CHAPTER - III

CHRONOLOGY OF CULTURES

To reconstruct the precise chronology of cultures of the district, in absence of any $^{14}C$ dates, is extremely difficult. The task is hazardous as only few sites have been excavated in this district and a report of Dwarka excavation only, is fully published, which gives the precise chronology of Historic period I and II. For rest of the periods conclusions are drawn on the evidences of excavated materials and study of river sections in the surrounding regions. Hence, the inferences drawn are bound to remain tentative and some inconsistencies are to be there. The material obtained during explorations of the district has been typologically compared with excavated materials from neighbouring regions in order to built up a sequence of cultures. The excavation reports of Somnath, Rangpur, Rojdi, Surkotada, Jokha, Kanewal and Dwarka are most important because of the presence of final publications and the access to valuable collection of Somnath, Jokha, Kanewal in the Department of Archaeology, M.S. University, Baroda.

Lower Palaeolithic Cultures: (Mid-Pleistocene period)

This is the earliest culture brought to light from the district by the present investigator. The stone tools like cleavers, scrapers and handaxes represent this culture and were
found loose in the bed of river Vadb. Unfortunately none of the sections are preserved. However, these tools can be typologically compared with tools from the river Dhader of which, Dr. Sankalia had studied the section of this river at Rajodi and Jetpur. The tools of lower Palaeolithic age have been found from the earliest gravel deposit overlying the trap (Fig. 5, 2) and have been dated to the mid-pliocene period. The lower Palaeolithic cultures were followed by middle palaeolithic cultures.

**Middle Palaeolithic Cultures:** (Late or upper Pliocene period)

Stone tools of this period were found from Kalavd, Tarana and Anda in this district. This industry consists of tools like variety of scrapers, points, burned, flakes and cores. The tool assemblage were found loose from river Aji and Und. The stratigraphic position of these tool assemblage becomes clearly by studying the section in Nala nearly 17 km east of Rajkot, Rajodi and Jetpur (Fig. 5-2) where the middle pleistocene and later gravel strata are interlaced by silt and sand, while the middle palaeolithic tools are found in the upper gravels, which have been dated to late or upper pleistocene period.

**Mesolithic Cultures:** (10,000 B.C. to 2500 B.C.)

The next culture which followed was late stone age cultures or microlithic culture, in district. Mostly the sites of this culture has been found in Shanvad taluka, as this area
fulfils the environmental conditions of prehistoric man's needs, such as, water, shelter, food and availability of raw material. The tools found from the district are non-geometric in nature and are not associated with any pottery. Typologically, these can be compared with tools found from Kutch, Rajasthan and Saurashtra.

At Bajgar in Rajasthan, phase I which has revealed microlithics and animal remains without any association of pottery is dated. There are three \( ^{14}C \) dates obtained from the site, i.e., 4480 ± 200 b.c., 3835 ± 130 b.c. and 3285 ± 90 b.c.\(^{12}\)

At Nangpur in Saurashtra the remains of this culture were found in gravel lens below the barren layer in which proto-historic people settled. Rao, has date this culture to 3000 B.C.\(^{13}\)

Similar evidences are from Jokha and has been dated to 2500 B.C.\(^{14}\). It seems that these cultures get linked up with chalcolithic culture at least in 2nd or 3rd millennium B.C. and hence could reasonably be dated to a period beginning from this age. Their stratigraphic portion on the black clay soil in south Gujarat seems to point to the fact that their earlier limit will not be more than 12,000 years, because this period is that of the processes that were operating for the formation of this soil. Thus, the late stone age cultures of the district can be also dated between 10,000 B.C. to 2500 B.C.

**Harappan Chalcolithic Cultures:** (2550 B.C. to 1000 B.C.)

The stone age cultures were succeeded by Harappan Chalcolithic cultures having affinities with Harappan, Late-Harappan
and post-Harappan cultures. In total 27 new sites were discovered by the present investigator which raises the number to 31.

During explorations of the district, variety of materials was collected. These materials were typologically compared with Rangpur and Somnath to set the contacts with contemporary cultures. The typological comparison of the ceramics formed the backbone of this study. The ceramic assemblage of this culture includes plain and painted red ware, plain and painted buff ware, coarse red ware, coarse black and red ware, grey ware, Prabhas ware, fine incised red ware, black and red ware, coarse grey ware and lustrous red ware. Besides, terracotta objects a copper pin, pot shards with graffiti marks, fossilised bones, shell objects, stone cores with crested guiding wedge, blades and arrow heads, scrapers were also studied. This material shows strong affinities with Rangpur IIA, IIB, IIC and III and Somnath period I and II. The presence Prabhas ware, fine incised red ware show contacts with Somnath and Kalibangan.

A word about Rangpur chronology will not be out of place here, because most of the comparisons are based on its chronology. Rangpur have been divided into three periods. Here we are only concerned with period II and III. Period II has been divided into three sub-phases i.e., IIA, IIB, IIC, while the uppermost layer has been assigned to period III and is associated with "marker ceramic" known as lustrous red ware. However, stratigraphy is completely reconstructed. At no point has an excavation
trench been placed so as to bring IIA and IIB-C periods into unquestionable stratigraphical co correlates. Rao, has offered only plausible stratigraphy interpretation represented by the development of ceramics.17

Unfortunately, there are no 14C dates from Rangpur. A series of dates are available from Lothal I and can be used to date period IIA of Rangpur sequence, because of its typological ties to the urban phase of Lothal. The 14C dates provide a time bracket between 2550 to 2100 B.C.18 without Max-A corrections.

Before placing the period IIB and IIC into its chronological position, it will be easy to discuss period III. The latter will be allocated a space in chronology by expulsion.

The period III has not been also defined chronologically, but there are regional comparisons from Rajasthan and Malwa. Lustrous red ware which is the characteristics of period III of Rangpur sequence has also been found from Shahr and Navdotali. Both these sites are dated by 14C. Lustrous red ware at Shahr occurs in stratum IV. This has been dated between 1550 B.C. to 1270 B.C.19 While at Navdotali lustrous red ware was found in each of the four phases, which together constitute period III and has been dated between 1500 to 1000 B.C.20 At Somnath it has been dated from 1700 B.C. to 1300 B.C.21 Bracketing these dates the time bracket for lustrous red ware will be 1700 to 1000 B.C.22 as the lustrous red ware makes its appearance in small quantities in period IIC at Rangpur. Thus, this period has been dated to 1500 to 1200 B.C.23
The middle difficult portion of Rangpur stratigraphy sub-periods IIB and IIC can be now given its chronological position now. Sub-period IIB has been assigned to 2100 to 1850 B.C. and IIC and by 1850 to 1500 B.C. Thus periods IIA = 2500 to 2100 B.C.; IIB = 2100-1850 B.C.; IIC = 1850-1500 B.C.; III = 1500-1000 B.C. Following figure will make the above statement more clear.

The chronology of all the ceramic assemblage of different sites like Rangpur, Navdotali, Ahar, Sonnath indicate the period of 2nd millennium B.C. If these dates could be relied upon, one can surmise that the span of chalcolithic cultures inJamnagar district should be the 3rd/2nd millennium B.C.

**Historic Period I: (1st/2nd Century B.C. to 00 A.D.)**

After a gap, the chalcolithic culture was succeeded by historic period I. The excavation at Dwarka, Vadnagar and Sanghamala has made the stratigraphy of this period clear. It is represented by black on red ware, which has been found below the red polished ware at above mentioned site, this period has been assigned to date between 1st/2nd century B.C. to 00 A.D. The date has been fixed on its being anterior to the layers containing red polished ware.

Limited number of sites were discovered, the main difficulty of locating such sites is due to the presence of black-on-red ware in succeeding historic period II also. However,
sites like Lemba, Pindare, Vasai, Haripur and Khakharda definitely represent this period. Two main criteria were used to differentiate it from historic period II is the absence of red polished ware from black-on-red ware sites and the presence of typical decorated pots with out-turned rim with a ledged band below it, flaring mouth and constricted neck. The rims are decorated with fillet band having mild ledge on the interior and horizontal bands pointed on it.\textsuperscript{28}

However, a inscribed pot sherd\textsuperscript{29} (Bsyet), some iron pieces, shell bangles, terracotta balls and stoppers have been found along with slipped red ware, coarse red ware, burnished red ware and black ware, during excavation at Dwarka in this period.\textsuperscript{30} The black and red ware, which is associated with iron has not been reported during previous excavations and present investigation in this district, probably, because of limited nature of excavated sites. Moreover, this phase has been represented at number of sites in Saurashtra like Somnath and Valabhi and therefore it is most probable that some of the sites in Jamnagar district also might represent this phase. It needs further investigation in the form of excavations.

\textbf{Historic Period II: (30 A.D. to 6th century A.D.)}

The beginning of Christian era, culture is characterised by Roman Amphora, red polished ware, black-on-red ware, coarse red ware and black ware, Kshatrapa and Gupta coins, terracotta figures, shell bangles. Sculptures of Kubera and Gop temple
Inscription of Gund and Mulvasar belongs to this period. Red polished ware, Roman amphorae is also reported from the excavation at Baroda, Timberva, Vadnagar, Valabhipur, Nareli, Nagara, Somnath, Dowimori and on the basis of all these evidences this culture has been dated between 1st century A.D. to 6th century A.D. Red polished ware has also been found associated with Stāvešan levels in Deccan, and in the Kusān and early Gupta levels in north India.

However, it is difficult to differentiate between the period I and II, as the black-on-red ware continued to appear in period-II and in absence of any stratigraphy in the explored site these are frequently referred as belonging to Historic period I and II.

**Historic period III**: (6th century A.D. to 1000 century A.D.)

The succeeding culture is named as historic period III. The earliest pottery like red polished ware, black-on-red ware

*The early mediaeval and mediaeval terms are avoided because, as Prof. Mehta has rightly pointed out that, "it is based on European experience in which after the downfall of the Roman empire specially in the west for about thousand years, the cultural break with the ancient Roman and Greek was substantial. It was the revival of the ancient thought preserved in the east that threw a bridge. This was renaissance in Europe. In India, however, such experience does not exist. The Indian tradition from its prehistory revived and are still surviving in manifold aspects and hence the term of mediaeval so far as Indian experience is concerned is redundant". (Mehta, R.N.; "Medieval Archaeology", p.2, 1979, New Delhi.) Therefore Historic period III and IV were used instead of earlier terms.*
disappears. Burnished red ware along with some crude wares represent this period. Around development took place in the field of temple architecture and sculpture. The group of temples at Sonkansari, Ganesa darum at Ghumli Koteswara temple at Kalavand, Clavavera temple at Mehvasa, remains of a temple at Gandval and some ruins at Shrurkund at Ghumli, and sculptures of Vishnu and its various incarnations represent this period. The Gachiya coins and six copper plate grant of Saindhava dynasty also belong to this period.

Historic Period IV: (1000 A.D. to 1300 A.D.)

This is the last phase of human history discussed in the present work. This is important period of history of Jumag in as the period witnessed the emergence and growth of Jethwa dynasty. Development took place in the field of temple architecture and sculptural art. The sites of this period generally yield crude red ware, crude black ware and glaze ware. The temples of Navalakha temple at Ghumli, temple at Bardin, temples at Vasai, Jethwa wab, at Ghumli belong to this period.

Cultural sequence of the district:

- Lower palaeolithic culture - Mid-Pliocene period.
- Middle palaeolithic culture - Late or upper pliocene period.
- Late stone age culture - 10,000 to 2500 B.C.
- Harappan Chalcolithic cultures - 2500 to 1000 B.C.
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<td>Historic period II</td>
<td>1st century A.D. to 600 A.D.</td>
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<td>Historic period V</td>
<td>1000 A.D. to 1300 A.D.</td>
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15. Period I of Rangpur sequence belongs to Late Stone Age Culture.


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23. Ibid.
24. Possehl; op.cit.; p.44.
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31. Also refer to part-II (illustrations) for cultural
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