

5. Dr. F. A. KHAN — *Excavations at Kot Diji*, published in *Pakistan Archaeology*, by the Department of Archaeology, Ministry of Education, Government of Pakistan, Karachi, Number 2-1965, PP. 11-85, Figs. 1-26 and Plates 1-XXXIV Journal priced Rs. 15.00/25 Shillings.

The long awaited report on the *Excavations at Kot Diji* has at last been published. For this achievement Dr. F.A. Khan must be congratulated. But even greater credit goes to him for actual excavation of the site and a clear recognition of a cultural pattern at Kot Diji that is chronologically as well as materially accepted to be a "fore-runner" of the great Indus Civilization. Before him the late-lamented Mr. N.G. Majundar had discovered the pre-Harappan Amri site but his untimely death did not allow him to go beyond the exploration stage. It was left for Mon. J. M. Casal to carry out the detailed excavation at the site (See below for review). Kot Diji, therefore, offered the first important pre-Harappan materials in the main Valley of the Indus. The discovery and the excavation of the site would continue to show the great interest that the Government of Pakistan has been taking in the furtherance of our knowledge about the Bronze Age Cultures in the Indus region.

The report, however, leaves much to be desired. A superficial examination, no doubt, enables us to understand the two clear-cut cultural patterns at Kot Diji — the mature Harappa phase as represented in the upper levels (Layers 1 to 3 in the citadel area and layer 1 in the city area) and the "Kot Diji" culture in the lower levels (layers 4-16 in the citadel area and layers 2-5 in the other area). But for a detailed study we would have liked that the draughtsman's drawings of the plan and sections to be properly utilized in the text, and both presented in a way that the report is intelligible to the readers who have had no opportunity to go to the site. It seems that the text writer never bothered to go to the drawings and he prepared his own report on the basis of his daily note-book. The only exception is the report on pottery, which obviously was written and drawn together in the office. To give a few examples:- the report has been divided into "A Citadel" and "B Outer City", but except for Fig. 5, which refers to Sq. A III/20 all other sections are described as Squares of B. It was difficult to find out the line of the section on XX from the published plan, Fig. 4. Obviously the upper section on Fig. 10, marked as Sq. B IV/5 refers to the Citadel area, as it is there that sixteen layers were found. Similarly the descriptions of the cuttings from area B, given in the text are not those of which sections are apparently published. It is not necessary to add any more. A little more caution would have made the report more readable. On the other hand if one desires to know fully the chronological interlocking of the different layers of the Kot Diji culture with the neighbouring excavations, he is not made wiser by this report. He will have to go to the account published by others, e.g. relations with Amri to Casal and with Kalat sites to Miss de Cardi. In their accounts we get a clear-cut time scale for the different periods, which we lack here.

This criticism does not in any way lower the value of either the report or the excavation. From the report we learn of the two main periods of the Harappan Culture and two or rather three of the Kot Diji Culture. The mature phase

of Harappan Culture is attested in the upper levels of the area A — Citadel, below which is the stage of invasion and burning in the opinion of the author. In the Harappan period “there is no evidence to show that the Harappans also used the fortification wall”. (P. 16). However, “Spacious rooms with stone foundations, mud-brick superstructures and mud-brick paved floors have been uncovered in a considerable area” (P. 18). If we omit the stage of burning, we miss the earlier phase of the Harappan culture in the citadel area. For that the author takes us to the excavations in the City — area B. There layer (1) is a mixed material and immediately from layer (2) downwards Kot Diji objects have been met with. The total number of layers here was five but “in some of the squares in the south-eastern slope Harappan pottery continued down to layer (4)” (P. 37). According to the author the Harappan pottery of these layers is simpler and earlier in date than those found in the upper levels of the citadel area. This simpler Harappan pottery reached Kot Diji by trade earlier than the invasion. Thus the author speaks of the contemporaneity for some time of the early Harappan with the Kot Dijian. It is, however, strange that this simpler pottery of Harappa could not be found in the deep trenches in the citadel area, where we have again to go back for the main evolution of the Kot Diji Culture. Its two phases are clearly understood: (a) early, when the painted decoration consisted of a simple band at the neck and (b) late when more decorated forms in painting is seen. Probably a third stage may be distinguished when we get more elaborate decoration like the “Horned deity” (Pl. XVII, Fig. 16) on pot. This classification is clear from the detailed account of the pottery. Other finds have been sparsely described. We would have liked to know more about the terracotta bull mentioned on P. 83. Does it refer to Pl. XXVIII a? If so, it is highly expressive. The micro-blades and scrapers can be seen in the photograph (Pl. XXXIV b). One important point to note is the principle of construction — mud-brick super-structure on stone foundation, a system also known from Kalat area (see above review No. 4).

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