

# THIRUKKOYILUR EXCAVATION

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*Published by*

**STATE DEPARTMENT OF ARCHAEOLOGY  
GOVERNMENT OF TAMILNADU**

**CHENNAI - 600 113**

**1996**

First Edition 1996 - 500 Copies

Publication No. 128



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Government of Tamilnadu

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930-10283

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Price : Rs.

Printed By

State Department of Archaeology

Government of Tamilnadu

Tharamani, Chennai - 600 113

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## PREFACE

Thirukkoyilur, situated on the Southern bank of the river South Pennar in Villupuram-Ramasamy Padayatchiyar District, is to-day a small town studded with a number of temples depicting its importance as one of the religious centres for Vaishnava and Saiva sects. But in ancient period it was a Capital of an important Chieftain known as Malayaman who figures in the Tamil Sangam Classics datable from Third century B.C. to Third century A.D. The important field of investigation in South Indian History and Archaeology is to probe into the antiquity and the nature of material culture through excavations and correlate them to the literary evidence wherever available. Historical Archaeology has helped us to unravel many hitherto unknown phases of our material culture as can be seen from the results of the excavations conducted at places like Pumpuhar, Kanchipuram, Uraiyur, Korkai, Karur, Kondumanal etc. by different agencies like the Archaeological Survey of India, Universities of Madras and Thanjavur and the State Department of Archaeology of Government of Tamilnadu. This department has undertaken excavations at Korkai (1968), Karur (1973), Alagankulam (1990, 1993) and quite a few other places. As a continuing process in the field of excavation, we began the excavations at the Historic site of Thirukkoyilur in 1994 and were able to collect a number of important antiquities which throw immense light on the pre and post historical periods. We are glad to present the results of this excavation in this volume and hope that it would be welcomed by the historians as well as general public.

We feel that it is our bounden duty to thank the following staff of our department for their unstinted service rendered during excavation and in preparation of this report.

Thiruvallargal/Thirumathi

- 1 V. Ramamurthy, Archaeologist
- 2 S. Rajam, Junior Engineer
- 3 T. Thangavel, Draftsman

- 4 V. Magudeswaran, Moulder
- 5 B. Thirugnanasambandan, Photographer

We also thank the head of the Jeeyar Mutt, Thiru. V. A. Shanmugam Chettiar of Tirukkoyilur and the Commissioner of H. R. & C. E. Department Chennai for having kindly permitted us to conduct excavations in the lands that are under their control at Thirukkoyilur and the Revenue Officials of the Taluk Office for their timely help in getting assistance on other matters.



## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THIRUKKOYILUR

THIRUKKOYILUR (Lat. 11° - 30' N. Long. 79° - 30' E.) is situated on the southern bank of Thenpennai river in Thirukkoyilur Taluk of Villupuram Ramaswamy-Padayatchiyar District. (See Fig. 1) Sangam literature assignable to 2nd - 1st century B.C. refers to this place as "Thunjā Mulavir Kōval"<sup>1</sup> and "Muraṅ Migu Kōvalūr"<sup>2</sup> *i.e.* Kōval which is plunged with unending sound of the war drum and the place of many battles respectively. Thirugnāna Sambandar, the famous Saiva Saint who lived during 7th century A.D. eulogises this place as "Valaṅḡoḡ Pennai Vaṅḡulā Vayalkaḡ Sūnda Kōvalūr,"<sup>3</sup> Kōvalūr which is surrounded by the paddy fields infested with the hummings of bees and the river Pennai. These passages clearly confirm the viability of this place.

On the basis of these above references, it is clear that the ancient name of this place was Kōval or Kōvalūr. Thus the present name Thirukkōyilur is a derived form of Thirukkōvalūr. The prefix 'Thiru' appears to have been added during or after the Bhakti period.

There was another Kōvalūr known as "Mērkōvalūr" which was situated on the western side of Thiruvannamalai.

The Thirukkoyilur which is under discussion was the capital of Malayamān Chieftain of the Sangam age. The mountain namely Mullūr Malai was in the limit of his country. Malaiyamān Thirumuḡikkāri was the illustrious ruler of this dynasty. He is called as 'Malayan' in the Sangam Literature.<sup>4</sup> Nedumān Anji, King of Takadūr who is said to have offered Avvaiyār, the celebrated poetess, the myrobalan fruit to increase her longevity, had attacked Malayamān Thirumuḡikkāri's capital Thirukkōyilūr and destroyed it according to literature.

To corroborate this, an archaic Tamil inscription of Atiyamān Nedumān Anji noticed by the Tamilnadu State Department of Archaeology at Jambai near Thirukkōyilur,<sup>5</sup> records the gift of

a rock cut bed made by Atiyan Neḍumān Anji, a *Satiya Puto*, to a Jain monk. The text of this inscription is as follows :

“Satiya Putō Atiyan Neḍumān Anji Itta Pāḷi”.

Since the inscription mentions the epithet *Satiya putō* which is found stated to a Tamil dynasty in Asokan inscription, and palaeography of this epigraph is very similar to the same, it could be dated to not later than 3rd century B.C.<sup>6</sup> In support of the antiquity of this town and the ruling dynasty of Malayamān, some coins bearing the figure of a horse on the obverse are shown as the issue of them. This type of coin is sufficiently collected from the river bed of Pennaiyar.<sup>7</sup>

There is a saying that after having persuaded Malayamān to marry the daughters of Pari one of the last seven philanthropists, poet Kapilar is said to have entered into funeral pyre at this place. This fact is found mentioned in the inscription of Rajaraja I which is engraved on the wall of a Siva Temple at Thirukkōyilūr.<sup>8</sup> Kapilar's death at Thirukkōyilūr is further attested by the existence of a hill which is locally known as Kapilar kunru. It is said that on this hill only, Kapilar had seated facing north and left the mortal remains by observing fast unto death. In a copper plate of 18th century A.D. recently discovered by the State Department of Archaeology from Tenkasi, the name of the king to whom Kapilar requested to marry the daughters of Pari is given as Arasappakkōn.<sup>9</sup>

Thirukkoyilūr seems to have played as an important religious centre as Kanchi in Tondaimandalam. There is ample evidence to prove that Vaishnavism, Saivism and Jainism had flourished at this centre. It is said the Mudalālvars, the first three Alvārs viz. Poigai, Būtham and Pēi were made to meet by the grace of Almighty in one place at Thirukkōyilūr and in ecstasy they sang poems on Ulagaḷanda Perumāḷ. Since these songs form the beginning of Divyaprabhandam, this place is immortalised as the birth place of Divyaprabhandam. The above three Alvārs are believed to have lived during 5th or 6th century A.D. The *mūla-bhera* of the presiding deity of the temple namely Trivikrama Perumal is still a wooden image and this retains its ancient character.

Thirukkōyilūr was very famous for Saivism also. This place is sung by the Saiva saints as one of the Ashtavirattānams<sup>10</sup> the places where Siva had executed his holy exploits. During 7th, 8th centuries this part of Tamilnadu was under the reign of Pallavas. There is one cave having the characters of Pallava art at Arakandarallūr a part of Thirukkōyilūr. There are a few sculptures representing the Pallava style located in the Siva temple, which is nearby the cave. During the medieval period, this part was known as Malāḍu or Chēdi Nāḍu. Thirukkōyilūr was the capital at that time also. The kings of this Chēdi Nāḍu were only feudatories to the Chōlas.

There is a legend mentioning a king known as Meipporuḷ was ruling this Chēdi Nāḍu. He was a staunch devotee of Siva and he came to be revered as Meipporuḷ Nāyanār, one of the sixty three Saiva Saints. Muttanāthan, another king ruling the neighbouring country was jealous of the fame and greatness of Meipporuḷ. He made several attempts to defame Meipporuḷ but were unsuccessful. Finally, he made a plot to kill Meipporuḷ by disguising himself as a Saiva Saint to whom Meipporuḷ had great respect. One day he entered into the palace of Meipporuḷ in disguise as a Saiva Saint. Meipporuḷ welcomed him with great respect and did all holy services to him. Muttanathan wanted Meipporuḷ to be alone with him in order to discuss on some Saiva ethics. When Meipporuḷ was left alone Muttanathan drew his sword suddenly and attempted to stab him. Watching suspiciously on the activities of Muttanathan, the servant of Meipporuḷ, Tattan appeared before them and prevented this trecherous act and tried to retard over him. But Meipporuḷ the staunch Saiva Saint advised his servant saying that "Muttanathan was one among them". (Tattā namarē Kāṅ).<sup>11</sup> Hence Muttanathan was saved and was sent back to his country with due security.

The Chieftains of Thirukkōyilūr had matrimonial relations with the ruling Chōla monarchs. Sundara Chōlā, the father of Rāja Rāja had married Vāṇavanmādēvi the daughter of Thirukkōyilūr chieftain. It is this crown queen who gave birth the illustrious Chōlā ruler Rāja Rāja I.<sup>12</sup> During the period of Rāja Rāja, Malāḍu was named as Jana Nāda Vaḷanāḍu. A number of chieftains of the Chēdi family had ruled this part as feudatories under Cholas till 13th century A.D.



Malayamān Nādu during the medieval period had comprised of the area, west of ancient Oymānadu, east of the present Salem District, south of Thiruvannamalai Sambuvarayar District and north of Cuddalore taluk of South Arcot Vallalar District. In an inscription it is mentioned that this Thirukkōyilūr Nādu consisted of an area of 2000 Bhūmi being one Bhumi is equivalent to nearly 10 Velis of land.<sup>13</sup>

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## CUTTINGS

Thirukkoyilur is a developing town with increasing population. Since the building activities being carried out day by day to fulfil the needs of the rising population, it was very difficult to locate vacant sites to carry out the excavation. However with great effort, five places were selected namely, the Government Boys Higher Secondary School Playground, the place near Ayathoor Channel, Kilaiyur Veerattaneswarar temple precincts, and the vacant places in the garden of Thiru V.A. Shanmugam Chettiyar and Jeeyar mutt for excavation to study the cultural deposits of Thirukkoyilur. Totally six trenches were laid out in the places mentioned above and are named as TRK - 1, TRK - 2, TRK - 3, TRK - 4, TRK - 5 and TRK - 6.

### TRK - 1

This trench was laid in the play ground of the Government Boys Higher Secondary School, Thirukkoyilur. The size of the trench is 4 x 4 sq.mts. It was dug upto 40 cms. and was forced to stop at this level for want of proper permission from the authorities of the Public Works Department.

### TRK - 2

This trench was laid bare near the Ayathoor channel in front of the Drawpathiamman temple. The dimension of this trench is 4 x 4 mts. square. This trench was dug upto 1.50 mts. consisting of two layers. Springs in the trench led to the stoppage of the excavation work at this level. Bangle pieces, roofing tiles and rouletted ware sherds were unearthed from this trench.

### TRK - 3

TRK 3 was laid bare at the vicinity of Thiru V.A. Shanmugam Chettiar Garden which is situated near the Vishnu temple. The size of this trench was also in 4 x 4 mts. square. This trench was dug

upto the natural soil, revealing the cultural deposit of 2.75 mts. This trench consists of five occupational layers. The potteries and antiquities unearthed from this trench helped to determine the cultural deposits of three cultural periods namely period I, II and III ranging in date from 1st century B.C. to 17th century A.D. The trench yielded Black and red ware dishes, Rouletted wares of thick and thin variety, an amphora piece, sherds with graffiti, shell bangle pieces, blue glass bead, terracotta ear-lobe, medieval 'L' shaped roofing tiles, iron nail pieces, piece of conical jars and a copper bangle piece.

#### TRK - 4

TRK - 4 was laid within the vicinity of the prakara of Kilaiyur Virattaneswarar temple which is situated on the southern bank of the river Pennai. The dimension of the trench was 4 x 4 mts. square. It was dug upto the depth of 1.90 mts. reaching upto the natural soil. The excavation of this trench revealed four occupational layers belonging to two cultural periods named as period II and III that are well represented in this trench with the discovery of potteries and the antiquities of the distinctive periods. It yielded black bangle pieces, terracotta gamesman, smoking pipes, terracotta beads, 'L' shaped roofing tiles, tiny iron ball, a terracotta torso, a leg portion of a lady figurine and a terracotta votive foot.

#### TRK - 5

TRK - 5 was laid bare at the back of the Jeeyar Mutt which is situated near the Vishnu temple. The dimension of the trench is 4 mts. square. This trench was dug upto the depth of 2.20 mts. and could not be continued further due to water spring in the trench.

This trench revealed four layers yielding potteries and antiquities of two distinctive cultural periods, *i.e.* period II and period III. At the depth of 1.70 mts. in layer 3 in the northern section, a terracotta pipe line was encountered. To trace the continuity of the pipe line, another trench was laid near the prakara wall to the north of TRK - 5. The prakara wall is in east west orientation joining with the dilapidated

temple tower of 13th century A.D. The continuity of this terracotta pipe line was exposed in layer three of the trench TRK - 6 in the same level. This pipe line starts from the north eastern direction in layer three of TRK - 6 and runs towards the south western direction and ends in TRK - 5. The total length of the available pipe line is 9.5 mts. (See. plate-1). Fifty terracotta pipes are found used for laying this pipe line

The size of the each pipe measures  $19 \times 16.5 \times 2$  cms. The pipes are similar to those found at Dharmapuri and Ulagadam in Periyar District and are assignable to medieval period. The pipe line exposed in this trench seems to have been used to bring drinking water from the river or channel nearby. This trench yielded paste bead, blue glass bead, shell ring, black and yellow bangle pieces and a redware pot sherd having embedded a female figurine datable to 4th century A.D.

#### TRK - 6

This trench was put to find out the continuity of the pipe line, exposed in TRK - 5. It yielded the leg portion of a terracotta female figurine, terracotta beads and ear lobes.

## STRATIGRAPHY

Of the six trenches laid, only in two trenches namely TRK - 3 and TRK - 4 the natural soil was reached. The excavation in TRK - 3 brought to light five layers. The occurrence of potteries and other antiquities noticed in these layers marked three distinctive cultural periods. The layer (5) is formed of gritty clay with the thickness of 70 cms. This layer is not noticed in other trenches of this site. It yielded sherds of Black and Red ware, Red ware, bearing graffiti, Red slipped ware, Rouletted ware, pieces of Amphorae and Conical jar, along with the antiquities of shell bangle piece, blue glass bead and terracotta ear-lobe. Careful observation of this layer and the distribution of potteries and antiquities occurred in this layer has led us to tentatively assign this as the cultural period I.

The occurrence of Black and Red ware, Rouletted ware, Amphora piece, conical jars is not noticed in the successive layers, while the other wares such as redslipped and red ware continued to occur. Layer (4) is formed of compact soil as the layer (3) is of loose clay mixed with small quantity of sand. The layers (4) and (3) of this trench with the habitational deposit of one metre thickness yielded redslipped ware, red ware, 'L' shaped roofing tiles, iron nails, besides a copper bangle piece. The occurrence of potteries and 'L' shaped roofing tiles, iron nails, make a distinctive cultural period called Period II. Redslipped ware is confined to this cultural period only.

The Layers (2) and (1) with the deposit of 1.20 metre thickness yielded coarse redware in association with modern objects like bangle-pieces, plastic beads etc. Layer (2) is formed of hard grey soil whereas layer (1) is formed of loose soil, ashy in colour. The occurrence of redware and modern objects, form a distinctive cultural period *i.e.* Period III. The redware is the only ware of this

period. Potteries in red colour with different texture and shape occur in all the cultural periods. (See. Fig. 2. and Plate - 2)

The excavation in the trench TRK - 4 brought to light four layers. Layer (4) is formed of loose soil, pale yellowish in colour while the Layer (3) is formed of loose soil yellowish in colour. Layer (2) is of loose brown soil and layer (1) is of compact soil greyish in colour. The potteries and the antiquities noticed in these layers marked two cultural periods namely Period II and III. Period I is not represented in this trench.

Four layers were brought to light in TRK-5, which fall into two cultural periods *i.e.* period II and III.

The digging operations in the rest of the trenches were not made upto the natural soil owing to water spring in sub soil.

## CULTURAL SEQUENCE AND CHRONOLOGY

Three cultural periods prevalent at Thirukkoyilur were determined on the basis of the occurrence of the potteries and antiquities. These three cultural periods are successive in character leaving no gap, known as Period I, II and III. These periods are represented only in TRK-3 whereas only two cultural periods, *i.e.* period II and III are represented in TRK-4 and TRK-5.

Period I represents the Megalithic culture having its habitational deposit of 70 cms. above the natural soil. It is characterised by the occurrence of the black and red ware, rouletted ware of thin and thick variety, amphora piece, red slipped ware, red ware and graffiti potsherd, besides the artifacts of shell bangle piece and blue glass bead.

Period II represents early medieval culture with the deposit of 1 metre thickness above the cultural period I. It is characterised by the occurrence of ceramic variety of red slipped ware, red ware in association with the minor antiquities of copper objects etc.

Period III represents late medieval culture with the deposits of 1.20 mts. thickness above the cultural period II. It is distinguished by the occurrence of coarse red ware in large quantity besides the modern objects like bangle pieces and plastic objects.

### CHRONOLOGY

This site appears to have been continuously occupied by the people. Based on the similarity of the findings of Thirukkoyilur with those of other places like Arikamedu, Uraiyur, Tirukkampuliyur and Alagarai the following chronological dates can be tentatively arrived for the habitational deposit of this site.

Period I	100 B.C. to 400 A.D.
Period II	400 A.D. to 1300 A.D.
Period III	1300 A.D. to 1700 A.D.

The earliest time limit of 100 B.C. applicable to the deposits of period I is based on the occurrence of the black and red ware, rouletted ware of thin variety with grey sections and thick variety with black section, amphora sherd, graffiti sherd, and red slipped potteries.

## PERIOD II

It is characterised by the occurrence of red slipped ware and red ware. The date of red slipped ware may be tentatively fixed to 400 A.D. to 1300 A.D. This ware occurs in large quantity in the earlier levels of this period, and found decreased in the later level. The red ware occurs predominantly in the later level.

## PERIOD III

Period III is the late medieval period assignable from 1300 A.D. to 1700 A.D. as evidenced from predominant occurrence of the coarse red ware.





## POTTERY

The potteries unearthed in the excavations helped to determine the cultural periods of Thirukkoyilur. Three cultural periods have been arrived on the basis of the occurrence of the potteries in the habitational deposits and they are Period I, II and III.

### PERIOD I

The cultural deposits of Period I yielded the following ceramic wares :

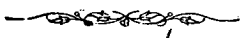
1. Black and red ware
2. Rouletted ware
3. Amphora sherd
4. Red slipped ware and
5. Red ware

### BLACK AND RED WARE

Black and Red ware occurs in the earliest level of Period I in association with the above mentioned wares. This ware is the most important ceramic tradition of the megalithic culture. Only the dish shapes occur in this ware. The dishes have convex sides with incurved, beaked and chamfered rims. This type of dishes occur at Arikamedu, Uraiyur and other places in Tamilnadu.

The dishes have thick sections and the dishes with thin section have not been encountered. The Black and Red ware was made of Fast Wheel with well levigated clay. The fine lustre on internal and external sides of the dishes was obtained by well burnishing. The colour of the external sides of the ware varies from red, pale red to deep red due to the variation in the firing technique. The internal and external sides of the dishes are black and red in colour respectively due to the inverted firing. A solitary specimen of this ware is unearthed with graffiti mark, which has two oblique lines intersecting each other. (See. Fig. 3, Types 1-12)

## FIGURE 3

- Type 1 Fragment of a dish of a Black and Red ware with incurved chamfered rim and convex sides. The illustrated specimen resembles type - 3 of Arikamedu.
- Type 2 Variant of Type 1
- Type 3 Fragment of a shallow dish of a Black and Red ware with incurved beaked rim and convex sides. The illustrated specimen has fine lusture externally due to well burnishing.
- Type 4 Fragment of a dish of a Black and Red ware with incurved sharpened rim and convex sides. The illustrated specimen is of medium fabric.
- Type 5 Fragment of a dish of a Black and Red ware with incurved beaked rim and convex sides. It resembles Type 2 of Arikamedu.
- Type 6 Variant of Type 4
- Type 7 Variant of Type 6
- Type 8 Fragment of a Black and Red ware with incurved rim and convex sides. The illustrated specimen is of fine fabric.
- Type 9 Fragment of a dish of a Black and Red ware with incurved beaked rim and convex sides.
- Type 10 Fragment of a dish of Black and Red ware with incurved chamfered rim and convex sides.
- Type 11 Variant of Type 10, bearing graffiti mark and this is a solitary specimen.
- Type 12 Fragment of a flat dish of Black and Red ware with beaked rim. The dish is bigger in size. The diametre of the dish is 18 cm. The illustrated specimen is of fine fabric and noteworthy.
- 

## ROULETTED WARE

Rouletted ware occurs in the earliest level of Period I in association with the Black and Red ware, Red slipped ware and Red ware etc. Only dish shapes are found in this ware. The rim and flat base portions of the ware occurred. Two varieties of sherds were unearthed in this level. The colours of the external sides of this pottery ranges from orange, deep red, or sepia. Only a limited number of the potsherds were unearthed. Among the two varieties one has the grey section with the high polish on both sides. This type is made of fast wheel with well levigated clay without any tampering materials. The interior flat side of the pottery has six concentric rings of triangle design. The Rouletted pattern is cogged before firing. The other variety has 5 to 12 concentric rings of dotted Rouletted pattern, on the interior flat sides of the dishes. The internal and the external sides of the dishes are not treated with high polish. The sherds are of medium fabric. The concentric rings have dotted, triangle and hyphen designs. Generally this ware has metallic ring due to the perfect firing. The Rouletted ware was unearthed in Arikamedu and Alagankulam in large quantity whereas at Uraiyur, Thirukkampuliyur and Vasavasamudram in limited quantity. previously it was under the opinion that the ware was an imported one. But after the discovery of a Rouletted sherd bearing archaic Tamil script engraved before firing at Alagankulam lends support to the theory that this ware belongs to an indigenous one. (See. Fig 4, Types 13-22, & Fig-5 Types 23-29)

### FIGURE 4

Type 13 Fragment of a dish of a rouletted ware with incurved beaked rim and convex sides with thick sections. High grey wash was applied internally while deep red wash is seen externally. The illustrated specimen is of medium fabric and wheel turned. It is impossible to note whether it has roulation as the rim portion only is available.

- Type 14 Fragment of a dish, rouletted ware with the chamfered rim. Deep red glaze is seen both internally and externally. The illustrated specimen is of medium fabric.
- Type 15 Variant of Type 14.
- Type 16 Fragment of a dish of rouletted ware with incurved sharpened rim and convex sides. It has orange glaze both internally and externally.
- Type 17 Variant of Types 14 and 15.
- Type 18 Variant of Type 16.
- Type 19 Fragment of a dish of rouletted ware with chamfered beaked rim and convex sides. It has grey glaze inside while orange on outside. The illustrated specimen is made of wheel turned with well levigated clay.
- Type 20 Variant of Type 14
- Type 21 Variant of Type 19
- Type 22 Fragment of a dish of rouletted ware with chamfered rim and convex side. The illustrated specimen resembles Type 1 of Vasavasamudram.

## FIGURE 5

- Type 23 Fragment of a flat base of a dish of rouletted ware and its flat interior is decorated with two concentric bands of dotted rouletted pattern. It is treated with black slip internally and externally.
- Type 24 Fragment of a dish of rouletted ware with flat base. The flat interior of the dish is decorated with concentric bands of dots. It is treated with black slip both internally and externally.
- Type 25 Fragment of a dish of rouletted ware. The flat interior of the dish is decorated with six concentric bands of hyphen designs. It is treated with black slip internally. The illustrated specimen resembles the Type 1-j of Vasavasamudram.

- Type 26 Fragment of the Flat base of a dish of rouletted ware with four bands of concentric hyphen designs. Each band consists of four concentric hyphen designs. It is treated with black slip internally and externally. It is of medium fabric.
- Type 27 Flat base of a dish of rouletted ware with four concentric rings of thick hyphen dots. It is treated with black slip internally and externally and is of medium fabric.
- Type 28 Fragment of a flat dish of rouletted ware decorated with concentric rings of triangle designs. The illustrated specimen is made of well levigated clay by fast wheel. The section of the ware is grey in colour. It is treated highly with grey polish. The illustrated specimen resembles the Type 1 B of Vasavasamudram.
- Type 29 Fragment of a flat base of a dish of rouletted ware. It is decorated with six concentric circles of hyphen designs. It is treated with red slip internally and black slip externally and of medium fabric. It resembles the design of the Vasavasamudram Type 1, - I.

## AMPHORA

### FIGURE 6

#### Type 30

Only a solitary specimen of an Amphora sherd occurred in association with the potteries of Period I in the lowest level of TRK - 3. This specimen is a fragment of the middle portion of an Amphora. It has pale pink in colour with hardly any slip and incrustation. At Arikamedu nearly 116 Amphorae sherds were unearthed in the excavation conducted in the year 1945. A neck portion of an Amphora was collected at Vasavasamudram in the course of exploration. The neck portion of this ware resembles with the Arikamedu variety and is datable to first century B.C. Sherds of neck and handle portions of the Amphorae were unearthed at Alagankulam and Karur. The Amphora sherd unearthed at Thirukkoyilur is illustrated (See Fig. 6).

## RED SLIPPED WARE

This ware occurs in association with the potteries of the Period I mentioned above. The shapes of this ware are vases, bowls, dishes globular pots and basins. The above mentioned shapes have splayed out rim, flat rim with grooves, featureless beaded rim and incurved rim. Red slip has been applied in some cases of the vases externally and upto the rim portion internally. In a few cases the slip has been applied both internally and externally and in some only externally.

The dishes of this ware have the incurved beaded rim and have the carination above the base. The red slip is applied in the dishes externally and upto the carination. In some other cases slip was applied both internally and externally. Some dishes have the grooves below the rim portion. (See Fig. 7, Types - 31-40, Fig. 8, Types - 41-51, Fig. 9, Types - 52-59 )

### FIGURE 7

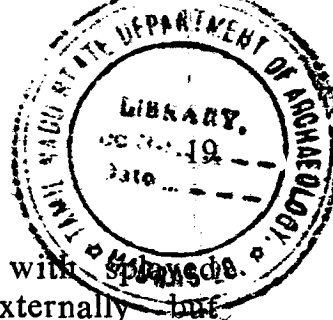
- Type 31 Fragment of a dish of Red slipped ware with incurved sharpened rim and convex sides. The slip is applied highly inside the dish but limited externally.
- Type 32 Fragment of a shallow dish of a Red slipped ware with the incurved thickened rim and has a carination at the base.
- Type 33 Variant of Type 32 and has the carination at the base. The illustrated specimen is of fine fabric and produces the metallic sound. It resembles the Type 84 of Arikamedu and Type 50 of Vasavasamudram.
- Type 34 Variant of Type 32 with incurved thickened rim. The illustrated specimen is of medium fabric and treated with Red slipped both internally and externally and resembles the Type 2 of Arikamedu and Type 48 of Vasavasamudram.

- Type 35 Variant of Type 33.
- Type 36 Fragment of a dish of Red slipped ware with incurved beaded rim with a slight carination at the base.
- Type 37 Variant of Type 36.
- Type 38 Fragment of a shallow dish of a Red slipped ware with slight carination of the base. The slip is applied internally but externally upto the point of carination.
- Type 39 Fragment of a deep dish of a Red slipped ware with incurved sharpened rim. The slip is applied evenly on both sides.
- Type 40 Fragment of a dish of Red slipped ware with incurved sharpened rim and grooved below the rim portion.

#### FIGURE 8

- Type 41 Fragment of a globular vase of red slipped ware with slightly everted rim. It is treated with red slip externally.
- Type 42 A fragment of a vase of red slipped ware with globular profile and has everted outturned beaded rim and rounded base.
- Type 43 A fragment of a vase of red slipped ware with flanged rim and convex sides. It is treated with red slip both internally and externally.
- Type 44 Variant of Type 43. It has grooves externally around the profile.
- Type 45 Fragment of a vase of red slipped ware with splayed out rim. It is treated with red slip both internally and externally. The illustrated specimen is of a medium fabric.
- Type 46 Fragment of vase of a red slipped ware with splayed out grooved rim. Multiple grooves are seen on the inner side of the rim. It is treated with red slip externally but internally upto the rim portion.

## RED SLIPPED WARE



- Type 47 Fragment of a vase of a red slipped ware with splayed out rim. It is treated with red slip externally but internally upto the inner side of the rim portion.
- Type 48 Fragment of a globular jar of a red slipped ware with everted out turned beaded rim with high thick sections. It is treated with red slip both internally and externally.
- Type 49 Fragment of a vase of a red slipped ware with splayed out rim. It is treated with red slip externally but internally upto the rim portion. The illustrated specimen is of a medium fabric.
- Type 50 Fragment of a vase of a red slipped ware with flaring out turned rim. It is treated with red slip externally but internally upto the rim portion. The illustrated specimen is of fine fabric, made of well levigated clay.
- Type 51 Variant of Type 50.

## FIGURE 9

- Type 52 Fragment of a red slipped ware with flaring slightly out turned rim. The illustrated specimen is of a coarse fabric. It is treated with red slip externally.
- Type 53 A fragment of a vase of a red slipped ware with flaring slightly out turned rim. It is treated with red slip externally but internally upto the rim portion and it is of a fine fabric.
- Type 54 Fragment of a vase of red slipped ware with internally beaked rim with corrugative and concave neck. It is treated with red slip both internally and externally. It is of a medium fabric.
- Type 55 Fragment of a vase of a red slipped ware with flattened rim. It has grooves on the inner side of the rim portion and corrugations at and above the shoulder. And it is a



short necked vase made of well levigated clay. It is treated with red slip externally but internally upto the rim portion. The illustrated specimen is of fine fabric.

- Type 56 Fragment of a tiny globular vase of red slipped ware. It has corrugation at the shoulder. It is treated with red slip externally but below the rim portion internally and it is of fine fabric.
- Type 57 Fragment of a bowl of a red slipped ware with incurved beaked rim and round base. Red slip is applied both internally and externally.
- Type 58 Fragment of a bowl of a red slipped ware with straight sharpened rim corrugations are seen at the shoulder and it has rounded base
- Type 59 Variet of Type 58

## RED WARE

Redware occurs in large quantity in this period. The shapes of the red ware are vases with flaring everted rim, flaring out-turned rim, basins with incurved beaded rim, jars with out-turned thickened rim. Generally the ware is of medium fabric with slow wheel turned and they are of utilitarian in character. (See Fig. 10, Types 60-68, and Fig. 11, Types 69-77).

## RED WARE

### FIGURE 10

- Type 60 Fragment of a vase of red ware with flaring everted rim and a bend is seen below the rim externally and bulged profile. The illustrated specimen is of medium fabric.
- Type 61 Fragment of a vase of red ware with flaring out turned rim with grooves below the neck and the shoulder. Tampering materials are seen in the section. This is of a medium fabric.

- Type 62. Fragment of a wide mouthed vase of red ware with splayed rim and bulged profile with grooves externally on the shoulders.
- Type 63. Fragment of a vase of red ware with everted, grooved rim and bulged profile and the illustrated specimen is of medium fabric.
- Type 64. Fragment of a red ware with flaring out turned rim with bulged profile. It is decorated with grooves externally on the shoulder.
- Type 65. Fragment of a basin of red ware with collared rim and has rounded base, having grooves on the shoulder. The illustrated specimen is of medium fabric.
- Type 66. Variant of Type 47
- Type 67. Variant of Type Type 47
- Type 68. Fragment of a basin of red ware with flaring out turned rim and has grooves externally on the profile.

## FIGURE 11

- Type 69. Fragment of a vase of red ware with everted out turned rim with globular profile. The illustrated specimen is of medium fabric.
- Type 70. Fragment of a red ware with out turned thickened rim with globular profile and the illustrated specimen is of medium fabric.
- Type 71. Fragment of a vase of a red ware with out turned thickened rim with bulged profile and grooves are seen on the shoulders.
- Type 72. Fragment of a tiny vase of a red ware with out turned beaded rim with globular profile. The illustrated specimen is of medium fabric.

- Type 73 Fragment of a storage jar of a red ware with out turned beaded rim with straight sides. The illustrated specimen is of medium fabric.
- Type 74 Fragment of a red ware of a jar with out turned thickened rim. The illustrated specimen is of medium fabric.
- Type 75 Fragment of a basin of red ware with incurved beaded rim with concave depression below the rim. The basin is decorated with a band of slanting finger nail incisions on the shoulder. The illustrated specimen is of medium fabric.
- Type 76 Variant of Type 75. The illustrated specimen has wavy line decoration on the shoulder and is of medium fabric.
- Type 77 Fragment of a basin of redware with incurved beaked rim. It is decorated with grooves externally below the rim portion and the illustrated specimen is of medium fabric.

## PERIOD II

Period II is characterised by the occurrence of the following ceramic tradition.

1. Red slipped ware
2. Red ware

### RED SLIPPED WARE

The shapes of the red slipped ware are the dishes with incurved rim and a carination at the base, bowls with incurved beaked rim, vases with splayed and flaring out turned rim, and storage jar with flat incurved beaked rim decorated with wavy lines externally below the rim. Lids also occurred in this period. (See Fig. 12, Types 78 - 91).

### RED SLIPPED WARE

#### FIGURE 12

- Type 78 Fragment of a bowl of red slipped ware with incurved sharpened rim. The red slip is applied both internally and externally. The illustrated specimen is of medium fabric.

- Type 79 Fragment of a dish of a red slipped ware with incurved beaked rim and a slight carination at the base with convex sides.
- Type 80 Fragment of a bowl of a red slipped ware with incurved sharpened rim.
- Type 81 Fragment of a bowl of red slipped ware with incurved thickened rim. The red slip is applied deeply both internally and externally.
- Type 82 Fragment of a dish of red slipped ware with incurved sharpened rim and carination at the base.
- Type 83 Fragment of a dish of red slipped ware with incurved thickened rim and convex sides.
- Type 84 Fragment of a dish of red slipped ware with incurved thickened rim.
- Type 85 Fragment of a bowl of red slipped ware with incurved sharpened rim and convex sides.
- Type 86 Fragment of a lid of red slipped ware with pronounced flanged at the waist and a sagger base functioned as lid for the cooking vessel. The red slip is applied both internally and externally and the illustrated specimen is of a medium fabric.
- Type 87 Fragment of a basin of a red slipped ware with out turned flanged rim with convex sides and rounded base. The illustrated specimen is of medium fabric.
- Type 88 Variant of Type 87
- Type 89 Variant of Type 87
- Type 90 Fragment of a vase of red slipped ware with flaring out-turned under cut rim.

- Type 91 Fragment of a vase of red slipped ware with flaring out-turned grooved rim and the ledges below the neck. The red slip is applied both internally and externally. The illustrated specimen is of fine fabric with thin section and made of well lavigated clay with fast wheel.

### RED WARE

The shapes of the red ware potteries that were encountered in this period are of basins with flat rim and convex sides, vases with out-turned beaded rim, grooved rim with finger nail incisions. And these shapes are utilitarian in character. Generally the earthen wares of these period are made of coarse fabric with slow wheel. (See Fig. 13, Types 92-103; Fig. 14, Types 104-112 and Fig. 15, Types 113-120).

#### FIGURE 13

- Type 92 Fragment of a basin of red ware with flat rim with straight sides and a carination is seen below the rim portion.
- Type 93 Fragment of a vase of red ware with wide mouthed out-turned grooved rim with bulged profile.
- Type 94 Fragment of a basin of red ware with out-turned beaded rim with short neck. A prominent ledge is seen around the neck portion.
- Type 95 Fragment of a bowl of a red ware with incurved thickened rim and convex sides.
- Type 96 Fragment of a basin of red ware with thickened rim, a prominent ledge and grooves are seen in the neck portion.
- Type 97 Fragment of a dish of a red ware with incurved thickened rim with carination at the base.
- Type 98 Fragment of a basin of red ware with everted rim, concave neck and carination at the shoulder with rounded base.

- Type 99 Fragment of a dish of a red ware with incurved thickened rim with saggar base.
- Type 100 Fragment of a dish of red ware with incurved thickened rim and saggar base.
- Type 101 Fragment of a jar of red ware with incurved beaded rim with straight sides.
- Type 102 Fragment of a basin of red ware with incurved beaded rim with convex profile.
- Type 103 Fragment of tiny vase with flaring feature less rim with convex sides.

## FIGURE 14

- Type 104 Fragment of a vase of red ware with a band of finger nail incisions on the shoulder.
- Type 105 Fragment of a red ware with flaring out-turned rim and corrugations are seen on the shoulders.
- Type 106 Fragment of a wide mouthed vase of red ware with out turned grooved rim with bulged profile. Corrugations are seen on the shoulders.
- Type 107 Fragment of a wide mouthed basin of a red ware with splayed rim and globular profile. Corrugations are seen below the neck
- Type 108 Fragment of a vase of red ware with flaring out-turned grooved rim with bulged profile.
- Type 109 Fragment of a vase of red ware with flanged rim and bulged profile.
- Type 110 Fragment of a vase of red ware with splayed out rim and bulged profile.
- Type 111 Fragment of a vase of red ware with everted out turned rim with bulged profile.

Type 112 . Fragment of a vase of red ware with flaring internally grooved rim with herring-bone decoration on the upper side of the rim portion with bulged profile.

### FIGURE 15

Type 113 . Fragment of a vase of red ware with prominent ledge below the rim portion internally and splayed out grooved rim. The grooves are seen around the neck portion. Three bands of triangle decorations are seen around the shoulder. The illustrated specimen has bulged profile.

Type 114 . Fragment of a basin of red ware with flanged rim with short neck and the carination at the base. Finger nail triangle design of two rows are seen externally around the shoulder.

Type 115 . Fragment of a lid of red ware with flanged rim and truncated profile.

Type 116 . Fragment of a vase of red ware with flaring out-turned rim.

Type 117 . Fragment of a vase of red ware with flaring out-turned grooved rim. Grooves are seen on the shoulders and has bulged profile.

Type 118 . Fragment of a vase of red ware with flaring out-turned grooved rim with bulged profile. Corrugations are seen around the shoulder externally.

Type 119 . Fragment of a vase of red ware with prominent ledge internally around the rim portion with splayed out grooved rim. The upper portion of the rim are decorated with fine thin grooves.

Type 120 . Fragment of a wide mouthed jar of red ware with out-turned thickened grooved rim prominent ledges and finger nail incisions are seen on the shoulders below the rim portain. The illustrated specimen is of coarse red ware.

## PERIOD III

PERIOD III is characterised by the occurrence of red ware. The shapes of the red ware are dishes, jars, vases and frying pan. Generally the wares are of coarse fabric and made by slow wheel and are utilitarian in character. (See Fig. 16, Types 121-132).

## RED WARE

## FIGURE 16

- Type 121 Fragment of a dish of a redware with incurved sharpened rim and carinated base. The illustrated specimen is of coarse fabric.
- Type 122 Fragment of a dish of a red ware with incurved thickened rim. The illustrated specimen is of coarse fabric.
- Type 123 Fragment of a vase of redware with prominent ledge below the neck portion internally with splayed out grooved rim. The illustrated specimen is of coarse fabric.
- Type 124 Fragment of a vase of redware with flanged out-turned rim with bulged profile. The illustrated specimen [is of coarse fabric.
- Type 125 Fragment of wide mouthed vase of a redware with flat rim. The illustrated specimen is decorated with cordoned finger nail incisions. The illustrated specimen is of coarse fabric.
- Type 126 Fragment of a vase of red ware with flat out turned rim and bulged profile. The illustrated specimen is of coarse fabric.
- Type 127 Fragment of a vase of red ware with flaring out-turned rim. The illustrated specimen is of coarse fabric.
- Type 128 Fragment of a redware jar with flat rim and a prominent ledge is seen below the neck portion. The illustrated specimen is of coarse fabric.



- Type 129 Fragment of a vase of redware with flaring out-turned rim. The illustrated specimen is of coarse fabric.
- Type 130 Fragment of a vase of red ware with flaring out-turned rim. The illustrated specimen is of coarse fabric.
- Type 131 Fragment of a basin of redware with straight thickened rim, carination at the base. The illustrated specimen is of coarse fabric.
- Type 132 Fragment of a frying pan of a red ware with internally beaded rim. The illustrated specimen is of coarse fabric.

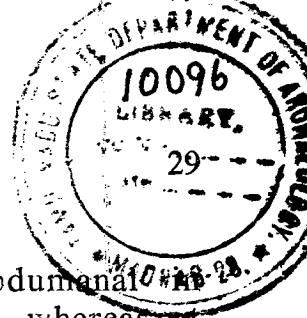
### GRAFFITI POTSHERDS

A few sherds of Graffiti assignable to Period I were unearthed at Thirukkoyilur. The graffiti is generally found mostly on red ware and rarely on black and red ware potsherds. The symbols on the potteries are post-firing. (See Fig. 17, Symbols 1-5). Of them a few are geometric in form, the others bear figures like ladder, boat, arrow etc. The occurrence of the symbols of boat, bow and arrow on potteries had already been noticed from Korkai in Magalithic level.

Scholars have different opinions on the graffiti marks. Robert Bruce Foote hold that the pottery marks are the marks of potters or owners. Yazdani an eminent historian on Deccan history expressed his opinion that they resembled the Egyptian Hieroglyphs and suggested that the symbols could have been used for sometimes as ideographs to express ideas and sometimes phonetically to represent symbols for letters. Dr. T. V. Mahalingam had the opinion that these symbols had been used as totemic symbols adopted by the people.

The potteries unearthed from different parts of Tamilnadu bear the symbols of Natural objects such as sun and stars and geometrical designs such as triangles, circles etc.

## RED SLIPPED WARE



The graffiti sherds occurred in Uraiyur and Kodumana association with the inscribed Tamil Brahmi sherds whereas at Vallam they occurred in earlier levels than the level of inscribed Brahmi sherds. At Thirukkoyilur also the graffiti sherds occur in the earliest level assignable to Period I. But at this site it is notable that the inscribed Brahmi sherds had not occurred.

## SYMBOLS

1. Two oblique lines intersect each on the upper portion of the Black and Red ware pottery. It resembles symbol-6 of Uraiyur but the oblique lines are converge in the upper end on red slipped ware.
2. Two oblique lines converge in the upper end on red slipped ware.
3. Intersecting two oblique lines on red ware.
4. Composed of three converging oblique lines on the sherd of Red slipped ware. It resembles symbol 20 of Uraiyur.
5. Ladder symbol on Red ware potsherd.

## TERRACOTTAS

In India during the early centuries of the Christian era Terracottas were made both by hand modeling and by moulds. They were made by fine levigated clay. Male figurine occurred for the first time in the Indus Civilization. But here too the female figurine out number them. Both in the Baluchistan and in India the female figurine seem to be associated with a cult of Mother Goddess either in the form of images or as votive offerings. An interesting terracotta figurine of a mother holding a child was found at Mohanchodara. The same type of female figurines were found at Pumpuhar and Manmangalam in Nagai Quaid-E-Milleth and Trichy Districts respectively. A receptacle of earthen ware bearing the relief of a female figurine was found during the exploration at Melaperumpallam near Pumpuhar.

The excavations at Thirukkoyilur brought to light only four terracotta figurines, the details of which are as follows (See Fig. 18, 1, 2, 3 and 4).

### 1. Female figurine

A receptacle of earthen ware bearing the relief of a female figurine was unearthed. This figure appears to be in standing posture. It is a mutilated one remaining upto the waist portion. With two hands spread out horizontally she is having shaved head, and wearing patra kundalas in her ears. The nose, protruding eyes and the mouth are shown with pinched clay. An ornament is found around her neck and the pendent hanging down between her prominent breasts. It is made of hand modeling with the fine levigated clay. This figurine is assignable to the cultural period II. (See plate-3).

### 2. Terracotta foot

A fine terracotta human foot was unearthed from TRK-4 assignable to period II. This foot seems to have been the workmanship of a master artisan and appears to have been offered as votive foot. The hind portion of the leg has been made in such a way to fix it in a socket of the leg. (See plate-4).

### 3. Torso

A Torso of a female figure was unearthed at Trench 5 assignable to Period III. The arms and breasts are mutilated. The portion of the left arm appears to be in a raised position. (See plate-5).

### 4. Terracotta-knee

The crossed left knee portion of a Terracotta figurine was unearthed at Thirukkoyilur assignable to period III. The knee portion and its surroundings are decorated with two lines to give the prominent effect to demarcate the knee. The figurine was applied with red wash.

## TERRACOTTA SMOKING PIPE

Eighteen Terracotta smoking pipes assignable to Period II and III were unearthed from the trenches TRK-4 and 5, at Thirukkoyilur. They have different workmanship. The smoking pipe consists of the portion of receptacle and a knob, having a circular hole in order to fix a stalk which functions as a pipe connected with the slit in the centre of the receptacle. The tobacco or other materials were placed in the receptacle for smoking purpose. The stalk portion of the smoking pipe might have been made of terracotta and was separable from the receptacle. This portion was not found during the excavations. (See Plate 6).

Three smoking pipes that are tiny in sizes and coarse in fabric were unearthed in the deposits of Period II. One of them is well decorated in the lower portion of the knob with six verticle lines and four slanting lines bordered with a pair of horizontal lines around the knob. The bottom portion of the knob is flat and the lower portion has a circular hole in order to fix a stalk while the receptacle portion was broken. (See Fig. 19, 8).

The other lower portion of the knob of the smoking pipe is round in shape decorated with a line of dots and grooves below the receptacle (See Fig. 19, 9). The third one has round shape knob with a round hole with the diametre of 9 mm. The mouth of the receptacle is round in shape with the diametre of 1.8 cms. and with a depth of 2 cms. The receptacle has a slit in the centre, decorated with grooves vertically with alternative finger nail incisions (See Fig. 19, 4).

The deposits of the Period III yielded fifteen Terracotta smoking pipes having their lower portions of the knobs conical, round and square in shape. In some cases the knobs are not found. The receptacle only are available, In some cases the receptacles are decorated with two rows of circles with pellets in the centre and the rim portion of the receptacles are decorated externally with a row of finger nail incisions. (See Fig. 19, 3).

**Smoking Pipe - 1**

The lower portion of the pipe has no knob but it has a circular hole with diameter of 8 mm. for fixing the stalk. It has a flat base. The receptacle has four sides with a slit in the centre. (See Fig. 19, 1).

**Smoking Pipe - 2**

The receptacle has round mouth, pyriform in shape. The lower portion of the receptacle is connected with a rectangular portion through the round hole. The round hole is meant for fixing the stalk. The receptacle is not decorated and plain. It is made of fine levigated clay with sufficient firing. (See Fig. 19, 2).

**Smoking Pipe - 3**

It has a conical knob with a round hole meant for fixing the stalk. The mouth of the receptacle is round in shape with a slit in the centre. It is decorated with two rows of circles with a pellet in each circle. The rim portion of it is decorated with finger nail incisions. The mouth portion of the receptacle is 2.2 cm. diameter. (See Fig. 19, 3).

**Smoking Pipe - 4**

It is provided with a receptacle and a knob in the lower portion. The knob has a circular hole with a diameter of 8 mm. The mouth of the receptacle is round in shape with a slit in the centre. The vertical grooves are marked externally on the receptacle portion in order to form a floral design. A ledge is seen in between the receptacle and the knob portion. The depth of the receptacle is 2.5 cm. and the diameter of the mouth portion is 2.8 cms. (See Fig. 19, 5).

**Smoking Pipe - 5**

The lower portion of the knob of this pipe with a circular hole of 8 mm. diameter is connected with a slit in the centre of the receptacle. The lower portion of the knob is decorated with four rows of dots. (See Fig. 19, 6).

**Smoking Pipe - 6**

The lower portion of the knob of this pipe is seen with a round hole of 1 cm. diameter. It is made of fine levigated clay with well firing. (See Fig. 19, 7).

## HOP SCOTCHES

The flat portion of the potsherds were ground in the edges to bring it to a round shape, It is called by Archaeologists as Hop Scotch. They were used for children's game. Hopping by one foot from one end and pushing the round object over scotches (lines) to the other end is the objective of this game. These type of specimens have been collected from the Harappan sites like Kalibangan, Lothal and Ruar. At Atranjikhera and Noh they occur in the painted grey ware levels whereas at Ayodhya, Hastinapura and in other Gangetic valley sites they continue to occur even in the Northern Black polished ware levels. Their occurrence is wide spread in the early historical levels in regions of Central and Western India and Deccan (Nevasa, Brahmagiri and Maski). Later specimens datable to Circa 200-500 A.D. are known from Nagarjunakonda and Salikundam. The shape of the hop scotches remains unchanged from the harappan period to historical periods.

The deposits of Period I, II and III of Thirukkoyilur yielded sixteen hop scotches. It is interesting to note that out of sixteen hop scotches one hop scotche is made of stone. Hop scotches made of stones had occurred in Harappan site from First Millennium B.C. levels. The diametre of the hop scotches found at Thirukkoyilur varies but the shape remains as round. (See Plate No. 7).

## TILES

The Cultural deposits of Period II yielded roofing tiles that are in the shape of 'L', This kind of tiles occurred at Vallam in the same period. The full size of the tiles are not ascertained because they are not occurred in full size. It seems that the lengthy part of the tile is made of mould while the hook part is bend by the head. The finger prints are visible in the hook part of the tile itself. The width of the tile varies from 4.3 cm. to 5 cm. These tiles might have been used to fix on the reapers running on the rafters. (See Fig. 20).

## SPINDLE WHORL

Spindle whorl is a circular object with a central hole, used as a flying wheel of a spindle. It is disc shaped, made of potsherd. Considering its light weight and small size it is presumed that this could have been used for spinning cotton thread. One such spindle whorl was collected during excavation at Thirukkoyilur from the stratigraphical level assignable to Period II. This whorl is an unfinished one having a small size hole in the centre. The diameter of the spindle whorl is 3 cms.

The oldest specimen of this kind belongs to Harappan period. The excavations held at Mohenjodaro, Kalibangan and Lothal have yielded a number of specimens of single holed whorls. (See Fig. 21, 1, Plate No. 8).

## COIN MOULD

A mutilated coin mould was unearthed at Thirukkoyilur from the stratum level assignable to Period III in the trench TRK-5. This coin mould has three rows of sockets totalling to seven. The molten metal was poured into the sockets to produce coins. This type of coin moulds have been encountered from the layers assignable to late medieval period, at Padavedu and Gangaikondacholapuram. (See Fig. 21, 2, Plate No. 9).

## IRON NAILS

The first occurrence of iron in Tamilnadu has been noticed from the Megalithic period. Nails made of iron were found at Sanur in Megalithic level.

Iron nails and the objects made of Iron were unearthed at Thirukkoyilur in the cultural deposits of Period II and III. Two iron nails found in TRK-4 are long and tapering in form with circular flat heads. The nail with rectangular head has the length of 10.5 cms. and the breadth of 1.3 cm. and the nail with circular head has the length of 7 cms. A few broken pieces of Iron rings were found in the trench TRK-4. A tiny ball of iron picked out in TRK-4, assignable to Period III has lead us to think that this could have been used as bullet. (See Fig. 22, Plate-10).

## MINOR ANTIQUITIES

The deposits of cultural Period I, II and III yielded glass beads, paste beads, shell bangle, ring, glass bangles, terracotta ear lobes and beads.

### 1. Shell Objects

Only one bangle piece of shell with plano-convex in section assignable to Period I was found in TRK-3. The diametre of it is 8 cms. indicating that it was worn by a grown up women. Apart from this a shell ring was also found in TRK-5 assignable to Period II. The diametre of it is 2 cms. (See Fig. 23).

### 2. Glass Bangle Pieces

Twelve bangle pieces of glass assignable only to Period II were unearthed at Thirukkoyilur. These bangles are in different colours like black, yellow and milky white.

The black bangles have plano-convex section whereas the yellow bangle has round and rectangular. The milky white bangle has the round section.

An interesting bangle piece with rectangular section has the flat interior surfaces. The exterior surface is decorated with two lines of black and white covering the gap with red colour.

The technique of making this bangle appears to be not refined as is indicated by the uneven thickness of these bangle pieces. (See Fig, 23, and Plate-11).

## BEADS

The cultural deposits of Period I yielded two glass beads one of which is translucent variety having the colour of blue and the other one is opaque in green colour. Both of them are disc shaped with a hole in the centre. (See Fig. 23,) The cultural deposits of Period II



also yielded a translucent variety of bead in sea blue colour with disc shape. (See Fig. 23). The above types of beads occur in Tamilnadu mostly in the levels of 1st-2nd centuries A.D. Another bead known as *paste* bead in cylindrical shape with a hole in the centre (See Fig. 23, and Plate-12) occurred in the deposits of Period II at TRK-5.

### TERRACOTTA BEADS

The deposits of Period II of Trench TRK-4 had yielded two terracotta beads only. One of them is in spherical shape and another is pear shaped. Both of them have a hole in the centre. These beads are hand made. (See Fig. 23).

### EAR LOBES

The deposits of Period II and III yielded three terracotta earlobes. They are circular and hemispherical in shape.

#### **Terracotta earlobe - 1**

One side of the earlobe is circular while the other is hemispherical with a flat fold in between them (See Fig. 24, 1 Plate 13).

#### **Terracotta earlobe - 2**

This earlobe appears with concave circular edges and is slightly bigger in size than the No.1 (See Fig. 24, 2 and Plate 13).

#### **Terracotta earlobe - 3**

This earlobe has circular side and a concave fold in the centre (See Fig. 24, 3 and Plate 13).

### COPPER BANGLE

The cultural deposits of Period II had yielded a solitary copper bangle with plano-convex section. The diameter of it is 5.4 cms. (See Fig. 23 and Plate 14)

## CONCLUSION

The antiquities unearthed at Thirukkoyilur throw fresh light on the history and culture of people. The habitation of the site starts from late megalithic phase *i.e.* from 100 B.C. and continues upto 17th century A.D. without any break. Considering other factors around this area, the habitation at this site might have been existed even earlier to the above time span. To substantiate this view there are evidences of pre-historic paintings in and around this place that could be dated to 1000 B.C. to 500 B.C.

The digging brought to light an amphora sherd which confirms the trade contacts of this part with the foreigners especially the Romans. The contact of the people of Thirukkoyilur with Romans is otherwise proved with the discovery of Roman coins from a remote village near Thirukkoyilur.

The main occupation of the people might have been Agriculture, but no material evidence has been collected to prove this conjecture. Apart from agriculture the people could have engaged in the ceramic industry to fulfill their needs like storing their grains and other food products and cooking their foods. The perfection we see in the manufacture of ceramic vessels in earlier period gets gradually deteriorated in the later period due to the introduction of metal utensils.

A very few terracotta figurines have been unearthed. Unfortunately all of them are in mutilated condition. Some figurines are found in solid nature while a few are in hollow. And in some cases, the figurines are embedded on the body of the earthen ware. It seems that this type of earthen ware was used either for ceremonial occasions or for burial purposes. These terracotta figurines could have been used either for worship or as toys for children. The art of making terracotta figurines had been prevalent throughout Tamilnadu even in Pre-Christian era.

Besides Agriculture, and manufacture of pottery the people appear to have engaged in Textile Industry. It came to be known with the discovery of a spindle whorl which was used for spinning

cotton. In this connection, it is noteworthy to mention the dyeing wats unearthed at Uraiur and Thirukkampuliyur. These discoveries confirm the prevalence of Textile Industries throughout Tamilnadu in those days.

The hop scotches uncovered in the excavation indicate the children's game which was in use in those days.

The discovery of roofing tiles suggest that they had houses with tiled roof. It is also inferred that the houses were built by using timber, bricks and iron nails.

The occurrence of a coin mould and the discovery of a considerable number of coins on the river bed clearly attest that they had an established currency system. Occurrence of bangles made of shell, glass and copper, beads made of glass, terracotta and terracotta ear lobes indicate that the women folk of those period had the custom of wearing them.

The occurrence of copper bangle and iron nails confirm the knowledge of metallurgy in those days.

It seems that the prevalence of smoking habit was in Tamilnadu during later period *i.e.* from the beginning of the 17th century A.D. The Portuguese people is said to have brought the tobacco the core material for smoking, to India only in the beginning of the 17th century A.D. In Ancient days, the tobacco plant was cultivated in South America only. Now the tobacco plant is being cultivated in many countries. The smoking pipes were unearthed at Thirukkampuliyur and Uraiur in the levels of 4th - 10th century A.D. And at Thirukkoyilur in the levels of 13th - 17th century A.D. In this connection it is noteworthy to mention here that there is no reference about the smoking habit in Sangam and the later literature. But the excavation brought to light the smoking pipes. We are not in a position to know that the material which was used for smoking. It is interesting to note in this connection that the smoking pipes were collected in large number from the premises of the forts, they are assignable to 16th - 17th century A.D. This indicates that the soldiers should have been addicted to smoking in those days.



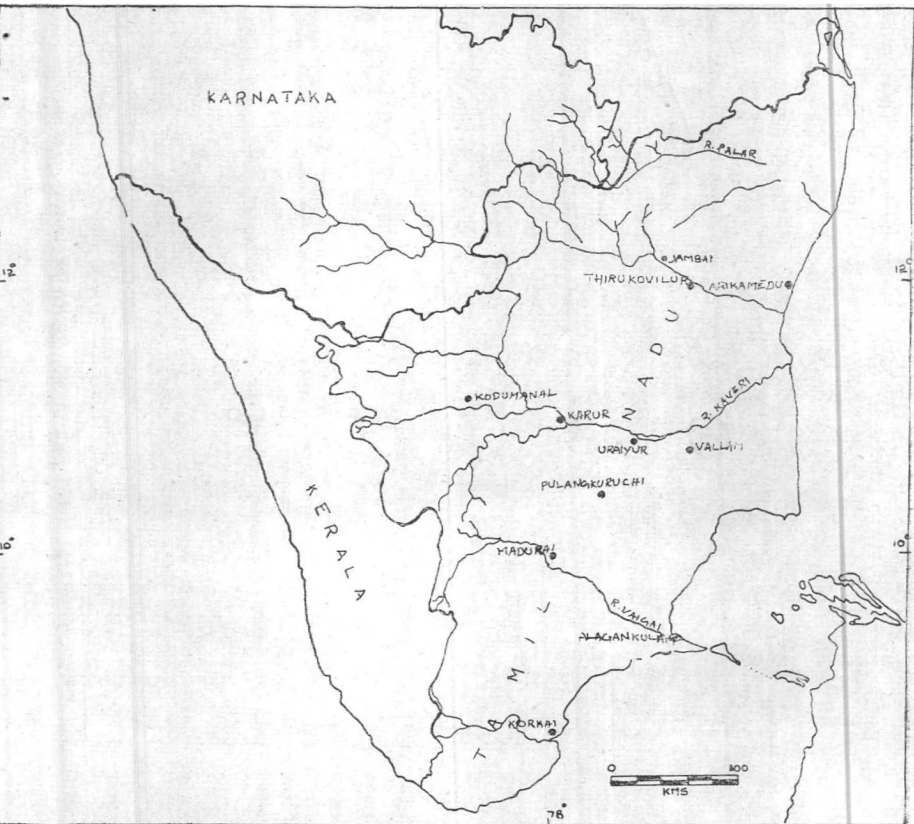


Fig. 1. Location of Tirukkoyilur

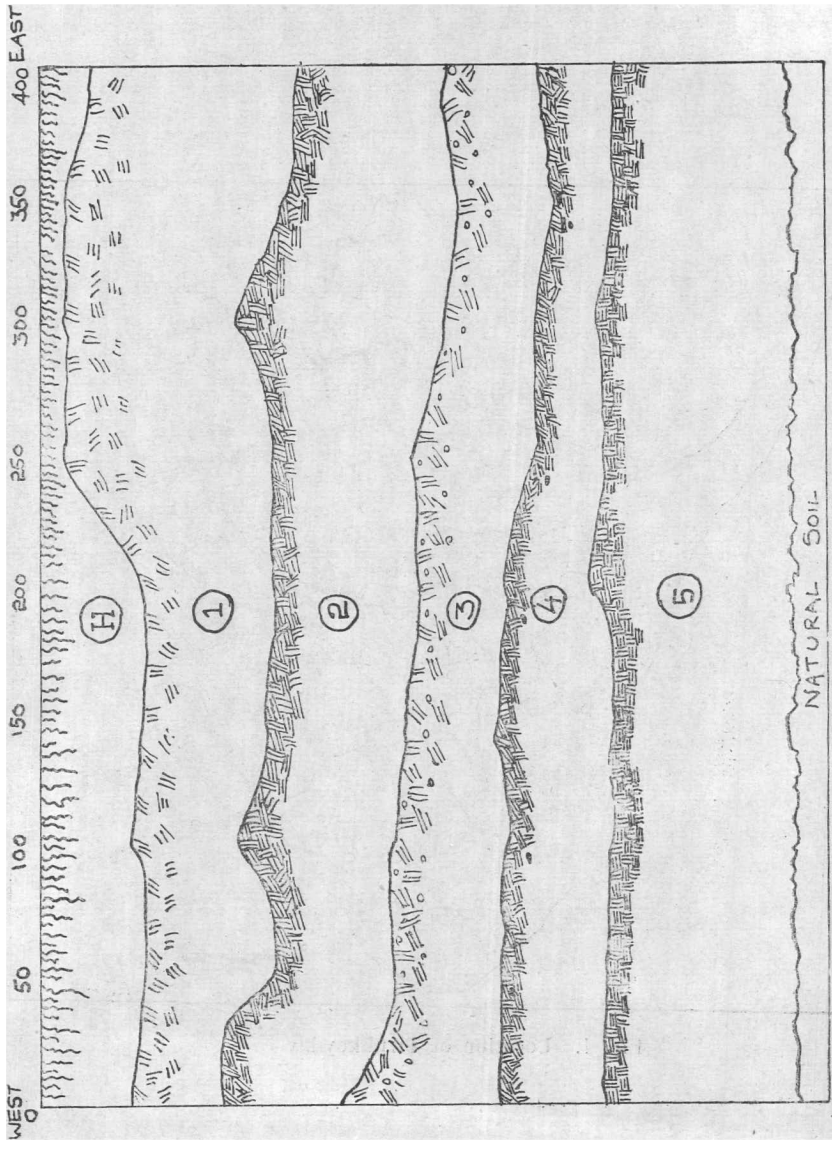


Fig. 2. TRK-3, Northern Section

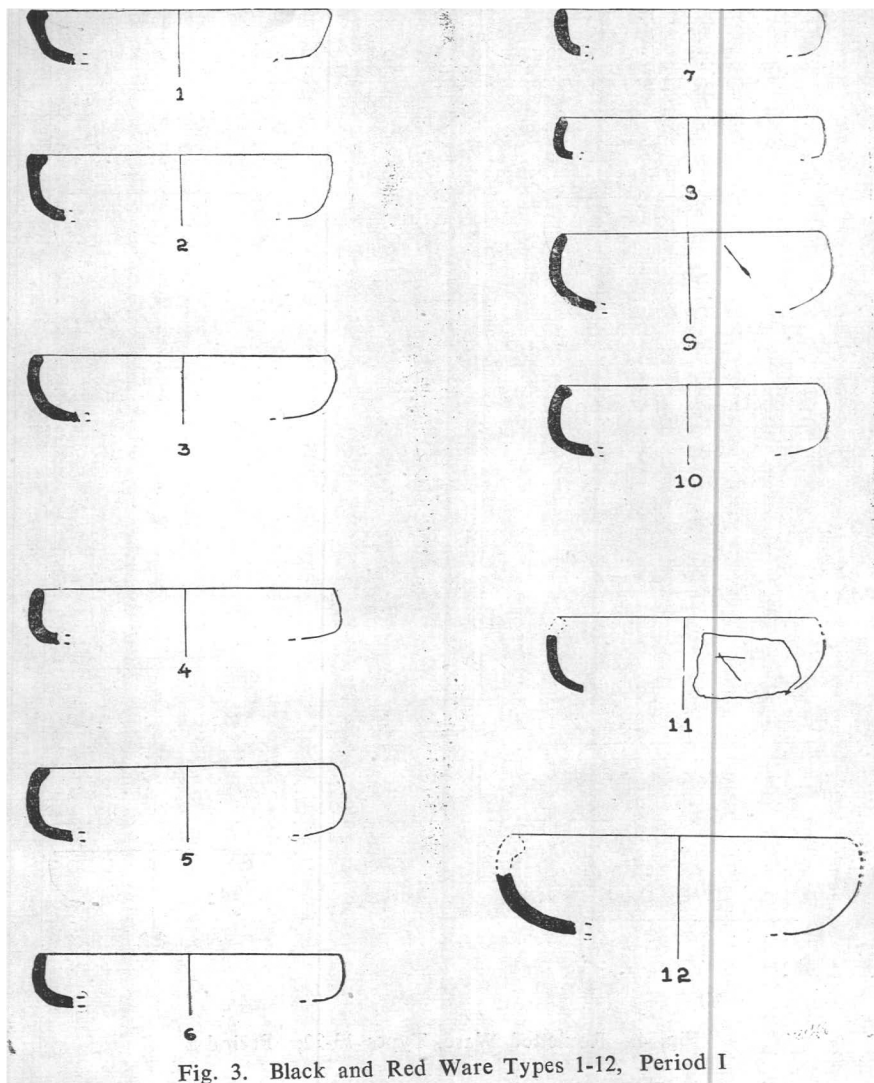


Fig. 3. Black and Red Ware Types 1-12, Period I

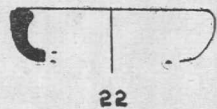
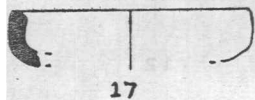
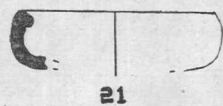
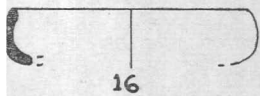
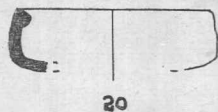
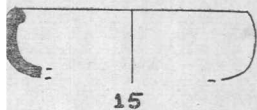
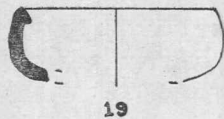
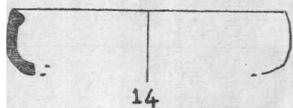
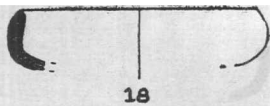
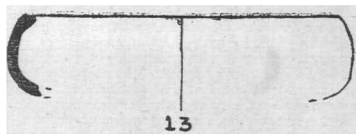


Fig. 4. Rouletted Ware, Types 13-22, Period I

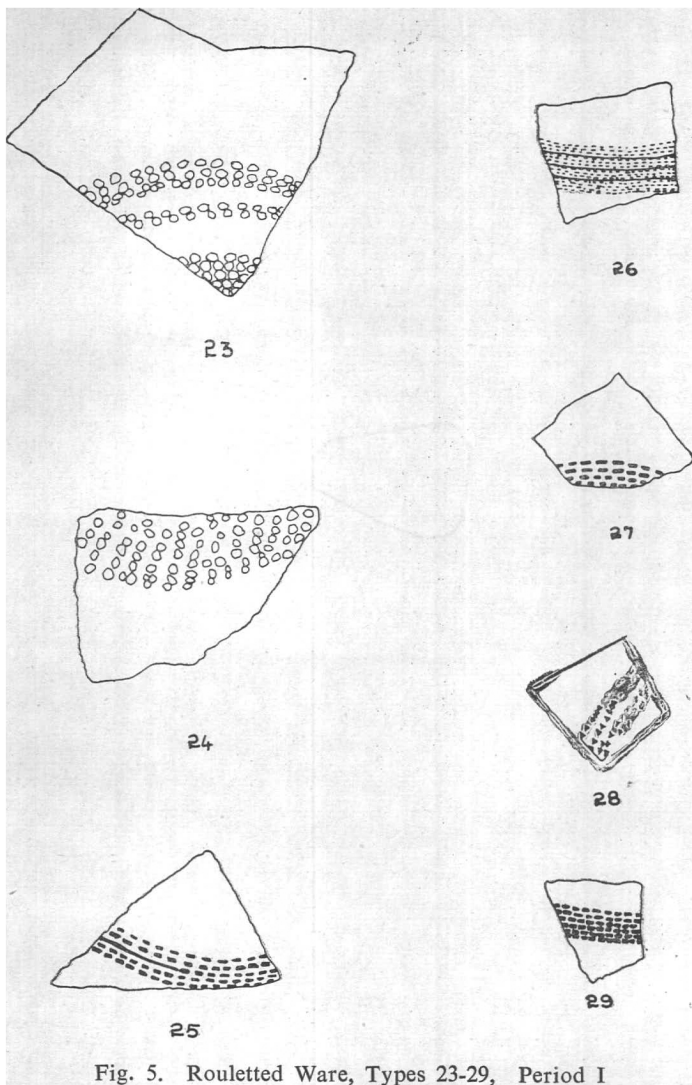


Fig. 5. Rouletted Ware, Types 23-29, Period I



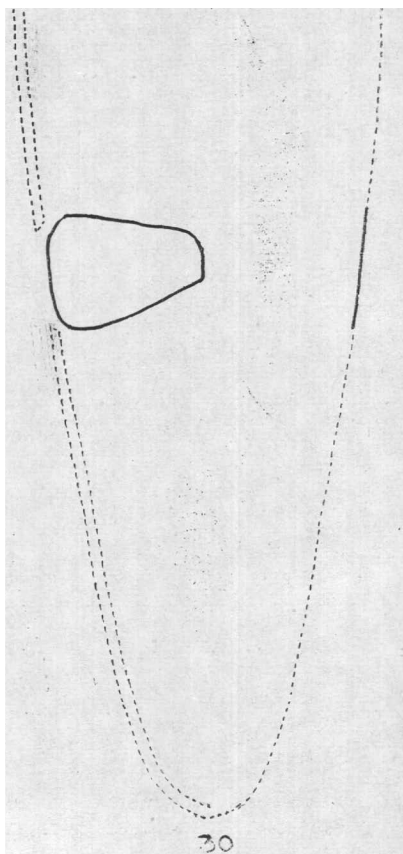


Fig. 6. Amphora, Type-30, Period I

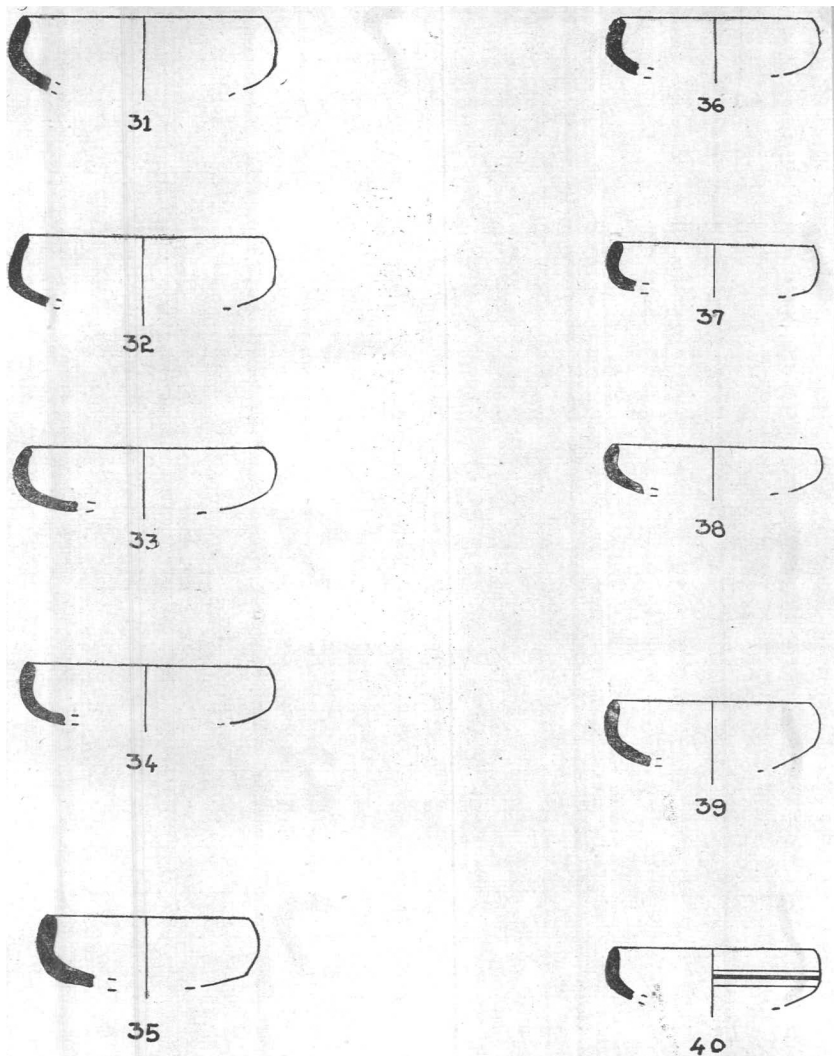


Fig. 7. Red Slipped Ware, Types 31-40, Period I

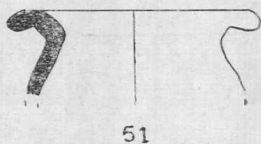
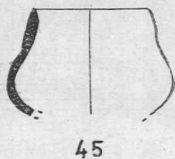
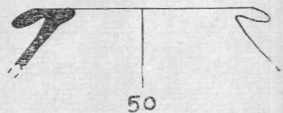
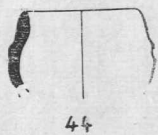
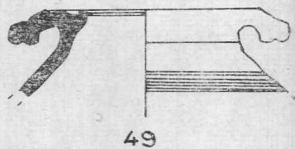
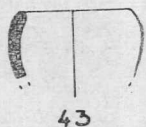
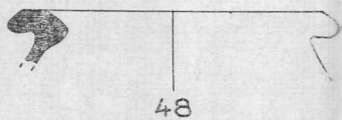
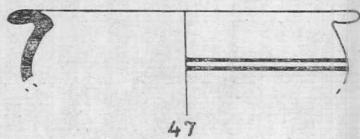
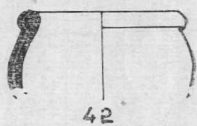
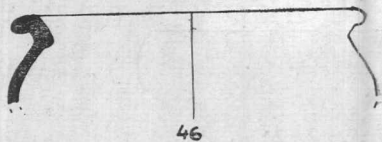
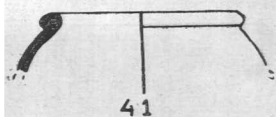


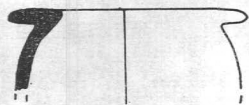
Fig. 8. Red Slipped Ware, Types 41-51, Period I



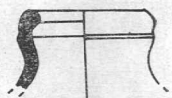
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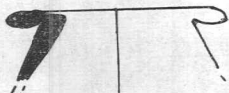
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53



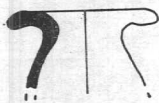
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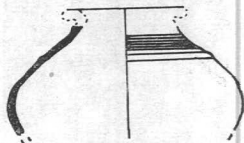
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58



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59

Fig. 9. Red Slipped Ware, Types 52-59, Period I

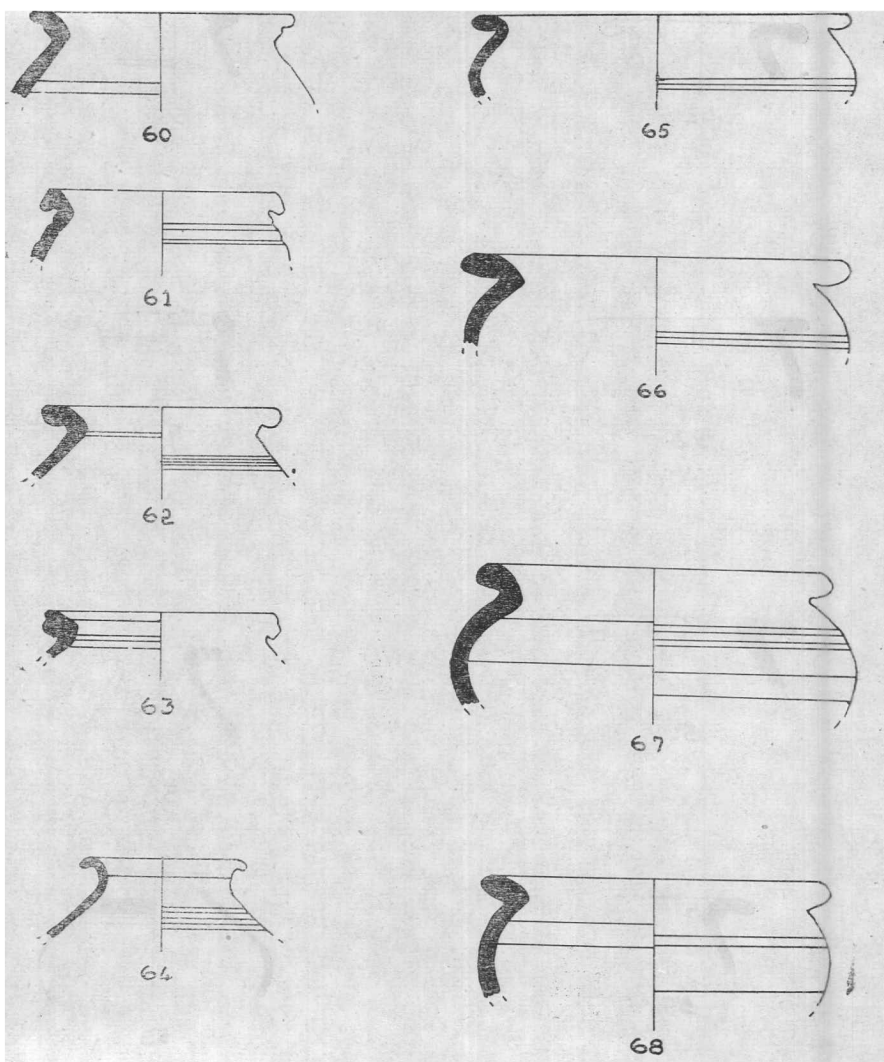


Fig. 10. Red Ware, Types 60-68, Period I

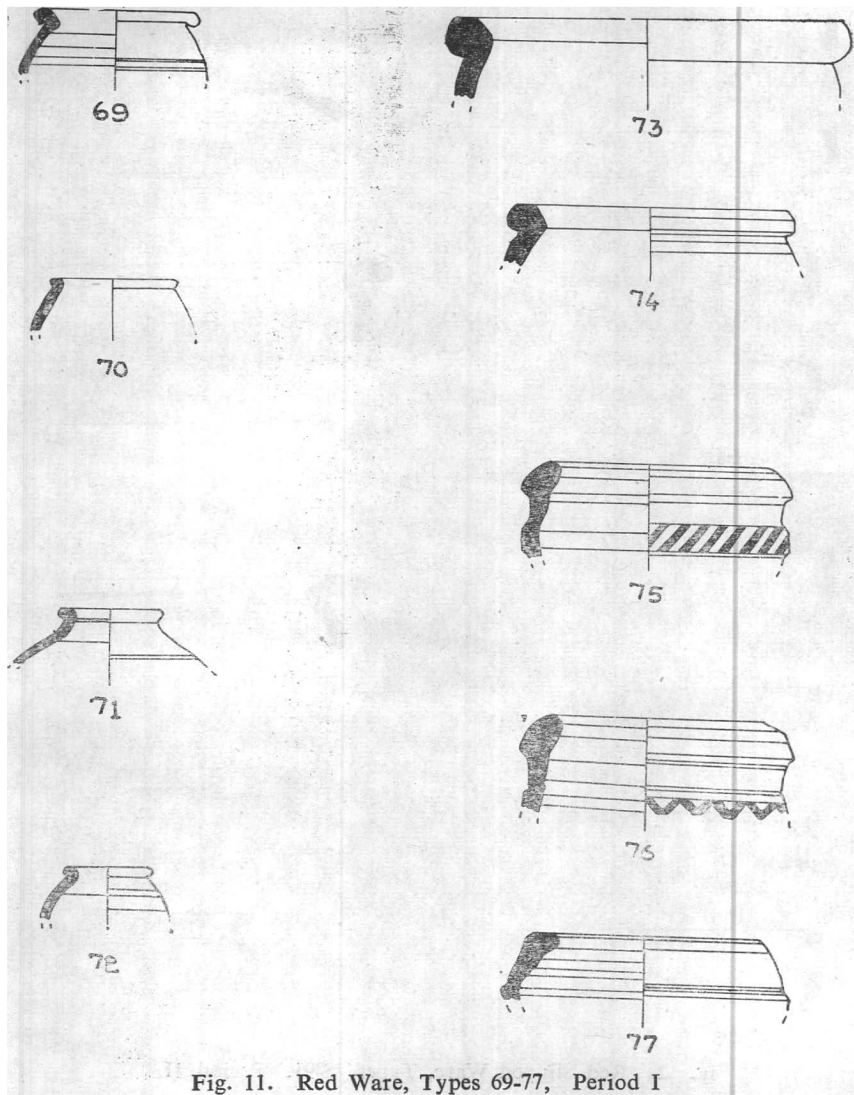


Fig. 11. Red Ware, Types 69-77, Period I

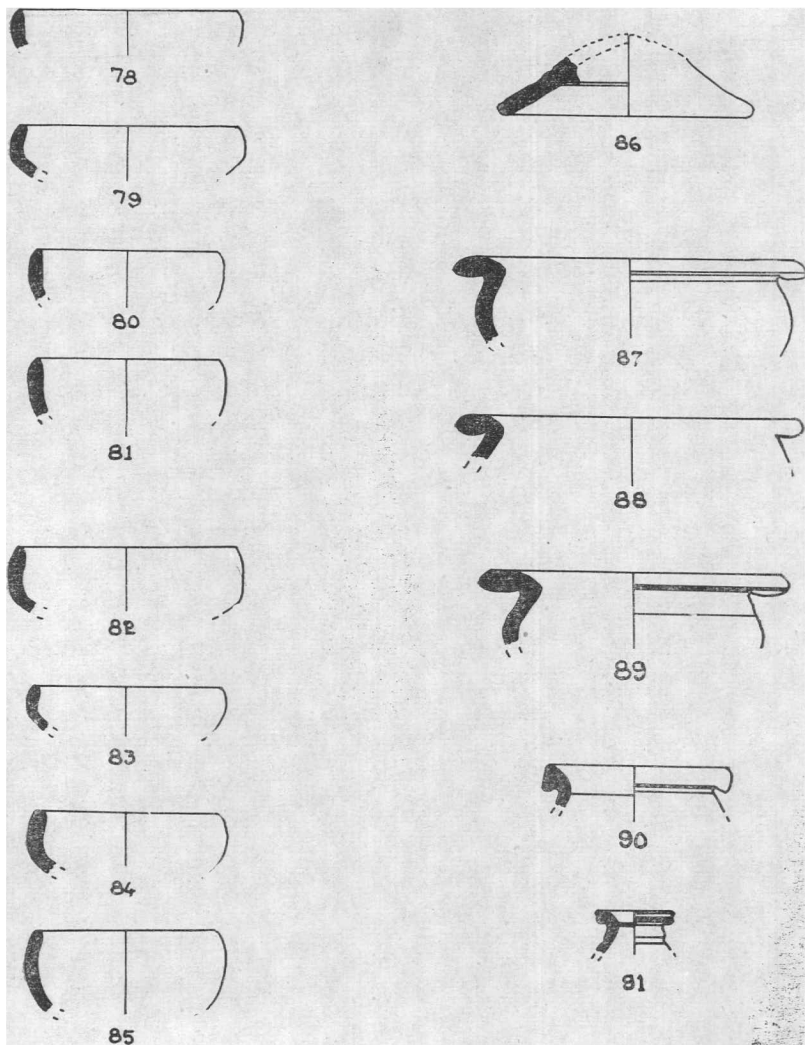


Fig. 12. Red Slipped Ware, Types 78-91, Period II

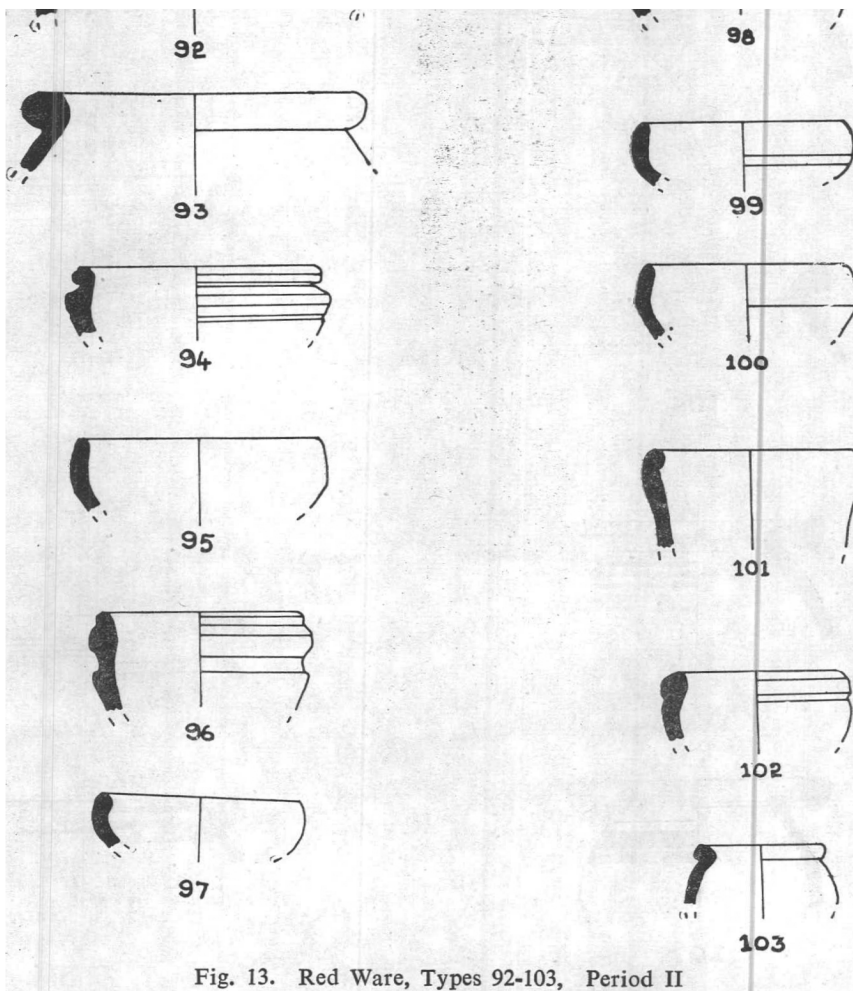


Fig. 13. Red Ware, Types 92-103, Period II





104

108



105



109



106



110



107

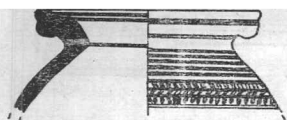


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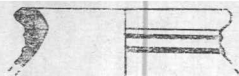


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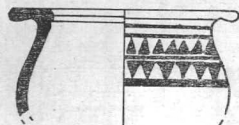
Fig. 14. Red Ware, Types - 104-112, Period II



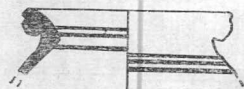
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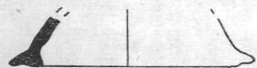
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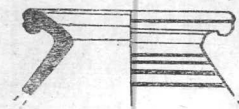
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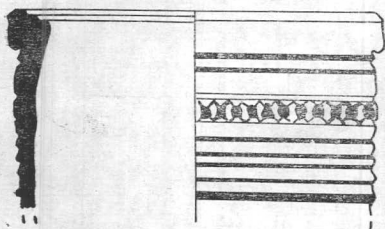
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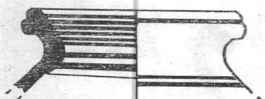
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119



116



120

Fig. 15. Red Ware, Types 113 - 120, Period II

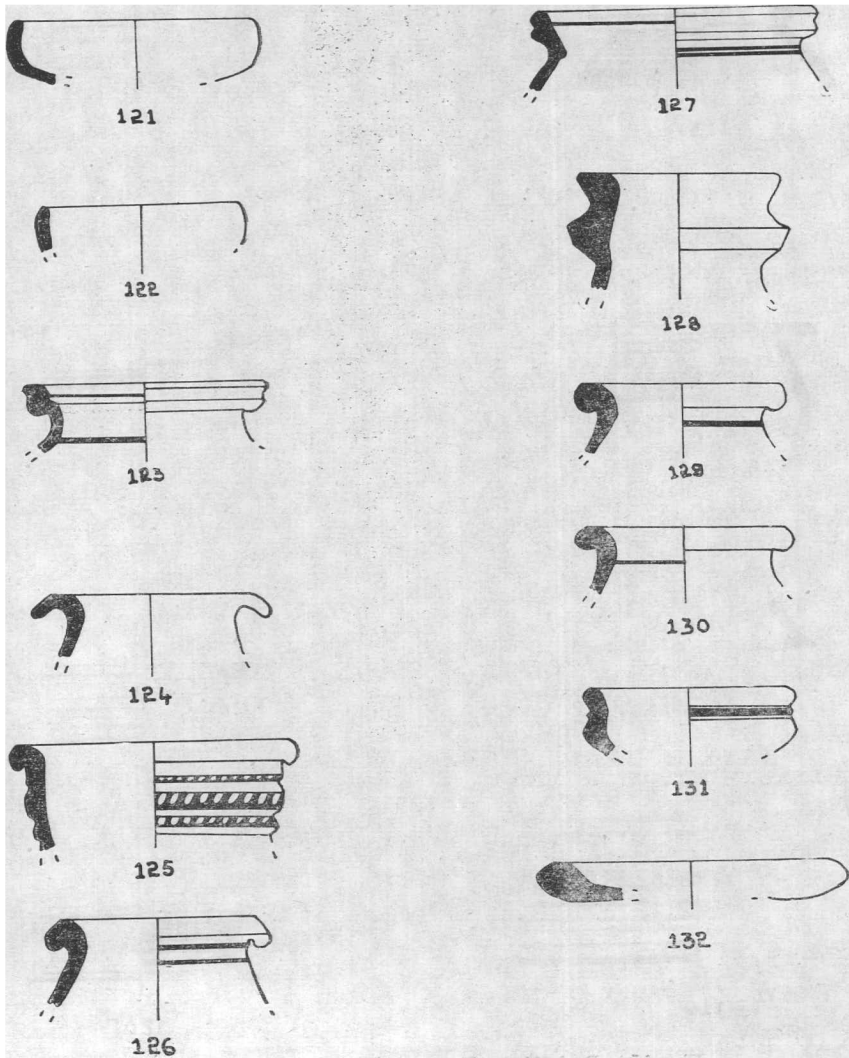


Fig. 16. Red Ware, Types 121-132, Period III

GRAFFITI POTSDHERDS

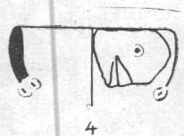
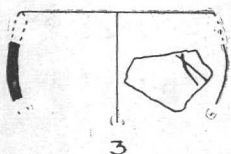
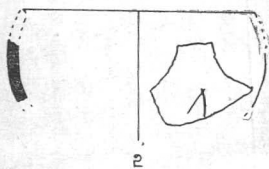
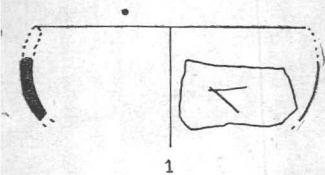
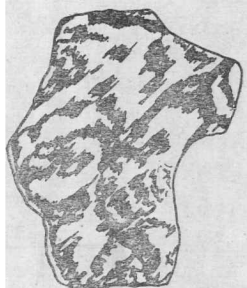
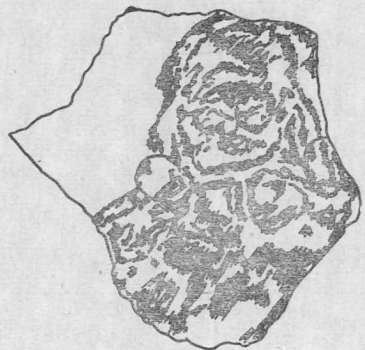


Fig. 17. Graffiti Potsherds, Symbols 1 - 5

TARRACOTTA OBJECTS



3



1



4



2

Fig. 18. Tarracotta Objects

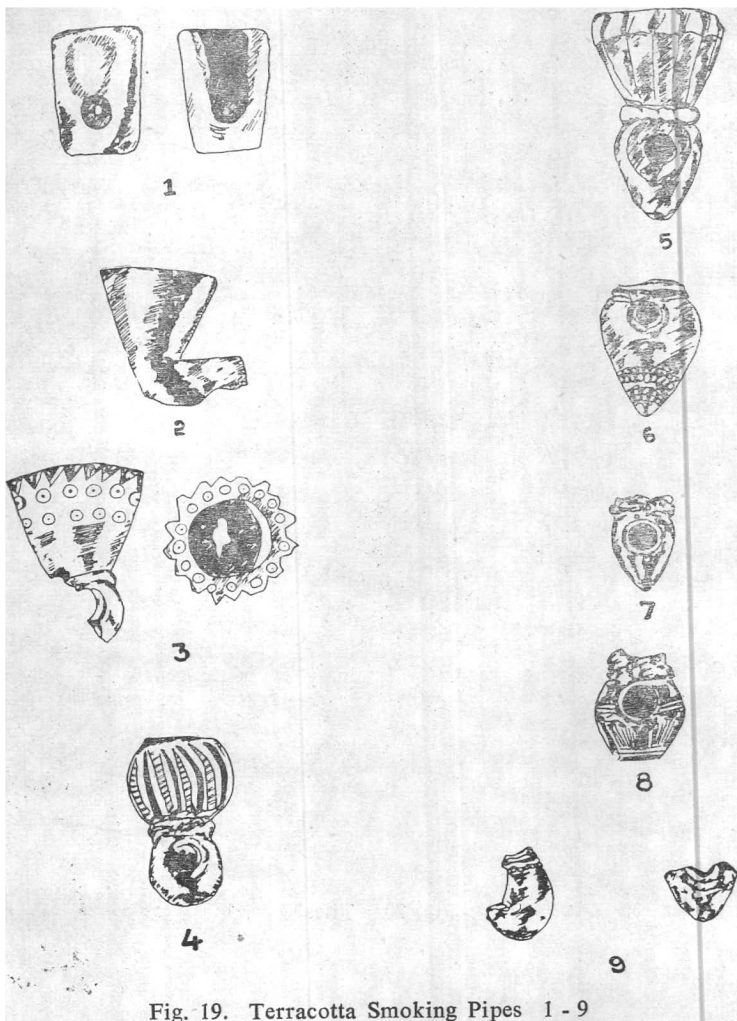


Fig. 19. Terracotta Smoking Pipes 1 - 9

# TILES

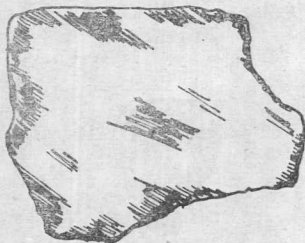


Fig. 20. Tiles



T.C. SPINDLE

WHORL  
BASE

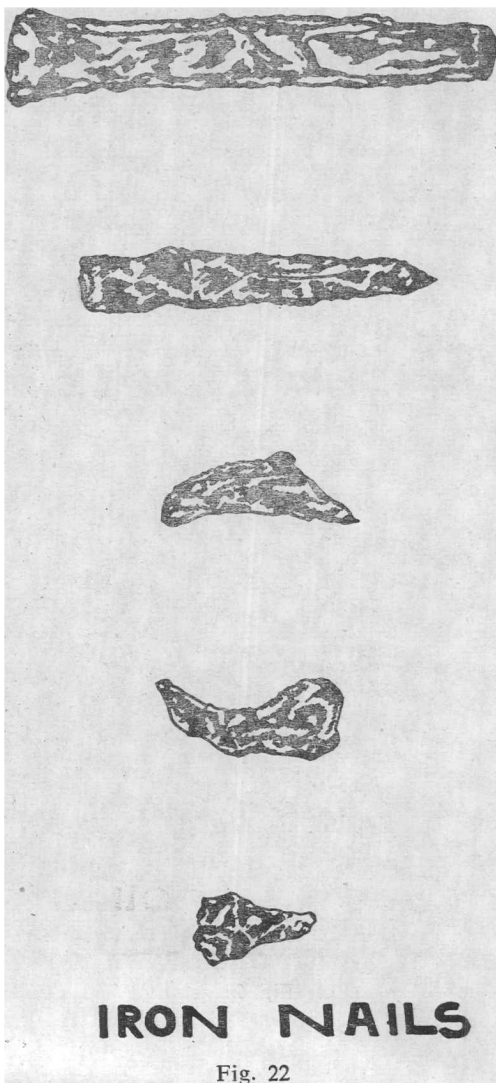
Fig. 21.



COIN MOULD

Fig. 21





# IRON NAILS

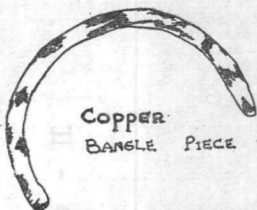
Fig. 22

# BEADS AND BANGLE PIECES



GLASS BEAD

PERIOD - I



GLASS BANGLE PIECES



TERRACOTTA



BEAD



SHELL RING



TERRACOTTA BEAD



PASTE BEAD



GLASS BEAD



PASTE BEAD

PERIOD - II



GLASS



BEAD

PERIOD - III

Fig. 23. Minor Antiquities



**PERIOD - II**

Fig. 24. Terracotta Ear Lobes

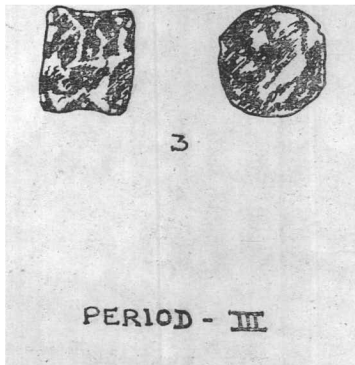


Fig. 24-A. Terracotta Ear Lobe

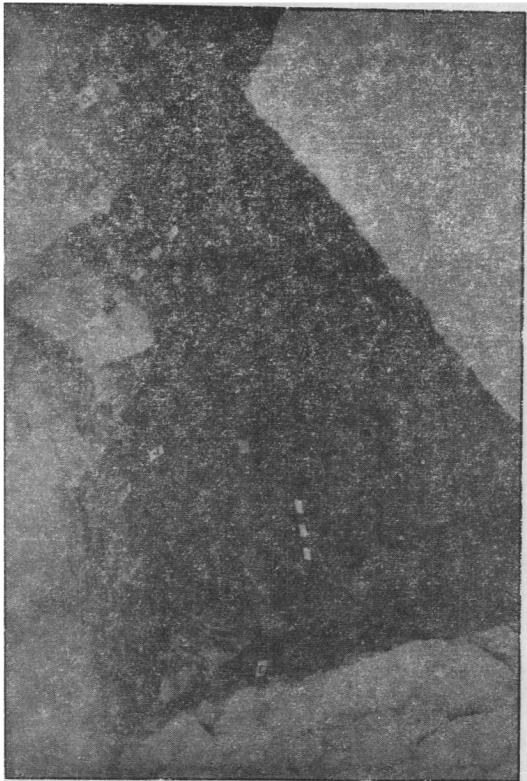


Plate. 1. Terracotta Pipe Line, In TRK - 5 & 6

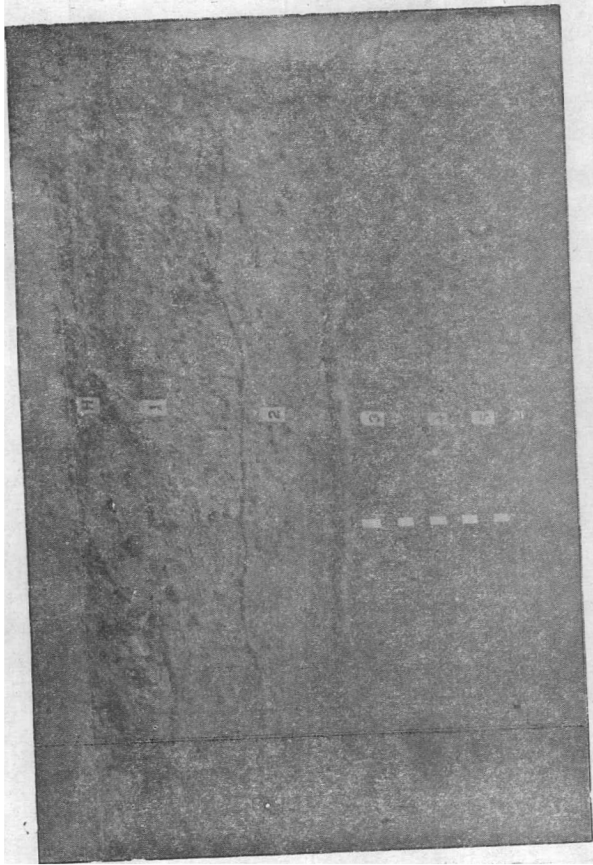


Plate. 2. TRK-3, Northern Section



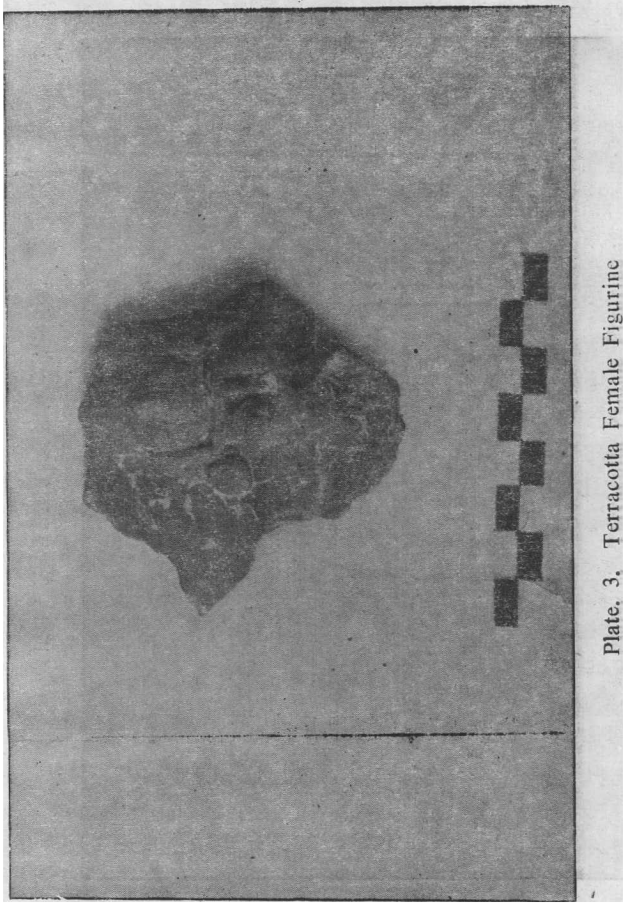


Plate. 3. Terracotta Female Figurine

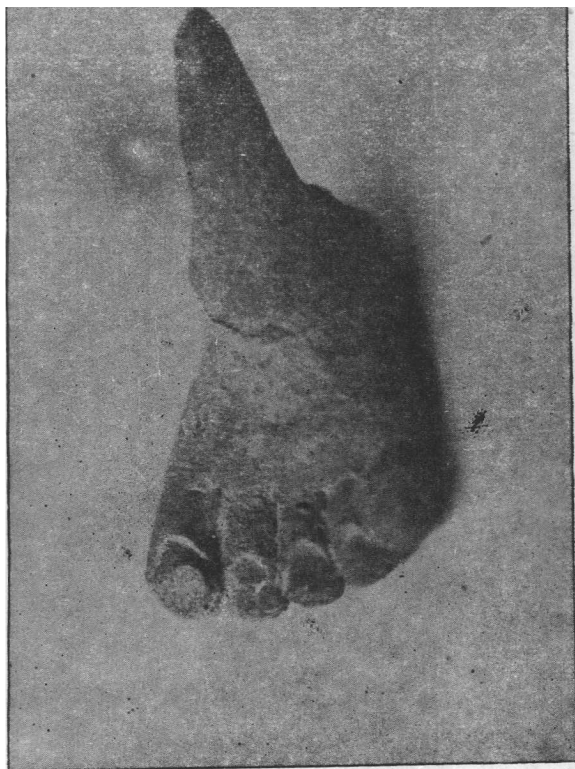


Plate. 4. Terracotta Votive Foot





Plate. 5. Terracotta Objects

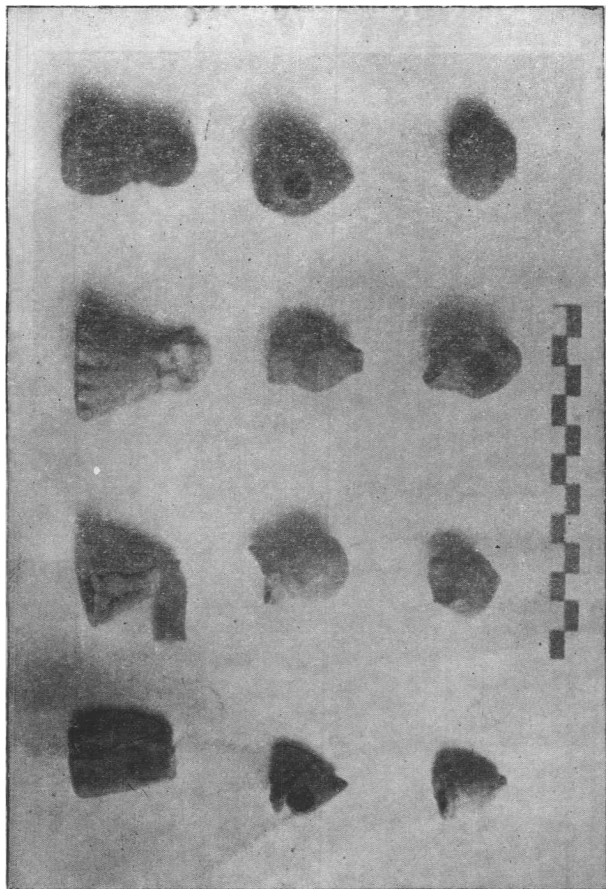


Plate. 6. Smoking Pipes

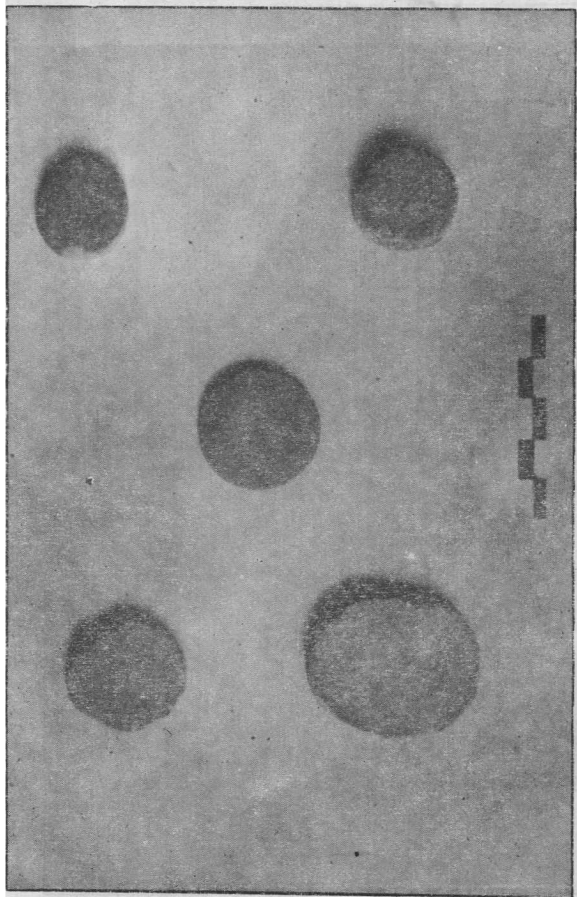


Plate. 7. Hop Scotches

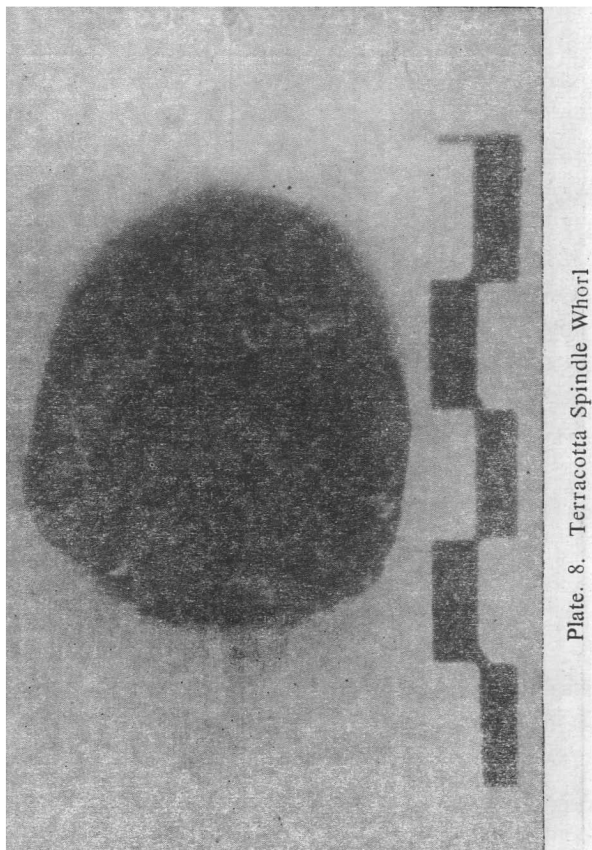


Plate. 8. Terracotta Spindle Whorl

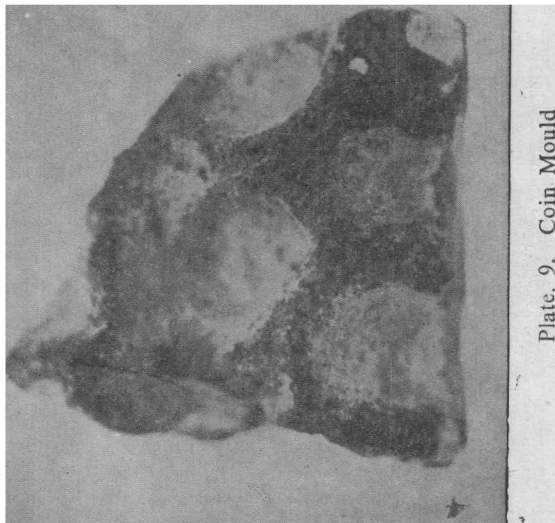


Plate. 9. Coin Mould

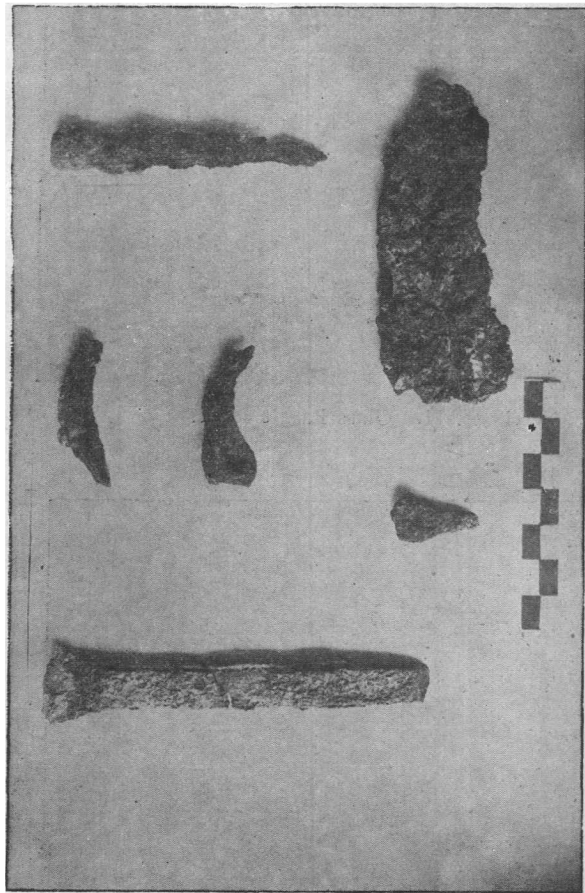


Plate. 10. Iron Objects

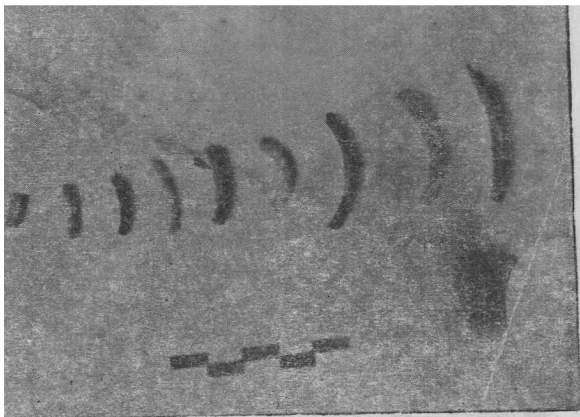


Plate. 11. Glass Bangle Pieces

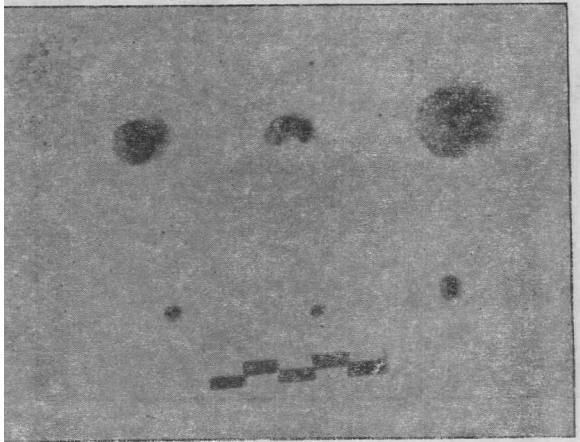


Plate. 12 Beads

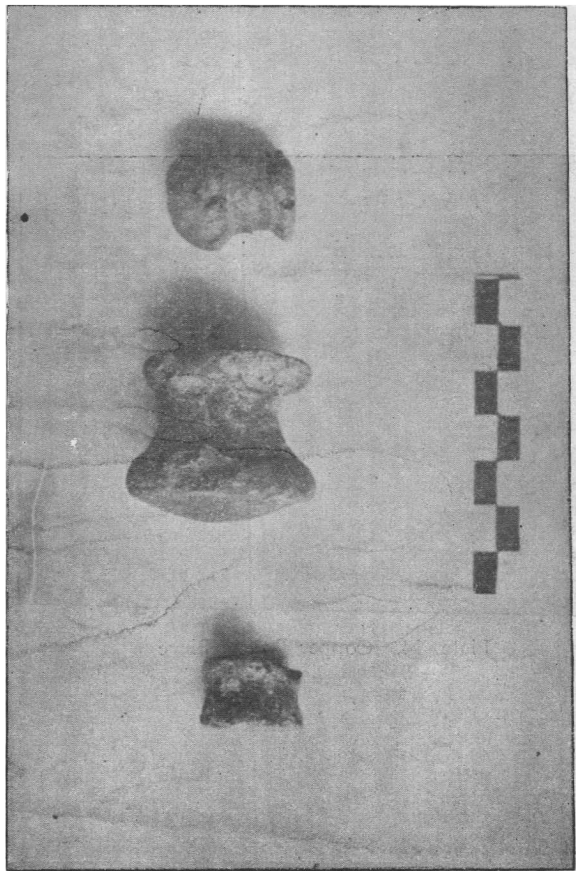


Plate. 13. Terracotta Ear Lobes



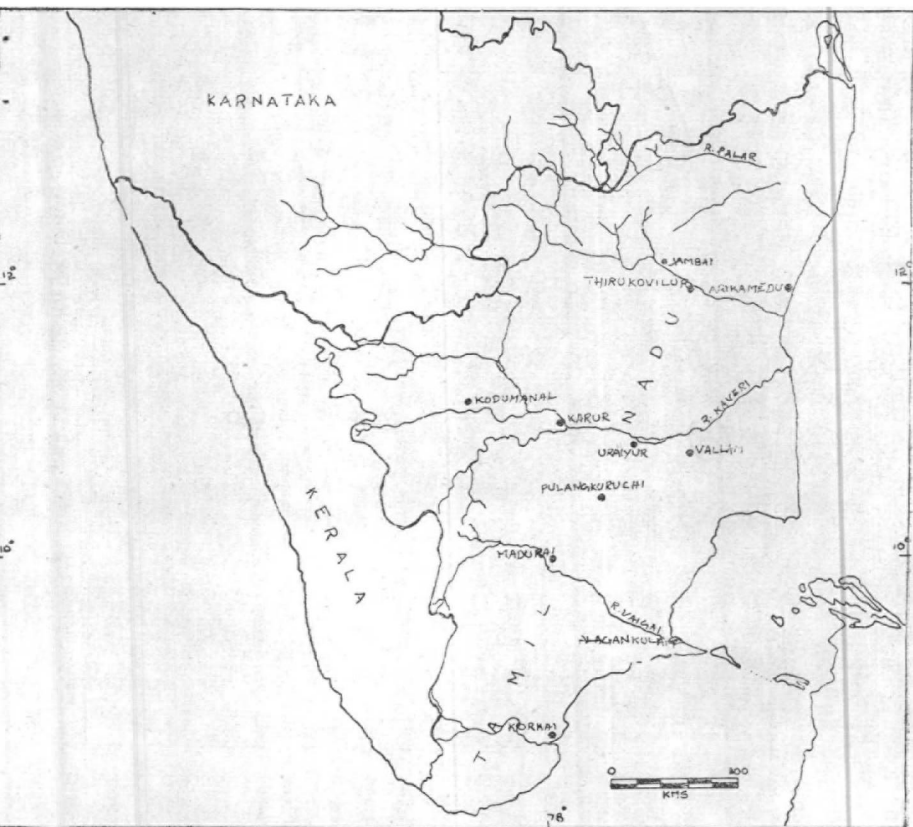


Fig. 1. Location of Tirukkoyilur