



ANCIENT ASIA

Vol. 15, 2024, pp. 165-183

© ARF India

URL: <https://ancient-asia-journal.com>
<https://doi.org/10.47509/AA.2024.v15i.10>

<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/>

Authors retain copyright and grant the journal right of first publication with the work simultaneously licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution License

Prabhas and Late Prabhas Ceramics from Prabhas Patan, Gujarat

Prabodh Shirvalkar¹, Astha Sharma¹, Esha Prasad² and Shashank Babu C¹.

¹Department of AIHC and Archaeology, Deccan College PG&RI, Pune

²Symbiosis School of Liberal Arts, Symbiosis International, Pune

Abstract: Four distinctive traditions, viz., Anarta tradition, Micaceous Red Ware tradition, Padri tradition and Pre Prabhas tradition, have been recognized in the modern state of Gujarat. Different scholars have called these cultures local chalcolithic, pre-Harappan and Early Harappan. On the other hand, sites belonging to the Early, Mature and Late Harappan periods in Gujarat are found in Kachchh, North Gujarat, Saurashtra and Southern Gujarat. The regional variation of mature Harappan cultural material in Gujarat has been termed Sorath Harappan (Possehl & Herman 1990). The Prabhas culture is the least studied and understood culture within Gujarat's protohistoric cultures. The Pre-Prabhas phase coincides with the Early Harappan period, the Prabhas phase coincides with the Sorath Harappan phase and the Late Prabhas with the Late Harappan phase.

This paper deals with the Period II and III ceramics from the excavation of Z.D. Ansari and M.K. Dhavalikar, which has not been published so far.

Keywords: Somnath, Prabhas-Patan, Prabhas, Late Prabhas, Dates, Z.D. Ansari, M.K. Dhavalikar

Published : 12 September 2024

TO CITE THIS ARTICLE:

Prabodh Shirvalkar, Astha Sharma, Esha Prasad & Shashank Babu C. (2024). Prabhas and Late Prabhas Ceramics from Prabhas Patan, Gujarat. *Ancient Asia*, 15: 1, pp. 165-183. <https://doi.org/10.47509/AA.2024.v15i01.10>

Previous Work at Prabhas Patan

The site of Prabhas Patan or Somnath is located in the Junagadh district of Gujarat. The site has 5 mounds and is locally known as *Nagara Timbo*. It is located on the right bank of the river Hiren 9 (Figure 1). The earliest accounts of the archaeological remains from Somnath were given by Burgess (1869) and Henry Cousens (1926; 1931). Hirananda Sastri's (1936; 1938) explorations brought to light ceramic from surface collection at Prabhas Patan.



Fig. 1: Location of Prabhas Patan and other Explored Sites

The first excavation at Somnath was carried out in 1950 by B.K. Thapar to reconstruct the various phases of rebuilding the old temple (Munshi 1951). The Chalcolithic period mound was first excavated by P.P. Pandya of the Department of Archaeology of the Saurashtra State and B. Subba Rao of M.S. University from 1955 to 1957. Both seasons of excavation (IAR 1955-56:7-8; IAR 1956-57:16-17) brought to light six cultural periods at the site, which are as follows:

Period I is divided into two sub-periods, viz., IA and IB. Period IA is characterized by Grey or Red Slipped pottery with corrugated or broadly incised decorations. Period IB is characterized by the presence of painted pottery, which was later identified as Prabhas Ware (Subbarao 1958). Period II is again subdivided into two phases. The first phase is characterized by the introduction of Lustrous Red Ware and the second by a decline of the Lustrous Red Ware (IAR 1955-56:7-8; IAR 1956-57:16-17). Period III belongs to the Early Historic period and is characterized by the presence of Iron and Black and Red Ware (IAR 1955-56:7-8; IAR 1956-57:16-17; Subbarao 1958). Period IV is represented by the disappearance of Black and Red Ware and the continuation of Gritty Ware (IAR 1955-56:7-8; IAR 1956-57:16-17). Period V belongs to Kshatrapa, Maitraka and Gupta Periods (IAR 1955-56:7-8; IAR 1956-57:16-17; Subbarao 1958). After Period V, the site was deserted for a short period. In period VI, i.e., the medieval period, one mound was re-utilized for the construction of a temple (IAR 1956-57:16-17).

The complete report of this excavation was later published by J.M Nanavati (Nanavati Mehta et al. 1971). The cultural chronology obtained from this excavation is as follows

Period I and II (Chalcolithic with Prabhas Ware)	2000 to 1700 BCE
Period III (Iron Using Culture)	6 th Century BCE to 0 BCE/CE
Period IV (Red Polished Ware)	0 BCE/CE to 6 th Century CE
Period V (Crude Wares)	6 th Century CE to 10 th Century CE

Ceramic

Period I (2000-1700 BCE)

The pottery, based on the fabric, has been divided into three groups: medium fabric and fine core, heavy fabric and medium core and heavy fabric, and coarse gritty core.

Group 1 is characterized by Prabhas ware which has been classified into two groups based on form, fabric, colour and decoration viz. Painted and Plain. The most common shape found is convex-sided bowls. It has deep brown and chocolate slips with paintings in black colour. A few bowls have grey slip over which paintings were done in red or violet. Decorations mostly include geometric motifs like vertical, horizontal and oblique strokes, straight and wavy lines, circles, semicircles dots etc.

Group 2 is characterized by pottery with heavy fabric. The shapes represented in this group are dish-on-stand, storage jars and globular vessels.

Group 3 is characterized by pottery with coarse gritty wares and is represented by Black and Red Ware. The decorations are in the form of oblique and vertical incisions. The shapes represented in this group are globular pots and basins.

Period II (700-1300 BCE)

Lustrous Red ware is the main pottery type represented by bowls, dish-on-stands, globular pots with high necks, and globular pots with slightly broader necks and basins. The slip colour varies from orange-red to dark red and has a thinner fabric and a fine core. Lustrous Red Ware has been further divided into painted and plain.

Structures

Structure III and IV belongs to Period I and II. Structure III is a S-W and N-E running wall constructed using rubbles. Only three course of the structure has survived. Structure IV is an assemblage of stone-rubble which was extremely fragmentary in nature hence it was not explained any further by the excavator.

Antiquities

In the Chalcolithic period (Period I and II) shell bangles with designs of bands and rhombuses have been found. Terracotta truncated beads, T.C. disc beads, T.C. circular beads, shell beads and semi-spherical carnelian beads are also reported from this period. The microliths are found only from the Chalcolithic levels. These are made on chert, chalcedony and agate. The microliths comprise parallel-sided flakes, flakes, penknife blades, micro burins, lunates, side scrapers, fluted cores, side scrapers and end scrapers. As far as copper is concerned a copper celt has been found, which is similar to Harappan tradition.

Later Excavation

The site was re-excavated by Z.D. Ansari, M.K. Dhavalikar, J.M. Nanavati and C.M. Atri. The findings from the excavation are not well reported and published. Only a few reports in IAR (1971-72:12-13; 1975-1976:13; 1976-1977:17-18) and articles have been published (Dhavalikar & Possehl 1992; Dhavalikar 1997; 2011). However, the excavation is of utmost importance as it brought to light a hitherto unknown culture, the Pre-Prabhas culture (Dhavalikar & Possehl 1992). Possehl & Herman (1990) have called the Pre-Prabhas culture the origin of the Sorath Harappan, later discarded by Possehl (2004). The chronology of the site earlier in IAR (1971-72:12) is as follows:

Period I (Pre-Prabhas Culture)	2000-1800 BCE
Period II (Prabhas Culture)	1800-1500 BCE
Period III (Late Prabhas)	1500-1200 BCE
Period IV (Plain Black and Red Ware)	4th century to 1st century BCE
Period V (Red Polished Ware)	1st century BCE to 6th century CE

Period I (3000-2800 BCE)

The Pre-Prabhas culture is mostly defined based on the ceramic assemblage. The ceramic assemblage consists of four main wares i.e., Red Ware, Incised Red Ware, Black-and-Red Ware and Grey Ware (IAR 1971-72; Dhavalikar & Possehl 1992). Among the other finds, mention may be made of segmented faience beads and a blade-flake industry of chalcedony (IAR 1971-72). The earlier dates were revised, and the period has been calibrated to 3000-2800 BCE (Dhavalikar & Possehl 1992).

Period II (1800-1500 BCE)

This period is characterized by the presence of Prabhas Ware. It is fine in fabric and is treated with a slip which is pink or orange in colour. Due to firing, the slip colour has turned grey in some cases. The painted designs are done in purple or dark-brown colour and include motifs such as vertical and oblique strokes, wavy lines, hatched triangles, lozenges, etc. The designs are executed in panels or registers. The common forms are sub-spherical bowls with a featureless rim, stud handle bowls, perforated jars, dish-on-stands, big storage jars with heavily beaded rims etc. Remains of a rectangular house constructed using large flat slabs of miliolite limestone were exposed. The floors of the houses are not rammed. The cultural material includes beads, segmented beads of faience and micro-beads of steatite (IAR 1971-72: 12-13; Dhavalikar 1997).

Period III (1500-1200 BCE)

Lustrous Red Ware was introduced in this period; however, the Prabhas Ware also continued.

In this period, a structural complex made of boulders of miliolite limestone set in mud mortar was exposed. The structure consists of six houses, each having one small and one big room. Near the entrance of the large room, a stone platform was found. A peripheral wall encloses the complete structure. Towards the east of this structure, two more houses were found. One of the houses is of twin-room type and the other of one large room. The flooring is made of rammed black sticky clay. The structure was damaged by a later-period citadel wall. Because of this, the entrance of this structure could not be found. However, no post poles or hearths were found around the structure, leading to the conclusion that the complex was an open-air structure and did not have any human occupation. Based on archaeological material and construction style, nearness to the sea coast and spaciousness for exporting cargo, it has been opined that the complex was not a residential structure but was a public building identified as a warehouse (Figure 2) The structure has been dated to 1500 BCE. From the warehouse, a steatite seal amulet, showing seven stylized deer on the one side and five on the other and an obsidian flake were recovered (Dhavalikar 2011; 1997; IAR 1975-76:13; IAR 1976-77:17). Apart from these a flower shaped gold ear ornament has been discovered. The steatite seal comes from the early levels of the Late Prabhas phase and has been dated to the mid-second millennium BCE, similar to the seal found at the site of Rangpur (Dhavalikar 1997).

Dhavalikar (1997) has proposed revised dates for the periods at Prabhas:



Fig. 2: Warehouse at Prabhas Patan, modified after Dhavalikar 2011

Period I: Pre-Prabhas (3000-2800 BCE)

Period II: Prabhas Culture (2000-1700 BCE)

Period III: Late Prabhas Culture (1700-1400 BCE)

Period IV: Early Historic (4th century BCE – 1st century BCE)

Period V: Kstrapa-Gupta (1st century BCE- 5th century CE)

Faunal remains recovered from the site include domesticated cattle, sheep, goats, pigs and camel. The wild fauna includes Sambhar, Chital, turtles and rodents (IAR 1976-77).

The excavation by Deshpande-Mukharjee et al. (2017) revealed Early Historic deposits dated from 40 BCE to 80 CE. Other sites affiliated with Pre-Prabhas and Prabhas culture are mentioned in Table No. 1 (Figure 1).

Table 1: Pre-Prabhas and Prabhas Phase Sites Reported

<i>No</i>	<i>Site</i>	<i>Latitude longitudes</i>	<i>Cultural Affiliation</i>	<i>Reference</i>
1	Janan	23°51'08.48" N 70°18'16.9 5" E	Pre-Prabhas	Rajesh et al. 2013
2	Datarna V	23°46'12.6" N 71°07'25.5" E	Pre-Prabhas	Rajesh et al. 2013
3	Datarna IX	23°45'59.6" N 71°07'21.5" E	Pre-Prabhas	Rajesh et al. 2013
4	Datrana IV	23°46'14.7" N 71°07'26.2" E	Pre-Prabhas	IAR 1994-95:11-16 Ajithprasad 2002
5	Khadini Timbo	20°49.35'N 70°33.52'E	Prabhas	Ajithprasad et al. 2011
6	Shapur I	21°05.65'N 70°07.56'E	Prabhas	Ajithprasad et al. 2011
7	Lohij I	21°09.53'N 70°8.45'E	Prabhas	Ajithprasad et al. 2011
8	Lohij II	21°09.49'N 70°3.50'E	Prabhas	Ajithprasad et al. 2011
9	Kokru	21°10.81'N 70°02.7'E	Prabhas	Ajithprasad et al. 2011
10	Khaganathno Timbo	21°13.13'N 70°00.33'E	Prabhas	Ajithprasad et al. 2011
11	Prabhas Patan	20°54'00" N 70°25'30" E	Pre-Prabhas and Pra- bhas	IAR 1955-56:7-8 Dhavalikar & Possehl 1992
12	Taraghda	22°23'14.09"N 70°39'18.50"E	Prabhas	IAR 1978-79:68
13	Bhatiwadi	21°45'53.81"N 70°51'53.21"E	Prabhas	IAR 1957-58:18-19
14	Mul-Madhavpur	21°14'59.89"N 69°58'56.6"E	Prabhas	IAR 1961-62:10-11
15	Moti-Kalavad	21°54'18.70"N 69°50'5.45"E	Prabhas	IAR 1961-62:10-11
16	Khambhodar	21°48'19.01"N 69°35'21.95"E	Prabhas	IAR 1957-58:18-19
17	Kinnarkheda	21°48'13.26"N 69°33'37.39"E	Prabhas	Dhavalikar 1997
18	Lakhabawal	22°24'37.45"N 69°59'52.71"E	Prabhas	IAR1955- 1956:7-8
19	Kanjatar	20°47'14.48"N 70°39'0.12"E	Prabhas	Gaur et al. 2011

Ceramic Analysis of Periods II and III

As stated earlier, the ceramic analysis from the excavated site has not yet been done, and it remained in the repository for almost 40 years at Deccan College.

For the present research, ceramic assemblage from layers 14 to 6 was selected out of the 17 layers. The layers and trenches are selected based on the unpublished filed logbook written by Z.D. Ansari and M.K. Dhavalikar. Samples were collected from the following excavated trenches (Figure 3 and Table 2).

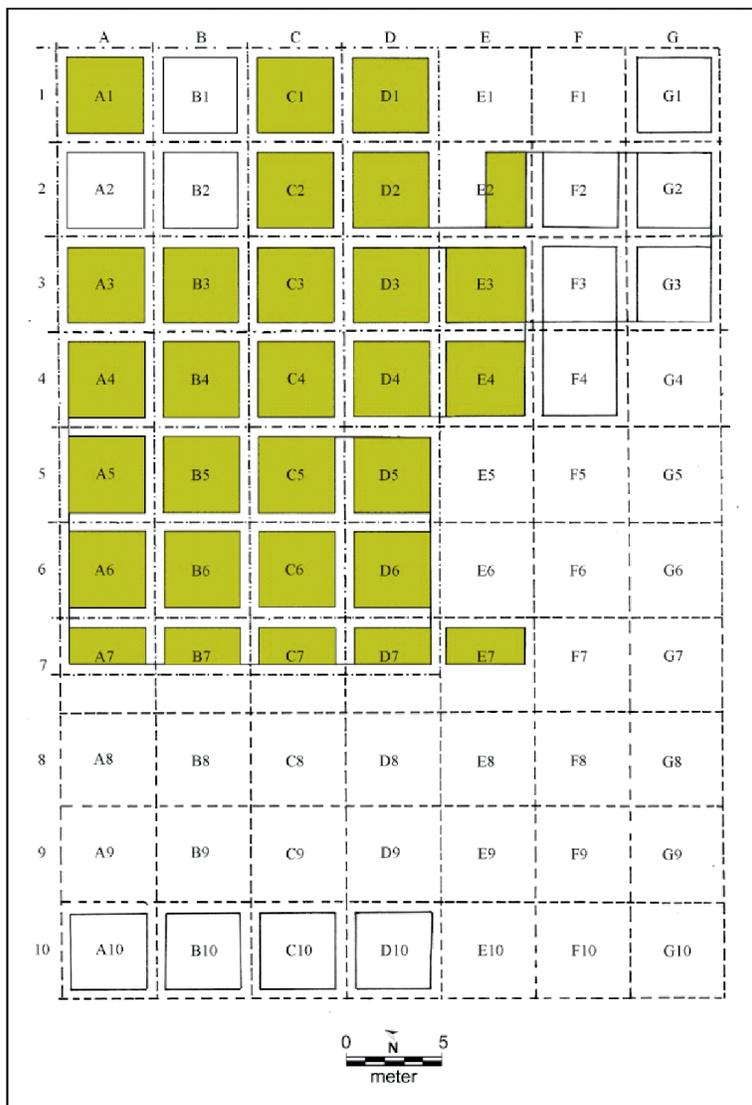


Fig. 3: Trench Numbers and Layout of Trenches, modified after Field Notes of Ansari and Dhavalikar

Table 2: Trench Numbers and Layers of Selected Samples

Layer No.	Trench Number
14	A7, B3, B5, C6, C7, D5, D6, E7
13	A6, B3, B5, C6, D6, B3-C3
12	A3, A5, B3, B4, B5, B6, C6
11	A3, A5, B3, B5, B6, B7, C4, C5, C6, C7, D6, D7
10	A3, A4, A5, A6, B3, B4, B5, B6, C4, C5, C6, C7, D5, D6, D7, B3-C3
9	A3, A4, A5, B3, B4, B5, B6, C3, C4, C5, C6, C7, D5, D6, D7
8	A3, A4, A5, A6, B3, B4, B5, B6, B7, C3, C4, C5, C6, C7, D3, D4, D5, D6, D7, E3, F2, F3, G2, B3-C3
7	A3, A5, A6, A7, B3, B4, B5, B6, C1, C2, C3, C4, C6, D5, D6, D7, E2, E3, F2, F3, F4, G3, B3-C3
6	A1, A3, A4, A5, A6, B3, B4, C1, C2, C3, C4, C6, C7, D1, D2, D3, D4, D5, D6, E2, E3, E4, F2, F4, G3

The ceramic assemblage of Prabhas Patan has been divided into various Wares such as Prabhas Painted Ware, Prabhas Unpainted Ware, Bichrome Ware, Cream Slipped Painted Ware, Black on Red Ware, Red Slipped Ware, Red Untreated Ware, Gritty Ware, Lustrous Red Ware, Grey/Black Ware, Black and Red Ware.

General Description of Pottery

Prabhas Painted Ware

It is characterized by a red-to-orange slip applied externally and up to the throat internally in closed vessels and on both surfaces in open vessels. Over the slip, paintings in red colour have been done. Because of the firing, the slip colour sometimes appears chocolate, and the paint colour appears brown or violet. The painted motifs include simple geometric designs like intersecting loops, horizontal and vertical bands, dots, dots in between horizontal panels, rows of dots, horizontal and vertical lines, horizontal wavy lines, short vertical lines, short wavy vertical lines, panels of horizontal lines, panels of dots, square within a square, groups of horizontal bands, chequered patterns, chequered pattern in a square, elongated circles filled with dots, elongated dots, dots, wavy lines, slanting wavy lines, set of vertical lines, wavy horizontal bands, semicircular lines, rows of circles, loop patterns, intersecting loops, chevron pattern, opposed triangles, concentric circles, diamonds, diamonds within diamonds, diamond filled with chequered pattern, radiating lines, circular motif with radiating lines, crisscross patterns, lozenge motif filled with dots and spiral motif. Instances of naturalistic motifs like petalled flower and plant motifs are also present. Apart from paintings, punctured decoration and graffiti are also found on the ware.

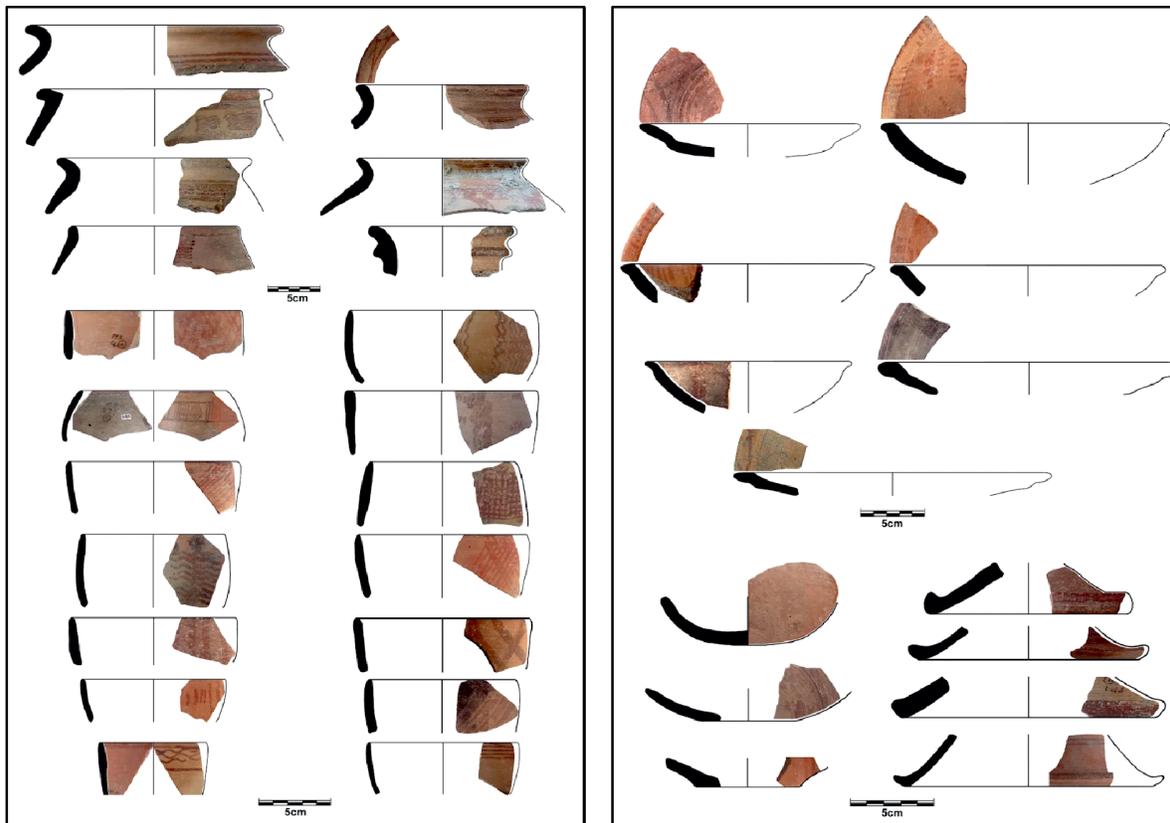


Fig. 4&5: Prabhas Painted Ware

The Ware is represented by forms such as globular pots with constricted, medium and long necks, convex-sided bowls, stud handle bowls, basins, dishes, and bases and stands in Prabhas Period and along with these shapes new shapes were introduced in the Late Prabhas Phase such as storage jars, spouted convex sided bowls, slightly carinated bowls, carinated bowls, and carinated dishes. The

fabric of this ware is majorly fine in texture with a few shards which are medium fine and coarse in texture. It is mostly well-fired, with some shards showing medium and ill-firing. The wares are thick in section with a few thin shards and made on a fast wheel.

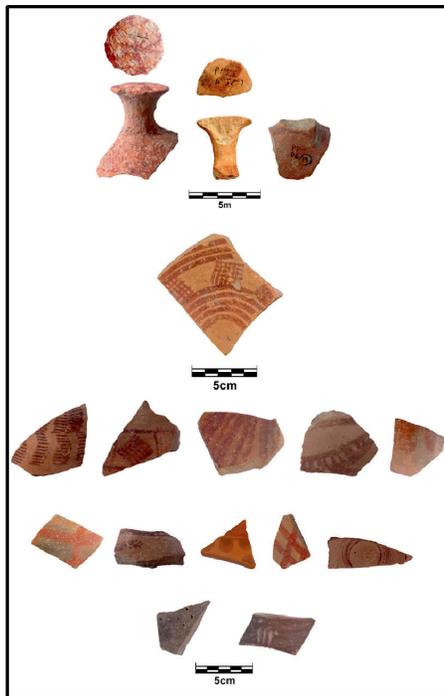


Fig. 6: Prabhas Painted Ware

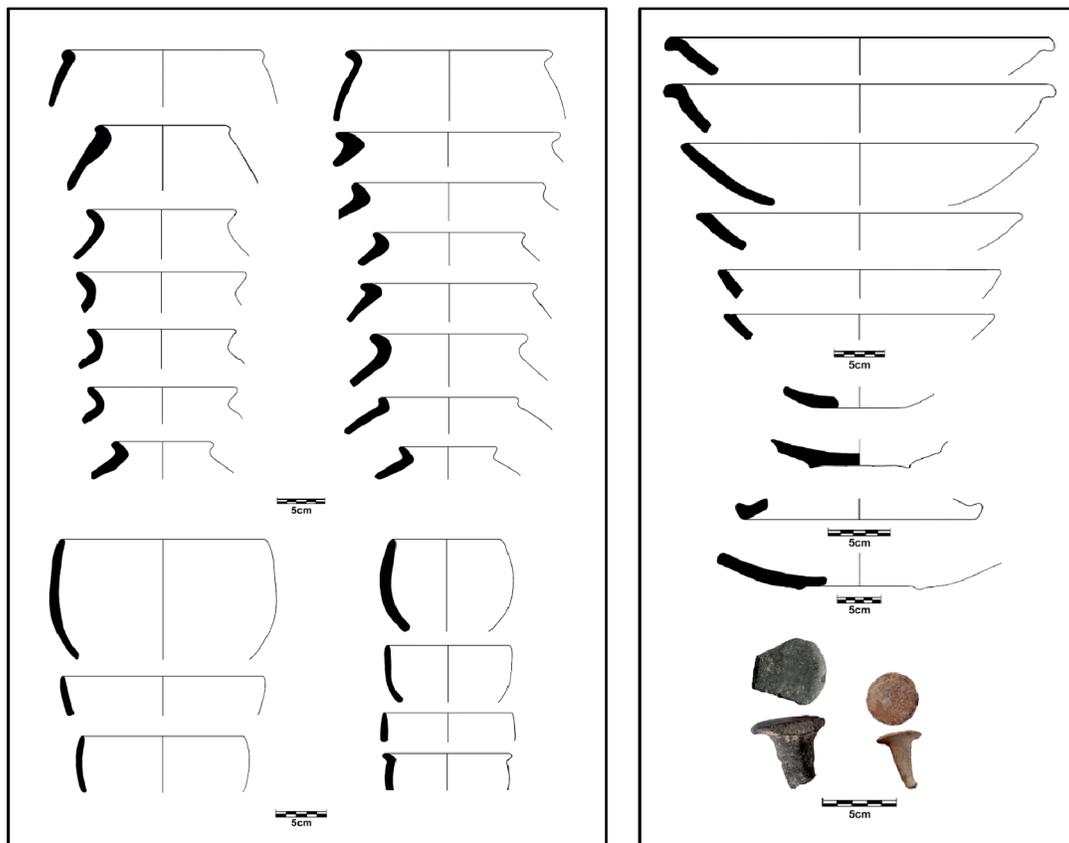


Fig. 7-8: Prabhas Unpainted Ware

Prabhas Unpainted Ware

It is characterized by a red-to-orange slip applied externally and up to the throat internally in closed vessels and on both surfaces in open vessels. Due to firing, sometimes the slip colour appears to be chocolate in colour. Over the slip, vertical rows of punctured decoration have been made, and graffiti in the form of deep gashes and flab is present.

The Prabhas Unpainted Ware is represented by globular pots with constricted, medium and long necks, convex-sided bowls, and stud handle bowls, dishes and bases. These shapes are found in both the Prabhas and Late Prabhas phases. The fabric of this ware is fine to medium fine. It is mostly well-fired, with a few shards showing medium and ill-firing. Both thick and thin sections represent the ware, and it is made on a fast wheel.

Bichrome Ware

The Bichrome Ware is represented by slips like cream, chocolate, orange and red applied on the exterior surface in upper and lower portions on both open and closed vessels. Two different slips have been applied on the exterior. Over the slip, paintings in red, black and infilling in cream colour have been done. The painted motifs include simple geometrical motifs, such as horizontal bands, horizontal and vertical wavy lines, curvilinear lines, slanting lines, short horizontal wavy lines, vertical rows of dots, loops, intersecting loops, intersecting loops having slanting lines, concentric circles, chequered pattern, dots, opposed triangles, and rattle shaped motifs. The natural motif includes a centipede motif.

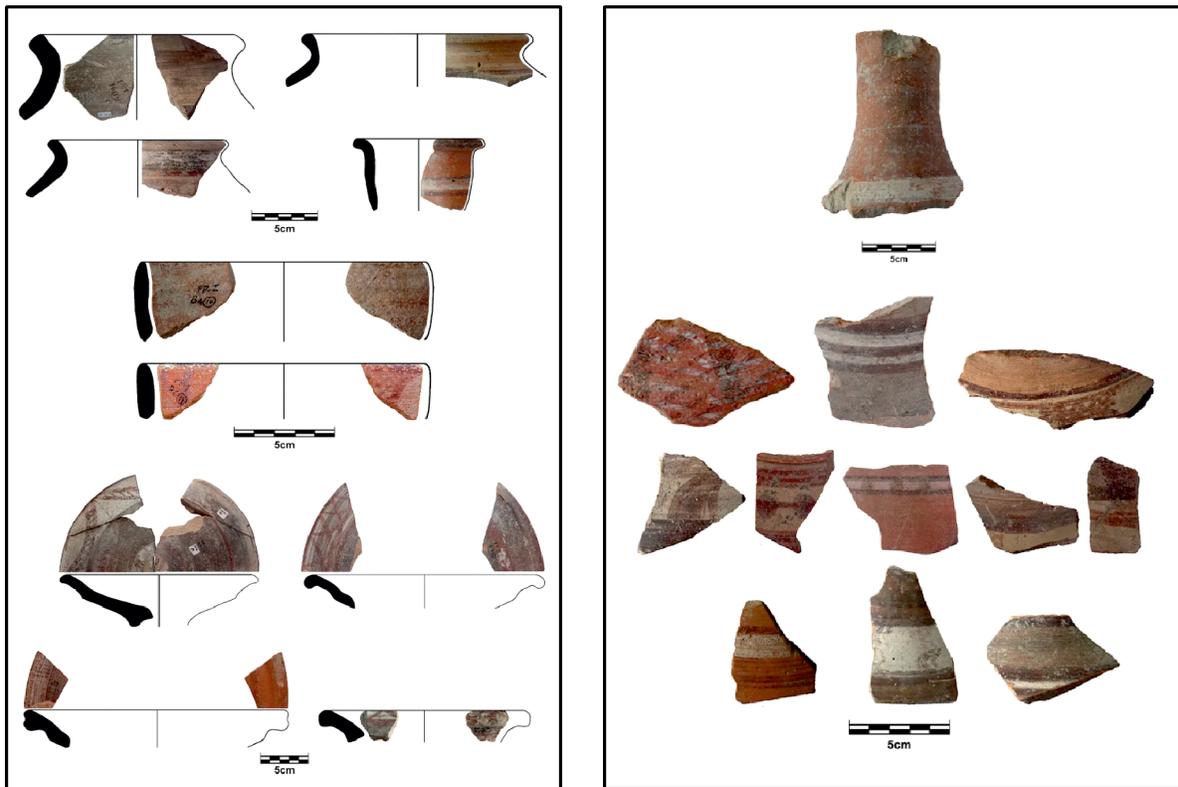


Fig. 9 & 10: Bichrome Ware

The Ware is represented by forms such as globular pots with constricted and long necks, convex-sided bowls, dishes, stud handles, bases and stands are present in the Prabhas phase. The new shapes, such as carinated dishes and long stud handles, were introduced in Period III, i.e., Late Prabhas along

with the earlier shapes. The ware is fine in texture. It is well-fired, and the shards are thick in section. It is made on a fast wheel.

Cream Slipped Painted Ware

The Cream Slipped Painted Ware is characterized by a cream slip applied externally and up to the throat internally and sometimes only on the exterior. Over the slip, red, black, violet and brown paintings have been done. The painted motifs include simple geometric designs like short slanting lines, short vertical lines, horizontal bands, horizontal wavy lines, curvy linear bands, vertical lines triangles, horizontal rows of triangles, dots, rows of dots, dots in a panel of horizontal bands, a centre dot surrounded by smaller dots, chequered pattern, intersecting loops and double loop. (Fig. 11)

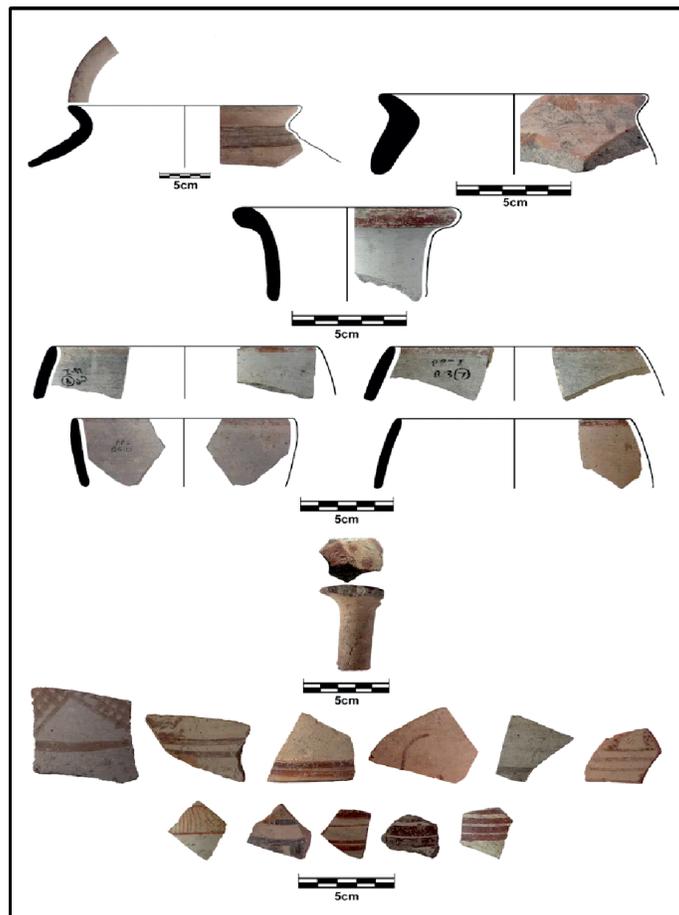


Fig. 11: Cream Slipped Painted Ware

The Cream Slipped Painted Ware is represented by forms such as globular pots with constricted and long necks, convex-sided bowls, basins, stud handles, bases and stands. In Period III, new shapes were introduced, such as carinated bowls, carinated basins, and long stud handles. The fabric of this ware is mostly medium fine to fine in texture. It is well-fired with few shards showing medium and ill-firing as well. It is thick and thin in section. It is made on a fast wheel.

Black on Red Ware

The Black on Red Ware is characterized by a red slip applied externally and up to the throat internally in closed vessels and on both surfaces in open vessels. Over the slip, paintings in black colour have

been done. The painted motifs include simple geometric designs like horizontal bands, vertical bands, intersecting loops, loops filled with chequered patterns, dots, short curvy linear lines, vertical panels consisting of chequered patterns, diamonds filled with chequered patterns, and short vertical lines have been painted. Graffiti in the form of a star, trident, triangle, and arrow were also found. (Fig. 12 and 13)

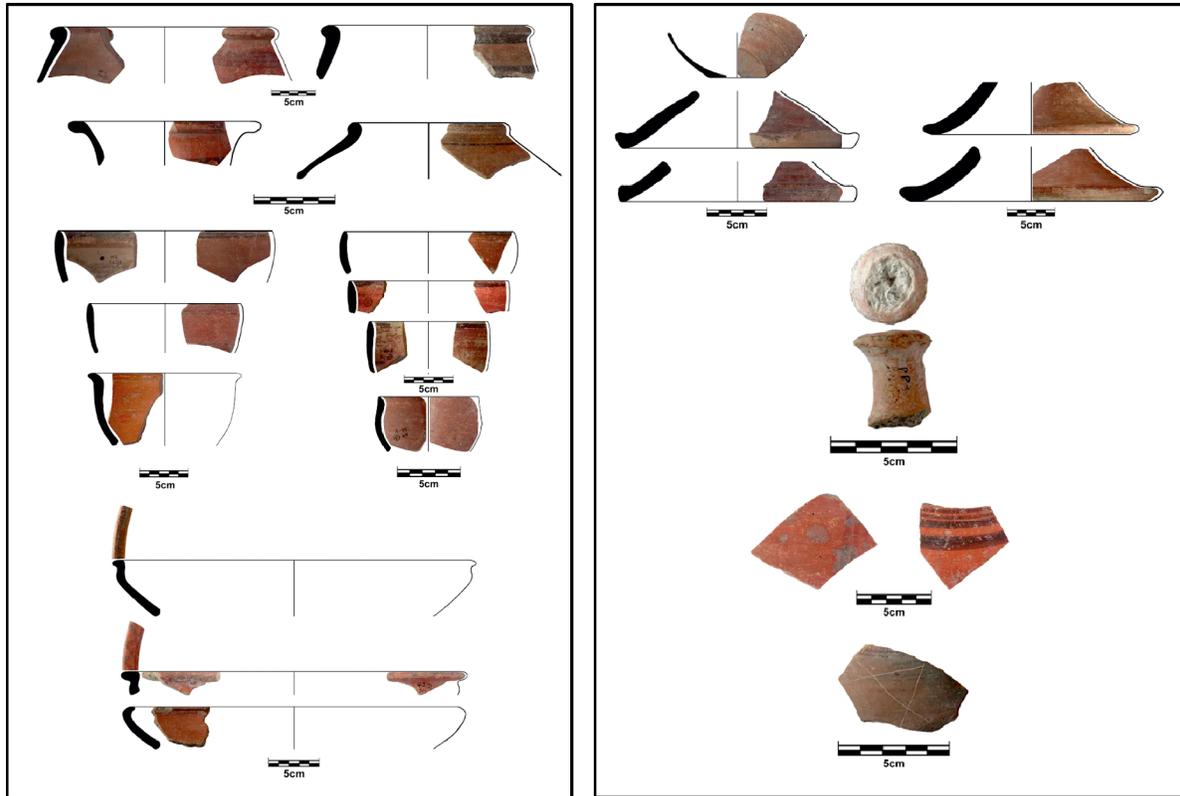


Fig. 12 & 13: Black on Red Ware

The Black on Red Ware is represented by forms such as globular pots with constricted and medium necks, convex-sided bowls, slightly carinated bowls, basins, slightly carinated basins, dishes, slightly carinated dishes, bases and stands, and stud handles. The shapes such as carinated bowls, carinated basins, carinated dishes, and long stud handles were introduced in Period III. The fabric of this ware is medium fine to fine in texture with a few shards which are medium coarse in texture. It is mostly well-fired, with some shards showing medium and ill-firing. The ware is thick and thin in section and made on a fast wheel.

Red Slipped Ware

The Red Slipped Ware is characterized by a red to orange slip applied externally and up to the throat internally in case of closed vessels and on both surfaces in case of open vessels. Over the slip, punctured decorations have been made in some cases. Graffiti in the form of a cross with tridents, half circle filled with lines, comb pattern, star, fan, ladder, attached triangles, cross, triangle attached to cross, comb, horizontal parallel line cut by a vertical line, circle, leaf and animal figure is found in this ware. (Fig. 14 and 15)

The Red Slipped Ware is represented by forms such as globular pots with constricted necks, convex-sided bowls, slightly carinated bowls, basins, slightly carinated basins, dishes, bases and stands, short studs, and perforated body sherds. In Period III, medium neck globular pots, storage jars,

carinated basins, and carinated dishes were introduced. It is fine to medium fine in fabric. It is mostly well fired with some shards showing medium and ill firing and is fast wheel made. The fabric of this ware is medium fine in texture with few shards represented by fine texture as well. The wares are thick in section with a few thin shards and are made on a fast wheel.

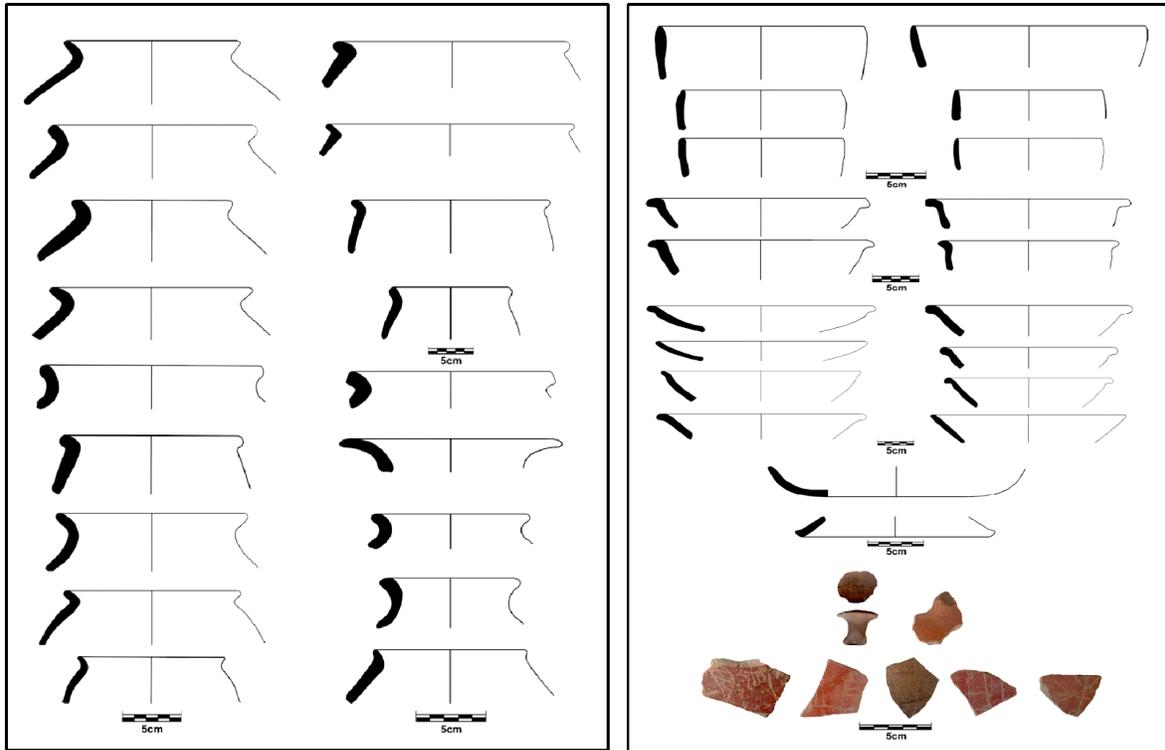


Fig. 14 & 15: Red Slipped Ware

Gritty Ware

The Gritty Ware is characterized by a red wash applied on the exterior. Over the slip, panel punctured decoration, as well as slanting lines, diamond patterns, diamonds filled with slanting lines, circles, rows of circles, rows of diamonds, chevron patterns, short wavy lines in a row, horizontal short lines, zigzag lines, are incised.

It is represented by globular pots with constricted necks and storage jars, convex-sided bowls, basins and dishes in both periods. The fabric of this ware is coarse in texture. It is ill-fired. The wares are thick in section and are made on a fast wheel. (Fig. 16)

Black and Red Ware

The Black and Red Ware is characterized by a red slip on the exterior and black on the interior. On the ware, decorations in the form of red paintings and nail incisions have been made.

It is represented by constricted neck globular pots, convex-sided bowls, basins and dishes in Period II and carinated bowls, carinated basins, and carinated dishes in Period III. The fabric of this ware is medium fine to coarse in texture. It is ill-fired. The wares are thick in section and are made on a fast wheel. (Fig. 17)

Black/Grey Ware

Black/Grey Ware is characterized by a black wash, and black slip applied externally and up to the throat internally in case of closed vessels and on both surfaces in case of open vessels.

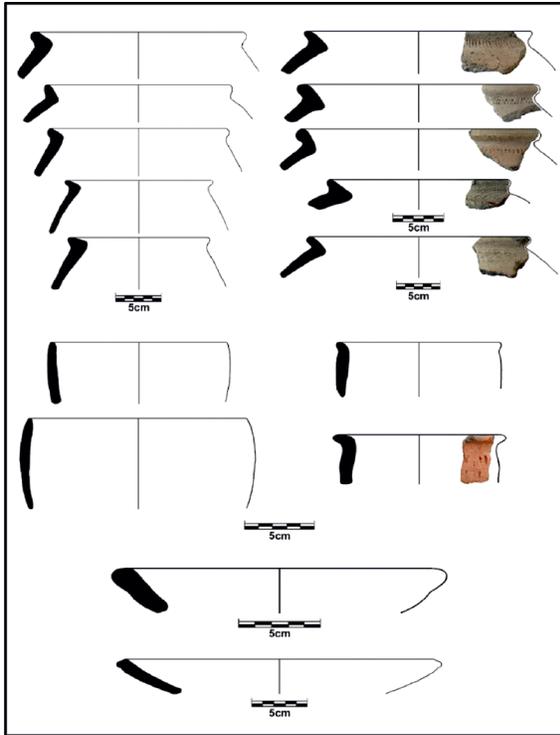


Fig. 16: Gritty Ware

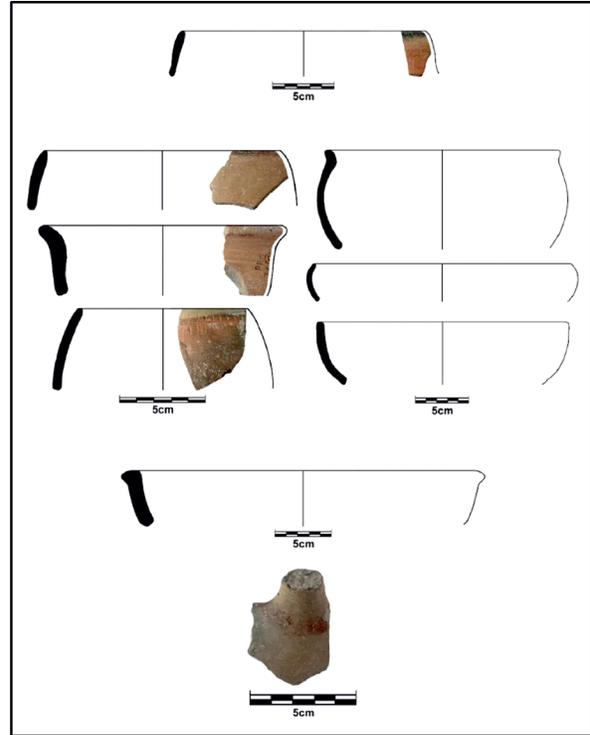


Fig. 17: Black and Red Ware

The ware is represented by globular pots with constricted and medium necks, convex-sided bowls, dishes, stud handles, and bases. Spouted convex-sided bowls and carinated dishes were introduced in Period III. The fabric of this ware is majorly coarse in texture with a few shards which are fine, medium fine and medium coarse in texture. It is well to ill-fired. The ware is thick in section with a few thin shards. It is made on a fast wheel. (Fig. 18)

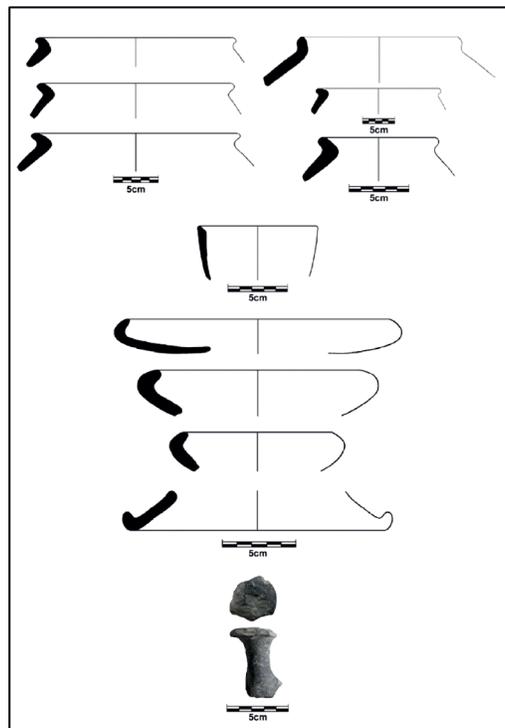


Fig. 18: Black/Grey Ware

Lustrous Red Ware

The Lustrous Red Ware is found only in Period III, i.e., the Late Prabhas period. It is characterized by a lustrous red slip applied on both surfaces in case of open vessels. Over the slip, in some cases, paintings have been done in black colour. The painted motif includes simple geometric motifs such as horizontal bands, vertical spiral motifs and chequered patterns. Apart from paintings, graffiti marks are also present. (Fig. 19 & 20)

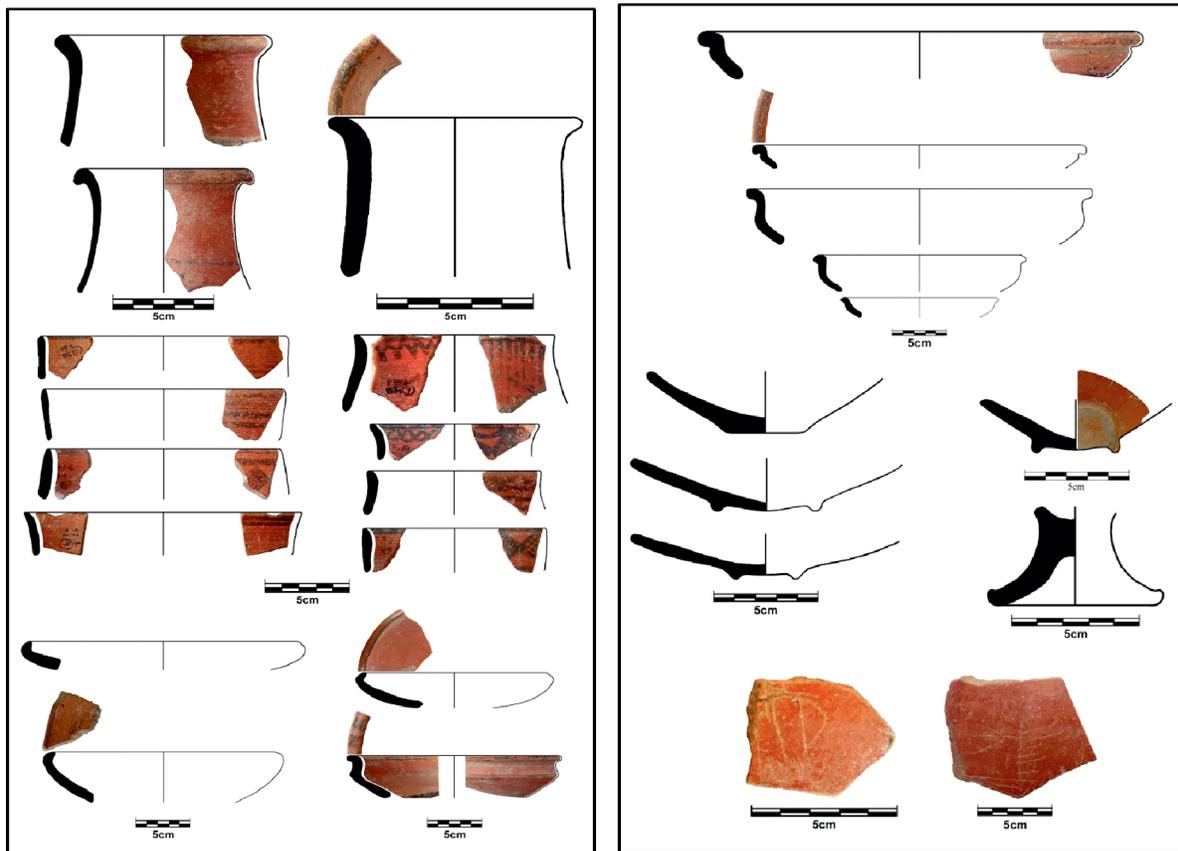


Fig. 18 & 20: Lustrous Red Ware

The Lustrous Red Ware is represented by globular pots with constricted and long necks, convex-sided and carinated bowls, basins and carinated basins, dishes and carinated dishes, bases and stands, and long stud handles. The fabric of this ware is majorly medium fine in texture with a few shards which are fine and medium coarse in texture. It is mostly well-fired, with some shards showing medium and ill-firing. The ware is thin in section with a few thick shards and made on a fast wheel.

Buff Ware

The Buff Ware is found only in Period III, i.e., the Late Prabhas period. It is characterized by a buff colour section. Red slip is applied externally and up to the throat internally in case of closed vessels and on both surfaces in case of open vessels. Over the slip, in some cases, paintings have been done in black colour. The painted motif includes simple geometric motifs such as horizontal bands, vertical spiral motifs and loop patterns. (Fig. 21)

The Buff Ware is represented by globular pots with constricted long necks, and convex-sided bowls. The fabric of this ware is majorly fine in texture. It is mostly well-fired and is thick in section and made on a fast wheel.

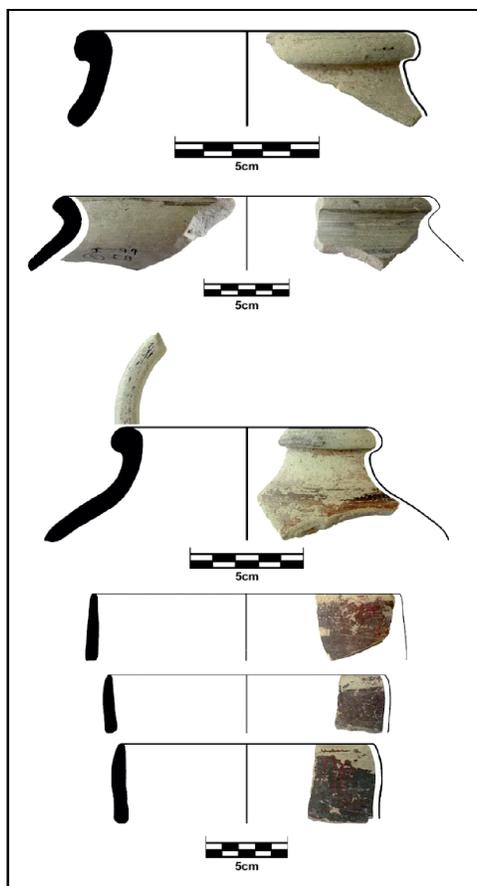


Fig. 21: Buff Ware

Results

The analysis carried out shows that some of the wares continued in all the layers, such as Prabhas Painted Ware, Prabhas Unpainted Ware, Bichrome Ware, Cream Slip Painted Ware, Black on Red Ware, Red Slip Ware, Gritty Ware, and, Black and Red Ware. Black/Grey Ware appears in layer 11 and continues till layer 6. Lustrous Red Ware and Buff Ware appears in Layer 10 and continues up to Layer 6.

Table 3: Ware and Its Distribution in Layers

Wares	Layer 14	Layer 13	Layer 12	Layer 11	Layer 10	Layer 9	Layer 8	Layer 7	Layer 6
Prabhas Painted	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Prabhas Unpainted	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Bichrome	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Cream Slip Painted	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Black on Red	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Red Slipped	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Gritty Ware	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Black and Red	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Black/Grey				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Lustrous Red					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Buff					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

The above general description of wares shows that some of the wares appear later in the phase. Similarly, some of the shapes are also introduced later.

Table 4: Carinated Bowls in various Wares and Layers

<i>Ware</i>	<i>Layer 14</i>	<i>Layer 13</i>	<i>Layer 12</i>	<i>Layer 11</i>	<i>Layer 10</i>	<i>Layer 9</i>	<i>Layer 8</i>	<i>Layer 7</i>	<i>Layer 6</i>
Black on Red					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Lustrous Red					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Prabhas Painted					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Table 5: Carinated Basins in various Wares and Layers

<i>Ware</i>	<i>Layer 14</i>	<i>Layer 13</i>	<i>Layer 12</i>	<i>Layer 11</i>	<i>Layer 10</i>	<i>Layer 9</i>	<i>Layer 8</i>	<i>Layer 7</i>	<i>Layer 6</i>
Black on Red					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Lustrous Red					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Red Slipped					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Table 6: Carinated Dishes in various Wares and Layers

<i>Ware</i>	<i>Layer 14</i>	<i>Layer 13</i>	<i>Layer 12</i>	<i>Layer 11</i>	<i>Layer 10</i>	<i>Layer 9</i>	<i>Layer 8</i>	<i>Layer 7</i>	<i>Layer 6</i>
Prabhas Painted					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Bichrome					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Black on Red					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Red Slipped					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Lustrous Red					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

The tables show that the carinated vessel forms are introduced in layer 10. The correlation between the introduction of Lustrous Red Ware in layer 10 and the carinated forms is well defined in the assemblage. Apart from this, the stud handles also show development in size. The stud handle bowl, which is considered to be a fossil shape of the Sorath Harappan, appears in layer 13 and continues till layer 6. The work done by Rao (1963) at the site of Rangapur has shown the development of stud handles. A similar type of evolution can be seen at Prabhas Patan. The short stud handles are found in layers 13 to 10, and medium and long stud handles are found in layer 10. The long stud handles with spiral designs dominate from layer 9 onwards. The spouted bowls also occur in the Late Prabhas phase for the first time at the site in Prabhas Painted and Prabhas Unpainted Wares (Figure 22).

Based on the introduction of Lustrous Red Ware, Buff Ware, carinated forms, and long stud handles with spiral designs, the following two periods have been identified stratigraphically:

Prabhas Period: 14 to 11 layers

Late Prabhas Period: 10 to 6 layers

The earlier dates published by Dhavalikar in IAR (1973-74:52; 1974-75:73) and Possehl (1994) were cleaned using Oxcal 4.4.2 (Figure 23). The date obtained on the shell has not been included because of the potential reservoir effect, and the other three dates have also been excluded due to lack of context.

The Period I (Pre-Prabhas) started 5210-4550 BP (68% confidence level), i.e., 3187-2527 BCE or 6340-4420 BP (98% confidence level), i.e., 4317-2023 BCE. The beginning of Period II (Prabhas

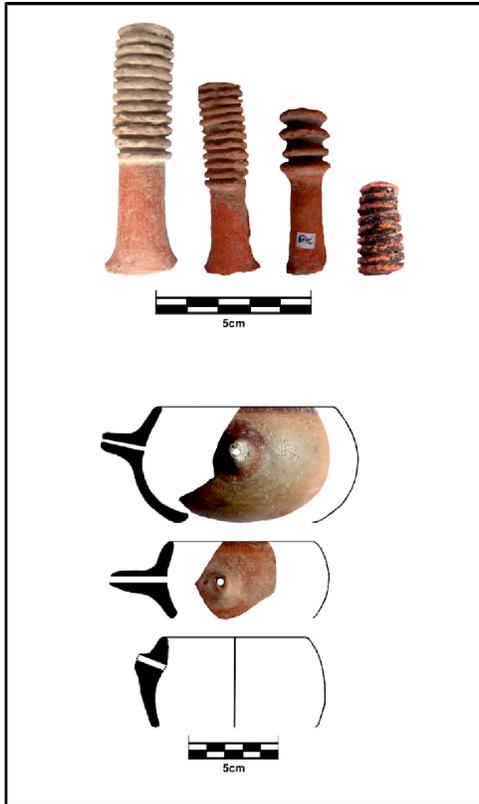


Fig. 22: Long Spiral Handles and Spouted Vessels

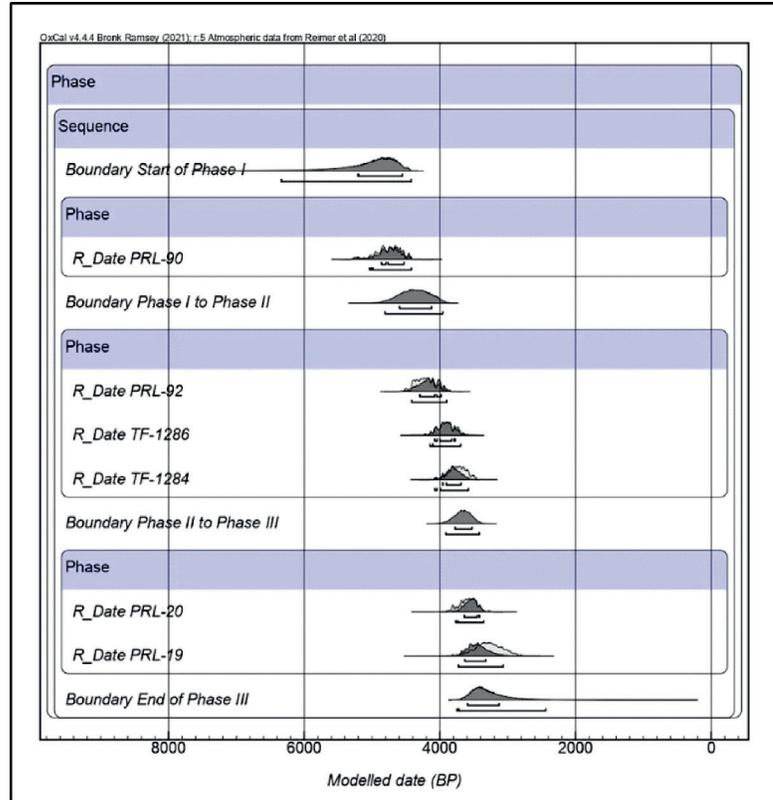


Fig. 23: Oxcal 4.4.2 Data Graph)

Culture) has 4600-4120 BP (68%), i.e., 2577-2097 BCE or 4810-3950 BP (98%) i.e., 2787-1927 BCE. The beginning of Phase III (Late Prabhas) is 3780-3520 (68%), i.e., 1757-1497 or 3920-3410 BP (98%) i.e., 1897-1387 BCE. The end of Period III is 3590-3120 BP (68%), i.e., 1567-1097 BCE and 3750-2430 BP (98%), i.e., 1727-407 BCE. If the date range of 68% confidence level and 98% confidence level are compared, it shows that 68% confidence level dates are in accordance with the ceramic types. Based on the revised date, Period I can be placed in the bracket of 3100 to 2500 BCE, Period II in the bracket of 2500 to 1800 BCE and Period III in the 1800 to 1500 BCE bracket.

The revised chronology puts Period I (Pre-Prabhas) along with the Early Harappan cultures of the Gujarat region. Period II (Prabhas Culture) is contemporary with the Sorath Harappan period within Gujarat, and Period III (Late Prabhas) coincides with the Late Harappan period.

The work carried out in this research confirms the existence of independent Chalcolithic tradition in the region of Saurashtra. The relationship between Harappans and Prabhas people at this stage is unclear and needs further understanding. Possehl & Herman (1990) proposed that Sorath Harappan develops from Pre-Prabhas culture, but this hypothesis remains to be scientifically proven.

Acknowledgment

The authors acknowledge the Department of AIHC and Archaeology and Archaeology Museum, Deccan College Post-Graduate and Research Institute, Deemed University, Pune for allowing to document the material.

References

Ajithprasad, P., Rajesh S.V., and Bhanu Sharma 2011. Archaeological Explorations in the Saurashtra Coast of Junagadh District, Gujarat. In: Osada, T & Uesugi A. *Linguistic Archaeology and Human Past*. Kyoto: Research Institute for Humanity and Nature. pp 27-70.

- Ajithprasad, P. 2002. The Pre-Harappan Cultures of Gujarat. In: Settar S. and Korisetar R. *Indian Archaeology in Retrospect Vol 2, Protohistory: Archaeology of Harappan Civilization*. New Delhi: ICHR and Manohar. pp.129-158.
- Burgess, J. 1869. *Notes on a Visit to Somnath, Girnar and other Places in Kathiyawar*. Bombay: Bombay Gazette Office.
- Cousens, H. 1931. *Somanatha and other Medieval Temples in Kathiyawar*. Calcutta: Archaeological Survey of India.
- Cousens, H. 1926. *The Architectural Antiquities of Western India*. London: The India Society
- Deshpande-Mukharjee, A., Shete G., Sengupta S., Deo S., Sawant R., Neha V., and Joshi S. 2017. Somnath Revisited: Results of the Recent Archaeological Excavation of an Early Historic Coastal Settlement at Somnath, District Gir Somnath, Gujarat. *Heritage: Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies in Archaeology* 5:22-46
- Dhavalikar, M.K. 2011. Architecture and Society. *Ancient Indian New Series* 1:317-336.
- Dhavalikar, M.K. 1997. *Indian Protohistory*. New Delhi: Books and Books.
- Dhavalikar, M.K. and Possehl, G.L. 1992. The Pre-Harappan Period at Prabhas Patan and the Pre-Harappan Phase in Gujarat. *Man and Environment* 17(1):71-78.
- Gaur, A.S., Sundaresh, Abhayan, G.S and Joglekar P.P. 2011. Excavations at Kanjetar and Kaj on the Saurashtra Coast, Gujarat. *Man and Environment* XXXVI (2):51-57.
- IAR: *Indian Archaeology -A Review* 1994-1995:11-16
- IAR: *Indian Archaeology -A Review* 1978-1979:68
- IAR: *Indian Archaeology -A Review* 1976-1977:17-18
- IAR: *Indian Archaeology -A Review* 1975-1976:13
- IAR: *Indian Archaeology -A Review* 1974-75:73
- IAR: *Indian Archaeology -A Review* 1973-74:52
- IAR: *Indian Archaeology -A Review* 1971-72:11-13.
- IAR: *Indian Archaeology -A Review* 1961-1962:10-11
- IAR: *Indian Archaeology -A Review* 1957-1958:18-19
- IAR: *Indian Archaeology -A Review* 1956-1957:16-17
- IAR: *Indian Archaeology -A Review* 1955-1956:7-8
- Munshi, K.M. 1951. *Somnath the Shrine Eternal*. Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan
- Nanavati, J.M., Mehta R.N., and Chowdhary S.N. 1971. *Somnath- 1956 (Being a Report of Excavation)*. Baroda: The University Publication.
- Possehl, G.L.1994. *Radiometric Dates for South Asian Archaeology*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology.
- Possehl, G.L. 2004. Rojdi: A Sorath Harappan Settlement in Saurashtra. *Marg* 55 (3):80-88.
- Possehl, G.L. and C.F. Herman 1990. The Sorath Harappan a New Regional Manifestation of the Indus Urban Phase. In: Taddei M., *South Asian Archaeology*. Rome: Istituto Italiano Per IL Medio Ed Estremo Oriente. pp. 295-319
- Rajesh, S., Krishnan., K., Ajithprasad., P. and Madella, M. 2013. Pre-Prabhas Assemblage from Gujarat, Western India. *Heritage: Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies in Archaeology* 1:181-209.
- Rao, S.R. 1963. Excavations at Rangpur and other Explorations in Gujarat. *Ancient India*18&19:1-250.
- Sastri, H. 1936. *Annual Report of the Director of Archaeology, Baroda State 1934-35*. Baroda: Baroda State Press
- Sastri, H. 1938. *Annual Report of the Director of Archaeology, Baroda State 1935-36*. Baroda: Baroda State Press
- Subbarao, B. 1958. *The Personality of India*. Baroda: Maharaja Sayajirao University