CHAPTER IV

Early Harappan Chronology
In the forgoing chapter, the Early Harappan affiliation of ceramic from north Gujarat has been discussed. It has been hypothesized that the pottery recovered from some of the sites of north Gujarat shows some similarities with Kot Diji, Amri and Nal culture pottery. In this chapter, an attempt has been made to review as well as assess the Early Harappan pottery and their distribution on the basis of analytical data, already published by different investigators, to gain a better understanding of these ceramic groups in particular and the Early Harappan culture in general.

Early Harappan culture comprises of mainly three different groups, differentiated mainly on the basis of ceramics. These are the Amri culture, the Kot Diji Culture and the Sothi culture. These three ceramic groups were found in different cultural zones, though some times overlapping of the zones can also be seen. The Amri culture is mainly confined to the lower Sind area whereas the Kot Diji culture covers a large area comprising of Punjab, Sind and Rajasthan. Sothi culture is spread over in parts of Rajasthan and Haryana. Other important ceramic groups falling in the Early Harappan category belong to the Balakotian and Nal culture.
Here, the emphasis is given to the type-sites of these wares and the extent of their distribution by describing the important sites having a pottery repertoire comprising of these wares.

**KOT-DIJI**

Kot-Diji, excavated by F.A. Khan for two seasons during 1955-57 (Khan 1965), is situated about 43km east of Mohenjodaro on the left bank of Indus (Figure 4.1). Built on a rocky precipice of the Sukkhar Rohri toward the south, the site covers an area of about 183x122m. with an extent height of 12m.

The mound consists of two parts: one comprising of the so-called Citadel (Area A) and the other, the Lower City (Area B). Excavation in the Citadel mound revealed a 5.19m. thick deposit of what was considered to be pre-Harappan occupation consisting of 13 main levels, with a few subsidiary levels, all numbered from top to bottom. The top levels, 1 to 3, showed Harappan characters. Level 3A is marked by a burnt patch, which spread over the excavated area at this horizon. Most interesting and significant feature was a sudden change in cultural material from this level downwards. Level 4 to 16 represents the phase which is named by the excavator as Kot-Dijian, containing pottery with short and everted rim and decorated with a wide band around the neck, identical to that recovered from layer 26 and 26A at Harappa (Wheeler 1947). This Kot-Dijian occupation lying below the Mature Harappan remains gave a range of radiocarbon dates, 3370-2900 BC for the lower level or level 14 and 2655-2185 BC (Table 4.1) for the level immediately below the Mature Harappan occupation at the site.
Figure 4.1 Map Showing Early Harappan Settlements in Greater Indus Valley
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After Shaffer 1992
Area B yielded the remains of Lower City represented by layer 1 to 5. Layer 1 is characterized by typical Mature Harappan pottery and layer 2 to 5 shows a pure Kot-Dijian character. But in some place, the Mature Harappan occupation penetrates down to the fourth level. According to the excavator (Khan 1965: 41)

".... the Harappan culture at this stage, as shown by some of the painted specimens, represents the early phase of the civilization, when, though the normal Harappan forms of pottery were developed, decorations remained still uncommon".

Two radiocarbon samples from the Lower City area give dates of 2980-2545 BC and 2900-2525 BC (Table 4.1). According to Mughal (1970), level 7 of Area 'A' is contemporary to level 5 of Area 'B' which is confirmed by the occurrence of terracotta 'Cakes' at this levels.

The most important structural remains associated with the Kot Dijian occupation is the defence wall of mud bricks, built on a stone foundation. The lower part was constructed with undressed limestone blocks and the superstructure with the mud bricks. It provided massive bastions at intervals. The wall remained contemporary with the whole Kot Dijian occupation at the site but fell into disuse during the Harappan period. Inside the Citadel, seven levels of structural remains were also identified. They were also built of mud bricks or mud on stone foundation. Fragmentary stone structures, which probably supported the mud-brick superstructures, were also found below the Mature Harappan remains in the Lower City.
Most of the excavated objects come from the lower city. A leaf-shaped arrowhead of stone comes from a Kot Dijian level. Such arrowheads are unknown in the Harappan period but occur at Pandi Whāi and Perino Ghundai in northern Baluchistan (Mughal 1970: 55). A bronze or copper fragment of a bangle; a terracotta bull figurine with short horn, different from the Mature Harappan examples; toy-cart frames; bangles and cones of terracotta, similar to the Mature Harappan culture and a large number of chert blades and cores, including serrated blades, are reported from Kot Dijian levels. There is a sharp decrease in Minor antiquities during the Kot Dijian phase, but in comparison with the Harappan specimens, they show superiority in shape and workmanship as well as in technical skill.

**Kot Dijian Ware:**

The specimen recovered from layer 4 to 16 represents the Kot Dijian culture. The most distinctive features of this pottery are its fine thin body, short beaded or slightly everted rim, fugitive broad bands around the neck in red, brown, sepia or warm black, varying from one to three inches in width, painted on a cream or dull red slip. The Kot Dijian pottery is wheel made. Its clay is well levigated and the ground varies from pinkish to red colour. Though the broad features remained unchanged from the beginning to the end of the Kot Dijian settlement, a stage of development can be traced in its style of decoration and to some extent, in its texture and form also. In the earlier stages, it is distinguished by thinner texture, a squat globular form and almost rimless and neckless open mouth. The decoration was confined almost exclusively to the characteristic neck band. In later stages the neck and rim became gradually
more developed and pronounced. While new decorative elements like horizontal and wavy lines, single loops, roundels and simple triangular patterns were introduced, which gradually became multiple and complex, taking the embryonic shape of such well-known Harappan motifs as fish scales, intersecting circles and linked roundels. The geometric pattern are solid, hatched filling being very rare, and there is no over-crowding of motifs.

The principal forms are represented by a open mouthed squat, globular vessel of medium size with short everted or beaded rim, dish-on-stand, both squat and long type, thin and delicate vases, flat-based and straight walled cylindrical vessels, bowls, shallow plates of thin grey fabric, beakers, jars, covers and lids.

The geographical area of the Kot Dijian culture largely coincides with that of Mature Harappan culture. Early Harappan materials have been reported from more than 230 sites on either side of the border dividing India and Pakistan (Mughal 1970). The old Bhawalpur region, called Cholistan, probably marks the center of Kot Dijian culture. Mughal (1980 and 1982) has located 40 sites with Kot Dijian related materials. The type-site seems to be located at the southern extremity of the Kot Dijian culture area with some penetration into the Amrian culture area and across Kirhar range into Kalat and Quetta Valley. Its extension in the north is attested by 3 sites in the Taxila valley and to the northwest in Gomal valley with 3 sites. On the Indian side it is found in the excavations at Kalibangan, Sothi, Binjor, Manda, Banawali and Siswal, other than 131 explored sites.

It is to be noticed that the Kot Dijian culture was in its developed stage when they inhabited Kot Diji. The ceramic was thin and very fine with well
levigated clay and well fired. It shows that this culture originated and
developed at some other place and came to Kot Diji at later times. Kot Diji
related pottery was found from the earliest levels of Amri, IA, along with hand
made Amrian pottery and Togau A ceramics. Mehrgarh IV shows the first
evidence of Kot Dijian ceramic and continued upto Mehrgarh VII. The
chronological evidence and radiocarbon dates points to the fact that the Kot
Dijian occupation started around 3500-3000 BC (Mughal 1990). Keeping in
view these and many more evidence, Mughal has divided the Kot Dijian
occupation at Kot Diji into three stages

Kot Diji A - 3500-3000 BC
Kot Diji B - 3000-2500 BC
Kot Diji C - 2500-2100 BC

Kot Dijian A corresponds with Namazga III and Mehrgarh IV and V and Kot
Dijian B equates with Namazga IV and Mehrgarh VI and VII. Kot Dijian C
was evidenced from the peripheral sites such as Bannu Basin and Taxila
Valley, of the Early Harappan occupation where it provides a clear evidence
of continuity well into the second half of the third millennium BC (Thomas and
Allchin 1986).

AMRI

Excavation carried out by N.G. Majumdar in 1929 at Amri revealed, under the
Harappan remains, an older culture, which was since named 'Amri Culture'.
Situated about 130 km south of Mohenjodaro (Figure 4.1) on the west bank of
the Indus and opposite Chanhu-daro, Amri has two mounds named as Mound A and B. Majumdar's excavation was limited to Mound B. A second excavation was conducted during 1959-62 by J.M. Casal and his team (Casal 1964). He laid trenches on both the mounds revealing five phases of occupation.

Casal recognised a pure Amrian phase in period I divided into four developmental stages designated from below, IA to ID. All four sub-periods of Period I was represented in Mound A while only upper two, IC and ID, were encountered in Mound B. Period II, with two sub-divisions IIA and IIB, was an intermediate one, still having elements inherited from period I, but yielding Mature Harappan traits which progressively increase after their first appearance in ID. The settlement represents Mature Harappan culture in Period IIA and then shows gradual degeneration until IIC, which revealed sherds of 'Jhukar Culture' and continued up to period IIID. Period IV represents 'Jhangar Culture' and period V belongs to the Islamic times (Casal 1979).

No radiocarbon dates are available for the lowest level, Period IA. Two dates available for Amri belong to Period IB and IC. It gives a date of 3660-3360 BC for Period IB and 3395-3160 BC for Period IC (Table 4.1).

Period I, which is purely Amrian in character, consists of nine superimposed structural levels. Though Period IA is not associated with any structural levels, Period IB marks for the first time the appearance of mud brick houses. Period IC is considered to be the height of Amrian occupation. Two types of habitational remains have been encountered. The first one has rectangular houses of various sizes, with doors and mud floors, which are sometimes a few
inches higher than the outside level. The second type is very different having triangular buildings internally divided into small cells - too small for anybody to live in and no door apparently. Some of them had, from the start, been filled with earth, bricks or brick bats, others are empty. In phase ID, all the older structures are replaced by new ones.

**Amri Ware:**

Amri ware is marked by thin fabric vessels painted with geometric and other motifs along with the plum-red bands on either side in black, reddish brown and chocolate-on-buff or sepia body. The pottery is wheel turned. Bichromy in decoration is the main feature of this pottery. These features are best applicable to the pottery of IC and ID, whereas the wares of Amri IA and IB are somewhat different. In Period IA, 82 percent of the whole assemblage recovered consisted of hand made pottery. Bichrome decorations, which is the most distinguishing feature of Amri painted pottery, is relatively less in quantity in this level. Painted designs, with few exceptions, occur on the neck and shoulder of the vessels in brown or red and black colours over buff slip or light red wash. The plain ware shows red or light red fabric. Some examples are treated on the exterior surface with a sandy striated slip, which does not occur in the later phase of Amri. Another method involved application of coarse material mixed with mud on the external surface of large vessels only (Mughal 1970). The principle pottery forms consist of bowls, pedestal vases and large vessels with 'guilloche' external surface. This has a similarity with the Hakra ware found from the Cholistan region of the erstwhile Bahawalpur State. Well developed and wheel made vessel with a distinctive wide band around the neck similar to Kot Diji occurs in this level. Presence of concentric
rows of radiating hooks on the vessel of Period IA and IB are characteristic of Togau C.

Period IB seems to be the continuation of Period IA as many repeated forms such as bowls, large basins and vases with bichrome decorations can be seen. But the decoration became more elaborate and the characteristic style of Period IB is the painting of triangles arranged with opposed bases and filled in with red on leather coloured background. The painted motifs drawn with heavy lines persisted in this period, but were abandoned in the later phases in favour of a more delicate treatment. The dish-on-stand and carinated bowls were two new forms introduced in IB. The hand made pottery from Period IA and IB seems to be ancestral to the classical Amrian ware as phase IC shows 55 percent of the total collection to be wheel thrown. However, the basic forms of elliptical and globular vessels of varying sizes remained unchanged as was the preference to decorate the upper part of the vessels. Painted design elaborated in the form of panelled net motifs consisting of black triangles filling half of the square and with one side curved. In addition to black and red colours, bands of ochre-yellow and plum-red were also painted on a buff slip to give a polychrome effect. In Period ID, further improvements in decorations are noticeable. Some vessels are luxuriantly decorated and are thought to mark the climax of Amrian ware. In addition of geometric designs, animal motifs include the humped bull. 58% of the ceramics were wheel made in this level. Few Kot Dijian shapes can be seen in the assemblage of Period ID.

In Period IIA, new bowl forms with prominent carination below the rim and profusely painted on the external surface were introduced along with medium-sized globular vases and basins. The bichrome painted tradition persisted. The 'fish-scale' motifs with dots of Period ID became simpler and
the 'pipal' leaf design was also introduced. In IIB intersecting circle motifs made their first appearance along with perforated wares and large storage jars of black on red Mature Harappan pottery.

The subsequent Period IIA is assignable to the Mature Harappan culture and the Amrian tradition disappeared.

The distribution of Amri ware is limited to the deltaic region of lower Indus Valley though no sites have yet been reported from the east of the Indus. Of the sites explored by Majumdar and Krishnadeva and McCown, about 22 sites yielded Amrian ware. Of these 10 shows exclusive Amrian pottery, 8 contains Amrian and Harappan wares, 3 gives Amri, Nal and Harappan ceramics and one only Amri and Nal. Amri related sites have been reported from Balakot, down south towards west of Karachi. Amrian bichrome painted style occurs at Siah-damb in the Surab region of north Kalat (De Cardi 1965: 137-152). The painted style of the so-called "Kechi Beg Polychrome" in Quetta valley is similar to the Amrian ware (Fairservis 1956: 259-261). Further northwest at Mundigak III in southern Afghanistan yielded Amri like bichrome pottery (Casal 1961: Fig. 49, 76, 85, 86, 100, 120). The presence of the so-called Faiz Mohammad Grey ware of the Quetta region and Togau and Nal wares of central Kalat in the Amrian culture zone witness the influence from the adjoining hills to the north and northeast (Majumdar 1934). Kot Diji maintain contacts with Amri during the Amrian occupation. An Amrian potsherd, found on the surface of Tepe Yahya, does indicate the contacts of southern Baluchistan with southern Iran, however marginal it may have been. The Amrian culture, though limited in distribution than Kot Diji or Sothi culture, must have played an vital role in the development of the Early Harappan to Mature Harappan phase.
KALIBANGAN

Located on the southern bank of the now dried up river Ghaggar in Ganganagar District of northern Rajasthan (Figure 4.1), the 10m. high mound was excavated by B.B. Lal and B.K. Thapar (Lal 1979, 1981; Thapar 1973, 1975, 1981, 1984) from 1961 for almost a decade. The site of Kalibangan comprises of two mounds, the smaller one (KLB-I) to the west and the larger one (KLB-II) to the east. This fortified settlement was divided into two periods. The lower level at the site shows an Early Harappan occupation and the later occupation shows Mature Harappan character.

The 1.6m. thick deposit of Period I occupation gives a radiocarbon date ranging from 2900 to 2500 BC (Table 4.1). The Period II settlement is bracketed between 2500 to 1750 BC (Table 4.1). There is no break between the occupations but in fact there is an overlap of the two periods. The settlement was surrounded by a mud brick wall, parallelogram in shape, which was built from the earliest levels. This fortification wall is about 250m. north-south and 180m. east-west and has an entrance on the northern wall. The houses of Period I were also made of mud bricks oriented in cardinal directions. In one of the drains burnt bricks were used. An ordinary house perhaps consisted of a courtyard and a few rooms. In the courtyard, ovens of overground and underground types have been found. Round silos dug in the floor of the rooms and plastered with mud or lime probably were used for storing grains, although no grain remains have been encountered. Remains of an agricultural ploughed field with intact furrow marks give ample evidence to show the well organized agricultural activity.
More than a hundred copper artefacts and bangles have been found from the assemblage of this period. Beads of carnelian, agate, shell and terracotta have also been discovered there.

The ceramic assemblage of Period I mainly contains Sothi wares, though Kot Dijian ware was also found along with them. The excavators has classified the pottery on the basis of fabric, assigning it alphabetically from fabric A to F. However, many vessel shapes overlap these divisions and other differences in manufacturing and firing. The fish-scale and pipal leaf designs and cord impression designs on the external surface, similar to Kot Dijian ware, was also seen here.

**Sothi Ware:**

This whole group of pottery, recovered from the earlier occupation, is distinguished by its pale red colour, sometimes underfired, and of medium to thick fabric. The outer surface of the vessels is either left plain, without slip, or treated with a sandy striated coating, which is more often painted in black and sometimes white as a secondary colour. Thick bodied, generally ring based bowls or basins are sharply grooved on the inner side with a series of parallel horizontal lines over which designs are occasionally scratched. The decoration is essentially geometric and floral consisting of semi-circles, crossed and parallel lines, crosses with dots at the end, leaf and moustache-like bifold scroll which may be horn motifs, trees, triangles, fish-scales, a pipal leaf flanked by horns and goat or ibex. The range of shapes comprises narrow-necked globular vessels, bowl with disc base or pedestal footed, offering stands, jars with flanked neck, large vessels with straight vertical neck
and prominent rim and small vases with short neck and everted rim (IAR 1961-62, 62-63; Nigam 1995-96). The distinguishing features of the six fabrics are:

**Fabric A**: Though wheel-made, show careless workmanship and thin fabric. The vessels are plum red to pinkish in colour with the paintings in black. Sometimes white is also used as a secondary colour.

**Fabric B**: This fabric is characterized by its careful potting and the vessels were treated with red slip up to the shoulder. A horizontal band is painted in black. The lower exterior surface is treated with sandy clay on which horizontal or wavy lines were drawn. Most of the animal motifs appear in this fabric.

**Fabric C**: Fine textured with a smooth slip in shades of red, plum or purple, on which painting is done in black. It includes tall and squat offering stand and flanged jars similar to Kot Diji.

**Fabric D**: Characterized by vessels with thick sturdy section and slipped red surface. Common shapes in this fabric include heavy jars, bowls and basins or troughs. The basins have a ring-base with incised designs internally and single or multiple rows of cord impression on the external surface.

**Fabric E**: Comprised of vessels with a buff or reddish buff slip. Shapes and decorations are similar to the vessels found in the other fabric.

**Fabric F**: Distinguished by its grey colour, otherwise the forms are similar.
Fabric C to F can be compared with the Kot Dijian ware though a few vessels of Fabric A and B are also similar. Fabric C contains diagnostic short-necked Kot Dijian globular vessels with a wide painted band on the neck. A similar type is also included in Fabric A. Fabric D includes Kot Dijian grooved ware and Fabric E includes cups and dish-on-stands (Mughal 1990: 184).

The Kalibangan I - Sothi complex is distributed along the banks of the Ghaggar-Hakra river in Pakistan and Indian territories and eastward on its tributary, the Drishadvati. Stein's exploration has revealed 19 sites in India and Pakistan belonging to Sothi culture though the full extent of this ware is not completely known yet. In Pakistan, excavations at Kot Diji, Sarai Khola, Jalilpur and Sandhanwala have given evidence of Sothi ware. It is neither been reported from lower Indus Valley nor found from any parts of Baluchistan. Present evidence shows that Sothi ware is concentrated in the northern parts of Rajasthan in the Ghaggar-Drishadvati basin. On the Indian side, Sothi ware has been reported from the excavations at Bara, Ropar I, Kalibangan I, Mitathal I, Siswal A, Banawali I and Manda IA (Asthana 1985: 185). It is now found all over the eastern Punjab, Haryana and even western Uttar Pradesh (Gupta 1982; Joshi and Madhu Bala 1982; Shankar Nath 1982).

HARAPPA

Situated in the Western Punjab (Figure 4.1), Harappa was the first site discovered of this culture. Excavation in 1946 revealed an Early Harappan occupation below the defence wall on the western edge of the mound AB (Wheeler 1947). Immediately over the natural soil were five layers, numbered 26 to 30, of which layer 26 constituted an occupation layer overlying a layer
of alluvium. These lower levels contain few very small sherds, which were thought to have come from some occupation nearby.

According to the excavator, layer 26 ceramic shows that the site was occupied by a variant or alien culture. He later compares this pottery with Zoab valley, northern Baluchistan and Amri. According to him, the fortification marks the arrival of the Mature Harappa culture. Re-excavation at the site by Dales and his team (Dales and Kenoyer 1990, 1991, 1992, 1993; Kenoyer 1991) gives the evidence that a regular fortified settlement was already established before the advent of Mature Harappans.

This Early Harappan phase at the site is represented by Period I and II. One radiocarbon sample for the lowest level, Period I, gives a date of 3338-3203 BC (Dales and Kenoyer 1993: 47, Table 1). Period I occupation is concentrated on the northwestern edge of mound E. Domestic structures were built of mud bricks and the walls show orientation which was followed in the subsequent occupational structures. The houses show considerable habitational debris as well as hearths.

Period II is defined primarily by the construction of massive walls discovered along the northwestern periphery of mound E. The walls are made with large mud bricks that measure 10x20x40cm. Five to six different building phases have been identified associated with the strata containing ceramics similar to those of Period I. The precise function of the wall is not clear, but since the exterior faces are invariably eroded and the interior faces are not eroded, they may have functioned as revetments or retaining walls to protect the settlement from floods.
The most important discovery was a round kiln 50x60cm. in diameter and about 40cm. high containing Period I pottery. This kiln to the excavators:

"... has a unique firing structure made by placing the upper half of a large pot in the center of the kiln. The fuel appears to have been placed on the outside of the broken pot as well as inside. The interior of the pot is vitrified and reduced while the exterior is oxidized. This suggests that the objects being fired may not have been placed inside the pot for a high temperature reduction that would have resulted in dark grey or black colour. Possibly this structure was for firing the thin greyish-black bangles that are common in Period I and II, but no bangles were found inside the kiln." (Dales and Kenoyer 1992: 60)

The ceramic assemblage of Period I and II can be correlated with the pottery found from the lowest levels by Wheeler. Thirty potsherds were recovered from layer 26 during Wheeler's excavation. Another 150 sherds were found from the mud brick used in the construction of the defence wall. Similar potsherds were also found from another layer numbered 26A, above layer 26 but also underlying the mud-brick platform. There is a clear identifiable difference between the Early Harappan and Mature Harappan pottery. The changes that take place through time are not dramatic discontinuities but show a gradual adoption and change in the use or reduction of various design element, manufacturing techniques and vessel forms (Jenkins 1994: 327).

Most of the sherds consisted of red, dull or pale-red ware, some having short straight neck or everted rim. On the neck, a carefully ruled horizontal black band is most distinctive. The outer surface is generally treated with pale red
or purple slip with a notably dull matt surface. In a few sherds, there are series of multiple grooved lines on the external surface below the neck. Pottery forms include vases, straight-sided bowls or bowls without curved rims, large basins of coarse fabric, ring-stands, straight-sided cylindrical cups, flat-topped knobbed lids and jars with a prominent flang in the neck.

This type of pottery are closely related to the Early Harappan wares found from Kot Diji, Kalibangan, Sarai Khola (Halim 1970-71; 1972), Rehman Dheri (Durrani 1988; Durrani et.al. 1991), Amri and Jalilpur (Mughal 1972, 1974).

BALAKOT

The site of Balakot lies in the middle of the Khurkera alluvial plains on the southeastern side of the Las Bella valley and Somani Bay (Figure 4.1). The excavation at the site was conducted for four field seasons from 1973-76 under the supervision of G.F. Dales (1974: 3-22, 1979a: 45-53, 1979b: 241-274). The site measuring 160x180m. in area rises to a maximum height of 9.7m. above the present level of the plain.

The most significant discovery of the site is that the earliest occupation belongs to a cultural period that preceded the Mature Harappan occupation by apparently several centuries. Architectural remains of this early period were uncovered at all parts of the mound suggesting that the settlement was as big as, if not bigger, than the Harappans.

The occupational history of Balakot can be divided into three periods: The earliest occupation viz. Period I is Balakotian, Period II is Mature Harappan
and Period III is post-Harappan and Islamic occupation.

The four radiocarbon samples from the earliest level of occupation of the site gives a time range of 4100-2700 BC (Table 4.1). The date suggests that the Early Harappan phase at Balakot had an early beginning.

The lower levels of Period I are frequently interspersed with horizontal bands of fine sand and silt, probably indicative of periodic flooding of the Windar river, which was next to the site at the time of its establishment. Heavy deposit of ash, charcoal and animal bones, which seems to be of a domestic nature, characterize the Period I strata. The 6-7m. thick deposit of Period I, divided into I to XII phases, contain archaeological materials of unexpected homogeneity in terms of brick sizes, building techniques, stone tool technology, ceramic types and artistic styles. Mud bricks measuring 10x20x40cm. were used for walls and paving.

Large amount of pottery was found in situ on, or buried into, the floor levels. The pottery from the earliest levels of occupation, with the exceptions of heavy, crudely formed utility and storage vessels, is all wheel made and reflects some of the fully developed painted pottery traditions known at the other sites in Baluchistan. According to Dales (1974: 11) the ceramic from Period I

"... can be described as belonging to the basic Nal tradition of south-eastern Baluchistan with infusion of other south-central Baluchistan traditions such as are best known from the Anjira sequence of Kalat (De Cardi 1965)."
The painted motifs representing highly stylized animal heads, designated "Togau C" is a common feature on dishes and shallow bowls of Balakot Phase I to V. The Nal polychrome vessels completely disappeared by Phase X. There is an increased appearance of Amri Period I, phase C-D, style pottery in the later levels.

Globular jars having a very thin body with short rims standing either vertical or being slightly inturned are found in every phase of Period I. A creamy white slip is found on most of the vessels upon which dark brown to black decorations are painted. The basic decoration consists of a solid colour on the rim and a solid band around the maximum diameter of the body. A single vertical solid band sometimes connects the rim and body band and often additional horizontal bands and wavy bands are painted on the shoulder of the vessels. On most of the examples of the globular vessels the rims tend more to a thick, heavier section and are often out-turned.

The Period I ceramic of Balakot also include a rich tradition of painted motifs that represents floral shapes and animal horns. Several decorations also show parallels with other sites of Baluchistan. The octopus-like motif is comparable with the Sothi period at Kalibangan. In addition to the basic decorative patterns on the painted pottery, the Early Indus ceramics often display enigmatic symbols - either painted or scratched into the vessels - that may have served as potter's marks.

Other artifacts include clay figurines of humped bull, chert/flint blades, edged tools, chipped stone tools and retouched microliths, beads of lapis lazuli, shell, semi-precious stones and pastes. Metal is very rarely used in Period I. The best-preserved example is a folded strip of copper with the cache of beads.
The mound of Sohr Damb is about 8km. east of Nal village in the Jhalawan Division of the Kalat state (Figure 4.1). The mound, measuring 305x180m., runs northeast and southwest at its main axis and attains a maximum height of 12m. towards the southern end. In 1903, Mirza Sher Muhammad of the Gazetteer staff excavated a small area and recovered fifty-nine pieces later described by Sir John Marshall in the Annual Report of the Archaeological Survey of India. Hazra Pioneers under the command of Colonel Jacob in 1908 extensively excavated the site and recovered about 250 vessels. Again in 1923-24 Bizanjau Sardar excavated and gathered a few beautifully painted vessels. Though these excavations have yielded the first antiquities from the site but they had, to some extent, disturbed the site.

Hargreaves took up a regular excavation at the site in 1925. The trenches were laid in Areas A, B, C, D, E, F and G (Hargreaves 1929). Two converging trenches, A and E, were dug in Area A on the outer limits of the deep excavation made by the pioneers. The principal structural remains disclosed by this clearance are the stone foundations of thirteen rooms and courtyards. No obvious entrances to the rooms can now be traced. Whether these stone structures are the remains of deserted and ruined habitations or whether designed originally for funerary purposes can not be asserted. The excavations further asserted that the entire area was devoted to the purpose of a necropolis and human remains and funerary pottery was found down to the floor level. Several methods of inhumation appear to have been practised at the same time. Pot burial was the rule, the exceptions being an adult and two children who
were found buried individually in a little mud-brick chamber. The adult was partially flexed and lying on its left side. No funerary remains were found with these burials. The greatest number of remains was fractional burials. Some of the body parts were found in vessels of the Nal ware. Other antiquities found from Area A of the necropolis includes 267 beads, pendants, stone weights, grinding stones, marble ring-stones, stone chisels and copper implements.

Traces of a stone wall have been encountered in Areas B and C. The use of sun-dried moulded bricks is attested in Area B. A Neolithic quartzite celt was found from this area whereas no antiquity is reported from Area C.

In Area D the excavation have brought to light two more or less parallel walls of plastered mud-work. In continuation, four deeper and smaller compartments have been revealed. Four fragments of a copper implement, broken figurines of bulls, burnt animal bones, fragments of coarse undecorated pottery and grooved discs of bone were the antiquities recovered in these four little chambers.

Excavations in Area F disclosed a rectangular chamber with walls of mud-bricks. The findings include a copper seal, a copper chisel, beads of different materials and two vessels different from necropolis pottery.

In Area G, three small rooms were disclosed from which beads of agate, carnelian, lapis lazuli and paste were recovered. Grinding stone with a grinder, two fragments of worked bone, a fragment of copper chisel and a white steatite press seal showing a vulture with one foot on a snake were found in this area. Twentysix vessels with incomplete burials were also noticed here.
Nal Ware:

The pottery assemblage is marked by the wheel-turned fine wares. There is a general resemblance amongst the potting but there are marked differences between the fabric and ornamentation of various types. The wares exhibit great variety in colour, ranging from greenish grey, through buff to a fine red. Pottery forms include open bowls with ring base, open bowl having a raised projection, tumbler-like vessels, canister like vessel with circular opening, open bowl with wide mouth, squat pot with bulging sides meeting in a sharp edge, double pot with projecting flat handle, drinking cup with short solid foot, little circular cups having sides nipped to form four sharp corners, miniature vessels with narrow mouth, shallow saucers with rounded rim, squat goblets with small foot, open bowl with curved sides and flat bottom, vase with narrow mouth and small solid foot, large open bowl with broad foot, small funnel etc.

The decoration includes painting in yellow, blue, green and black but no single vessel has more than three colours in addition to sepia outline. The colours are not permanent and have applied after the vessels have been fired. The decorations were primarily geometric with distinctive zoomorphic motifs, such as the fish, scorpion, bull, ibex, gazelle, fish and birds. These are painted in a style, which involves utilization of panel designs, often with multiple outlines, including curvilineals. The geometric designs consisted of horizontal bands, trapezoidal panels, intersecting motifs, fish, stepped designs, zigzag lines etc.

The Nal culture area corresponds clearly to the geographical region of northern Jhalawan with a few sherds on the sites along the Mula route but its presence
in settlements in the Chhappar Valley (Site 19 and 22) and one in Mungachar (Site 18) (De Cardi 1984: 64). Nal pottery has been found mixed with Amri pottery in southern Baluchistan. At Balakot (Dales 1979b: 251) it is found before the Amrian pottery. It is also located at a few sites in Kalat area (De Cardi 1965: 126). It has been reported from Mehrgarh VI (Jarrige and Lechevallier 1979: 507), Mundigak III (Shaffer 1978: 124), Shahr-i-Sokhta I and Yahya IV C (Asthana 1985: 188).

SUMMARY

With the above mentioned discoveries the old theory of west Asian origin of the Harappan Civilization can be put aside. The cultural development in the Indus Valley was witnessed right from the Neolithic times, with many currents operating within this area. It is now abundantly clear that from about the middle of fourth millennium BC, there came into being a cultural stage defined by the Kot Dijian, Sothi and Amrian cultures, which had many of the elements that subsequently went into the making of the Mature Harappan Civilization.

The exquisite town planning and fortification walls around the settlement which was so distinctive of the Mature Harappan levels were found even during the Early Harappan levels of Kot Diji, Kalibangan and Dholavira. By this time the stone tool technology, metallurgy and other craft activities like terracotta and ceramics were also fairly well developed. The shape of kilns for firing objects of faience and clay that are known from Harappa, Mohenjodaro, Balakot and Lothal in Mature Harappan levels is precisely similar to those used at the Early Harappan settlements in Cholistan and Harappa (Mughal 1990: 187).
In pottery repertoire, there are certain forms like flanged vessels, tall cylindrical vases, sometimes even perforated (as in Amri ID), flat and flanged 'bread containers', dishes and cup-on-stand, ring stand etc. do continue in the Mature Harappan times. Similar is the case with certain painted motifs, viz. pipal-leaf, banana-leaf, intersecting circles, hatched triangles, fish-scales, peacocks etc. (Lal 1997). Even in the case of terracotta cakes and toy carts, beads of paste and semi-precious stones, the seals without inscription, all shows an Early Harappan origin.

All these evidences make the Early Harappan people the forerunners of the developed stage of the Harappan Civilization. However, this transformation from the Early to Mature phase was not sudden. There was a definite transition phase, thus giving a change over which was not only slow and gradual but also smooth. Sites like Amri, Kot Diji, Dholavira, Harappa and Kunal (Khatri and Acharya 1997) show a transition phase between the; Early and Mature Harappan deposits where the few Early Harappan traits still continue while many Mature Harappan feature starts appearing.

The distribution of Early Harappan sites show an area of occupation which almost equals the area covered by the Mature Harappans. The three major ceramic groups of the Early Harappan tradition viz. Kot Diji ware, Amri ware and Sothi ware, show concentration in a specific area, but inter-tradition overlap is also evident between these groups. The only area which was thought to be left unexplored during the Early Harappan times was Gujarat. The Amrian culture area was thought to be limited to the western part of Indus Valley and the Kot Dijian culture, which had the widest area of distribution among these culture, was supposed to have restricted themselves from entering
Gujarat. The significant shift to this part of the sub-continent was assigned to the more adventurous Mature Harappan people. However, with the excavation at Dholavira, Gujarat also came within the realm of the Early Harappan tradition. The fortification, three tier settlement, the water management all show a developed stage of Early Harappan settlement in Gujarat. Further east, the excavation at Moti Pipli brought the extent of the Early Harappans up to north Gujarat.

With this fresh evidence, it is very clear now that during the Early Harappan period, different ecological niches, not only within the greater Indus Valley, but also in Kutch and north Gujarat, were utilized inducing different responses in the form of subsistence practices and cultural articulation.