

## MATERIAL CULTURE OF AN ANCIENT SETTLEMENT KAMPIL DURING P.G.W. PERIOD

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The ancient site of Kampil, frequently mentioned in the great epic Mahabharat is situated in the Kaimganj tehsil of Farrukhabad district of Uttar Pradesh at Latitude 20° 37' 12" North and Longitude 79° 16' 48" East. It is approachable by road and rail from Lucknow, Kanpur, Agra and Delhi. It is about 240 km from Lucknow, the state capital of Uttar Pradesh.

Some important information about the settlement is found in Rigveda,<sup>1</sup> Shatapath Brahman<sup>2</sup>, Yajurveda<sup>3</sup>] Taittiriya Samhita<sup>4</sup>, Maitrayani Samhita<sup>5</sup>, Vajasaneyi Samhita<sup>6</sup>, Taittiriya Brahman<sup>7</sup>, Vishnu Purana<sup>8</sup>, and Valmiki Ramayan<sup>9</sup>. A detailed description of city is found in Mahabharat. The daughter of king Drupad, Draupadi and his son Dhristadyumna who participated in Mahabharata war were born here<sup>10</sup>. The rulers of Prishat dynasty<sup>11</sup> (Yagnyasen and his son Drupad) were ruling here during Mahabharat time. They are described as the descendents of Somak lineage<sup>12</sup>.

Mahabharat gives a glimpse of that time. Kampil was a city<sup>13</sup> which was situated in the region of south Panchala<sup>14</sup> as its capital. When the Pandavas with Kunti entered in Kampil, they found it a very pleasant city<sup>15</sup>.

The palace of Drupada was located in this particular city. It was built in a big size. The city of Kampil was surrounded by defense wall<sup>16</sup> and deep ditch. It was full of water.<sup>17</sup> Its defense system was three tiered. First it was surrounded by wall of bricks,

secondly by wood and at third stage it was guarded by soldiers<sup>18</sup>.

The palace of Drupad comprised a big court where many people can stay on any specific occasion<sup>19</sup>. The royal palace of Drupad consisted many entrances<sup>20</sup>. Other houses in the city were multi storied<sup>21</sup> having great height and white colour<sup>22</sup>. The walls of the royal palace were painted in different colours and sometimes decorated with precious stones and jewels. The multi storied houses had comfortable steps<sup>23</sup>. There was a strong system of defense of city. *Mahachakras* were installed and Shataghni missiles were also fitted at different points.<sup>24</sup>

There is mention of developing a new city in Khandava forest as capital of Pnandavas which was named as Indraprastha. First of all the shantikarma was performed. After that the land was measured. Defense ditch was dug and defense wall in white colour was erected. The city was developed in the inner area of it which contained big sized multi storied houses, many entrance and exit gates, gopuras, tanks, trees, flowers and birds. The war and defense equipments and machines like Chakras, Ankushas, Shataghnis were installed at different places. The city was approachable by wide roads. Different professionals, traders from different areas, Brahmanas, sutas, Magadhas etc were inhabited there<sup>25</sup>. The architect Maya built a marvelous meeting hall (Sabha Bhavan) in Indraprastha for Yudhishthir. It was 10 thousand *hast* in length and width. It was built with precious material and its

tombs as well as gates were built with jewels. A beautiful *pushkarini* was made in the center of the *sabha bhavan* which was full of blue lotus. The floor of Sabha-bhavan was so fine and smooth that Duryodhan confused there during walking. He could not locate the doors ultimately bumped many times and fell on the dry floor<sup>26</sup>. Thus the entire construction was completed in 14 months. He also constructed a fort for royal family which was full of grains, weapons, equipments, skilled labors and military men<sup>27</sup>.

Yudhisthir invited many kings to attend his Rajsuya sacrifice at his capital Indraprastha where he made good arrangement for their stay. All the houses were tall, well furnished, surrounded with rampart, courts finished with stones and jewels, decorated with festoons.<sup>28</sup> Similar type of houses were constructed in Dwarka, the capital of Krishna<sup>29</sup>. The capital of Banasura, Shonitpur was surrounded with rampart of copper. The gates and toranas were made of gold<sup>30</sup>.

Keeping in view the archaeological importance of the site an attempt for the

excavations were made in the year 2011-12 under the supervision of first author of this article and 30 trenches were unearthed up to the depth of natural deposit. Some of it was excavated even deeper to trace the earlier deposits, but not found. The site was once and earlier excavated by Dr. K. K. Sinha of Department of Ancient History Culture and Archaeology, Banaras Hindu University in field season of 1970 and primary report was published in Indian Archaeology: A Review. It was a small scale excavation done with an objective to determine the chronological sequence on the site. Dr. Sinha established a fourfold cultural sequence of the site i.e. PGW, NBPW, Gupta Post Gupta and Medieval periods.

Our efforts revealed a six fold cultural sequence namely OCP, BRW, PGW, NBPW, Gupta-Kushana, and Medieval Periods. The maximum deposit of P.G.W. period was found in thickness of 1.70 meter. It yielded potsherds of Painted Grey Ware in medium to fine fabric with the shapes of bowls and dishes (Fig.1).





Fig. 1, Painted Grey Ware from Kampil

The painted motifs executed on the potsherds are rim band, horizontal lines, vertical lines, wavy lines, zig-zag lines and floral designs in black colour but

sometimes in vermilion colour. The other associated wares are grey ware in fine to medium fabric with shapes of bowls and dishes (Fig.2).



Fig. 2, Grey Ware from Kampil

Orange red slipped ware in medium fabric with the shapes of bowls, dishes, basin, channeled basin and

jar. The decorations on this ware executed in the same way as on accompanying P.G.Wares (Fig.3).



Fig. 3, Orange red ware from Kampil

red ware in fine to coarse fabric with shapes of bowls, dishes, basins, vases, jars, trough and

shapeless chorded wares and some shapeless shreds of black and red ware and bones (Fig.4).







Fig. 4, Red Ware from Kampil

While excavating the site we found some mud floors with burnt patches, remains of ash and hearts (Fig.5).



Fig. 5, Trench XT 4, Section facing west, Floor 3 with hearths, Painted Grey Ware Period

These hearths were inter connected and seems to be used for cooking food for a gathering (Draupadi swayambar?). It is pertinent to mention here that a floor paved with mud bricks was also found in the

same trench (Fig.6). No evidence of use of fired bricks or any remain of fort or palace like building was found from the site.



Fig.6, Trench XT 4, Mud brick floor, P.G.W. Period

It is mentioned that Drupad arranged and collected many types of eatable and usable items for the reception his guests gathered at the time of marriage of his daughter Draupadi at Kampil which included many types of fruits, garlands, kavach, dhal, seats, cows, seeds, agricultural equipments, small scale industrial equipments, playing instruments, war equipments like swords, bow and arrows, axes, and horses etc.

फलानि माल्यानि च संस्कृतानि वर्माणि चर्माणि  
तथाऽऽसनानि ।

गाशचैव राजन्थ चैव रज्जूर्बीजानि चान्यानि  
कृषीनिमित्तम् ॥

अन्येषु शिल्पेषु च यान्यपि स्युः सर्वाणि  
कृत्यान्यखिलेन तत्र ।

क्रीडा निमित्तान्यपि याहन तत्र सर्वाणि  
तत्रोपजहार राजा ॥

वर्माणि चर्माणि च भानुमन्ति  
खड्गामहान्तोऽश्वरथाश्च चित्राः ।

धनुषि चप्रयाणि शराश्च चित्राः शक्त्युष्टयः  
कांचनभूषणाश्च ॥

प्रासा भुशुण्डयश्च परश्वधाश्च सांग्रामिकं चैव  
तथैव सर्वम् ।

शय्यासनान्युत्तमवस्तुवन्ति तथैव वासो विविधं च  
तत्र ॥ महा0 1/193/5-8

It is also mentioned that the king's palace was full of pots made with gold and silver.

उच्चावचं पार्थिव भोजनीयम् पात्रीषु जाम्बूनदराजतीषु ।

दासाश्च दास्यश्च सुमृषेष्वाः सम्भोजकाश्चाप्युपजहुरन्मम् ॥

महा0 1/193/13

He gifted her daughter at the time of her marriage many golden pots when she was departing from her father's house to her husband's home.

वसांसि च महार्हाणि नानादेश्यानि माधवः ।

कम्बलाजिनरत्नानि विविधानि महान्ति च ॥

शयनासनयानानि विविधानि महान्ति च । वैदूर्यवज्रचित्राणि

शतशो भाजनानि च ॥ महा0 1/198/14-15

The terracotta discs, hopscotches, marbles, stoppers/ gamesman and terracotta beads; stone (quartz, carnelian, agate) beads and bone arrowheads etc. are the main antiquities recovered from this cultural period.

The main antiquities comprising Terracotta hopscotch, stone pestle, beads, marble, skin rubber, bone stylus, bone points, terracotta discs, spindle whorls and gamesmen in following quantity and ratio (Fig.7).

Type of Antiquity	Quantity
Terracotta hopscotch	67
Terracotta disc	62
bead	15
Marble	18
Spindle whorle	04
Gamesman/Stopper	53
Terracotta Animal figurine	08
Bone arrow head	13
Dabber	01
Net sinker	01
Terracotta wheel	03
<b>Total</b>	<b>245</b>

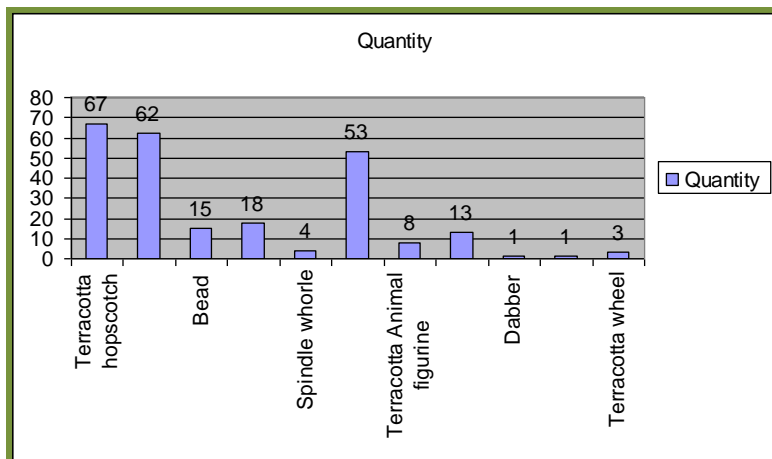


Fig. 7, Comparative quantity of antiquities P.G.W Period.

The hopscotches have occupied a large number in collection. These are made on the pot sherds of red ware, black slipped ware, grey ware, painted grey ware and black and red ware, fabric wise fine

medium and course fabrics for available in collection. These are made by cutting edges to turn in a circular or round shape (Fig.8).

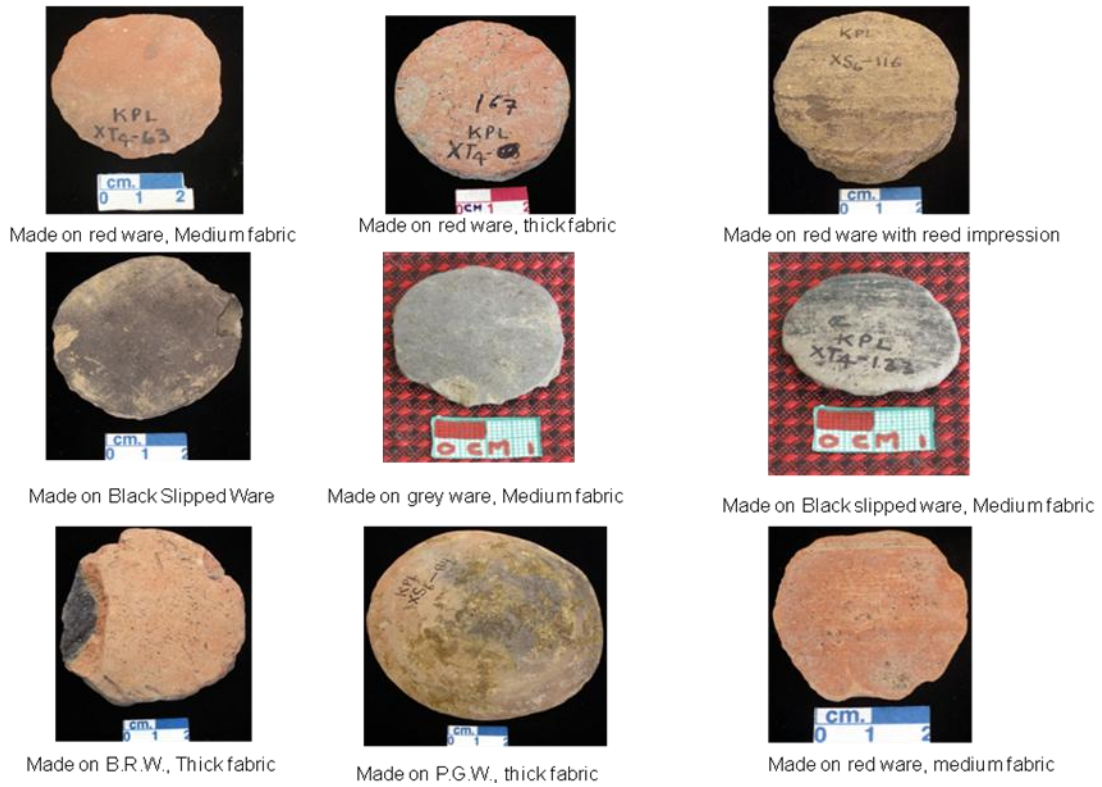


Fig. 8, Terracotta hopscotches, P. G. W. Period.

Few of these bear perforation in center across. The beads are made of clay, stone and bone. The terracotta beads are often in ghat shaped bearing collared rim, depression below and globular profile

with flat top and bottom with a wide perforation in across. Some stone beads are made on semi precious stone like chalcedony and agate in cylindrical and lunatic shape (Fig.9).



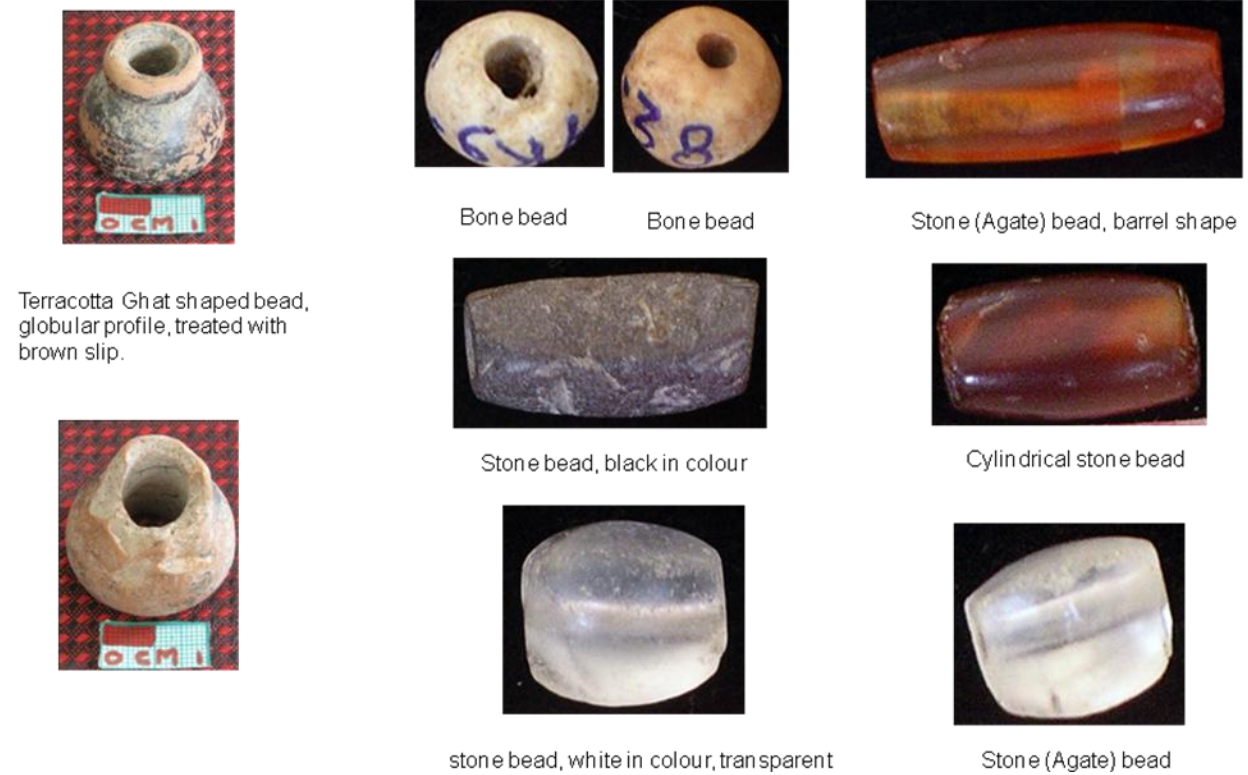


Fig. 9, Terracotta and Stone beads, P.G.W Period, Kampil

Terracotta discs found from Kampil are peculiar in nature. These are made with fine grained well levigated clay and fired with medium temperature having appearance of grey in colour. Most of these are decorated almost in a standard pattern. The peripheries of these on both sides are marked with

stamped notches. Again within that notched circle four crescentic circles are incised commonly on both sides, which intend to think their affinity with lunar shapes. Sometimes cris-cross designs are found in the center of the discs otherwise rest samples remain plain (Fig.10).



Fig.10, Terracotta discs, P.G.W Period, Kampil



The terracotta gamesmen are also made with fine grained well levitated clay which is fired at medium temperature giving a look of grey colour. These are circular in shape with flat plain bottom a vertical thick band over it, dent concave exterior followed by

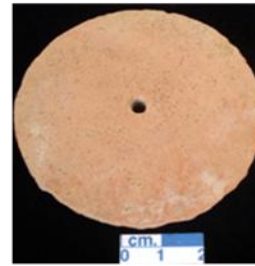
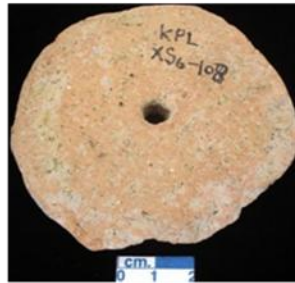
vertical rounded top for using it as a knob. Almost the of these are plain and devoid of any surface treatment but in exceptional cases circular incised lines are executed below the knob and traces of red slip are seen (Fig.11).



Fig. 11, Terracotta gamesman, P.G.W Period, Kampil

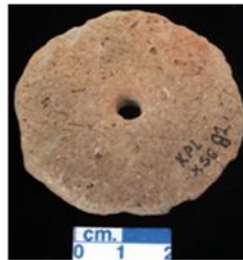
Spindle whorls basically used as base in spindle to prepare thread from cotton is very commonly found on archaeological sites. Some of these spindle whorls are in ghat shaped while other are made of

pottery discs. Some terracotta discs are also used for this purpose making a central perforation on it (Fig.12).



Made on dull red colour, another is black, thick fabric

Made on red colour, medium fabric



Ghat shaped bead, Red in colour, globular profile

Black and red ware, medium fabric, circular profile

Fig. 12, Terracotta Spindle whorl, P.G.W Period, Kampil

Other minor antiquities including bone stylus, marbles, skin rubber, bone point and stone pestles are found in laser quantity (Fig.13-15).



Marble, Grey in colour



Marble, Grey in colour



Marble, Red in colour



Bone point



Bone stylus

Fig. 13, Terracotta marbles, bone pints and bone stylus, P.G.W Period, Kampil

Type of Antiquity	Quantity
Terracotta hopscotch	49
Stone pestle	01
Bead	14
Marble	04
Skin rubber	01
Bone stylus	01
Bone point	01
Terracotta disc	13
Spindle whorle	06
Gamesman	08
<b>Total</b>	<b>94</b>

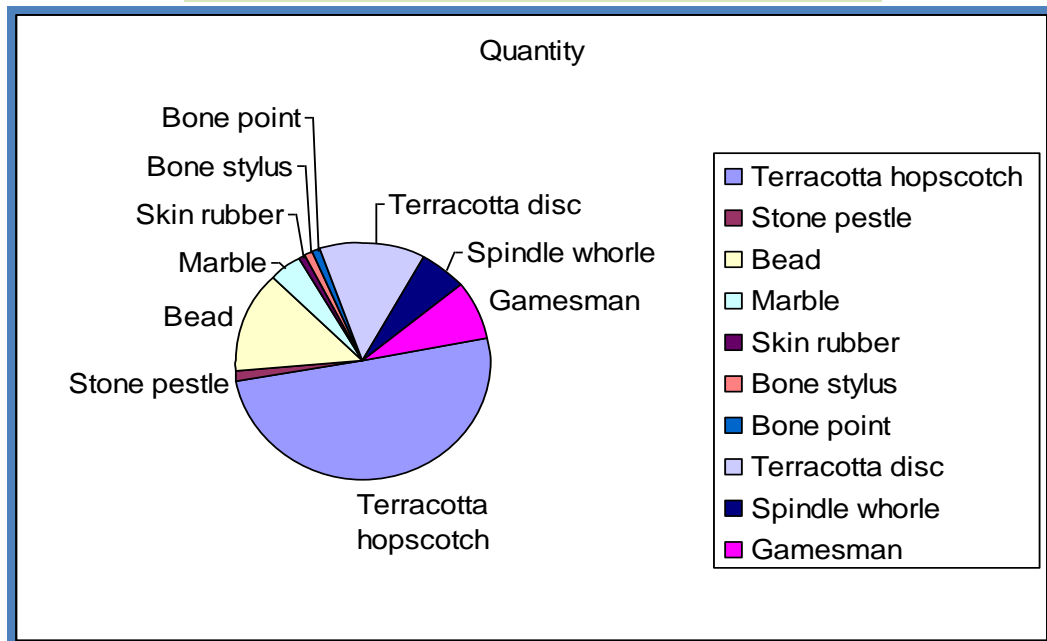


Fig. 14, Comparative chart, Antiquities, P.G.W. Period, Kampil

The analysis of the data recovered so far shows that the majority of antiquities are terracotta antiquities. First position is occupied by the terracotta hopscotches which may be used by children during play and amusement<sup>31</sup>. The shell beads are at

second position which shows the interest of ladies of Kampil towards ornamentation. They were commonly using glass bangles and frequently terracotta beads and beads of semi precious stones also.

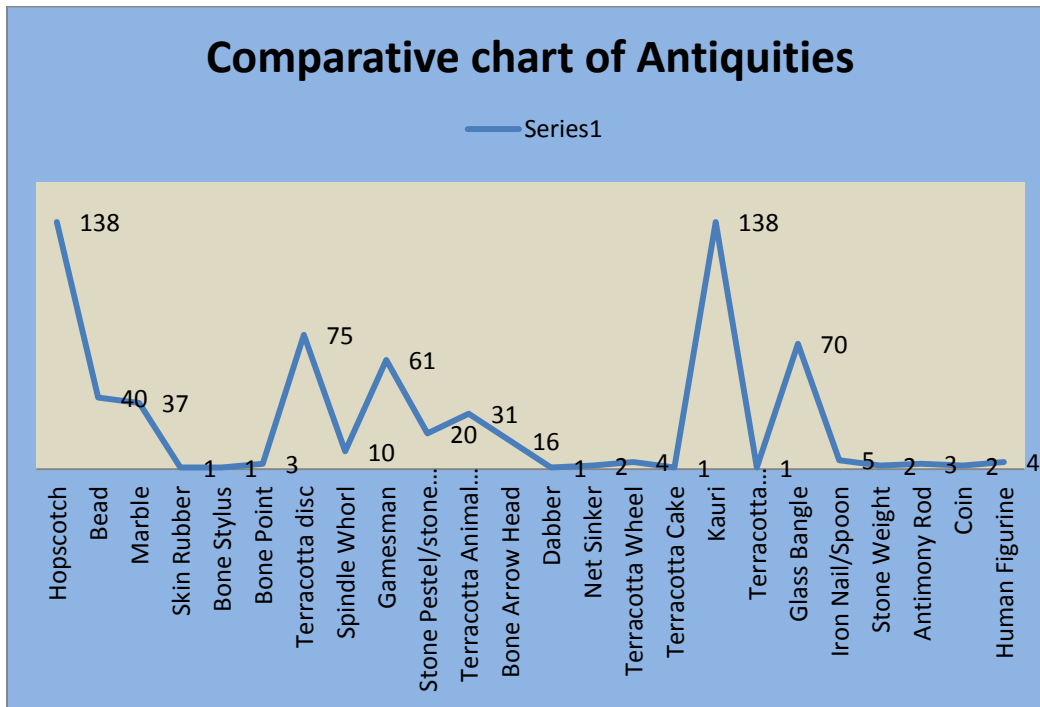


Fig. 15, Comparative Chart of Antiquities, P.G.W. Period, Kampil

The adults seem to be found of gambling and playing marble based games which supports the Mahabhart narrations of dyuta krida. The bone points, bone arrowheads, and net sinkers shows their food habits based on non vegetarian items basically on fish which were easily available in Ganga flowing adjacent to the mound. The bone styluses are supporting to conclude that the ancient settlers of Kampil were use to reading and writing. The terracotta discs found from the levels of PGW and NBPW uniformly bears four crescent marks on both surfaces. Is it any indication of habitants of Kampil with Lunar dynasty? The antiquarian assembles recovered from the excavations do not support the prosperity status of Kampil as described in Mahabharat.

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