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TÍTULO: Un análisis empírico de la cerámica esmaltada del sitio de Mansurah.

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RESUMEN: Mansurah fue la primera ciudad árabe establecida en el subcontinente indio entre 712–1025 dC por el gobernador omeya Amr Thaqafi Construido en el Shahdadpur del distrito de Sanghar, Sindh. Durante este período, los gobernantes árabes extendieron el comercio nacional e internacional desde Sindh. La espectroscopia fue utilizada para examinar el material de cultivo excavado y para encontrar el origen de la cerámica esmaltada. Las evidencias empíricas extraídas del material cultural resaltan la composición de la pasta de color utilizada en estos vasos rotos y se preparan utilizando la arena de dos tipos diferentes de rocas como la volcánica y la metamórfica. Este estudio resalta las relaciones árabe-sindh y otros aspectos culturales de esta fase específica de la historia de Sindh, Pakistán.

PALABRAS CLAVES: Arqueología, Historia, Geografía, cerámica esmaltada, relación y comercio.

TITLE: An empirical analysis of glazed pottery from the site of Mansurah.

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ABSTRACT: Mansurah was the first Arab city established in the Indian sub-continent between 712–1025 AD by the Umayyad governor ‘Amr Thaqafi Built in the Shahdadpur of District Sanghar, Sindh. During this period, the Arab rulers extended national and international trade from Sindh. The spectroscopy was used to examine the excavated culture material and to find the origin of the glazed pottery. Empirical evidences drawn from the cultural material, highlighted the composition of color paste used on these broken vessels, that is prepared by using the sand of two different types of rocks such as volcanic and metamorphic. This study highlights the Arab-Sindh relations and several other Scio -cultural aspects of this specific phase of history of Sindh, Pakistan.

KEY WORDS: Archaeology, History, Geography, glazed pottery, relationship and trade.

INTRODUCTION.

When, Alexander the great came in Sindh 325 BC, Sindh was divided into two zones, as upper Sindh, its capital was Aror and lower Sindh the big city was Brahmanabad known as Patala. The Patala city was the headquarters. Alexander marched from Patala (Cunningham 1979; p.180), to Sewistan and Makran to the sea. His purpose was to take safe route to home country (Lambrick 1996: p. 88) Later, he died in 323 BC (Pathan, 1974 p.218).

After that, Kushan dynasty 200 BC – 100 AD, Gupta Dynasty 200 AD – 300 AD, Rai dynasty 500 AD – 600 AD and Brahmans dynasties 632 AD – 711 AD (Lambrick 1996; p.162-165) ruled. Chach ruled for 40 years 632 AD – 672 AD (Lambrick 1996 p.244). In 711 AD; Arab invaded Sindh under the command of Amad-u-din Muhammad bin Qasim Thaqfi in 711 AD (Balouch 2008;

p. 215) brought to an end of the Brahman dynasty and made Mansurah as headquarter city which was already occupied city called Brahmanabad. When the city was conquered by Arabs; they rename the city Mansurah and became the capital city of Arab Dynasties.

Arabs brought peace and economics prosperity which developed local culture and made strong Scio-commercial relations with Arabs. It is necessary to create purview starting from city itself, and Scio-cultural items both locally made and brought in through trade. The Archaeological research has shown that the blue glaze ceramics were very popular status items and were imported from Samarkand Iraq This paper further illustrates the original source of blue glaze manufacturing and trade routes and explain the presence of blue glaze items in Mansurah city and its surroundings.

DEVELOPMENT.

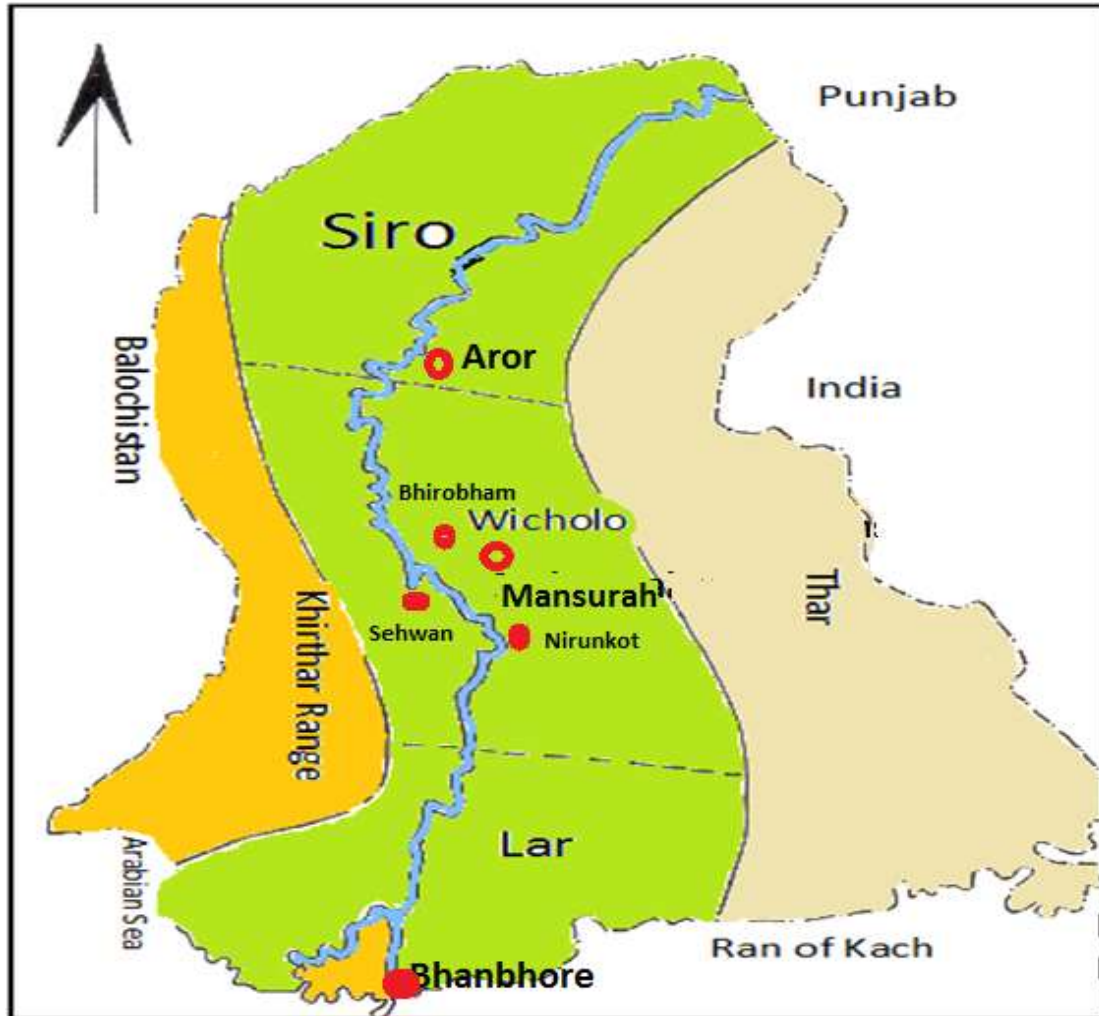
Brahmanabad / Mansurah.

The Mansurah flourished in between early 8th-13th century A.D. It is situated 15 kilometers south east of Shahdadpur in Jam Nawaz Ali Taluka 05 Kilometers west of present modern town of Jhol in district Sanghar (Pathan 1974; p.157) (Plan # 1).

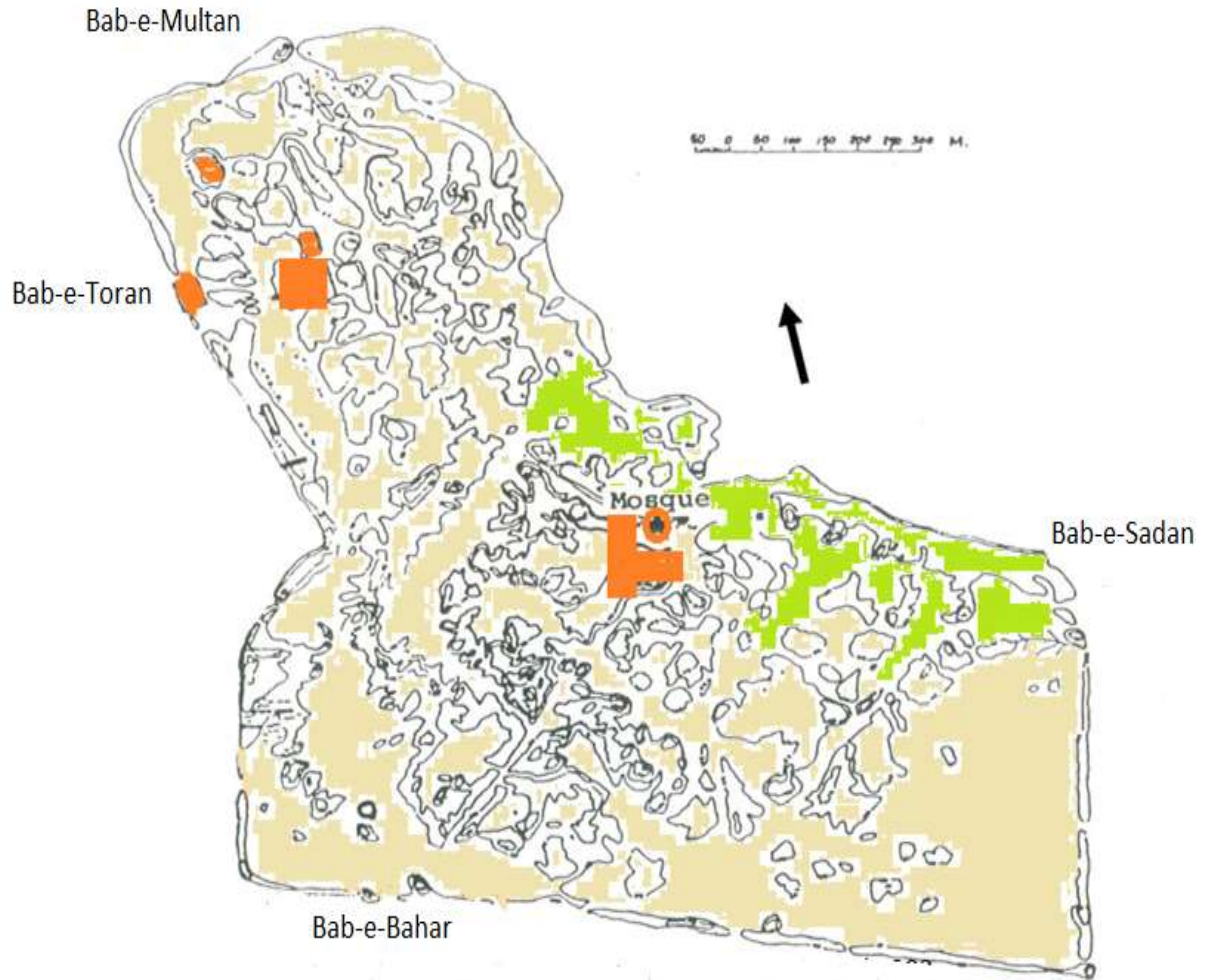
The present geographical setup of Mansurah site is surrounded by cultivated land. A metallic road was constructed in 1993-96 from the southern side of the site is connecting the village of Bakhshan Khan Bozdar, and village Haji Muhammad Lakho; while, in the mid of the site, it is an expanded village of Sahito Fakir Laghari 2017).

Jamrao cannal is flowing to the northeast of the site. The geographer and historians like (Baladhuri 1932 p.139, Astakhri1927 87, Houkal 1887 p.61, Masudi,1861 p.114) mentioned Mansurah regarding its location, layout and architectural features in details. The writer of Ahsan Al-qasim mentions that, it is located 12 Kilometers from the distance of Shahdadpur town. The literary sources describe that it was a fortified city with four gates/entrance namely (1) Babe Toran, (2)

Babe Bahar, (3) Babe Sandan and (4) Babe Multan (Pathan 1974; p. 66-67, Khan 1991). The ruin of Mansurah is spread over a vast area measuring about 2770 X 1385 meters and rise to a maximum height of 11 meters from the surrounding fields level (Farooque 1974-86) (Plan #2).



Plan #. 1 Shows the exact location of the site



Plan #. 2 Contour and Excavation view of the site produced by Author

Antiquities of Mansurah.

Each excavation in various season at Mansurah produced a good number of antiquities. During the first visit by author in 2016 reports cultural artifacts have been recorded. A variety of antiquities reported from the site includes complete and broken pots, Terracotta objects, stones, glasses, metal and shell objects. A number of coins have also been found. Among these antiquities, the blue glazed pottery is unique and reported from the other archeological sites; such as, Aror (Bukhari 1991), Bhira Bham Mughal 1992), Qasim Keerio/ Gujri (Mughal 1992, Laghari 2017) Mano Khan Jamali (Laghari 2017) and Bhanbhore of Sindh. The details of some major sites are given here.

Aror.

The site is visited by various historians and described the site in their own way. Aror, the ancient capital of Sindh is reported in various forms as Masudi calls it Al-Rur (Masudi 1861; p.35) Istakhari writes Al-Ruz & Al-Rur (Istakhari 1927; p. 88) Ashkal Blad has Al-Dur & Al-Rur, Ibn Haukal's version are Ruz and Al-Ruz (Haukal 1887; p. 47) but the city is also called Aror. It is located 10 kilometres south east of modern town of Rohri near the eastern Nara canal.

At the time of Arab invasion in Sindh, it was the capital of Brahman rulers of Sindh (Baladhuri 1902; 44). Arabs did not give much importance to this town, but they founded their own colonies and residences.

Alror or Aror written by Arabs, which derived from Aror means stone or noise (Cunningham 1879; p.258). In Persian, it mentions Al-Rud means the town of river and this same name has been mentioned by Al-Masudi (Masudi 1861; p.142), who visited the whole region of Sindh.

Chach Namah mentioned Aror was a big populous city and possessed fine buildings, palaces, gardens and places for recreation. Arab geographers report that the town of Aror was as large as Multan, it is extended and was very thick populated (Istakhari 1927; p.171, Haukal 1887; p.322, Idrisi 1854; p. 34). The Aror town was destroyed by an earthquake which changed the course of the river Indus (Qanae 2006; p.44). Later, it was visited by archaeologists; they describe the site on the basis of archaeological collected material as Pottery plain and painted, blue glaze pottery, Terracotta toys, and copper coins and architectural evidences (Bukhari 1992, Laghari 2017).

Debal site.

Another contemporary archaeological site is Debal, which was conquered by Arabs situated southern lower Sindh five kilometres south of Dabeji railway station on the left bank of Gharao creek.

The site was excavated in 1958 by Alcock under the direction of Pakistan Department of

Archaeology Government of Pakistan. The city of Debal is called Seaport (Khan 2003). Cultural material is also found from this site during the excavation such as large and heavy textured Jars of deep blue green glaze decorated with floral patterns suggested Sassanian origin. The slip painted, lead glazed vessels, lustre glazed pottery closely resembles with Persian material of 9th century A.D. various colours of Chinese pottery was also reported (Pakistan Archaeology 1968; p. 181).

Bhiro Bham.

The site is located 05 Kilometers north of Daur Railway station towards, north Daur-Bandhi road and one Kilometer east of Railway track. The site is first reported by M.R Mughal in 1992, Laghari 2017 covering an area of 28 acres with north south long axes with the height of 02 meters from agriculture land.

M.R. Mughal found clear thick fortification wall from southern side and have remains of 24 bastions, houses were made with mud and burnt bricks (Mughal 1992). Pottery shreds scattered painted with black and red colors blue glaze pottery, shell bangles, Terracotta animal figurines, broken glazed shreds are reported (Bhutta 2011, Pathan 74, Laghari 2017).

Qasim Kerio / Gujrri.

Qasim Kerio / Gujrri site is situated on the eastern side of the village of the name of Qasim Kerio about four Kilometers Nawabshah-Sanghar road. The site is surrounded by agricultural land (Laghari 2017). Site is measuring 275 ms west-east and 120 ms wide north-south with 03 ms high from present fields. Surface examinations revealed structural remains in mud and burnt bricks with fragments of plain and painted pottery, copper coins and pieces of curved bricks, bits of glazed pottery are also found which indicate that the site is belonging Buddhist period and later occupied by Muslims (Pakistan Archaeology No:1, Laghari 2017).

The Pottery.

Large number of complete and partially broken plain pottery consisted of mostly bowls, lids, and vases and handled Jugs in buff ware well fired and made of fine clay; number of stamped pottery mostly consisting of thin globular pots was also observed (Laghari 2017).

Good number of molded pottery specially bowls thin texture in red ware with mica dusting was recorded. Painted pottery good number of dishes, bowls, water pitchers, vases and other potsherds were found (Qasim, 2000). Duck and camel motifs and geometrical, plants and other designs were beautifully applied to decorate the pottery in red, light brown, black and some time in white colors. Some pieces of glazed pottery including luster and alkaline glazed have also occurred, green, turquoise blue, grey, golden and silver color of bowls (Qasim 2000), dishes, and other potsherds are noticed.

Moulded terracotta pots were found during the excavation from various squares and strata's of each sector. Vessels include /cooking pots. Bowls, small and medium pots, handled Jugs, Cups, Lids with or without knob. The pots have variety in form, texture, shape, decoration and surface treatment. Both buff ware and light red ware with well fired pots were manufactured with fine clay. Some pottery has beautiful glazed and some decorated with applied designs. A few incised decorated and cut ware pots have also been reported. Mostly pots were made of wheel turned with string cut base and some hand made with thick texture were also reported (Fig #1, a&b).



Fig # 1(a) Glazed and Painted vessels with Arabic inscription (Courtesy National Museum Karachi).



Fig # 1(b) Broken glazed imported vessels (Courtesy National Museum Karachi).

Literature review.

Bellasis, 1854 has mentioned in his preliminary report the cluster of the human skeletons and very rare number of cultural materials, including plain and painted pottery, from first excavation of 10X10 meters from the north direction of site. These all artifacts are available in British museum of United Kingdom. From this small-scale excavation, the blue glazed pottery was not found (Bellasis 1854).

Cousens, 1975 describes that the historian carried out extensive excavation work from top to bottom of the site near temple. From that excavation found cultural material including plain, painted and glazed pottery and other cultural material including blue glaze pottery (Cousens 1929).

GOP (1986) illustrated the architectural and stratigraphic analysis of the site was carried out by the department after the excavation in different seasons. The various forms of cultural material such as plain, painted pottery including blue glazed pottery, stones objects, terracotta objects and copper coins found from the surface and subsurface analysis of the site Mansurah (Pakistan Archaeology No 10-22).

Evidences of blue glazed pottery from other contemporary sites.

The cross-literature review highlights that contemporary site Aror located at Taluka Rohri, district Sukkur of upper Sindh. Some of the pieces of cultural material found from there due to illegal digging of the site by locals somewhere observe vandalism. Among that cultural material blue glaze pottery is prominent (Bukhari,1991; p.17).

Another contemporary archaeological site is Debal/ Bhanbhore which was conquered by Arabs situated 05 kilometre south of Dabeji railway station on left bank of Gharo creek. In 1958 Alcock, excavated the site under the direction of Department of Archaeology Government of Pakistan. The

cultural material collected during the excavation includes glazed pottery of various colours Blue, light green, white and yellow and Chinese pottery was also reported (Ishtiaq 1986).

The major objective of the study is to discover origin of blue glazed pottery source of raw material and manufacturing process, paste and its designs / decorations. To trace the imported routes towards Sindh and distribution of blue glaze ceramic from big cities as Aror, Mansurah and Bhanbhore to small settlements of Sindh.

For this research quantitative and qualitative research methods applied in which area of study and sample collection of turquoise glazed pottery objects are focused. Some pieces of blue glazed pottery were examined under spectroscopy to see the colour paste, its raw material, design and decoration. To trace the major routes towards Sindh and also distribution from major cities to other small settlements.

As mentioned above that the archaeological site Mansurah is situated 15 kilometre east of Shahdadpur and 20 kilometres of south of Sangahr District.

The site was excavated in various seasons by different Archaeologists. They reported various glazed colours pottery. Among that cultural material blue glaze pottery selected, because it is found from various layers of the site, the glaze pottery was analyzed through spectroscopy instrument to examine the colors used to fabricate in the ceramics of the site Mansurah.

CONCLUSIONS.

The broken pieces of pottery vessels in light red, brown and blue colour have been found from the excavation of the site. The empirical test by Laser ablating inductively coupled mass spectroscopy instrument shows that the composition of colour paste used on these broken vessels is prepared by using the sand of two different types of rocks such as volcanic and metamorphic rocks.

The composition of the clay is used to manufacture the vessels not found in the Sindh during the Arab period till today. The identification of the composition of the two pastes and cross the literature review shows this type of craft activity was prohibited in Mesopotamia during the period of Scytho-Parthian, Indo-Sasanian and Early Arab periods in the beginning of 8th century AD.

The composition of the colour paste had entered Sindh in result of the trade and alien invaded. The entry points glazed pottery in the Sindh by the route from Mesopotamia, Iran, Afghanistan, China to Sindh during the various dynasties ruled over the Sindh.

The objective of the present study is to determine the origins of raw materials and the sources of production of ceramics recovered from the archaeological site of Mansurah.

Arab's uses principal routes which connects Mansurah with the western world where were two land route and one by sea route; the first, which was used frequently came from Iran by way of sea coast through Makran. In the same time, the trade links of Arabs of Basra with Malabar, Gujrat and Maldeep remained intact but they ignore the country of Sindh.

Arabs came from Basra via Kirman and attack Panjgor, conquered it and stayed 6 months, then marched Armabel present Lasbella, conquered it and stayed their long time. Makran to Debal and also use dry route of coastal region and also use naval route.

On the Gulf the Arabian Sea coast, sea of Oman and East African coast.

The significant coastal cities were Banbhore in Pakistan, Siraf in Iranian coast in the Gulf, Suhar in Oman, Menda in Kenya on the East African coast and Mantai on the northern coast of Sri-Lanka. The maritime network extended to Southeast Asia and beyond to Japan and China on the east Egypt and Iraq on the west (Mughal, 1992 p.155).

The proposed study of Arab's glazed pottery/ceramics from Mansurah will make a substantive contribution to identifying the origin of those ceramics in Mesopotamia and Central Asia. Through understanding how different decorative technologies were created and spread, it will be possible to reconstruct a technological history of Arab ceramics. It will also develop an analytical protocol for conducting such studies elsewhere along the "Silk Road" where such ceramics were traded and transported.

In addition, the present study aims to provide research results with significant databases for identification of the provenance: the origins of the raw materials and the sources of production of a large but highly significant body of glazed and ceramics in various public and museum without verifiable archaeological contexts.

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