1, 30/3, 31/3, 31/6, 39/5; Vidale, Micheli and Olivieri 2016 3/uninventoried, 8/8.	Grave 140 Loebanr (c.d.); 1000-800 Grave 30 Kātelai (c.d.)
A/2064	Silvi Antonini and Stacul 1972 type VT18, Loebanr 21/8, 51/11, 53/4, Kātelai 112/5, 116/3; Castaldi 1968 Tav. XVII/5 G68.	1000-800 Ind. 2 Grave 68 Kātelai (c.d.); 1000-800 Grave 112 Kātelai (c.d.)
A/2065	Silvi Antonini and Stacul 1972 type VTc32-33, Loebanr 17/10, 44/6, 48/15, 63/5, 70/7, 121/11, Kātelai 9/10, 16/12, Butkara 21/9; Vidale, Micheli and Olivieri 2016 28/7, 29/10; Castaldi 1968 Tav. XIV/2 G58.	1200-800 Grave 4 Udegram (c.d.); 1200-800 Grave 12 Udegram (c.d.); 921-831 Grave 28 Udegram (Ind.1); 992-830 Grave 28 Udegram (Ind.2); 1195-978 Grave 29 Udegram; 1200-800 Grave 27 Udegram (c.d.); 894-798 Grave 63 Loebanr Ind. 3; 1006-904 Grave 63 Loebanr Ind. 2?
A/2066	Silvi Antonini and Stacul 1972 type VTc28/29 Loebanr 73/10, 75/5, Kātelai 16/3, 144/6, Butkara II 17/11, Vidale, Micheli and Olivieri 2016, Fig. 107 3/1, Fig. 163b G10/7, 28/6; Castaldi 1968 Tav. XIV/6 G.58; *infra* A/2067.	1192-939 Grave 10 Udegram (Ind.1); 921-831 Grave 28 Udegram (Ind.1); 992-830 Grave 28 Udegram (Ind.2); 831-796 Grave 73 Loebanr (Ind.1)
A/2067	Silvi Antonini and Stacul 1972type VT33 Loebanr 41/4, 63/4, 135/11, Kātelai 16/8; Castaldi 1968 Tav. XIV/2 G.58 *infra* A/2066.	895-801 Grave 135 Loebanr (Ind. 1); 971-834 Grave 135 Loebanr (Ind. 1?); 894-798 Grave 63 Loebanr (Ind. 3); 1006-904 Grave 63 Loebanr (Ind. 2?)
A/2068	Silvi Antonini and Stacul 1972type VT5 Loebanr 12/6, 55/5, 172/1, Kātelai 210/17, Butkara 25/3; Vidale, Micheli and Olivieri 2016 Fig. Fig. 63a G. 2/9, Fig. 69 G. 7/2, Fig. 153 G. 9/4, Fig. 201 G26/2, Fig.209 G29/12; Castaldi 1968, Tav. XVII/2 G.68, Tav XIX/4 G.70.	1011-909 Grave 7 Udegram (Ind.1); 976-832 Grave 26 Udegram (Ind. 1); 1195-978 Grave 29 Udegram (Ind.1); 1000-800 Grave 68 Kātelai (c.d.); 1000-800 Butkara 25 (?) (c.d.)
A/2069	Silvi Antonini and Stacul 1972, type VTd40, VTd36 Loebanr 17/2, 48/5, Butkara II 26/6.	1000-800 Grave 26 Butkara II (Ind.2?, 3) (c.d.)
A/2070	Silvi Antonini and Stacul 1972, type VTa79 Loebanr 41/6, 119/14, Kātelai 39/6.	
A/2071	Silvi Antonini and Stacul 1972 type VT6I Loebanr 48/10, Kātelai 16/9, 58/10, Butkara 30/17; Vidale, Micheli and Olivieri 2016 Fig. 194b G28/8; Castaldi 1968 Tav. XIV/10 G.58.	Post (Pit 1 north) 921-831 Udegram Grave 28 (Ind.1); post (pit 1 north) 992-830 Udegram Grave 28 (Ind.2)
A/2072	Silvi Antonini and Stacul 1972 type VT8, Loebanr 15/4, 30/7, Kātelai 38/6, 165/2; Vidale, Micheli and Olivieri 2016 Fig. 125 G. 4/1 (with longher foot); Castaldi 1968 63/7, 70/2.	1200-800 Grave 4 Udegram (c.d.)
A/2073	Silvi Antonini and Stacul 1972: type VT8, Loebanr 44/10, 45/5, 139/18, Kātelai 1/2, 39/13, Butkara II 14/11, 28/8; Vidale, Micheli and Olivieri 2016 2016 Fig. 33 G. B/2, Fig.134 G5/5, Fig.201 G. 26/5; *infra* A/2074.	1044-922 Grave 5 Udegram (Ind.1); 976-832 Grave 26 Udegram (Ind.1)
A/2074	Silvi Antonini and Stacul 1972: type VT8 Kātelai 1/12, 5/2; *infra A/2073.*	
A/2075	Silvi Antonini and Stacul 1972 type VTa36 Kātelai 165/2; Castaldi 1968 Tav.XVI/7 G.63.	
A/2076	Silvi Antonini and Stacul 1972: type VT50, Loebanr 30/9, Kātelai 210/20, 242/23, Butkara II 1/6, 1/4, 1/12, 28/19, 28/21, 31/5; Vidale,	1044-922 Grave 5 Udegram (Ind.1); 1195-978 Grave 29 Udegram (Ind.1)

	Micheli and Olivieri 2016 Fig.134 G. 5/7, Fig. 209 G29/3, G29/8, G29/11.	
A/2077	Silvi Antonini and Stacul 1972 type TMb15 Kātelai 230/10; BKG 12 W, SU (218) = (217)	1223 - 1031 BKG 12 W SU (218) = (217), unpublished
A/2078	Silvi Antonini and Stacul 1972 type TMb18 Kātelai 189/11.	
A/2079		
A/2080	Silvi Antonini and Stacul 1972 type TT1; *infra* A/2081.	
A/2081	Silvi Antonini and Stacul 1972 type TT1; *infra* A/2080.	

Table 1 – List of Grave 36 inventoried materials and comparisons.

3. Discussion

The objects still retained soil coming from the burial context, and had to be excavated internally and cleaned. While cleaning the vessels we found an intact ceramic spindle whorl (A/2081) against the inner wall of the cooking pot (A/2062), see Fig. 4. The same association, as stated above, was noticed in other graves from Udegram and Gogdara (Vidale et al. 2016: 209-210) in the context of a probable female-related ritual [3]. The cooking pot also containing a miniature beaker. The microstratigraphic dig of Grave C of Gogdara, in particular, allowed to distinguish a multi-phase funerary cycle of two subsequent depositions. The grave, visible on surface for long, thanks to a wooden fence, was re-opened in order to manipulate and remove the remains of the first occupant (and probably the furnishings) and to bury another individual.

The authors of the report tried to subdivide the offered objects found in the final assemblage in two similar groups, as suggested by a partial duplication of the functional types. The same association was found in other protohistoric graves of the Swāt Valley: at Loebanr, in 18 graves

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[3] We have noted that the only graves with the association cooking pot - spindle whorl of which genetic sex of the individual in primary deposition has been determined, are graves 80 and 85 of Loebanr. In both cases individuals were females.

Fig. 4 – A detail of the discovery of the spindle-whorl, during the cooking-pot's emptying process (Photo by E. Lant).

Fig. 5 – The iron artefacts (Photos by E. Lant).

out of 183; less frequently at Kātelai, in 7 graves out of 243; and in Butkara II, in 4 graves out of 48 [4]. Reviewing the list of materials found in the graves excavated in 1981 at Aligrāma, we identified another Grave (25) with the association cooking pot-spindle whorl. Not all the cooking pots were in primary context of deposition. About these, there is a preferential location, in the funerary space, near the lower part of the skeletons (see above).

The assemblage also contains two well preserved iron artefacts (Fig. 5), quite uncommon in the graves' inventories of the Swāt valley. Until recently, the earlier ^{14}C dating related to iron objects in the north-western regions of the Subcontinent was from Bala Hisar (Charsadda): c. 1200-900 BCE (Mc Donnel and Coningham 2007: 155). It was commonly accepted that iron technology in Swat valley appeared later, in Stacul's Period VII (800-400/300 BC). More recently, another reliable date was provided by two iron pins found in Grave 19 at Udegram, 928-802 BCE, therefore ascribed to Stacul's Period VI (Vidale and Micheli 2017). An important comparison for the dagger A/2077 (our Grave 36) comes from the protohistoric settlement of Barikot - BKG 12 W, SU (218) = (217), ^{14}C 2 σ 95.4 (100 % prob.), 1223-1036 cal BC (Olivieri et al. 2019).

These blades have relevant implication for the debate about the origin of iron technology in South Asia: from well-known earlier diffusionist models assuming a spread from west-north west (from Iran and Central Asia) around mid-first millennium BC, to theories of earlier indigenous developments in South Asia in the course of the second millennium BC[5]. The presence of the two iron weapons in our unpublished grave, as we shall see, support, of course, the second viewpoint.

The small chloritoschist pot A/2079, sub-cylindrical, is almost an *unicum*. The pot has a very rough surface and plain walls (Fig. 6). We tried to find possible matches, focusing both on inventories from Oman and Turkmenistan, but nothing similar was found in the literature[6].

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[4] Silvi Antonini and Stacul 1972, at Loebanr, graves 12, 14, 24, 35, 39, 40, 41, 42, 45, 54, 80, 85, 91, 115, 136, 139, 154, 159; at Kātelai, graves 58, 133, 160, 161, 162, 187, 210; and in Butkara II, graves 7, 21, 28, 42. We have counted also spindle whorls mixed with potsherds from broken cooking pots.
[5] Among others, Chakrabarti 1976, 1977, 1982; Mc Donnel and Coningham 2007; Stacul 1979; Ali et al. 2008; Callieri et al. 1992; Olivieri 2014.
[6] David 1996, 2001, 2002, 2011; David and Phillips 2008; Harrower et al. 2016; Potts 2008.

Fig. 6 – Chisel marks on the inside of the chlorite pot A/2079, and the same marks on the rim, (Photo by E. Lant).
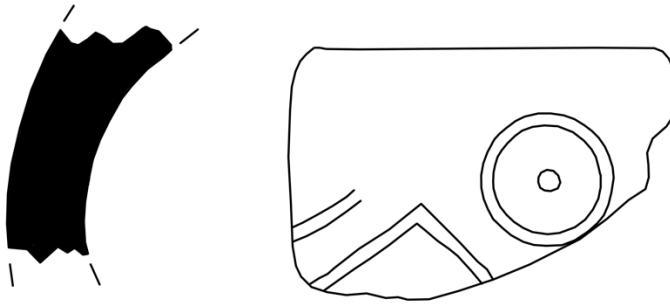

Fig. 7 – The small fragment of a decorated chlorite vessel found in Aligrāma settlement, Trench K, layer 4a (after Stacul and Tusa 1977: fig. 100).

Another tiny fragment of a vessel of the same stone comes from Aligrāma settlement, Trench K layer 4a (Fig. 7), decorated with *chevron* and the "dot and circle" pattern, comparable to one of the most common decorative design on chlorite of the Wadi Suq period of the Arabian Peninsula (David 1996, fig. 6/3), commonly dated between ca. 2000-1300 BC[7].

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[7] Some of these vessels from Oman present more complex or quadrangular shapes, and dot-like patterns absent in vessel A/2079. Dates about Wadi Suq period according to

In Grave 189 of Kātelai (Fig. 8), a single burial with a poorly preserved skeleton, was found a quadrangular schist or chlorite vessel (189/9, Silvi Antonini and Stacul, type VSa85, PL. XLV f), the only one recovered, until now, from Swāt graveyards. The chlorite container has a raw surface and chisel traces similar to those visible on A/2079. In this context, near the skull, there was also an iron "axe" of the same type of A/2078[8]. This grave is a peculiar match also because it has a high number of offerings (nine pots, one stone vessel, three iron objects and a stone pebble). The rich assemblage and the co-occurrence of stone and iron objects are not very common. Perhaps both graves, in the two separate communities, belonged to leading figures. Four of the nine pots from Kātelai Grave 189 are certainly comparable with as many vessels from Aligrāma Grave 36.
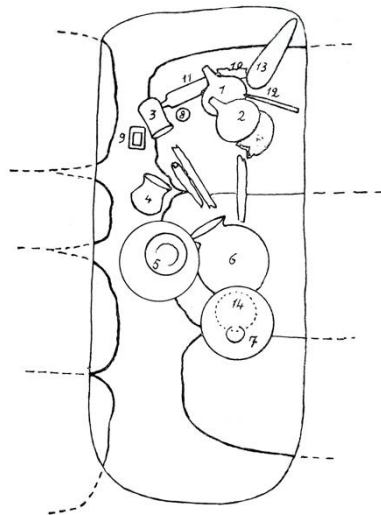

Fig. 8 – Grave 189 of Kātelai
(Silvi Antonini and Stacul 1972: 376, pl. CLXXXIX.a, b).

Cleziou and Tosi 2007: 261.
[8] Silvi Antonini and Stacul 1972, type TMb18, Fig. 22g; PL. LV d.
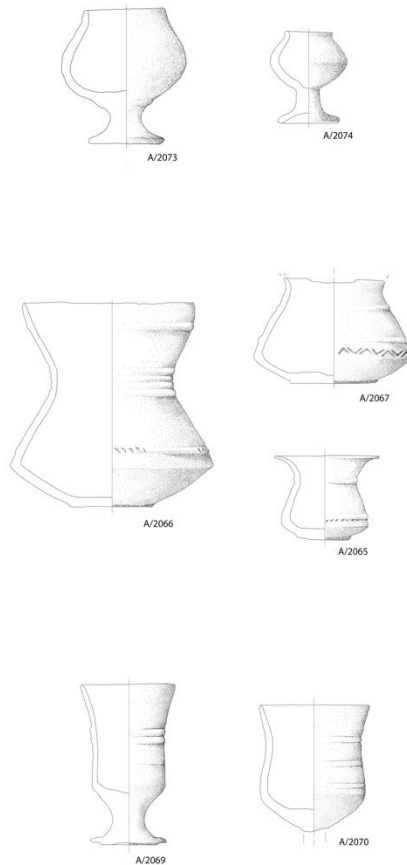
Fig. 9 – Vessels from Grave 36 grouped according to their shape and possible functions
(Drawings by I. Caldana).

Grave 36 Aligrāma	Grave 189 Kātelai	Stacul type
A/2076	189/1, 189/2	VT50
A/2066	189/4	VTc28/29
A/2079	189/9	VSa85
A/2078	189/11	TMb18

Table 2 – Comparison of four vessels found in Aligrāma Grave 36 with similar materials
from of Kātelai Grave 189 (after Silvi Antonini and Stacul 1972).

In our case, unfortunately, there is no information about the human remains and the vases' arrangement inside the tomb. But from the abundance of offers and the evidence of pairs of vessels with analogous shapes and presumably the same ritual use (Fig. 9), we can assume a similar sequence of events, as reported in Grave C of Gogdara IV. It is also possible to follow recurring links between globular cooking pots and high stemmed cups, often buried together in the graves: at Loebanr it is encountered in 65% of the cases, at Kātelai in about 30%, at Butkara in not less 73% and in Aligrāma the 77%[9]. In the graveyards of Loebanr, Kātelai and Butkara we observed a recurrent depositional pattern in the furnishings: cooking pots are almost regularly put near the feet of the deceased, while, for example, high stemmed cups may be found near the head[10], the basin or even the feet.

Getting back to the lifespan of our Grave 36, an Oxcal diagram, based on radiocarbon dates of graves from Swat, shows the most convincing typological comparisons with one or more vessels of Aligrāma Grave 36 (the results are displayed on the left side of Fig. 10)[11]. On the right of the table appears the proposed chronology of the furnishings, between 1223 and 795 cal BCE. Quantitatively speaking, since two-thirds of the comparisons fall between 1050 and 850 BCE, this is the most likely chronological range. But the dagger A/2077 (that has the oldest dating) could have its own important chronological implications. In fact, it is the third specimen known to date, after those found in Kātelai Grave 230 and in the excavations of Barikot (BKG 12). Given its formal identity to the previously known specimens, and the precise absolute date available for the Barikot dagger, it may be ascribed to 1150/1100 and 850 BCE; admittedly, a large time span. Because of the simple shape of the dagger, moreover, the weapon could have been a long-lasting type.

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[9] For the time being, only the information about the furnishings are available.

[10] Vidale et al. 2016: 33-34. The presence of the high stemmed cup near the skull was interpreted as "the performance of a socially accepted representation".

[11] In this work we have considered only the radiocarbon datings recently published by *Science* (Narasimhan et al. 2019). There are previous dates published on Vidale et al (2016); these dates, known with the code CEDAD-LTL, have differences of 100-200 years compared to the same ones published on *Science*.
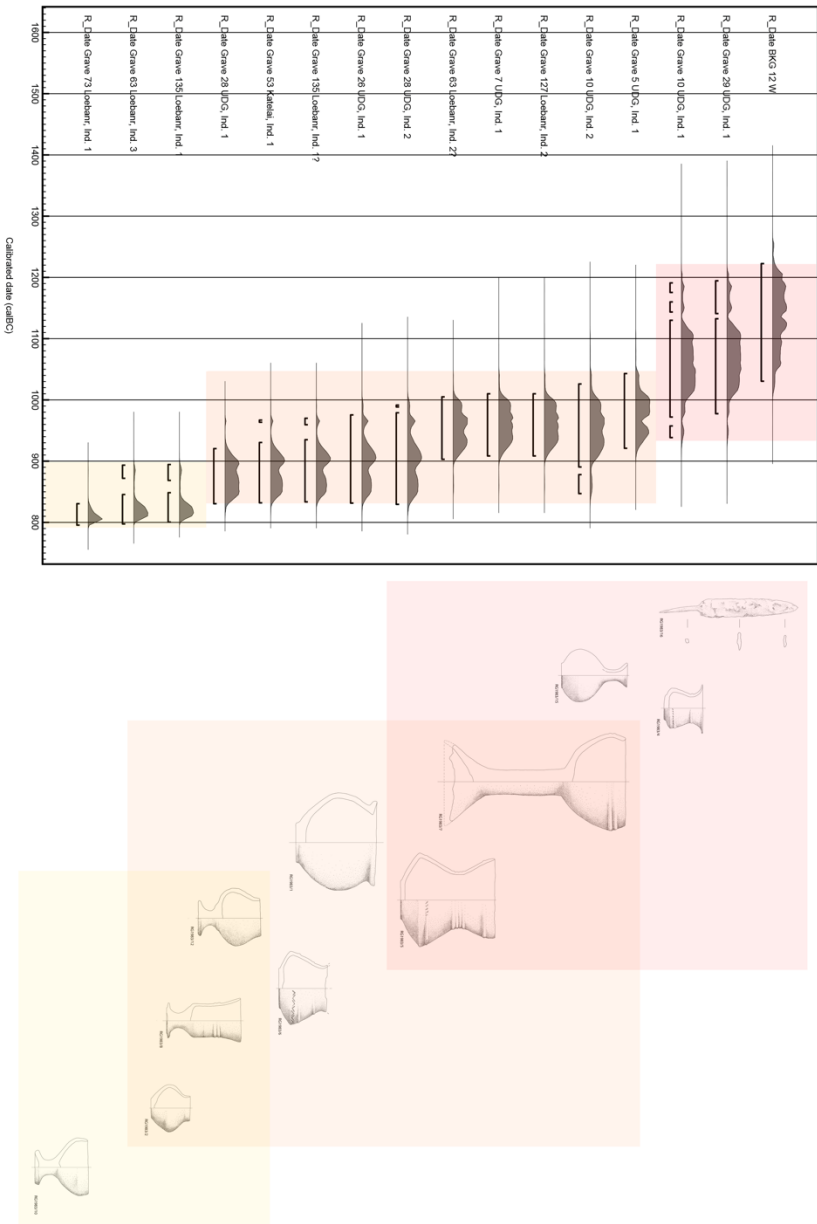
Fig. 10 – To the left: calibrated 14C dates of features with materials comparable to Grave 36. To the right: the chronological spread of the furnishings of Grave 36. (Elaborated by I. Caldana).

4. Conclusions

Since Aligrāma's Grave 36 was quite likely an inhumation, we wonder whether the Grave contained the remains of more than one burial, as observed in Grave C of Gogdara and Grave 7 of Udegram (Vidale et al. 2016: 38-43, 67-71). From a technological viewpoint, there is a perceptible difference between some vases of the same general forms: some are fine wares, with a more resistant slip, in which it is possible to recognize more care and attention in forming and clear traces of smoothing (belong to this group A/2065, A/2066 and A/2068). Others are rougher, preserving the spiral-shaped trace of the detachment from the wheel and a badly preserved or totally absent slip (like A/2063, A/2071 and A/2073). However, it is hard to say how far this evidence is function of time. In favor of the hypothesis of depositions prolonged in time, there is also the presence of A/2076, a small bottle with globular body, elongated neck and everted rim, probably a container for perfumes: a type common, at Udegram, in deeply manipulated re-exhumed burials (Vidale et al. 2016: 112 and 125).

We believe that the large amount of finds (a total of 20) of Grave 36 could be the sum of more furnishings belonging to more individuals. In fact, by comparing the average number of objects for burial in all the published protohistoric graves of Swat, we come to a value of six to ten objects for each buried individual[12]. For the graveyard of Aligrāma we were able to recover only some parts of the excavation reports; of all the graves excavated, only three have furnishings with more than twenty objects, and among these, the only one on which we have information is Grave 29: a double burial with an assemblage of fifty objects, dated to 818-789 BCE (Narasimhan et al. 2019: 162).

Observing the complex furnishing of Grave 36, the peculiarity of some objects (like the iron axe, the iron dagger and the chlorite vessel) could suggests that in this grave could have been buried eminent individuals, as in the already mentioned Grave 189 of Kātelai.

In conclusion, we believe that this tomb could be considered a multiple burial and we also believe, thanks to the presence of the two iron

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[12] For this analysis we take in to account only the graves with intact assemblages, which do not show disturbances or evidence of erosion, and only those which are for certain an inhumation type.

objects, to considered as *terminus post quem* the beginning of Period VI (ca. 1100 BCE, possibly the earliest date for the appearance of the iron technology); moreover, as we saw in Fig. 10, the end of Stacul's Period VI (c. 800 BCE) is the *terminus ante quem*. The chronological range is ultimately quite compatible with the two radiocarbon dates of Aligrāma's graveyards: Grave 2, Ind.1 dated to 974-836 cal BCE and the same Grave 29 dated to 818-789 cal BCE.

With this initial work we have tried to demonstrate the complexity and potential of Aligrāma's record and unpublished reports; it is in fact the first step to a more complete and organic study of the unpublished graveyard and the settlement of Aligrāma, while we are trying to recover further documentation and materials from the old excavation campaigns.

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