

ISSN: 2321-4880

શ્વેતુલ્ય વારસો

ગુજરાતની ઐતિહાસિક અને સાંસ્કૃતિક ધરોહરને
ઉજાગર કરતું ત્રિમાસિક

સળંગ અંક-૮, વર્ષ-૨, ફેબ્રુઆરી થી એપ્રિલ-૨૦૧૫

કિંમત રૂ. ૫૦/-



મુખ પૃષ્ઠ : તપકેશ્વરની કુદરની ગુફાઓ પર કંડારેલ બ્રહ્માણું શિલ્પ, ગીર સોમનાથ



HCRC હિસ્ટોરીકલ એન્ડ કલ્ચરલ રિસર્ચ સેન્ટર, અમદાવાદ-૧૪.

Craft Production at Navinal: A Harappan Settlement in Kachchh District, Gujarat

(Rajesh S.V., Saleem Shaikh, Brad Chase, Y.S. Rawat, Ambika Patel, Abhayan G.S., Ajit Kumar, Charusmita Gadekar, Haseen Raja R., Akinori Uesugi, Vinod V., Renjinimol M.N. and Prabhin Sukumaran)

Introduction: Located in the forest land on the margin of Gulf of Kachchh in Mundra taluka of Kachchh District, Navinal (22 49' 17.5" N, 69 35' 49.9" E) is a site showing cultural remains of the Integration and Localization eras of Indus Civilization. The site (Figure) was discovered in 1950s by P.P. Pandya of Department of Archaeology, Saurashtra. It was first reported by S.R. Rao in 1963 and was assigned Rangpur IIB phase of Harappan culture of Gujarat. Later in 2011, the site was explored by P. Ajithprasad of the Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda and in 2012 by A.S. Gaur of National Institute of Oceanography. In 2013, the site was explored by a joint team from the University of Kerala, Kachchh University, Albion College – USA, Gujarat State Archaeology Department and M. S. University of Baroda to understand its archaeological potentials. A long term multidisciplinary international research project entitled 'Archaeological Excavation at Navinal in Mundra Taluka, District Kachchh and Exploration in Kachchh District, Gujarat' has been launched with financial support from University of Kerala and the Archaeological Research and Conservation Program: India and Pakistan (ARCP/IP). This project has been launched with such objectives as to understand the level of integration which existed among the Regional Chalcolithic Cultures and Classical Harappans found at the site and to understand the economic production and inter regional interaction network that existed during the Urban Harappan phase in Kachchh.

Surface Survey: 2013-14: Systematic surface surveys during 2013-14 under the project at Navinal (Figure) have revealed remains of ceramic assemblage belonging to the Integration and Localization Eras (c. 2600-1600 BC); terracotta objects; complete shells and shell objects; varieties of beads of stone, shell and terracotta; stone amulet; grinding stones; hammer stones; lithic tools (Figure) and associated debitage and large number of copper tools. Many structural parts of stone and indicators of craft production (pottery production, stone tool production, copper working and shell working) are visible at various parts of the site. A number of animal skeletal remains found from the site show salt and

calcium encrustation suggesting substantial antiquity. Large number of charred and uncharred otoliths of variety of fishes and fish vertebrae were also collected from the site. Huge quantities of complete and broken small shells (probably edible) and lithic debitage are found scattered all over the surface of partially disturbed site. This paper deals with the evidences of craft production discovered from the site.

Ceramic Production: Millions of potsherds are scattered on the surface of the settlement. Three major ceramics categories may be identified at Navinal – Sorath and Late Sorath Harappan Pottery, Classical/Urban Sindhu Harappa pottery and ceramics of Anarta Tradition. Among these Sorath and Late Sorath Harappan pottery are the predominant types found at the site. Convex and straight sided bowls, wide mouthed pots, pots/jars, basins and shallow dishes represented the Sorath

Harappan pottery. Although Red Ware was the predominant ware in this category, Buff Ware vessels are also common. These vessels are generally decorated with simple designs in black over the red slip. Important Late Sorath Harappan vessel forms include concave sided and straight sided bowls sometimes with a blunt carination, dishes with thick flat or a drooping rim, jars with an elongated neck flaring out into a beaded rim and large storage jars. These also show decoration of horizontal and wavy lines. Surface indicators of ceramic production at the site are 8 kilns of varying sizes and shapes, vitrified sherds, fused vessel parts, over heated sherds and kiln wasters.

Stone Tool Production: Lithic assemblage collected from the site of Navinal includes 70 diagnostic tools (blades as well as geometric and non-geometric tools) and 789 fragments of lithic debitage (Gadekar et al. 2014). A total of 48 blades, classified according to their attributes into simple blades, retouched blades, blade flakes and crested ridge blades have been recovered from the site. It was observed that simple blades without any retouches but with edge damages were maximum in number. Retouched blades (backed as well as obliquely blunted blades) and blade flakes are present at the site in good quantity. A fragment of crested guiding ridge blade provides evidence for the employment of this technique at the site or the use of such tools produced in some other sites. Most of the blades (40 fragments)



Figure 1: Copper Prills from Navinal

were found in broken condition. It was noticed that the retouched tools were exclusively made out of secondary blades which are devoid of cortex. It was seen that the most prominently represented raw material amongst blades was chalcedony followed by banded agate, chert and moss agate. Amongst the geometric category only lunates were recovered from the site. In the non-geometric category tools such as points, burins, borers and different varieties of scrapers have been discovered. It was observed that chalcedony was the most preferred raw material amongst this category of tools. Chert, banded agate, moss agate and quartz were also exploited to manufacture different variety of geometric and non-geometric tools. Lithic debitage or the byproducts of stone tool productions from the site of Navinal have been classified into flakes (primary, secondary and core rejuvenation), nodules, cores (chalcedony, banded agate, quartz and Rohri chert) and waste/shatter (Gadekar et al. 2014).

Copper Working: A large number of copper objects and evidences for copper working were recovered from surface of the site which includes small broken spatulas, points, fish hook, wires, knife fragments, broken sheets and beads besides nodules (Figure 1), waste materials and crucible fragments. No convincing evidence of copper smelting has been found from the site. The recovery of some coarse clay crucibles with copper adhering in them point to the fact that they were used in melting the copper. Majority of the copper objects were probably made at the site using sand moulds that would leave very little or no traces for the archaeologists (Bhan et al. 2004).

Shell Working: Another craft activity pursued in minimal quantity at the site was the production of bangles from *Turbinella pyrum* shells. 175 shell bangle fragments (Figure 2) of different sizes and shapes, shell beads, grounded collumellae, a few lip margins, cut collumellae and unused shells have been reported from the site. A few bangles with chevron marks and a broad bangle with ribbed decoration were also recovered from Navinal. Large number of broken and complete shells of *Fasciolaria trapezium* and *Turbinella pyrum* scattered over the site are probably indicators of raw shell trading from the site.

Conclusions: The Harappan site at Navinal has produced ceramic assemblage, majority of which belongs to the Sorath Harappan and Late Sorath Harappan category but at the same time has revealed ceramics of Anarta tradition, Classical Harappan ceramics and Classical Harappan artefacts such as shell bangles with chevron marks, stone amulet, lapis lazuli bead and Rohri chert core. As at many other sites of Gujarat, surface finds at Navinal shows clear

evidence for a mixed material assemblage that includes artifacts attributed to each of these categories. While this work is in its initial stages, it is consistent with findings from other recently excavated sites such as Bagasra, Shikarpur, and Kanmer where Sorath styles of pottery were used alongside pottery and other objects of Anarta tradition and Classical Harappan material culture (Sonawane et al. 2003, Bhan and Ajithprasad 2008, Kharakwal et al. 2012).

Acknowledgement: We would like to first acknowledge the Archaeological Survey of India whose support has made possible the exploration upon which the present work is based. We would like to thank the University of Kerala and the Archaeological Research and Conservation Program: India and Pakistan program (administered by the Center for South Asia at the University of Wisconsin-Madison) for research funding. Fieldwork was undertaken by all MA students (1st and 3rd semester) from the University of Kerala. It would not have been possible without the support of Sarpanch Mr. Gajendra Singh of Navinal village. We are also thankful to the people of Navinal for their kind hospitality.

References

- Bhan, K.K. and P. Ajithprasad. 2008. *Excavations at Shikarpur 2007-2008: A coastal port and craft production centre of the Indus civilization in Kutch, India*. www.harappa.com.
- Bhan, K.K., V.H. Sonawane, P. Ajithprasad and S. Prathapachandran. 2004. Excavations of an Important Harappan Trading and Craft Production Center at Gola Dhoro (Bagasra) on the Gulf of Kutch, Gujarat, India. *Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies in History and Archaeology* 1 (2): 153-158.
- Gadekar, C., S.V. Rajesh, S. Shaikh, B. Chase, Y.S. Rawat, A. Patel, G. S. Abhayan, V. Vinod, Ajit Kumar and P. Ajithprasad. 2014. Typological Analysis of Chalcolithic Lithic Assemblage from Navinal, District Kachchh, Gujarat, Western India. *Man and Environment XXXIX* (1): 92-105.
- Kharakwal, J.S., Y.S. Rawat and T. Osada. 2012. *Excavation at Kanmer 2005-06 - 2008-09: Kanmer Archaeological Research Project*. Japan: Indus Project, Research Institute for Humanity and Nature, Kyoto; Gandhinagar, India : Gujarat State Department of Archaeology; Udaipur, India: Institute of Rajasthan Studies, JRN Rajasthan Vidyapeeth.
- Rao, S.R. 1963. Excavations at Rangpur and other explorations in Gujarat. *Ancient India 18-19*. New Delhi: Archaeological Survey of India.
- Sonawane, V.S., P. Ajithprasad, K.K. Bhan, K. Krishnan, S. Prathapachandran, A. Majumdar, A. Patel, and J. Menon, 2003. Excavations at Bagasra- 1996-2003: A Preliminary Report. *Man and Environment XXVIII* (2): 21-50.



Figure 2: Shell Bangle Fragments from Navinal