



RESEARCH PAPER

**Discovery of Hindu-Buddhist Period Site in District Nawabshah,
Shaheed Benazirabad, Sindh**

Dr. Muhammad Hanif Laghari*¹ Qurat-ul-Ain² Hamid Ali Gadhi³

1. Assistant Professor Archaeology, Department of Anthropology and Archaeology, University of Sindh Jamshoro, Sindh, Pakistan
2. Teaching Assistant Archaeology, Department of Anthropology and Archaeology, University of Sindh Jamshoro, Sindh, Pakistan
3. Teaching Assistant Archaeology, Department of Anthropology and Archaeology, University of Sindh Jamshoro, Sindh, Pakistan

***Corresponding Author** HanifLaghari@usindh.edu.pk.

ABSTRACT

Nawab Shah District is renamed Shaheed Benazir Abad is located in the center of Sindh. As usual this district has historical importance, literature review shows many Archaeological sites and monuments in which Qasim Keerio / Gujri site is one of them. It is located one Kilometer north of Qasim gaining Cotton factory towards Nawab Shah - Sanghar road. The author visited and recorded the site scientifically used both qualitative and quantitative methods operate Global position system (GPS) and other survey equipment measuring the site. Cultural material as pottery shreds, TC objects, stones, beads of precious stones and metallic objects analyzed shows the resemblance of Hindu-Buddhist period. And also, this study provides fresh data to fill the chronological gap and create the new direction of research.

KEYWORDS Archaeology, Climate, Chronology, Geography, History

Introduction

Nawab Shah District has been named after its founder Syed Nawab Shah S/o Syed Ali Shah, who was a philanthropist Zamindar (Land Lord) of this region. The district comprises four Talukas as Sakrand, Daur, Qazi Ahmed and Taluka Nawab Shah / Shaheed Benazirabad. The site Gujri previously known as Qasim Keerio is located in Deh and Tap o Gujri Taluka and District Nawab Shah (Fig#1).



Fig#1 shows general view of the site

Surface examination on the bases of cultural material as structural remains of mud and burnt bricks with a broken fragment of plain and painted, incised, moulded, applique clay-coated and bits of glazed pottery, copper coins, and a broken piece of cut brick are also found (Khan F.A 1964) over the heap of mounded shaped in the centre of the site which is accurately shown stupa remains (Laghari 2018 unpublished) from the surface site and subsurface which indicate that site belongs Buddhist and later occupied Muslims. The district Nawab Shah appeared in the map of Sindh in 1912 that time Sindh was under the British Raj (Hughes 1874, Sorely 1868, Aitken 1886). It is really miniature Sindh in itself. On 17th February 1843 when Charles Napier who was appointed as Governor of Sindh. Napier divided Sindh into three administrative units or district Viz. Karachi, Hyderabad and Shikarpur (Sorely 1968). Before leaving he merged it with Bombay (Mumbai, India) Presidency and later Commissioner was appointed to rule over Sindh. Nawabshah district was created in 1912 from district Hyderabad. Taluka Kandyaro, Nausharo Feroz, Moro, Sakrand, Nawab Shah Shahdadpur and Sinjhorro were contained into three sub-divisions viz. After the creation of Pakistan Sindh Government created new District Sanghar in 1954 and two Talukas Shahdadpur and Sinjhorro were excluded from Nawab Shah District for inclusion in Sanghar district. In 1989 again another district Nausharo Feroz was created by Government of Sindh and Nawab Shah further deprived of its three Talukas Nausharo Feroz, Kandyaro and Moro. The climate of Nawab Shah District is arid and subtropical continental type. It is characterized by hot summers for seven months, mild winters and a late spell on monsoon rainfall (Pithawala 1978). The southern part of the district is slightly influenced by the coastal effect but the northern portion of Nawab Shah District and Sakrand Taluka do not have the advantage of the sea breeze. May, June and July are hottest months of the year and the winter season lasting through December, January and February. The rainfall is the most erratic element of the climate area. Dominant part of the rainfall accompanies the summer monsoon precipitating during July, August and September but rainfall throughout the district is poor.

Literature Review

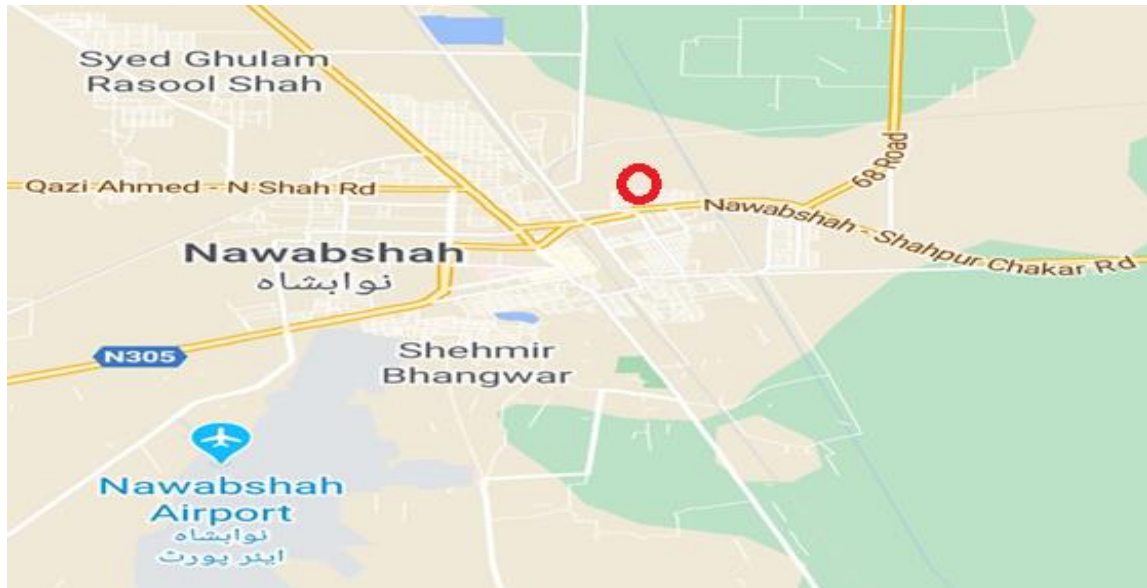
Qasim Keerio / Gujrri is situated on the eastern side of the village of the name of Qasim Keerio about four and half kilometres along the Nawab Shah - Sanghar road. The site is surrounded by agricultural land. Site is measuring about 275 meters west-east and 120 meters wide north-south with 0.3 meters high from present fields. Surface examination revealed structural remains in mud and burnt bricks with fragments of plain and painted pottery, copper coins and pieces of curved bricks, stray bits of glazed pottery are also found which indicate that the site is belonging to Hindu-Buddhist period and later occupied by Muslims. In the centre of the mound traces of Stupa are visible (Khan F.A 1964). This site is newly discovered by Mr. Tajuddin Rashdi landowner of the surrounding of the site area, village Pir Noor-u-din Shah Rashdi Taluka of district Nawab Shah. Then in 2000 Syed Shakir Shah worked on the documentation of Archaeological sites of the District. And lastly Researcher made first scientific research on the surface collection by collecting objects mentioned above but in that region of Nawab Shah but, the Researcher is the first Archaeologist who is working on site of Qasim Keerio / Gujrri. The Researcher has made research on various aspects of cultural artefacts like of Pottery, Coins, Beads, Shell Bangles, Seals and etc. Qasim Keerio / Gujrri is to be considered newly discovered and scientifically studies and documented by the Researcher.

Material and Methods

The site Qasim Keerio / Gujrri has now surveyed intensively and there are two different set of data qualitative and quantitative both are considered for documentation and analyses.

Location

The site Gujrri previously known as Qasim Keerio is located in Deh and Tapo Gujrri Taluka and District Nawab Shah. It is situated Longitude 26, 23, 08 North and latitude 68, 49, 06 East from North East corner of village Syed Noor-ul-Din Shah Rashidi and one kilometre North of Nawab Shah towards Sanghar Road Google (Map #1). The site is measuring 275 meters east-west and 112 meters wide north-south with 03 meters high from present agricultural field Bus stop Al-Qasim City Garden near Village Gul Muhammad Keerio / Noor-u-Din shah Rashidi is situated South West of site its west is Laloo-Jo-Qubo which is famous Saint of the region with the distance of one kilometre. North is the village KaloI and its East is modern of village Muhammad Hashim Shar (Researcher 2020).



Map #1 Location of the site Gujrri from Google

Surface examination on the bases of cultural material as structural remains mud and burnt bricks with broken fragment of plain and painted, incised, moulded, applique clay coated and bits of glazed pottery, copper coins and a broken piece of cut brick are also found (Pakistan Archaeology No: 01) over the heap of mounded shaped in the centre of the site which accurately shows stupa remains from the surface of site and subsurface which indicate that site belongs Hindu-Buddhist and later occupied Muslims.

Surface Analysis

During the first visiting by the researcher observing site Qasim Keerio / Gujrri is dividing into two parts as Eastern and Western with pottery shards of various forms and decorations are scattered on surface. The Gujrri site is measured its length is 275 Meters East to West and 112 Meters North to South with the height of 3 meters from ground level. The long axes of the site are east to West. The western site is Modern Mosque built by Villagers. While, over fired clay lumps and broken burnt bricks vitrified pottery shreds and charcoal with ashes are observing. During visiting from Northern edge of the high mound is illegal digging by Villagers for the search of treasures and Precious stones. Somewhere beside the digging portion found Bone pieces in Cluster form may be burials. During Visiting of high mound where broken burnt bricks were scattered in heap form which showing structure remains, deeply examining found some variation in brick size. A broken burnt brick found with cut design which shows Stupa brick, same type of cut design complete brick is found eastern side. Such bricks used in Buddhist Stupa in first century B.C and during visit found broken pottery shreds with raised dot circle in circle with sun

raised design and other plain painted rim body and base sherds, TC animal figurines TC beads and square TC tablets with incised lines such tablets are reported in Tulamba site Multan (Pakistan Archaeology No"5).

Applique design Pottery

Some sherd are collected with appliqué / clay coating. This coating sometimes applied for decoration purpose. However, the collected sample dos not provide notion of the decoration. It is assumed that these appliqué sherds are part of the cooking vessel which is highly necessary to apply the appliqué coat to resist the heat for cooking purpose (Fig#2).



Fig # 2 shows appliqué / clay coated design

Impressed / incised stamped Pottery

From this site some impressed sherds were collected as well. The incised decoration is made into Patel leaf pattern. This specimen is from smoking pipe. There would be more such type sherds needed to be collected in future (Fig#3).



Fig # 3 shows impressed / incised stamped pottery

Chequer Design

It is the basic design in gird pattern decoration. Any ceramic industry Applying gird system as a decoration technique is such to have the chequer motif. The history and spread of this pattern has multi-civilizational recognition, for example, in Mesopotamia, it begin in halaf period 5000 B.C it was used extensively in bio chrome and polychrome having painted red square out line is brown alternating with crossed square on a yellowish slip sometimes it was simple blacked square alternating with empty square.

In Indus valley this motif was first seen in a Quetta valley at Kali Gul Muhammad period III. On KGM black on red slip ware in its basic form blocked alternating with empty squares as decoration elements. It all of a sudden acquired great popularity with the advance of Amri ware in Baluchistan and Sindh. At Amri it was used as all over design and also as a divided and filler specially multiply in closed.

The Indus used it for the same purpose for which the Halafian used, mostly as all one design. In addition at Mohen Jo Daro and Harappa (2400-1750 BC) its simplest form was also used for border bend cut up into Small Square filled with a dot in each square. The Harappa should their preference for cross hatching the motifs instead of solidity blocks than. Hence on the Indus side mostly fined cross hatching square instead of blacked once. The alternating empty square was filled with secondary element like dot with slash. Single or double or dot in circle. At Harappa even sun motifs was employed as filler for the empty square.

The post Indus culture seemed to have no use for it as logical with the ceramic industry not attributing unit any characteristic to the pottery except the Jukkur culture which was more in lines with the Indus are pre Indus culture. At early historic site of Mansurah excavated by Pakistan Department of Archaeology & Muslim Karachi in 1995 found some pattern of chequer design as found from Chanhun-Jo-Daro. During the surface survey of the site of Bhiro Gojro sherd of this type is found which have same pattern of squares & slash lines with empty square resemble with Chanhun-Jo-Daro & Mansurah. This indicates great Continuity and utility of this specific motif on the pottery tradition (Fig#4).



Fig

4 shows black painted chequer design pottery

Terracotta Objects

During the field trip these objects are found and are collected for analysis as TC balls, bird figurines, shell and stone pieces and TC rectangular tablets for ritual purposes as previously reported from Tulmba site located Multan (Fig#5-6).



Fig # 5 shows TC balls various sizes, birds' figurine shell and stones



Fig # 6 shows TC tablets with parallel incised lines

Animal Figurines

Some Animal figurines were collected. The gathered artefacts apparently showed as (1) Head of horse and (2) broken part of figurines (3) Complete Bull figurines and (4) Complete Terracotta Toy figurines (Fig#7). All specimens are simply made without any decoration. There may be other type of figurines present there on the site but have not been recorded until the final visit by present researcher. To get more information on the figurine a systematic excavation is suggested here. Some beads of made from precious stones as carnelian fiancé Agade and terracotta (Fig#8). Shunk shell complete and some broken bangles are reported (Fig#9).



Fig # 7 shows Terracotta animal Figurine



Fig # 8 shows Cylindrical, round and Disc beads of precious stones as Fiancé, Carnelian



Fig # 9 shows shell bangles from conch shell

Copper coins

Of the major antiquities, the most important are copper coins which provide valuable and significant chronological and historical evidence. A few have been recovered during the surface survey and section cleaning on the southern slope of the site (Fig#10). The collected coins are in terrible condition of preservation however after chemical treatment some of the better preserved specimens were found deciphered. It includes small thin rusted copper coin resemble early phase of Bhanbhore, Brahmanabad / Mansurah having inscription and symbol but it is earlier dated from second century B.C to 10th century A.D. thick copper coins after chemical treatment found Arabic inscription "Kalma" thick on mint and rivers were faded.



Fig # 10 shows copper coins of early historic period

Conclusion

The site is completely saved and well-preserved by the local dominants and land owner no anybody allow the illegal digging and vandalism observed. The cultural material as above collected from the top surface scientifically analyzed and reported on the basis of artifacts features, color and decorations , designs, impressed depiction on surface , and some ritual clay tablets shows the chronology of the site precious stones for bead making rough and manufacturing form shows distance connection, all the material relatively analyzed shows the cultural affiliation of site with Tulamba site near Multan (Pakistan archaeology No 5) its early Hindu- Buddhist /period dated first century BC to fifth century AD.

Recommendations

The present condition of the site is good and well preserved if excavations are taken out on the site then it will provide good history and knowledge about the region. Thus concern authorities should take interest to plan excavation projects on site.

References

- Aitken E. H. (1986). *Gazetteer of Province of Sindh*, Indus Publication, Karachi.
- Brown, P. (1942). *Indian Architecture Islamic Period*, Taraporevalas Treasure Bombay.
- Burten R. F. (1993). *Sindh Revisited* volume 1&2 Department of Culture and Tourism, Government of Sindh, Karachi.
- Cousens, H. (1975). *Antiquities of Sindh*, Oxford University press Karachi.
- Elliot. Sir H.M (1975). *The History of Sindh: As told by its own historians*, Kareem & sons Karachi.
- Flam, L. (1981). *The Paleography and Prehistoric Settlement pattern in Sindh*, Unpublished.
- Flam, L. (1987). *Sindhological studies, Prehistoric Civilization in Sindh*, institute of Sindhology, Jamshoro.
- Hughes. A.W. (1874). *Gazetteer of the province of Sindh*, George Bell and sons, London.
- Khan F. A. (1964). *Pakistan Archaeology vol: 01* Department of Archaeology and Museums , Governemnt of Pakistan , Karachi
- Khanai, H. A, (1987). *Nawab Shah, Zilo Tareekhi Shahar aen Shaksiyatoon*, Nawab Shah Cultural society.
- Lambrick H.T (1964). *Sindh a General introduction*, Sindhi Adabi board Hyderabad,
- Majumdar N.G (1981). *Explorations in Sindh*, Indus Publications Karachi
- Mehar, G. R. (1958). *Tareekh-e- Sindh* , Sindhi Adabi board , Jamshoro
- Panhwar M. H. (1983). *Chronological Dictionary of Sindh*, Institute of Sindhology Jamshoro
- Pithawala, M. B. (1978). *Historical geography of Sindh*, Institute of Sindhology, Jamshoro.
- Potanger, H. (1967). *Travel in Baluchistan and Sindh*, Indus publications Karachi
- Qudoosi, A. H. (1974). *Tareekh-e- Sindh* , markazi Urdu board Lahore
- Raverty H.G (1989). *The Mehran of Sindh*, Sangmeel Publications Lahore
- Smith. J.W (1920). *Gazetteer of Province of Sindh* vol: V Bombay
- Sorley, H.T (1988). *Gazetteer of West Pakistan including Khairpur state*, Government of west Pakistan, Archaeological survey of India, western circle Bombay.