

# AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXPLORATIONS AT KHANPUR KALAN, DISTRICT SONIPAT (HARYANA) INDIA.

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## Introduction

Haryana has been the cradle land of Indian civilization. The Indus civilization is one of the earliest urbanizations in the world. The Indus civilization represents the most ancient phase of Indus culture, going back to the third millennium B.C. It was contemporary to the Mesopotamian and Egyptian civilization. This civilization proves that people in Haryana were already civilized before 5000 years and they knew the concept of town planning like Haryana Urban Development Authority (HUDA). Chandigarh, a beautiful city of Punjab and Haryana, too settle based on Harappan settlement that attracts everyone for its well managed town planning.<sup>1</sup> The Indus town planning has three principal division named as a acropolis (citadel), middle town and lower town, which was surrounded by a fortification wall.<sup>2</sup> Ancient famous river *Ghaggar/Saraswati* and its tributaries has high fertility land which made the earlier agriculturist settled here continuously. The excavations and explorations of many archaeology sites scattered all over the state has made it clear that on the banks of the river *Ghaggar/Saraswati* many ancient civilizations developed over time. Importance of Haryana in the Harappan studies can be understood by looking at the distribution pattern of Harappan sites in India. Haryana has highest number of Harappan sites with 241 Early Harappan , 96 Mature Harappan and 840 Late Harappan, followed by Gujaarat with 230, Punjab 147, Uttar Pradesh 133, Rajasthan 75, Chandigarh 4, Himachal Pardesh 3, Delhi 1, Jammu 1, and Maharashtra 1.<sup>3</sup> At present probably there is not a single site in Haryana unknown to Archaeologists. Sonipat, earlier known as *shonaprastha* is stated to have been one of the five *prasthas* demanded by *Yudhishtra* from *Duryodhana* as the price of peace.<sup>4</sup> Which were *shonaprastha*, *Baghpat*, *Tillpat*, *Indraprastha* and *Panprasth* .Sonipat has the highest number of Late Harapaan and 25 of Painted Grey ware culture .So that, Sonipat region has made a signified contribution to Haryana field archeological heritage.

## **Khanpur Kalan.**

Khanpur Kalan is a village in Gohana block Sonipat District of Haryana. It is situated 34 Kms. towards west from District head quarter 10 kms. from Gohana. 240 Kms from Chandigarh. The site can be approached from Delhi to Rohatak via Panipat on Gohana-Panipat road. The village Khanpur Kalan (29 09'40'' N 76 47' 33'' E) is located at a distance of about 9 kms. East of Gohana, near *Bhagat Phool Singh Mahila* University in district Sonipat. The ancient mound lies 400 mts. North of this village. The total area of this site is about 17 acres and rises to a height of about 4 mts. A part of this site is under cultivation and half of the mound is still intact. Khanpur Kalan lies at a height of 2mts. From the mean sea level.<sup>5</sup>

## **Flora:-**

The region is not adequately wooded because of large scale cultivation on account of the pressure of population. The finest trees are found alongwith the bank of the canal and roadsides such as *Kikar* (*Accadianilatica*), *Shisham* (*Dalbergia Sisoo*) and *babool* (*Acacia nilotica*). The floral types found in the region are *Jand* (*Prolsopis Cineraria*), *Rohera* (*Tecomella-undulate*), *Lasura* (*Cordial dicnotema*) and *Beri* (*Zozphus mauritiana*).<sup>6</sup>

## **Fauna:-**

The extensive cultivation has affected the forests and wild life in the regions, however a few wild lives are still found *Nilagai* (blue bull) is the common wild animal in this region. Fox , Jackal, Squirrel, White cat, Monkey, here and scorpions are commonly found. Even the poisonous snakes, such as cobra, karait, and chitkabra are found besides the common lizards. The common birds include peacock, sparrow, duck shad grouse, owl, baya, pigeon's etc.<sup>7</sup>

## **Regarding these wide spread mounds the elderly villagers believe that**

*.A hermit named choolkat and a king named chakwaban used to be close friends at a certain time . Once chakwaban invited the hermit to Buland khera for food . But due to some dispute, he got angry with the hermit and insulted him . The angry hermit left his territory and created dhai-shakti. Using one shakti he sant the kingdom of Chakwaban underground. He used his second shakti ,in the battle of the Mahabharta and later moved to an unknown place alongwith the remaining half shakti.*<sup>8</sup>

### Previous work:-

Archaeological explorations were conducted for the first time in this region by Dr. Silak Ram<sup>9</sup> and he brought to light some of the sites. After that Dr. R.C Thakran<sup>10</sup> also explored this region during his PhD research work. First author, Department of Ancient Indian History, Culture & Archaeology of K.U. (Kurukshetra explored Ghohana region and added many archaeological sites to the archaeological map of this region.

### Cultural Sequence.

After the exploration, the potsherds collected from the Khanpur Kalan mound, and they were marked and classified in terms of color, fabrics forms and shapes. The material collected from the mound show that is occupied from the Hakra culture ware period up to the medieval period. Interestingly, the Mature Harappa pottery has not been reported from the site.

Period: VII	Medieval Period
Period: VI	Historical ware
Period: V	Northern black polished ware
Period: IV	Painted Grey ware
Period: III	Late Harappan
Period: II	Early Harappan
Period: I	Hakra Culture ware

On the basis of the cultural assemblage discovered during the exploration our assessment is that period I of Khanpur is represented by Hakra ware pottery. Previously first time discovered by M.R. Mughal<sup>11</sup> in the Cholistan desert area in Pakistan and later same typed of pottery reported from the Ghaggar basin have some typological similarities with the Hakra pottery reported from the Cholistan region, in the *Ghaggar/Saraswati* basin, Indiana Archaeologist conducted some excavation which revealed that Kunal<sup>12</sup>, Bhirrana (Fatehabad) and Faramana<sup>13</sup> (Rohtak) have some affinities with the Hakra ware reported from Cholistan.

But the excavators of Faramana and Harappa has given a different name like regional Hakra culture Tradition<sup>14</sup> and Ravi phase.<sup>15</sup> In the Exploration at Haryana region, there are 16 sites which have yielded pottery with some affinities with so called Hakra culture. These sites are Bhirrana,

Rakhigarhi, Farmana, Kunal, Khanpur Kalan, Girawar II, Ghaswa, Burj, Kheri Meham, Siswal, Talware, Rajpura, Banawali, Shymalo Kalan II, Nidhani and Khima Kheri.<sup>16</sup>

Although, Hakra Pottery from Bhirrana has been divided into eight classes.<sup>17</sup> Yet author have found two types of pottery form Khanpur kalan site (1) incised ware (2) mud appliqué ware. M.R. Mughal<sup>18</sup> has describes characteristic features of Hakra Culture as under

“Hakra ceramics are very distinctive. They are both wheel made and hand made red wares with a variety of surface they are both wheel made red wares with a variety of surface treatment. The most frequent and conspicuous pottery types include (i) those treated on the external surface with a secondary coating of mud fixed with bits of pottery called mud appliqué and (ii) pottery with a series of incised lines on the external surface called Hakra incised. Most of the Hakra mud appliqué ware. Consists of handmade, thick-bodied vessels tempered with clay. There are also some wheel made, thin-bodied pots with a fine fabric. The thin bodied pottery has an everted rim and is painted in black on a deep red or chocolate slip which is confined to the shoulder just below the rim. The resemblance of the Hakra mud appliqué ware in vessel form and surface treatment to some of the handmade pottery form the earliest levels of Amari IA is most striking?”

The second phase of this site is represented by the people of Early Harappan culture who made technological advancements towards the first urbanization, Sothi-Siswal culture is a regional variant of the Early Harappan culture in the upper and middle Ghaggar/Saraswati Basin The Harappans are believed to have immigrated and settled side by side with the Pre-Harappan Kalibangans (Popularly known as sothians) in Haryana.<sup>19</sup> The Pre-Harappan culture in the region and the represented by the characteristic sothi Pre-Harappan culture in the region and is represented by the characteristic sothi-siswal ceramics, with the influence of Kot-Diji elements. The Early Harappan pottery was found from the surface of this site and which is similar to Kalibangan Fabric A, B and D. B.K Thaper<sup>20</sup> has made an elaborate study of the Early Harappan pottery and classified it into six fabric as A to F. Painted designs of Early Harappan pottery can be broadly divided into two categories as (i) Geometric motifs like line, cross ,loops or festoons, checker board pattern, triangles and swastika and (ii) flora and fauna which is found with various forms of leaves, flower design, fish, snake ,animals and birds, and horns. Pottery making was also an important industry in the Harappan period .These were chiefly wheel-made and were treated with a red coating and has decoration in black. Kunal ,Rakhigarhi, Banawali, Balu, Farmana and Bhirrana are the excavated sites belong to this cultural phase. The Third phase of the site is marked by the presence of late Harappan pottery. Late Harappan culture is with eased general decline of Indus civilization. The decline of the Harappan civilization was slow and gradual in every region but the transformation from the Late Mature phase to the Late phase differs from region to region.<sup>21</sup> The Late Harappan pottery can broadly be divided into four regional groups-sindh. Gujarat, Punjab and the *Sutlej-Yamuna* basin.<sup>22</sup>

In Haryana the now dry *Ghaggar/Saraswati* and *Drishadvati* rivers were once the most flourishing valleys. The general settlement pattern of these Post-Harappan sites in Haryana is that most of them are away from the perennial river and the settler rather preferred the area outside the flood plains of seasonal river.

In the Haryana region, the late Harappan material culture has affinities with Mitathal period 11 B and Bara culture. Mirzapur, Daulatpur, Mitathal, Banawali, Balu, Bhagwanpura and Jognakhera are the famous excavated sites belonging to this culture phase. At present there are 16 Hakra sites, 241 early Harappan, 96 mature Harappan and 890 late Harappan sites.<sup>23</sup> The excavated sites Siswal, Banawali and Mitathal revealed a culture-sequence starting from Pre-Harappan to Late Harappan period. Mirzapur, Daulatpur, Mitathal IIB and Bhagwanpura IA indicated a general decadences in fabric, Potting and treatment of surface.

Period four is marked by the presence of painted grey ware pottery in two shapes ie. Basin and Bowls. It was painted with geometric pattern like horizontal and vertical bands, circular lines and dot. The painted grey ware represents highly evolved technique of manufacture. At Bhagwanpura IB and ere Madina-III attested on interlocking of Late Harappan culture with PGW Ware,<sup>24</sup> suggesting their contemporary co-existence in the region at least partially .similar evidences has been reported from Dadheri, Katpalo, Nagar(U.P)and Manda, Akhnur(Jammu).<sup>25</sup>

Period five is characterized by the occurrence of black polished wares which are generally associated with the Northern black polished ware. N.B.P.W are pottery mostly found at upper Ganga valley, which is divided into two region: (1) The upper *Ganga* valley south and (2) The upper *Ganga* valley north.<sup>26</sup>

Sr. No.	Site Name	Lattitude	Longitude	Previous work	Culture Sequence
1.	Bali Brahman	29° 03'42'' N	76° 44' 15'' E	Hist-Med	
2.	Bidhal-I	29° 04'93'' N	76° 48' 57'' E	Hist	
3.	Bidhal-II	29° 04'93'' N	76° 48' 57'' E	Hist	
4.	Bidhal-I	29° 0'0'' N	76° 46' 35'' E	Hist-Med	
5.	Bidhal-II	29° 0'0'' N	76° 46' 35'' E	Med	
6.	Bidhal-III	29° 0'0'' N	76° 46' 35'' E	MED	
7.	Bhaswal Kalan	29° 03'00'' N	76° 47' 30'' E	LH-HIST	
8.	Bhaswal Khurd-I	29° 05'30'' N	76° 40' 34'' E	Med	

9.	Bhaswal Khurd-II	29° 05'30'' N	76° 40' 35'' E	Med
10.	Brota	29° 07'12'' N	76° 44' 27'' E	HIST-MED
11.	Garmi	29° 09'0'' N	76° 45' 42'' E	HIST-MED
12.	Garhi Sarai	29° 08'0'' N	76° 42' 50'' E	HIST-MED
13.	Garhi Ujale Khan	29° 08'28'' N	76° 42' 42'' E	MED
14.	Giwana	29° 01'00'' N	76° 46' 35'' E	HIST
15.	Jauli-I	29° 05'47'' N	75° 48' 18'' E	HIST-MED
16.	Jauli-II	29° 05'47'' N	76° 48' 18'' E	MED
17.	Kakana Bhadri	29° 07'58'' N	76° 48' 13'' E	LH-PGW-HIS-MED
18.	Kalana Khas	29° 10'21'' N	76° 45' 54'' E	EH-LH-HIST-MED
19.	Kheri Damkan-I	29° 06'30'' N	76° 45' 54'' E	PGW-HIST
20.	Kheri Damkan-II	29° 06'30'' N	76° 45' 54'' E	LH-HIST
21.	Khanpur	29° 09'40'' N	76° 47' 33'' E	HW-EH-LH- PGW-NBPW- MED-HIST
22.	Kasandi-I	29° 07'20'' N	76° 50' 40'' E	HIST-MED
23.	Kasandi-II	29° 07'20'' N	76° 50' 40'' E	LH-HIST
24.	Kasanda	29° 06'20'' N	76° 49' 10'' E	MED
25.	Katwal	29° 02'20'' N	76° 57' 00'' E	MED
26.	Lath	29° 04'25'' N	76° 57' 00'' E	HIST
27.	Mahra	29° 04'25'' N	76° 46' 48'' E	HIST-MED
28.	Moi-Hooda I	29° 02'42'' N	76° 43' 15'' E	HIST-MED
29.	Moi-Hooda II	29° 02'42'' N	76° 43' 15'' E	MED
30.	Moi-Hooda III	29° 02'42'' N	76° 43' 15'' E	MED
31.	Niat I	29° 07'18'' N	76° 46' 54'' E	LH-HIST-MED
32.	Niat II	29° 07'18'' N	76° 46' 54'' E	MED
33.	Nagar	29° 07'32'' N	76° 43' 37'' E	HIST-MED
34.	Puthi	29° 03'40'' N	76° 41' 57'' E	LH-GW
35.	Rabhra	29° 04'52'' N	76° 41' 57'' E	HIST
36.	Rukhi I	29° 02'58'' N	76° 40' 52'' E	LH-HIST-MED
37.	Rukhi II	29° 02'58'' N	76° 40' 52'' E	EH-LH-PGW
38.	Saragthal	29° 07'21'' N	76° 50' 15'' E	LH-HIST-MED
39.	Thaska	29° 06'08'' N	76° 40' 34'' E	EH-LH-PGW
40.	Gohana I	29° 07'08'' N	76° 42' 02'' E	LH-OCP
41.	Gohana II	29° 12'08'' N	76° 42' 02'' E	PGW
42.	Khanpur II	29° 09'06'' N	76° 47' 02'' E	LH

HW=Hakra ware

NBPW=Northern Black Polished ware

EH=Early Harappan

HIST=Historical

LH=Late Harappan

MED=Medieval

The sixth and seventh phase of this site is represented by the people of historical and medieval period. The early historic period saw the emergence of sixteen great states of which Haryana formed the greater part of the *Kuru mahajanapada*.

Sonipat region seems to have been located at a very significant (Politically and economically) strategic point. It was well conducted by a north-south trade route running almost parallel to the Grand Trunk Road (GTR) between Mathura and Thanesar in the historical period.<sup>27</sup> The great poet of early historical period, *Banabhatta* in his *Harshacharita* has also described the association of great empire *Harsha* with *Thanessar* in detail and *Mathura* also capital of Kushana king. However, the region seems to have been thickly populated during the post-Mouryan and pre-Gupta period,<sup>28</sup> because 24 Historical sites found here during the valley to village archeological survey. When the *Mouryan* empire collapsed in the third century BC, a number of new people come in Haryana region. They were the Grapes, Shakes, Scytheans, Huns and Kushanas,

During the course of exploration at the site, Historical period represented the common shapes of pottery with bowl with in curred rim, carrinated cooking handies, vases, Jar with averted rim, basins, lid and incense burner. Kushana and Gupta period pottery is less painted as compared to the Rajmahal Pottery.

During the sultanate period, Sonipat, Panipat, Karnal, Hansi, Hissar, Sohna, Fatehabad, Thanesar, Kaithal, Jhajjar, Farukh Nagar, were important towns and well close to Delhi. So that Haryana become the strong centre of various rival political forces, i.e, the pathans, the Afghans, the Mughal, the Sikhs and the Marathas.<sup>29</sup>

In the medieval times, a great change took place owing to the coming of the Muslim.

Although the Muslims touched Haryana in the tenth century for the first time. During the Gohana region 27 medieval sites were discovered.

During the course of exploration at the site, many medieval pottery shapes are sharp edged bowls, basin, pos and few shades of glazed ware and important antiquities found such as two terracotta shal noteworthy surface finds include one sculpture of *vasudave*. This sculpture made of black stone. This idol is how established in a temple. Perhaps this is the idol of *vasudeva* which is related to early medieval period bearing the length of 13 inches and breadth 6 inches. It was large eyes and large brows and long nose. Some neck ornaments carved on the breast can easily be seen. He is

wearing a dhoti round his thighs. A hole which is the identity of Gods is also seen decorated with the petals of lotus.

The deity is wearing a turban on head. The left part of the idol is broken. It is holding the *kalia* (Snake) in right hand and the snake is ceiling his body. In its right hand there is standing *Kalia's* wife which is not so clear(Its sculpture is newly discovered by author).During the course of the exploration at site found a sand stone quern, reddish in color, measuring 24 inch in length, 12 inch in width and 4 inch thick.<sup>30</sup>

*Note: This site has a great archaeological importance and can be taken up for excavation. The authentic culture sequence of this site can only be given by an excavator. The present culture sequence of this site is given on bases of exploration.*

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