

# An In-Depth Study of Ancient Pottery of Rajasthan: With Special Reference to Kalibangan, Rajasthan

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**Abstract** – This paper presents the results of village to village survey conducted in Kalibangan, Hanumangarh District of Rajasthan. In this, pottery and antiques from the historic sites of the Kalibangan were presented. In this process, researchers ensured possible pottery scattering across the countryside also gathered diagnostic pot sherds (such as rim, body, base and essential body sherds of all forms of pottery observed) to assess the relative chronological period.

**Keywords** – Pottery, Early Harappan Pottery, Harappan Pottery, Late Harappan Pottery, Painted Grey Ware, Historical Pottery, Medieval Pottery, Kalibangan, Hanumangarh, Rajasthan

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Rajasthan 'House of Kings' or 'State of Kingdom' is the largest state per country of India. The state is located on the country's northwest side and is home to cultural diversity. The features include Indus Valley Civilization ruins, temples, forts, and fortresses in nearly every area. Rajasthan divided into nine regions; Ajmer City, Hadoti, Dhundhar, Gorwar, Shekhawati, Mewar, Marwar, Vagad and Mewat which are equally rich in heritage and creative input. Such areas have a parallel history that goes hand in hand with the State history.

Keoladeo National Park near Bharatpur is a world heritage site known for its bird life. Besides this district, there are two major tiger reserves at Sawai Madhopur, namely Ranthambore National Park, and Sariska Tiger Reserve in Alwar.

The State was created on March 30, 1949 when the name of Rajputana as adopted by British Empire was incorporated into the Indian Dominion. Jaipur was declared the biggest city to be the state capital.

## 2. ANCIENT HISTORY OF RAJASTHAN

Ancient history of Rajasthan includes some of the famous Maharanas, Nawabs, and Rulers. Which included among others Prithviraj Chouhan, Samrat Hem Chandra Vikramaditya (also known as Hemu), Mughal Emperor Akbar, Maharana Udai Singh, Maharana Pratap, Raja Maan Singh. The history of Rajasthan Indian state is around 5000 years long.

Because of the various epochs-Ancient, Medieval and Present, Rajasthan's history can be divided into three sections.

### • Ancient Period, upto 1200 AD

Rajput clans originated from around 700 AD, and retained their sway over numerous parts of Rajasthan. Rajasthan was a member of several republics before that. This had been a member of the Mauryan Empire. The Malavas, Arjunyas, Yaudhyas, Kushans, Saka Satraps, Guptas, and Hunas are other major republics that ruled this region. The ascendancy of the Rajput families in Indian history was between the eighth and twelfth centuries A.D. During 750-1000 AD, the Pratiharas ruled Rajasthan and much northern India. Rajasthan was witness to the struggle for hegemony between Chalukyas, Parmars and Chauhans from 1000-1200 A.D.

### • Medieval Period (1201 – 1707)

A part of Rajasthan had fallen under Muslim rulers around 1200 AD. Their main power centres were Nagaur and Ajmer. Ranthambore was under their suzerainty, as well. The most famous and influential kingdom of Rajasthan was Mewar at the beginning of the 13th century A.D.

### • Modern Period (1707 – 1947)

Before his conquest by Mughal Emperor-Akbar, Rajasthan had never been politically unified. Akbar

had formed a single Rajasthan province. After 1707, Mughal power began to decline. Rajasthan's political disintegration was triggered by the decommissioning of the Mughal Empire. The Marathas penetrated the decline of the Mughal Empire upon Rajasthan. They occupied Ajmer in 1755. The start of the 19th century was characterized by the Pindaris onslaught [1].

Early Historical Period after Harappan civilization was second most prosperous phase in Indian history. This is marked by the pervasive presence of Early Historic Sites in India, as well as many texts / written records, coins, inscriptions and monuments. . Early Historical Phase in India is intertwined between the 6th and 6th centuries C[2]. There are scholars who claim that Kushanas and Satvahnas, who laid the foundation for all round creation, marked the beginning of a golden age of Gupta [3].

### 3. PREVIOUS WORK

There wasn't much research in the field under review by Lt. Col. Todd in the early 19th century, visited a small part of this area and documented several ancient sites such as Kalibangan. Italian writer P. Tessitori visited Kalibangan during his research in 1917 and 1918 and left us with an insightful account of his findings.[4] Aurel Stein conducted detailed explorations along the Ghaggar River and found a number of historical and proto-historical sites. [5] A. K.N. had revisited the Harappan sites explored by Ghosh. Dikshit right. [7] They confirmed the presence in that area of pre-Harappan pottery. Besides these explorations, a few sites have been excavated in the present study area, namely Kalibangan. Excavations at Kalibangan started in 1960-61 and ended in 1968-69 after nine excavation seasons.[9] This yielded the remains of Early harappan (Period-I) and Mature Harappan (Period-II) culture.

### 4. METHODOLOGY

Archeological research undertaken so far in the field of study did not approach the question of the cultures' settlement history from a systemic perspective. In the light of new data from Kalibangan. We therefore need understand the work of some important sites such as Kalibangan and the general pattern of distribution. How these sites led to urban Centers developing. With regard to the Historical and Medieval Era, an effort has been made to obtain numismatic and epigraphic evidence to recreate not only the region's political history but also its cultural background.

- Referred published data covering Early Historical sites in the neighbouring region of Hanumangarh district to gain insight into sequences and cultural assemblies.
- Several papers, including journal articles, unpublished Ph.D. theses, M.A./M.Phil

dissertations, and books were reviewed for the purpose of collecting relevant information.

- Cultural material collected from exploration and excavation by other entities located in various museums and elsewhere examined and analyzed.

## 5. STUDY OF POTTERY

Exploration may be used as a prelude to mining, or as an end in itself. It's not Exaggeration to say that the development in survey methods over the last century has revolutionized archeology, helping us to see people in a larger context, rather than relying on settlements. The pottery is an alphabet of archaeology. Analyzing and interpreting ceramic remains allows archeologists to achieve a variety of ends: establishing a time scale, documenting interconnections between different areas and suggesting what activities were performed at specific sites. Here describing the methods and hypotheses used to close the gap between the recovery of ceramics and their understanding in archeological contexts. The production of pottery is usually attributed to the way of man's sedentary life.

### ► Evolvement of Pottery

The word pottery generally denotes all artifacts made of clay, first formed, then dried and finally made hard and permanent by fire. So, clay is the fundamental ingredient in all pottery. The raw material needed to make pottery is abundantly found in river valleys all over the world.

The beginning of pottery production dates back to around 10,000 years ago. Yet it was unfired or sun-dried at the earliest stage and only exists in archeological remains. The first pottery comes from the Beldibi and Gatal Hüyük sites in southern Turkey and is dated to 8500 BC. Pottery began to appear at Syriac sites from 6000-4500 BC. While the Japanese Jōmon Ware is dated to c. BC 12,000. More credible TL dating placed this ware in this area in the mid-sixth millennium BC I, when most people used handmade pottery.

Throughout the Indian subcontinent, a few sites in the Ganga Basin have unique signs of pottery from the Mesolithic ages. The earliest use of clay in pottery and for architectural purposes comes from the Baluchi district of Mehargarh 2 (Period IB / IIA). Pottery was not concentrated in one location or area and was spreading to other regions. Indeed, pottery making began and gradually evolved with the necessities that arose with the changing economy. The transition from hunting-scavenging economy to the food gatherer and later food producing economy

required pottery production. The emergence of pottery can be ascribed to the beginnings of agriculture and settled communities.

As long as it is very useful for an understanding of the past cultures, it is an essential source for the study of past society and history. It helps one, to build up the sequence of cultures and reconstruct the material culture of the ancient people when written records are not available. Very often, it is the readily available material from ancient sites and, therefore, serves as an index of the cultures of the people who inhabited these sites. It is helpful for the identification of civilization and as much as it is an essential element to characterize it. Different groups of ceramic industries have been identified, dated and interpreted as guides to the study of the cultures evolutions or diffusions. Since it fluctuates in style, shape, size, color, etc. and change, from region to region and age to age, it assists as an important benchmark for identifying cultures possessing different traits and tracing out inessential impacts. In the course of rigorous examining a large number of Proto-historic and historical settlements, representing a sequence of cultures in succession, was put on the archaeological map of research area on the basis of pottery. These settlements put forward a vivid cultural complex, which is to be discussed in the chapter with a view to understand the nature of cultural remains at various stages in the period under debate, the process of cultural developments and their significance in the life of the people at various points of times.

### ► Techniques of Pottery Decoration

The history of pottery decoration goes back to the very beginning of ceramic production. Obviously, it witnessed numerous vicissitudes throughout the time in accordance with the evolving fortunes of the ceramic industry, which in turn represents the general level of social development.

In the present sense, the beginning of the decoration cycle is closely connected with the very first step of the Early Harappan of Civilization, which is not only the formative stage of the Harappa Civilization itself, but also the great ceramic tradition of this time, bi-chrome ware, and hence the starting point for the present topic. The decoration usually comprises of two techniques, namely, the incision and painting. With the help of these two methods people always attempted to execute their ideas into practice by way of either adopting natural or geometrical objects. In a way these two categories of items formed the subject matter of expression of their ideas through decoration of pottery types. These are to be taken up in the following lines with regard to various stages of development during the period under discussion. In the Early harappan phase people adopted white, chocolate and black colors to decorate their ceramic wares. These colors are applied either on the plain red or red slipped/washed surface. As a result, the

pottery of this phase is popularly known as 'polychrome ware'. Specimens of this class were picked up, though very limited, from the surface of the sites representing this phase. Some of them, however, bearing signs of this color combination have been shown.

The ceramic complex is thus, in agreement with the general Harappan scenario witnessed in the region on the whole. All these examples underline continued occupation of this area by the Harappan people after the Early Harappans. In the succeeding late Harappan phase the ceramic ware betrays a family likeness with the preceding Harappan phase in respect of fabric, shapes and painted designs. However, the devolutionary process, so obvious in the ceramic tradition, marks the departure from the established classical tradition, which assigns it a separate status of being late phase of the Harappa. This trend is also conspicuous so far as the decoration of pottery is concerned. As a result, the painting repertory is strictly restricted to linear paintings and similar engraved designs. There is, of course, no dearth of such instances. Such linear paintings are so common in this phase to be witnessed frequently everywhere. This shows the general state of decoration technique where neither the color applied is fast nor slip is visible nor the painted designs are rich in any manner. These marks are witnessed almost as a rule on the exterior of ceramic ware of this phase, everywhere, in the Harappan zone.

Next phase represents the degeneration of the Harappan civilization with regard to the civic standards and craft deeds. It is the mixture of Early Harappan and Harappan types but on the whole Late Harappan pottery is dominated by the Harappan fabric with some modification of shapes, potting, surface treatment, design and decorations. But those sherds found in present research area are very fragmentary and very limited and devoid of any slip and decorations. Some identified shapes are basins, undercut rim, vases etc.

Although the pottery is still wheel made yet, the application of red slip is not common feature now, which also lacks in uniformity and quality. This trend is further appeared in painted designs and shapes also. However, the ceramic industry of this phase is consisted of a dull red ware of medium to sturdy fabric of soft firing technique. Occasionally its exterior tends to peel off giving a look of the decline.

The succeeding phase produced a distinct pottery after which the period itself is designated PGW phase. The ceramic assemblage from this area underlines the extant undercurrents suggesting conspicuously different stages of the industry as could be noticed elsewhere also in this regard. And this is also visible in respect of the decoration of the pottery. The decoration process is consisted of

paintings and incision designs. Of course, the paintings are executed in jet black color over polished grey outer and inner surfaces of thin walled and well-fired ceramic ware. Besides in certain instances of application of incision technique is also quite obvious. However, the decoration of this nature is mainly confined to very sharp engraved and parallel horizontal lines and plain grey ware is in abundance but in the region under review, a few sherds have been found at Ramsaranarayan-I.

House of Historical ware, the internal side is partly pale red and greyish with striation marks, whereas the outer surface is pale red. These sherds seem to hint at the lack of requisite control over the firing process and the resultant impact of pottery in terms of shade but most of sherds are best example of this ware and high quality decorated with different patterns. This could also perhaps provide an insight in regard to the nature of the substance used for pre-firing decoration. The color contrast and brightness of this substance seems to have been subjected to the degree and quality of firing process. As in the present case obviously, the firing is not up to the mark and therefore, the color of the painting and surface is also accordingly light. Whereas in normal firing conditions of the usual color is also of standardized nature. This shows the decorative substance when applied for paintings was of raw nature.

Next period is Medieval period. Throughout the exploration, Medieval period pottery is found from a great number of settlements. The whole pottery of the Medieval period is wheel made. It is almost of red color some time dull red ware and a coarse fabric. Generally, no surface treatment is seen with and, whenever available, it approximates to the color of the paste. That type of treatment applied only on small pots viz. small bowl, cup and glass type pots. The firing is good but variety of ill firing is too in large number. The painting is more or less commonly finished in black designs on a red surface. There are a few exemptions. Most of the painted designs are geometrical and linear consisting of parallel bands on the shoulder, sometime on the belly portion also. Functional, engraved and stamped patterns are also in this category. Among the stamped designs, most prolific is the chequered pattern.

## 6. POTTERY DESCRIPTION IN VARIOUS CULTURAL COMPLEXES

The present study is focused on archaeological settlement of the area. The main features of each period are summarized here. An ephemeral explanation of illustrated potsherds is to be given chronologically and compared each other.

### 6.1 Early Harappan Pottery

The Early Harappan Pottery have already been chronicled from various excavated settlements like

Kalibangan [3] (Period-I), Sothi [4], Dabdi [5-I], Dabliwas Chugta [6] in Hanumangarh district, Baror[7] in Ganganagar district of Rajasthan, Rakhigarhi [8] (PeriodI), Siswa in Hisar district; Banawali [10], Bhirrana-IA in Fatehabad district; and Mitatha in Bhiwani district of Haryana state. These sites have a rich variation of shapes and painted designs of pottery, which in turn establish a regular evolution of the art of pot making in Early Harappan times. The Early harappan pottery collected from the area under study is suggestive of the further eastward extension of that tradition. Increasing settlement of Early Harappan further eastward is another best example for this debate. No doubt the pottery bears close association with that of the type-sites in regard to their shapes, decorations and surface treatment. This has been amply demonstrated in the color scheme-usually decorated in black and chocolate color over plain, occasionally polished, red surface-thin section and shapes.

The Early Harappan pottery from this area is primarily of red group. This ware is usually lacking of any slip or wash. Occasionally either red slip or red wash seems to have been applied. The pattern of its application is not perpetually uniform. Moreover, it is strictly restricted to the rim, neck and shoulder portions. It is of thin to medium fabric, wheel- turned (though in certain instances the surface is uneven indicating either poor workmanship or perhaps being thrown on slow moving wheel or more likely a sign of handmade pottery), fairly well fired giving it a pinkish to red color and made of refined, well levigated clay.

Regarding the decoration mechanism a synthesis of painting and incision techniques is indicated. The former is usually accomplished in black color, though occasionally chocolate color is also applied. The painted designs are mainly consisting of linear patterns. Prominent among them are thick black bands (a salient feature of this phase), horizontal lines, zig-zag or wavy lines and oblique or vertical strokes. The natural and geometrical designs are noticeable by their complete absence.

In regard to shapes the overall scenario does not seem different in any manner. Because many typical shapes representing the A to F fabrics of Early Harappan ceramic ware are visible in circulation. These include bowls, basins, vases and lids, which are being discussed below.

A. Ghosh firstly recognised the regional separation in the ceramics in the Ghaggar basin and labelled it as the Sothi ware and first time this type of pottery was found in the stratigraphical context at Kalibangan. B.K. Thapar classified it into six fabrics; A, B, C, D, E, and F. Fabric A was marked by an individuality which differentiated it from the other fabrics. The vessels of this fabric, although made on wheel,



were carelessly potted, betraying unskilled handling with teale traces of irregular striations. Comparatively light and thin in section and red to pinkish in color, most of the vessels were painted in black, combined at times with white (hatched in the drawings), over a dull-red surface, the field of decoration being confined to the portion above the girth. The design elements, drawn in free style, included: horizontal bands, sometimes as thick as the height of the neck and loops fringed. A low or enclosed by horizontal bands criss-cross, grouped converging lines enclosing opposed triangle or rhombs, latticed triangles or ladders enclosing open opposed triangles, pendant latticed leaves bordered above by horizontal bands, verticals enclosing chain, lenticulars with multiple horizontals bordered above and below with thick bands and segments or scallops with fillers and moustache like bi-fold scroll within wavy verticals or conifers.

Fabric B was distinguished primarily by its paste-texture and surface-treatment. The vessels of this fabric were carefully potted onto the wheel and treated with a red slip up to the shoulder, with black-painted horizontal bands of varying thickness further diversifying the slipped area. The surface remaining of the vessels (except for Maybe the base) was coated with a thin clay solution, sometimes mixed with sand and sandy, with horizontal or wavy combing or tortoise?) (or, dendritic impressions. Naturalistic designs, floral, animal and insect, (stag, ibex, bull, scorpion, duck, etc.) were painted in black over this rustic surface, often combined with the white ancillary (hatched in the drawings).

In shades of red and plum or purple-red, fabric C was marked with a finer-textured paste and a smooth-slipped surface all over. Apart from the frequent carefully-ruled horizontal bands or loops or criss-cross, the variety of painted patterns, which were generally in black, included plant borders, scale, metopes, latticed loops or pendant triangles. However, the panelling of the palm-tree with a bird by criss-cross and the motif of the butterfly or double-axis, the wavy verticals and the Indus scales were of particular interest. The shapes represented in this fabric comprised globular and ovoid vases with disc-bases, lids, straight-sided bowls, and dishes and offering stands, including a noteworthy form with an extra-flared lip.

Fabric D was characterized by vessels with thick sturdy section and slipped red surface. Common shapes included heavy jars including the one with an accentuated flange round the neck; bowls and basins or troughs. The last-named, however, was the most characteristic of this fabric. The basins with a ring-base were decorated internally on the sides with sharp ridged incisions of varying patterns often bordered by wavy lines and on the outsides with single or multiple rows of cord impressions. The engraved patterns were executed by a reed-fragment when the paste was plastic or yielding as evidenced

by the raised or burred edges along the engraved lines. The decoration on bowls and the flat-bottomed basins, however, consisted of grouped wavy lines, doubtlessly produced by the employment of multiple-pronged tool held with a pencil grasp. Besides, black-painted horizontal bands and loops were included in this fabric.

Fabric E comprised vessels with a buff or reddish buff slip. Common shapes included: large-and medium-sized jars including those with a hole-mouth or a flange round the rim, lids, bowls and offering-stands and dishes including a small chalice. The painted decoration (in black sometimes tending to purplish and occasionally white pigment) consisted of the ubiquitous horizontal bands, oblique lines with fronds, sigma horizontal sequence above joined semicircles with fillers and borders of scales and latticed or plain scallops or loops and such unusual motifs as multi-petal flowers, fish, cock (?) and stylized butterfly or double-axe within wavy verticals.

Fabric F related to the grey-colored pottery and was represented in forms commonly met with in other fabric, viz. dish-on-stand, basins, bowls and vases. For decoration, the use of both black and white pigment (hatched in the drawing) was current.

J.S. Nigam<sup>15</sup> re-classified the ceramics grouping of the Early Harappan levels of Kalibangan approximately into three main wares viz. 1) Red ware, 2) Buff ware, and 3) Grey ware. He comprised Thapar's Fabrics B, C and D in the class of the red ware. The red ware included bowl with straight up, internally oblique, averted, out-turned or out\* cunted, thickened rims and convex or tapering profiles, with a ring pedestal base and vases of various size with out-turned pr out- curved rims. The shapes in buff ware were limited to chalice and a few vases. The paintings are rendered in black, occasionally using white pigments also. The third variety of the ware Nigam include involves of bowl with vertical rim and vases with flaring mouth. Although painted pottery is rare, some examples show black and white paintings.

Katy Frenchman likes to use the 'Sothi Culture' word for the Early Harappan Cultural Complex present in Sothi, Kalibangan etc. She has graded the Sothi pottery as red ware, black engraved red ware, black and red slipped engraved ware, ridged ware, black and white painted red ware, engraved and red painted buff ware, black slipped red ware and black red ware.

The detailed description of illustrated photo plates and drawings is given below.



**Figure 3.1 : Early harappan miniature pot [plate]**

Miniature vase of red ware having slightly projecting rim and globular body with round base, treated with red slip, painted with a black block band of the rim and neck; from Jhaloda- III.

## 6.2 Harappan Pottery

The cultural phase that follows the Early Harappan in the region is represented by the developed Harappan phase. The sites belonging to this phase are less than the early phase. Only 15 sites have yielded Harappan ceramic as well as other associated remains such as 'S' shaped jars, goblets, perforated jars, dish-on-stand with long stem, Chert blades, cubical weights, beads of semi-precious stones, terracotta humped bull figurine, triangular cakes, etc.

Harappan ceramic assemblage mainly belongs to red ware, made of refined, well levigated clay, turned on fast wheel and generally well fired. It is found generally painted in black. The main shapes are goblets, cylindrical perforated jars, vases with out-turned rim, disc based bowls, dish-on-stand etc.

The excavation at Tarkhanewala-Dera has yielded remains of a single culture i.e. mature Harappan. The excavator of the site has divided the ceramic of this site into five major groups viz. red ware, grey ware, red slipped ware, black on red ware and other decorated ware.

As regards the surface treatment, red slip of fine quality is usually applied, giving it a very fair and attractive look. The pottery is made of well-levigated clay, which shows fabulous accuracy in firing technique as the core is usually brick-red creating a metallic sound on strike.

The painted designs have been accomplished in dark black color offset nature. And further standardization is attained in relation to painted designs. These include natural as well as geometric. Among them mention may be made of fish scale, peacock, triangles, diamonds, etc. It is to be noted here in this case that all these characteristic features of the mature phase are not regularly visible on the

surface of the sites in the region. But some of the features are verified during explorations. However the limited presence of such elements of the Harappan tradition is more than enough to attest the human existence at some settlements in this area.



**Figure 3.2 : Harappan pottery [plate]**

1. Pedestal rim portion of a long stem dish-on-stand, the surface is treated with red slip and painted with horizontal black bands, made of refined, well levigated clay with fine tiny mica, fine fabric, red Kalibangan.
2. Lower part of a goblet having a pointed or constricted base, traces of squeezing base are clearly visible on the internal surface, treated with red slip, made of refined, well levigated clay with fine tiny mica, fine fabric, red oxidized core; from Kalibangan.
3. Lower part of a goblet of dull red ware having a pointed or constricted base, made of refined, well levigated clay with fine tiny mica, course fabric, oxidized core; from Kalibangan.
4. Sherd of a perforated jar having a straight profile, perforations less executed, thick section, made of refined, well levigated clay with fine tiny mica, medium fabric, greyish oxidized core; from Kalibangan.
5. Sherd of a small vase of red ware, treated with fine red slip, painted in black with fish-scale design and dots, thin section, made of refined, well levigated clay with fine tiny mica, fine fabric, red oxidized; from Kalibangan.
6. Fragment of vase of red ware having a globular body with gently out-curved neck and rim, treated with red slip which painted black bands are executed, made

of refined, well levigated clay, fine fabric, red oxidized core; from Kalibangan.

### 6.3 Late Harappan Pottery

This pottery represents the declining Harappan phase civilization. It is the fusion of Early Harappan and Harappan types but on the whole Late Harappan pottery is dominated by the Harappan fabric with some modification of shapes, potting, surface treatment, design and decorations. It is dominantly wheel-made and well fired red ware. It is generally consisted of a dull red ware of medium to sturdy fabric of soft firing technique. Occasionally its exterior tends to peel off giving a look of the decline. During exploration period only a few sites of this phase have been found in the region and these have not yielded pottery in much quantity from their surfaces. Moreover, no site of this phase has so far been subjected for excavation in the study area.



**Figure 3.3 : Late Harappan pottery [plate]**

1. Fragment of a red ware jar with collared rim, medium fabric, ochreous surface, light grey core; from Ummewala.
2. Fragment of jar of red ware having thickened undercut rim with wide mouth expanded sides, surface is treated with red wash, made of refined, well levigated clay with tiny mica, well fired, medium fabric, light red oxidized core; from Ummewala.
3. Fragment of a red ware jar having collared rim, treated with red wash, made of refined, well levigated clay, medium fabric, grey core; from Ummewala.
4. Fragment of vase of red ware having clubbed rim, surface is devoid any slip or wash, made of refined, well levigated clay with tiny mica, medium fabric, oxidized core; from Karanpura-II.

### 6.4 Painted Grey Ware

The fourth group of ceramic industry is Painted Grey Ware (PGW) and its associated wares. First time, the

Painted Grey Ware was found at Ahichhatra [19] and its full significance was realized only after B.B. Lal's excavations at Hastinapur [20] in the early fifties. Since then, explorations carried out in Northern India's different parts have brought to light about 650 sites. During that time, in the whole state of Rajasthan, only 2 sites belonging to PGW culture were known to us viz. Noh and Jodhapura. [21] Its distribution is conformed in north-eastern Rajasthan, Haryana, Punjab, and the upper Ganga-Yamuna basin in western I.J.P. The main shapes of this ceramic include bowls, dishes, cups and basins. The pots are painted in black, sometimes in red with simple horizontal bands, vertical and oblique lines, row of dots as dashes, concentric circles, semi-circles and simple or intersecting loops. This ware is found in association with grey ware and red ware. It was fired in reducing conditions.

The PGW site namely Chak 86, has so far been excavated in the nearby district Ganganagar. The excavator of the site has categorized its pottery into eight major groups viz. red ware, red slipped ware, black on red ware, black and red ware, grey ware, Painted Grey Ware, black ware and decorated ware. [22] In the case of Painted Grey Ware, the surface of the body is painted in black before firing. Instance of bichrome designs also met with, i.e., black and brown black and chocolate. The common pattern in painted designs is represented by group of vertical or oblique strokes below the horizontal rim-band. Other motifs include intersecting lines, dots, dashes, wavy lines, concentric circles, sigmas, radiating lines, spiral designs etc. Two C 14 dates of PGW are provided from Chak 86 viz. 650±130 BC and 215±185 BC. [23]

Only two sites of PGW have been discovered from the area under present study. Both the sites have yielded remains of Late Harappan and PGW culture. In the absence of excavation of a PGW site, it is not possible to say whether there was any overlap like Bhagwanpura [24], Dadheri [25], Kathpalon [26], Manda n and Madina. [28]



**Figure 3.4 : Painted Grey Ware [plate]**



1. Sherd of a bowl of PGW with a slightly chamfered rim and a groove below the rim, painted with thick reddish band on either side of the rim, surface is finished by streak-burnishing technique; from Hanumangarh.
2. Straight sided bowl of PGW with featureless rim, painted with a thick black band on either side of the rim, two twisting parallel thick strokes on the outer surface, whole surface is finished by streak-burnishing technique; from Surewala-I.
3. Fragment of a straight sided bowl of PGW with vertical featureless rim, painted with black band on both sides of the rim, two twisting parallel lines on the outer side enclosing a line of dots, surface is finished by streak-burnishing technique; from Surewala-I.
4. Sherd of a bowl of PGW with an incurved sharpened rim having convex body, painted in black with a band at the rim on both sides, surface is finished by streak-burnishing technique; from Surewala-II.
5. Fragment of a straight sided bowl of PGW with featureless rim, painted in black with a band at the rim on both sides, three twisting parallel lines touching the rim band on the inner side and one twisting line on outer side; from Surewala-II.
6. Sherd of a bowl of PGW with featureless rim, painted in black with two thick parallel wavy bands on inner side, surface is finished by streak-burnishing technique; from Surewala-II.
7. Sherd of a bowl of PGW with featureless rim, painted in black with a set of semicircles on outer side, whole body surface is finished by streak-burnishing technique; from Surewala-II.
8. Sherd of a small PGW bowl having straight featureless rim, painted in black with a band at the rim on both sides and three parallel twisting thick strokes on outer side; from Surewala-I.

### 6.5 Historical Pottery

The Painted Grey Ware is followed by historical red ware or Rang Mahal Ware in our region. This pottery is reddish or pinkish in color and occasionally yellowish also. The whole pottery is wheel turned except a few big jars of which neck and uppermost part is wheel-turned and the rest of the body shows clear traces of patting by the potter. The molded pottery was first turned on the wheel and was then pressed, by hand or with a tool (such as dabber and

Mettle shaped tool), afterwards the inner surface was smoothened with a brush. The clay of the painted vessels is much smoother than that of the ordinary vessels, and it is reasonable to suppose that the slip must have burnished before the painting was executed.

The finest fabric is that provided by sprinklers, which have highly polished red slip. Many ordinary unpainted pots also have a red slip. [24]

The painting is almost regularly finished in black on a red or pinkish slip. There are a few exceptions. The feature which primarily exemplifies the Rangmahal pottery is the richness with which the potters have decorated, mainly by painting, the various types of pots with floral, zoomorphic and geometrical patterns.

Rangmahal ware has a vast variety in types. The main shapes are basins, beakers, carinated pots, cooking handis, conical bowls with incurved rim, dish-like a plate, flask shaped jars, frying pans, globular bowls, globular jars, jars with pointed base, jug with handle, incense burner, lamp, lid, spouted handis, spouted jars, spouted miniature pots, sprinklers, stand, storage jars troughs with loop handle, tripod pots etc.



Figure 3.5: Historical Red Ware Pot [Plate]

A spouted pot of red ware having round body but curves angularly at the shoulder, straight and short necked with out-turned beaked rim, treated with red slip, short spout at the shoulder, fine fabric; from Dabli Kutub.

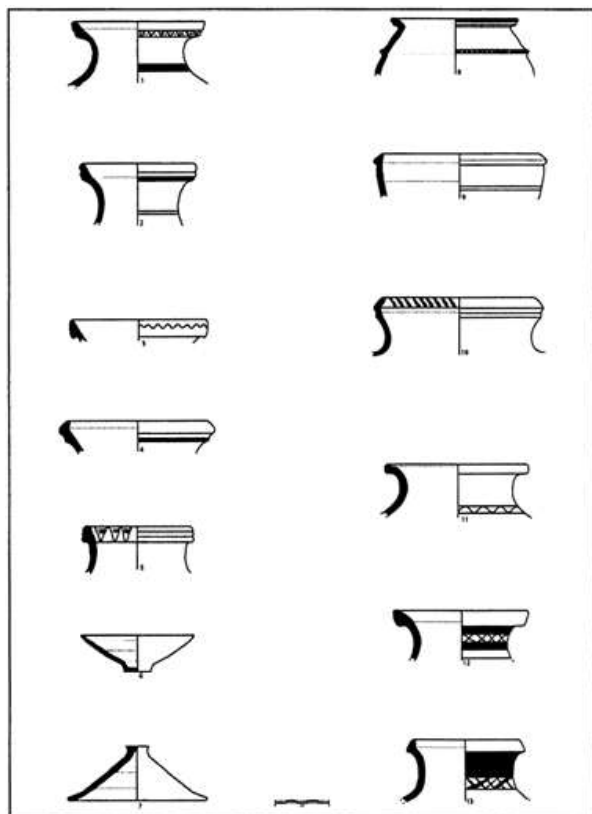
### 6.6 Medieval Pottery

The last group of pottery pertaining to our study belongs to Medieval period. During exploration periods, Medieval period pottery is found from a great number of sites. This pottery is all wheel-made and is entirely of red ware. The fabric ranges from medium to fine. Generally, no surface treatment is seen, whenever available, it approximates to the color of the paste. Sometime very thick red slip is applied on it. The main shapes include basins with open mouth,



carinated handis, bowl-cum-lid with a central cup-like depression, knife edged bowls, spouted vases etc.

The painting is almost regularly finished in black designs on a red surface. There are a few exceptions. Most of the painted designs are geometrical and linear consisting of parallel bands on the shoulder, sometimes on the belly portion also.



**Figure 3.6: Medieval pottery [diagram]**

1. Fragment of a vase of red ware with an out-turned grooved rim, concave neck and expanded profile, painted in black with V-like designs and filled with dots and a horizontal band at the shoulder, surface is treated with red wash, fine fabric, red oxidized core; from Ujjawalwas.
2. Fragment of a vase of red ware having slightly out-turned externally grooved rim, treated with fine red slip on either side, painted in black with a horizontal band below the rim, made of refined, well levigated clay, fine fabric, red oxidized core; from Bisrasar.
3. Fragment of a vase of red ware having thickened externally nail headed rim, decorated with a horizontal engraved wavy line at the rim, made of refined, well levigated clay, fine fabric, light red oxidized core; from Paltu-II.
4. Fragment of a vase of red ware having incurved nail headed rim, painted in black

with a horizontal band, made of refined, well levigated clay with fine tiny mica, fine fabric, red oxidized core; from Ghotada Patta.

5. Fragment of a vase of red ware having slightly out-turned externally grooved rim, concave neck, painted in black with a V-like designs filled with vertical strokes, both side surfaces are treated with red slip, made of refined, well levigated clay, fine fabric, red oxidized core; from Hanwantpura-II.
6. Bowl of red ware with flared sharpened rim, thin tapering walls and flat base, treated with brown red slip, made of refined, well levigated clay, fine fabric; from Raslana.
7. Lid of dull red ware with thickened rim-base and a pointed flat terminal base, treated with fine red slip, made of refined, well levigated clay, fine fabric, showing light red oxidized core; from Bhirani.
8. Fragment of a jar of red ware having an out-turned grooved rim, concave neck, ribbed waist and globular body, painted in black with horizontal band at the rim and decorated with rope-like design at the rib, treated with fine red wash, fine fabric, red oxidized core; from Appuwala-I.
9. Fragment of a bowl of red ware with externally collared rim, tapering walls, treated with fine red slip, fine fabric, red oxidized core; from Mahrana-I.
10. Fragment of a vase of red ware having sharp pointed incurved externally grooved rim, concave neck, painted in black with twisting strokes at the rim on the interior, devoid any wash or slip, medium fabric, oxidized core; from Ajitpura-I.
11. Fragment of a vase of red ware having splayed out, flattened top rim and concave neck, painted in black with two horizontal lines at the shoulder enclosing a zigzag line forming opposite triangles, treated with fine red slip, fine fabric, brick red oxidized core; from Nettharana-II.
12. Fragment of a vase of red ware with an out-turned thickened rim, concave neck, painted in black with two horizontal bands enclosing criss-cross design at the neck, treated with fine red wash, medium fabric, oxidized core; from Karouti.
13. Fragment of a vase of red ware with an out-turned obliquely sharpened rim, concave neck and expanded profile, painted in black with a block band and a

criss-cross design at the neck, treated with fine red slip, medium fabric, oxidized core; from Karouti.

## 7. CONCLUSIONS

It is customary to draw a sequel to any research undertaken. In view of this one can see that district Hanumangarh had been inhabited by a large number of people from early Harappan phase. Analysis of pottery is carried out – color, fabric, shape, morphology and compared with existing typology published from the known and dated Rang Mahal site of Ganganagar district of Rajasthan. Even pottery drawing is performed to classify pottery forms.

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