

# Relationship between Harappans and Folks in Haryana

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**Abstract:** Relationship between rural and urban people is a known fact of various ancient and medieval cultures of the world. This was a necessary part of the development of any civilization. The urban area gives various type of help to rural people and on the other side rural folk support cities in various types. It is a relationship of give and take. In this current study we define the relationship of Harappans with Rural folk of the area.

**Keywords:** Harrappans, Bricks, Rural Folk, Civilization, Citadel.

**Introduction:** The excavation of Siswal revealed the existence of a non-Harappan culture in Haryana<sup>1</sup> related to the Kalibangan I and the 'pre-defence' culture of Harappa, which has been called the Late Siswal Culture<sup>2</sup> after the site where its stratigraphic relationship with the Kalibangan I culture was first recognized. It also provided a continuous sequence from Late Siswal to Late Harappan cultures and evidenced the survival and co-existence of the Late Siswal elements in the Harappan and Late

Harappan phases<sup>3</sup>. The Siswal A sites are generally small village settlements, but there is existence of fortified town sites (as at Kalibangan and Kot-Diji etc.) below the Harappan deposits of Rakhi Garhi and Banarwali.

At that time when these two big sites were not excavated, Suraj Bhan visualized the relationship of two type of sites and this material culture, on the analogy of Kalibangan I. One could visualize the existence of mud-brick structures, use of plough, bullock-cart, copper, bronze tools, wheel made pottery and stone, bone and terracotta objects. It implies developed technology, surplus food production. Specialization in crafts (Smithy, pottery, masonry, carpentry, hunting, fishing, weaving and leather working) and barter trade atleast with Baluchistan and perhaps also with Afghanistan directly or indirectly. The inequality based on property relations i.e. ownership of good land, cattle, tools and slaves may have lead to the emergence of nobility with a higher social

status than that of the craftsman, peasants and slaves. The existence of citadels and profuse mud brick structures at Kalibangan I shows a marked contrast with the village sites, like Sarangpur near Chandigarh (where the folks perhaps continued to remain clan based). Thus we could surmise lack of tribal homogeneity in Siswal A (Kalibangan I) town.”

So the overall conclusion of Suraj Bhan is that at the time of EHP, whereas there were two types of sites in this area, first, the fortified big sites and second, small sites with poor culture and folks.

At Mitathal EHP phase and Siswal EHP (Late phase of EHP) and at Balu, there are use of white pigment is limited (so this is different from other Early Harappan Cultures). And there are also absence of typical Kalibangan white paintings and motifs<sup>4</sup> And at Rakhigarhi Pd. I (b) with EHP also finds Bara elements in pottery. The Early Harappan ceramic industry included all the six Kalibangan fabrics, besides a few examples of hand made pottery. Apart from these pottery types, some sherds reminiscent to Hakra ware, were also reported which included incision. The incised pottery were the

characterized by thick and thin medium six vases which was decorated externally with groups of multiple incised lines drawn horizontally, diagonally and in wavy compositions. In shapes also typical Baran eota also found<sup>5</sup> So here at Rakhigarhi a mixture of EHP and local cultures found. This is indicated that in some percentage local cultures also linked with EHP's in some main sites, but mainly the local folks lived side by side the EHP's main city sites in rural areas, with their poor cultural implements.

In Mature Harappan phase, there are also examples of co-existence of Harappan folks and Mature Harappan's at various sites in Haryana. At Banawali during Mature Harappan phase (Pd. II) the pottery combination is mix. In the words of excavator, “During this period, the ceramics tend to be more of a dull matt red, or pinkish red in colour and are usually treated with either a dilute work at all. The use of white paint seems to have been discarded early in Period II. This ceramic corpus compares well with that of Mitathal I and IIA<sup>6</sup> and Siswal B<sup>7</sup> which Suraj Bhan calls “Late Siswal Ware”<sup>8</sup>. A another non-classic Harappan pottery group is represented by a

sprinkling of red ware sherds. This pottery has a thick and heavy fabric and a subdued oily surface which was occasionally burnished. Technically its family likeness lies in the Bara ware<sup>9</sup>. Another non Mature Harappan ceramic in MHP pd. at Banawali is an uninspiring dull red ware with a poor matt surface, thin walls and a coarse texture. In this pottery usual forms are vessels and cooking handis which often have an incised decoration or applique bands with cut-marks or pinchings on the shoulder. Sometimes these occur together the bands enclose, underline, or overline the incised zone which usually contains deeply incised parallel horizontal lines subsequently cut through by vertical or oblique strokes, or many incisions. Later this type becomes the hallmark of the Bara ware<sup>10</sup>. So in MHP period at Banawali, there are different pottery families found and this also present a co-existence of different rural or folk or local cultures with Mature Harappans at Banawali. This also indicates their inter-dependency on each other.

In the Sutlej valley when the Mature Harappan's arrived, the folk Bara people maintained their separate identity. Both lived side by side. Even with their

superior arts and crafts, and the advantage of a script, and trade economy, there is no evidence that the Barans were overthrown or absorbed by the Harappans. The two together appear to have evolved a social pattern, in which such utilitarian Harappan maturities as writing continued to play their role, although on a much diminished scale<sup>11</sup>

Barans have a sub-elite status in Mature Harappan period, as quoted by R.S. Bisht at Banawali. He writes that the Bara settlement at Banawali reposes against the eastern wall of the Indus town<sup>12</sup> This is not much different from what we find at Ropar and Kotla Nihang where Y.D. Sharma has suggested the Barans appeared to be living in a separate Mohalla as it were, obviously they had a sub-elite status, that of farmers or workers. So at Kotla Nihang and Ropar, Mature Harappans and Barans lived together although each occupied a different sector of the settlement. The same status also happened at Mitathal, where in period (Mature Harappan) the folk Siswalions and Mature Harappans lived together in a same house<sup>13</sup> Pd. IIA at Mitathal is marked by appearance of typical Harappan types in the continuing Sothi complex. Generally speaking the vessels have more evolved

shapes, better potting and treatment of surface. Although almost all the fabrics of the earlier period survive, their distinctive features are gradually blurred. The decorated designs include cord impressions and incised wavy lines<sup>14</sup> It is likely that the colonization of Kalibangan, Rakhishahpur and Banawali by the Harappans coincided with the decline of the Siswal culture in the region which continued to survive side by side with the former<sup>15</sup>. At Mitathal IIA Suraj Bhan said it “Late phase of Mature Harappans” and said, “The survival of Late Siswal potsherds and antiquities in Mitathal IIA indicates the fusion of these non-Harappan culture. It is this composite character which distinguishes Mitathal IIA Harappan from the classical Harappan (The Mature Harappan levels at Mohenjodaro and Harappa are largely free from the pre and non-Harappan elements. At Kalibangan the pre Harappan elements survived only upto the middle of the Harappan levels of Pd. II) and marks the transitional character of the culture in this easterly province<sup>16</sup> The same pottery mixture also occurred at Balu<sup>17</sup> and Bhirrana also<sup>18</sup>.

Suraj Bhan categories the settlements of this phase in three parts:<sup>19</sup>

- (1) The extensive Harappan twin mounds (Rakhi Shahpur, Banawali)
- (2) Medium sized site (Mitathal IIA)
- (3) Small village sites (Siswal B)

The relationship between the co-existing extensive Harappan settlements, the medium sized Mitathal IIA settlements, and the small sized Siswal B settlements may not be far to guess. The large sites like Rakhi Shahpur represented Harappan cities, Mitathal IIA being a town, and Siswal B sites the villages. The differences in the three categories of settlements are not only in sizes but also in the culture content and in all probability in the sociological composition of the inhabitants – the cities predominantly inhabited by the Harappans, the villages chiefly by the Siswal folk and the towns by the mixed population. Thus this phase marks a stage when the two people came into closer contact and lived together in the same region, at the same sites and perhaps in the same houses, particularly in the towns.

## In Late Harappan phase in Haryana

In this phase the typical Indus seals, script, clay bangles, steatite disc beads, chert weights, stone blades and other allied lithic industry are absent, copper is not plentiful; even rare. The classical triangular cakes disappear, but biconvex idlis, longish nodules and balls of clay are plentiful.

It is significant that while the Harappan cities came to an end at the close of this phase (as at Kalibangan and Rakhi Shahpur), the towns and villages continued to survive in this phase (Mitathal IIB). The reoccupation of some of the city site by Mitathal IIB people is also attested at Banawali. Interestingly the Mitathal IIB pottery shows resurgence of the Siswal elements blending harmoniously with the transformed Harappan. But this phase shows a final and good composite character of two different cultures (i.e. Harappans and Siswalions). In this period the Mature Harappan pottery shapes such as the beaker, perforated jar and the dish with nail head rim have now fallen out of use. But the storage jar with flanged rim and small vase with raised neck undergo modifications. The tall dish on stand becomes rather squat and a prominent fringe replaces the drum. The

slanting rim of the sturdy dish on stand develops a dropping rim. So at the last stage they mixed finally or fully at Mitathal IIB stage or time.

The common shapes of Mitathal IIB includes lota shaped vase, globular vase with flanged rim; bowl with tapering convex or carinated sides; basin with flaring rim; trough with shallow grooves on the interior and the rusticated jars, all desirable clearly from the Siswal phototypes. The painted designs show popularity suggesting an almost resurgence of the Siswal style. The level of urbanization could attain the Harappan framework<sup>21</sup>

At Banawali<sup>22</sup> in the Period III, the Bara pottery makes its very limited appearance in the Late Harappan phase. Mostly its found in the eastern quarter, outside the walled town of the Harappans. On the main mound, its pottery is found only in pits and kilns dug into the Indus deposit. So they were contemporary of Late Harappan at Banawali.

At Balu Late Harappan and Baran material is co-existed in the upper levels. It would, therefore, that the pre-Harappan tradition exemplified by the Sothi

or Kalibangan I culture survived to late times.<sup>23</sup>

The Siswal tradition this time undergoes further transformation and loses its distinctive character in fabric, surface treatment and potting. The shapes are now fewer and the incised designs both on the interior and exterior of vessels reminiscent of fabrics A, B and D persist. The painted designs, however show resurgence of the Siswal style.

### **In PGW Phase relationship in Haryana**

The Bara and cemetery H elements which are available at Bhagwanpura and Dadheri are absent at Manda in subperiod IB. This may indicate that the intermingling of these elements, or survivals, with the Late Harappans took place only in the Punjab and Haryana and not in the Jammu area. It shows that Manda was beyond the influence of Barans<sup>24</sup>

An overlap of the Bara and Painted Gray ware cultures was first laid bare by J.P. Joshi at Bhagwanpura. He reported the same sequence at Dadheri in Ludhiana district. At Nagar and Katpalan in Jullunder districts the overlap phase began with the original occupation of the site<sup>25</sup>.

At Bhagwanpura in sub period IB, there is a house with 13 rooms. Painted gray ware, plain gray ware vessels and Late Harappan pottery were found in this building. A statistical analysis of the pottery revealed that two to five percent of the total corpus was Late Harappan in the rooms of the houses. This shows some social contact between the two groups of people.<sup>26</sup>

At Mitathal top levels shows affinities with Mitathal IIB and cemetery H wares in shapes and designs. A copper ring, celt and a parasu, were recovered from these deposits. In all probability the copper harpoons, found in course of ploughing from near the spot of the copper objects found already also belonged to these levels and the tools might have constituted a hoard before it was disturbed by ploughing. The pottery includes sturdy dish-on-stand with drooping rim, dish-on-stand with undercut beaded rim, basin with beaded rim and cemetery H type dish-on-stand with sharp carination at shoulder.

Suraj Bhan elaborates similarities between Bara and C'H' pottery<sup>28</sup>. The cemetery 'H' culture is, on the whole quite distinct from the Harappa on its derivative cultures with regard to this

pottery types, painted designs and modes of burial.<sup>29</sup> Certain similarities in painted designs on Late Harappan pottery of Bara and those on the cemetery H pottery had been pointed out by D.H. Gordon<sup>30</sup>

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