

# Second urbanization in Gujarat

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*The origin and development of first urbanization in Gujarat, i.e. the Harappan Civilization, has been dealt with in great detail, but it has not been done so in the case of second urbanization. Extensive explorations followed by sporadic excavations in some of the early historic sites have brought out vast material vestiges in the form of structures, rock shelters and other remains like ceramics, artefacts, implements, utensils, ornaments, artistic objects and other crafts. These material vestiges are studied to reconstruct the second urbanization in Gujarat.*

**Keywords:** Excavation, exploration, material vestiges, urbanization.

URBANIZATION is the physical growth of a particular area under diverse circumstances and due to specific causes, where the political, economical, social and religious factors play an important role in the growth and sustenance of the same.

The fundamental criteria for the emergence of capital cities, port towns and trade centres have been variously defined and discussed<sup>1-5</sup> at great length. Childe<sup>1</sup> rendered some clarity in approach on this complex problem. According to him, the size, specialized classes of skilled workers, centralization of surplus, monumental architecture, a ruling class, knowledge of writing, sophisticated art style, long distance trade, exact and predictive sciences regulating the cycle of agricultural operation and social organization based on residence rather than kinship could be considered for understanding urbanization.

Many scholars reject some of these criteria, as the evidences at many sites show urban characters without one or two of the above-mentioned characters. Dhavalikar<sup>5</sup> rightly points out that 'the largest cities like Catal Huyuk in the prehistoric times show no writing system or currency and even Egypt has a civilization without large cities'. He adopted the parameters with little deviation and applied his hypothesis on central chalcolithic culture, particularly at Inamgoan, considered by him as urban based on certain characters like settlement size, irrigation, ceramics, art and craft, burial practices, etc.

Such criteria followed in the given context helped understand urbanization. Now, it is generally agreed that the chief characteristics of urbanization include a large population, a strong agricultural base, developed trade, growth of skilled craftsmen, etc. However, behind it all is the centralized power structure which acts as the binding force. This will be reflected generally in monumental

architecture such as forts, palaces, irrigation works, etc. So, in general, the criteria applicable to Indian scenario are to be examined as to whether the available evidence from the sites fulfils the criteria of urbanization.

## First urbanization

The first urbanization in the Indian subcontinent is identified with the Harappan civilization datable to the middle of the 3rd millennium BCE which lasted for a millennium; it shows a high degree of maturity in all aspects of society. The size of the settlement, surplus produce, central authority, uniform art and craft, monumental architectures, specialized artisans for skilled works, internal and external trade, writing system, stratified society, etc., all show uniformity in all the Harappan sites during the mature period. The overall extension of this civilization now extends from Afghanistan to Mandi and from Mandi to Daimabad covering a vast area of 13 lakh sq. km. The steady, but fast processes of de-urbanization due to various ecological factors, either in the form of inundation for a prolonged period of the site or change in the course of river or silting of river, or the aridity or the sea level fluctuation or deforestation or a combination of one or more of the above factors led to the decline of classical/urban Harappan civilization. The ecological factors invariably affected the social order or institutions leading to disintegration. The survival of the same in the post urban phase was noticed in the degenerated way of life like improvised structures without any alignments, ceramics and disappearance of crafts and even non-use of writing. With a standstill in the external trade, the burden of population in the form of refugees who came in several waves from the lower Indus Valley in estuarine ports of Kachchh, Kathiawar and south Gujarat gradually moved into the interiors. They reverted to the ancient and most dependable and unavoidable occupation, i.e. pastoralism and agriculture with the rise in cultivation of millets. During this period, 'the differential in size and degree of elaboration

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of settlements, evidence for burial practices and architecture' has been interpreted as evidence of social differentiation by Dhavalikar<sup>5</sup> and termed as 'chiefdom'.

Allchin<sup>4</sup> mentions that the introduction of iron paved the way for the second urbanization. According to him, 'towards the close of the second millennium, the settlements of the post-urban period began to show a new dynamism, particularly in the eastern Punjab and Ganga-Yamuna doab and this development coincides with the manufacture and spread of the pottery known as painted grey ware, and more importantly with the spread and gradual increase in the manufacturing of tools and weapons of iron at Pirak, where the first iron occurred early in period III, perhaps slightly before BCE 1000, and iron became more common later in the same period, probably from 900 BCE. It was only after this date that iron working became common and that its full influence upon the social and economic life began to exert itself.' This gradually led to the second urbanization or re-urbanization after a period of 1000 years.

Recent evidences suggest<sup>6</sup> that iron was introduced in India around 1900 BCE as evidenced at Dadupur (1882, 1739, 1679 BCE), Raja Nala-Ka-tila (1423 BCE), Komaranhalli (1320 BCE), Lahuradeva (1205 BCE) and Vidarba (1393 BCE). However, widespread use of this technology was witnessed around 1000 BCE. After the introduction of iron technology, it took a little time to increase the production, which accelerated the urbanization process. The material evidences unearthed from the study area indicate that this second urbanization process would have taken place around the 6th century BCE. However, the different eco-settings and landscape did not permit a uniform development at all places. It seems that the Gujarat mainland entered this process first as compared to the Saurashtra Peninsula.

## Second urbanization

The second urbanization witnessed in several parts of India is more visible in the Gangetic plains. It emerged and flourished in an altogether new socio-economic milieu generated by the widespread use of iron technology. This technology of extracting metallic iron from 'earthy looking' ores played an important role in gradually changing the economy of the painted grey ware culture, as is amply evident from many of the sites like Hastinapur, Atranjikhhera, Noh, Alamgirpur and Ahichchatra, where they were locally smelted. The distribution of this ware indicated that the migration was from Rajasthan to the Indo-Gangetic plains. The next three centuries witnessed a dramatic growth in population and agglomeration. The growing number and size of settlements point towards a substantial and continuing increase in population. Fertile lands were brought under cultivation by clearing the forest. New variety of rice with the

introduction of new techniques of transplanting paddy had extended its scope from being an exclusively monsoon crop to also being a winter crop and hence two or three seasons' crop<sup>7</sup>. This surplus production of food led to the development of cities in potential eco-zones, particularly on river banks with strong centralized government, frequently marked by massive fortification walls and controlling a hinterland of smaller agricultural settlements. Though the literature mentions about various types of settlements during this period, the archaeological evidences are meagre. This is due to the absence of intensive explorations and large-scale excavations. Most of the sites have been subjected so far to only trial excavations or section scraping.

During this period, well-planned settlements appeared in the form of mud bricks at Hastinapura, mud and rarely of burnt bricks at Atranjikhhera. A protective low mud embankment/rampart was also noticed at Jakhera<sup>8</sup>. The houses were generally single or double-roomed units, but one large house consisting of 12 rooms has been unearthed at Bhagwanpura<sup>9</sup>. Such a large building was also planned at Sardargarh, but was not built and only its foundation trench had been dug. The circular or oval-shaped floors with postholes along the periphery were exposed at Jakhera, where the walls are of wattle and daub with thatched roof. Along with the tools like sickles and axes, evidence of rice and other staple grains shows that agriculture was making a breakthrough. The people also had an advanced technology in the fields of metal smelting, glass manufacturing and pottery making. This advancement certainly indicates the emergence of specialized groups in the field of production. With these, trade or commercial contacts with the neighbouring places were also well attested, though on a restricted scale<sup>3</sup>.

However, this society remained rural in less productive areas, in the sense that it was not yet in a position to produce sufficient agricultural surplus to sustain a developed urban economy in those eco-zones. The main reason is the adverse climate, with intense aridity prevailing almost all over the Old World. When the environment started becoming congenial around the 6th century BCE, the process again got accelerated in agriculture, supplemented with the extensive exploitation of iron ore. This process approximately coincides with the appearance of northern black polished ware (NBP) in the central Gangetic plains. Apart from the common red ware shapes in ceramics, the basic difference between the painted grey ware and WBP was the association of iron and exploitation of iron on a large scale. Though in the former, iron tools were in the formative stages and mostly confined to arrow and spear heads, in the later stage, improvements in iron technology as well as the discovery of some of the best mines of the metal completely changed the situation. This suggests that the stage set for urban revival by the painted grey ware people was ably exploited by the NBP

people to initiate the process of second urbanization in the Ganga Valley from the 6th century BCE.

Thus, the period from 600 to 400 BCE is noted as an era of urban revival marked by growing economic prosperity, probably originating in the Ganga valley between Pataliputra and Kausambi and then spreading to the adjoining regions. The settlements are situated in fertile soil with high agricultural potential. The succeeding period 400–150 BCE marked further growth of the town as this period witnessed a centralization of all economic activities under the Mauryas. During 150 BCE to 300 CE, the process of urbanization deepened further due to economic prosperity as revealed from the archaeological evidences. Though this development was not uniform in all parts of India, gradual expansion of its political thought to other regions of the sub-continent and its culmination was witnessed roughly between 150 BCE and 300 CE. During this period, newer areas were exploited for geographical location and spread wherever raw materials and transport facilities were available or markets for finished goods could be established. Various factors like technological advancement, political process, economic growth with regularized/channellized trade, religious thought, etc. led to the consolidation of this urban process in different cultural zones of India.

The first phase from 600 to 400 BCE marks the spread in the Ganga Valley and Central India; the second from 400 to 200 BCE is heyday of NBPW and the prosperity of the period is evident from luxury articles. During this period, urbanization spread to Sindh, Punjab, Rajasthan, Gujarat and Maharashtra. Finally in the third phase from 200 to 50 BCE, it reached south where the inscribed potshreds from Arikamedu support this dating. However, Ghosh<sup>10</sup> objects to the term 'second urbanization' because in his opinion, vast population continued to be rural even though the towns and cities were emerging in the Ganga Valley. Buddhism and Jainism penetrated in South India and Sri Lanka before Asokan times through well-established trade routes. Excavation conducted at Tissamaharama, Ridiyagama, Kantarodai and Manthai in Sri Lanka, and in India at Alangankulam, Thandikudi, Porunthal and Kodumanal in Tamil Nadu, Sanati in Karnataka, and Adam in Maharashtra supports this view. The occurrence of a large number of carnelian and agate beads and black-and-red ware in Iron Age megalithic monuments and the NPB and punch marked coins in South India, prove that the cultural contacts between north and south were well established in pre-Asokan times. The identical graffiti marks, Brahmi script and Prakrit also indicate its early contacts. Therefore, the second urbanization process might have started well before Asokan times. The Girnar inscription of Rudradaman I and the Surastra janapada coins establish the fact of contact with Chandragupta Maurya, i.e. pre-Asoka. The first three centuries of the Christian era mark the zenith of urbanization with three major powers, the Kushanas in

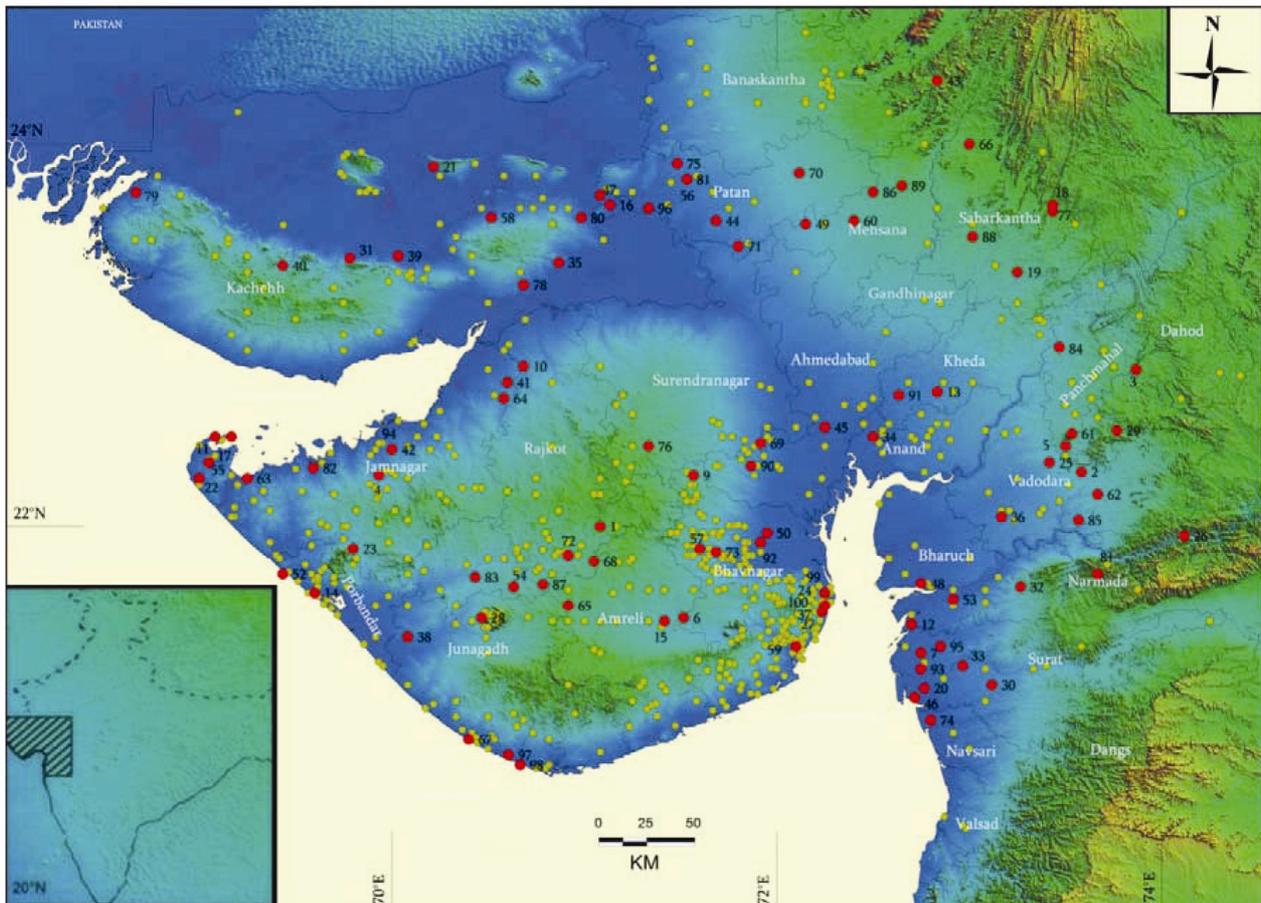
the north, the Satavahanas in the south and the Kshatrapas in the west, who were ruling most parts of India. Thus, the process of urbanization in various parts of the country exhibits certain amount of similarity both in quantity and quality. Keeping these emerging factors in mind, an attempt is made to understand the factors leading to the emergence and culmination of second urbanization in Gujarat.

### Second urbanization – Gujarat

The second urbanization in Gujarat started roughly around the 6th century BCE and most of it was concentrated along the water sources. This social group was technologically well advanced. Material evidences in the form of ceramics like black-and-red ware, black-on-red ware, NBP, red polished ware, coarse red ware, Roman amphorae and West Asian ceramics, terracotta, shell, stone and metal objects, inscribed seals and coins, structures in the form of well-planned cities with mud and burnt bricks and religious structures were noticed. According to Ambika Patel (pers. commun.), 'the Early Historic material culture of this region is characterized by the presence of northern black polished ware, dominance of black-and-red ware, slow introduction and later dominance of red polished ware, occurrence of Roman amphorae, Rangmahal ware, introduction of glass and lead, followed by gradual conquest of iron, an agro-based economy, shell industry, development of script, rise of urban settlements, brick structural remains, monumental buildings, international trade and development of Jainism, Buddhism and Vaishnavism.'

During this period, the 1600 km coastline of Gujarat was dotted with numerous ports and several trade routes that connected parts of Rajasthan, Malwa and up to Bengal. Though the coins of Indo-Greeks were found in many parts of Gujarat, the earliest inscribed reference is noticed in the form of 14 rock edicts of Asoka at Girnar, which indirectly indicates that Gujarat was under the Mauryas. After its disintegration, it became the bone of contention between the Satavahanas and the Kshatrapas due to its strategic importance. Gujarat itself had many ancient small settlements connected by caravan routes. Amreli, Devnimori, Dwaraka, Girnar, Karvan, Somnath, Pindara, Vadnagar, Vadodara, Vala and Vasai were all flourishing as small industrial and administrative townships.

The material vestiges of Early Historic Gujarat are known from 1011 sites, of which nearly 47 excavated sites have been subjected to in-depth study (Figure 1). The ceramic tradition is considered as the main criterion to differentiate Early Historic Gujarat under two cultural phases, viz. phase I – presence of NBP and associated finds, and phase II – presence of red polished ware and associated finds.



**Figure 1.** List of explored (marked in yellow) and excavated (red) early historic sites in Gujarat.

### Phase I

Earlier the relative chronology of Gujarat was divided into two phases, viz. phase I – 400 BCE to 100 CE and phase II – 100 to 500 CE. Roy<sup>11</sup> has suggested that the NBP in Gujarat represents early phase of early historic Gujarat. These dates were based on archaeological stratigraphy and partly on radiometric dating. The Surastra Janapada<sup>12</sup> coins datable from 450 to 300 BCE and the other Punch-marked coins found from some of the excavations and explorations like Amreli<sup>13</sup>, Bharuch<sup>14</sup>, Jokha<sup>15</sup>, Nagara<sup>16</sup> and Prabhas Patan (Somnath)<sup>17</sup> are invariably associated with NBP and are datable to 4th century BCE. The early occurrence of iron in Gujarat in association with black-and-red ware in the pre-NBP and NBP contexts from Nagara<sup>16</sup>, Dhatva<sup>18</sup>, Bharuch<sup>14</sup>, Nagal<sup>17</sup>, Prabhas Patan (Somnath)<sup>19</sup> and Timbarva<sup>20</sup> suggests that this phase can be tentatively dated from 6th to 3rd century BCE.

### Phase II

The black-on-red ware or the Vasai ware (variant of Rangmahal ware) commonly found in Kachchh and in the northwestern part of Saurashtra was dated around 1st/2nd

century BCE 'being anterior to the red polished ware levels' from the excavations at Dwaraka<sup>21</sup>. As far as red polished ware is concerned, it is reported from the levels of 1st century BCE at Amreli<sup>13</sup>, 2nd century BCE to 4th century CE at Hathab<sup>22</sup>, 1st BCE/CE to 6th century CE at Somnath<sup>19</sup> and 2nd to 5th century CE at Shamalaji<sup>23</sup>. These wares were found along with Indo-Greek coins and the well-dated Kshatrapa coins, inscribed materials and the Roman ceramics, which led to dating them tentatively around 3rd century BCE to 4th century CE.

The stratigraphical position of various ceramic traditions found in association with datable material helped understand the beginning of early historic period in Gujarat. The lack of radiometric dates restricted our understanding to some extent. On the basis of the above tentative dates, an appraisal of the material vestiges was attempted to draw some conclusions regarding the growth of second urbanization in Gujarat.

### Ceramics

The early historic Gujarat has revealed three types of ceramics – first is the non-local ware, second is the foreign ware and the third is the local ware. The non-local

ware represents NBP, roulette ware, glazed ware and kaolin ware. The NBP was noticed only from sites like Nagara, Dhatva, Bharuch, Jokha, Timbarva and Prabhas Patan (Somnath) representing the earliest trade contacts with the Gangetic plains and all located in Gujarat mainland, excluding Prabhas Patan in the Saurashtra peninsula. Except Timbarva and Jokha, all the above-mentioned were port sites and Timbarva and Jokha were situated on the trade routes. Further, these sites also showed the gradual development from 6th/5th century BCE down to 3rd/4th century CE. The concentration of this ware was more in the Gujarat mainland, which is conducive for the agro-based community. The agricultural surplus supported the trade. The rouletted ware noticed at Hathab also shows that the trade contact existed beyond the Gangetic Valley and in the east coast. The kaolin ware that was widely used in the Deccan around 2nd century BCE to 1st century CE was reported from Rajarajeswar, Surpaneswar, Devnimori and Dwaraka, all invariably associated with religious sites. The glazed ware noticed at number of sites, where the concentration was more in Saurashtra peninsula, shows its contact with the regions ruled by the Kushanas. The interesting ceramic is the Vasai ware, a local variant of Rangmahal–Bhinmal pottery; it shows the local imitation where its concentration was more in the Kachchh peninsula and Banaskantha district of Gujarat mainland. It clearly shows that these sites were located on the border of Rajasthan, where the typical Rangmahal site is situated.

The important foreign ceramic found from most of the early historic ports and trade route sites was the amphorae shreds. Used for carrying wine, fish sauce or olive oil, the port sites which revealed the amphorae shreds in the stratified context in Saurashtra peninsula did not find their place in the Greek or Roman literature, except Ptolemy's *Geographia*. This shows that the newer areas were exploited or the feasible new ports were created during the early centuries of Christian era. This, along with torpedo shreds were not only reported from the port sites and sites situated on the trade routes, but recovered from religious centres as well. They were even obtained from the interior sites that were away from these trade routes. Whether such occurrences indicate the direct contacts or intermediatory contacts carried out by the local traders, is yet to be proved with more supportive material evidences. It is interesting to mention here that the concentration of these shreds is more in Saurashtra peninsula than the Gujarat mainland, which is a prosperous region and conducive for various trade activities.

The other ceramics like megarian ware and arretine ware were reported only from Hathab, another important port site in Saurashtra peninsula, while the black variety of arretine was also reported from Devnimori. The barbotine or knobbed ware was reported from Hathab, Devnimori, Shamalaji and Nani Rayan – again the port and trade route sites. Finally, the Roman porcelain was

reported only from Karvan, an important religious site situated on the trade route. All these factors suggest that local trade network was established first, followed by overseas trade, which shows that early historic people of Gujarat had trade contacts not only with North, East and South India, but also with Romans.

The local ceramics found from most of the sites are red ware, red slipped ware, red burnished ware, coarse red ware, black ware, black slipped ware, black burnished ware, coarse black ware, grey ware, grey slipped ware, grey burnished ware, coarse grey ware, black-and-red ware, black-on-red ware, red-and-black ware, incised ware embossed ware, appliqué ware, painted (both monochrome and poly chrome) shreds, black polished ware and red polished ware. The wide distribution of the last mentioned ceramic, i.e. in nearly two-thirds of the sites during the early historic period shows a strong cultural integration. All this indirectly shows urbanization and well settled urban life, which was observed through ceramic presentation also. The cultural integration is another form of settlement integration or one may say socio-economic integration, leading to the creation of internal and external trade networks, industrialization, specialized craftsmanship, establishment of political authority, etc. leading to urbanization.

## Architecture

Monumental architecture is one of the important components of urban development. The tremendous increase in the number of settlements was naturally due to the rapid population growth. The gradual development of architecture is noticed from the excavated early historic sites in Gujarat. This has been achieved through the well-trained artisans of different categories. These developments are differentiated into civil, defence, religious, secular, industrial and sepulchral architecture. In Gujarat mainland, the available evidences show that in the earlier stages, the houses were of wattle and daub. Evidences of mud brick structure, burnt bricks set in mud mortar and lime mortar, burnt bricks encased mud brick structures, rubble pavements with post-holes and mud flooring made out of rammed earth mixed with cow dung and ash were noticed at many sites. In the following stages, along with wattle and daub, the huts and houses were made out of mud bricks, burnt bricks and brickbats. The floors were either paved with mud or burnt bricks. The post holes noticed on the floor and the burnt bamboo strips and tiles suggest that the roofs were either laid with tiles or with some perishable materials.

In the Saurashtra peninsula, the structures were mostly laid in stone with mud or dry mortar. The walls were made of huge blocks with a few ornamented designs with mortise holes. A house built of mud with rubble footings and floor was made of rammed kankar. The foundation

was rammed with brickbats and potshreds to serve as damp-proof. The house of undressed rubbles with dry masonry and mud bricks or mud mortar was also noticed.

In the Kachchh peninsula, the structures were invariably of roughly dressed rubble stones as well as well quarries slabs and even reused Harappan structures with some alterations. Nani Rayan is the only site in Kachchh, which revealed the burnt brick structures set in mud mortar<sup>24</sup>. They show that the climatic condition and availability of raw material played a dominant role in the formation of dwelling places.

The early historic Gujarat has revealed defence architecture in the form of ramparts, moat, forts and fortification. At Taranga hills, the fortification was raised according to the contour of the hill with stone topped with burnt bricks and at some sites wholly with burnt bricks. Mud rampart with brick revetment and brick fortification with rampart were also noticed. While in the Saurashtra peninsula, mud rampart surrounded by a moat and fort with corner bastions was noticed, in the Kachchh, the early historic people who occupied the Harappan settlements, had reused the bastions of the former reinforcing the same.

The existence of different types of defence architecture suggests the existence of different types of threat perception both from nature and humans. The fort and fortifications raised on top of the Taranga hills without well-established settlement suggests that these structures might have been used as watch towers. At Hathab and Amreli, the mud rampart was built at meander. The settlers of these two sites built the forts and fortifications near the meander, so that the natural landscape itself served as a moat. The existences of fort, fortification, watch tower, etc. are indicative of external aggression. The location of these structures on trade routes is suggestive of two things. First, they were intended to protect the trader and trade goods from the external adversaries. Secondly, it indirectly reflects the economic prosperity.

The religious structures in the early historic Gujarat are noticed in the form of rock-cut caves and structural ones and all belonging to the three religions, viz. Buddhism, Shaivism, Vaishnavism and Jainism. All these caves were situated on the trade routes. Though these caves were mostly 'viharas', the rock-cut tanks and wells within them were actually used to store water during the rainy season. These religious caves invariably influenced the traders and caravans passing by. Many structural viharas and stupas have also been explored and excavated. The plan of the vihara that was excavated at Intwa<sup>25</sup>, Vadnagar<sup>26</sup> and Amreli was square or swastika or parallel rooms, whereas the excavated stupas at Devnimori and Boria have revealed the relics. It is interesting to note that most of the Buddhist edifices have been noted in the Saurashtra peninsula, while the Brahmanical temples have been noticed in the Gujarat mainland. The reason behind it, has to be studied in detail.

Apart from the above, the other monumental edifices noticed in early historic Gujarat were the water-harvesting structures in the form of reservoirs, dams – both rock-cut and structural ones, bunds, dams, wells, etc. The evidence of earliest reservoir in early historic Gujarat was noticed as an embankment excavated around 6th/5th century BCE at Nagara. The rock-cut tanks and a dam built of stone was noticed at Taranga hills. The evidence of bunds supported on both sides either by natural hillocks or low hills at three different series to raise the groundwater level was noticed at Devnimori. The famous mud dam at Junagadh has been mentioned by the Kshatrapa King Rudradaman I while repairing the same<sup>27</sup>. This clearly shows the importance given by the authorities in providing a congenial environment in support of irrigation in the rain-deficit area, which indirectly increased the revenue to the state. Some of the rock-cut caves show elaborate rainwater harvesting techniques. Further, kunds and wells of varied nature also show the development of various techniques applied by the early historic people of Gujarat in harvesting rainwater.

Further, ware houses were noticed at Kamrej<sup>28</sup> and Hathab. They were flourishing port cities in Gujarat mainland and the Saurashtra peninsula respectively. The jetty, kilns, furnaces and chullahs noticed from the early historic levels, all indicated the development of industries and commerce. A number of sites revealed bricks of various sizes. The rectangular and square bricks were employed in the structures. These bricks differed from site to site as well as within a site; but whatever might have been the size, the ratio was maintained. The usage of identical ratio is indicative of specialized craftsmanship or engineering skill, which is one of the characterizations of urbanization. The wedge-shaped bricks were used in the construction of wells, while the moulded and chamfered bricks were used extensively in stupas and temples. The open and covered drains of this period were discovered mainly from the religious structures. Therefore, one may infer that the same might also have been constructed in the residential areas. These well-planned constructions of drains speak of the sanitary system of those times. The material evidences available so far clearly indicate that the cities, towns and houses were highly developed. This can be achieved only with the support of a strong technical institution. The construction of public architectural monuments, providing irrigational facilities and construction of religious structures by the state are indicators of urbanization.

### Art and religious objects

The art and religious objects of early historic Gujarat were found in diverse materials. The objects of worship also varied and they included most of the deities of Hindu pantheon. Apart from these, male and female figurines

decorated in various costumes show the dressing sense of that period. The expressions of different moods are also very realistic. It is interesting to note that the site of Buddhist importance has also yielded the deities of Hindu religion and vice versa. In-depth study of these objects clearly shows that diverse schools of art prevailed in early historic Gujarat, but no particular art technique or art form was attributed to any of the periods like Maurya, Satavahana, Kshatrapa, Kushana and Gandhara. In addition, it indicated the stable economy and peace in the region, which encouraged the growth of a variety of arts and crafts. A variety of gods and goddesses along with the objects of ritual nature suggests that people following different faiths, and that religion was a predominant force throughout the period, which again signifies the traits of urbanization.

### Recreational activity

Games and toys are an integral part of any society. The material remains unearthed from the early historic levels of Gujarat clearly show the existence of different games like dice, gamesman, hop scotch/discs, sling ball/marbles, tops/teetom and toy carts, wheels, toy animals and birds with and without wheels, rattles, masks for adults and children, both male and female, etc. These games are being considered as recreational activity. Games play a dominant role in integrating society at large. They are generally appreciated during peaceful times. Peace prevails in a society when economic prosperity and social values are being respected. The games at subaltern level and elite level indicate the social response. The multiple games/varieties of games are one of the indicators of the urban character.

### Toilet items, dresses and ornaments

The toilet items were found less in number from the early historic levels. The available objects illustrate the people's desire for personal cleanliness. As far as clothes are concerned, evidences for cotton and silk were noticed from the relic casket recovered from the Devnimori Stupa. Apart from this, accessories in the form of spindle whorl and needles suggest that the textile industry was localized at different centres and textiles were sent to various places, both inland and overseas. Further, different types of dresses were also noticed in the terracotta and stone figurines. The dresses are probably made out of the two or more plant fibres as reported from Kamrej<sup>29</sup>.

The availability of personal items made of valuable material suggests their status in the society. Each material is a representation of a social, economic and ritual status. The status is generally attained or conceived in a complex stratified society. Such a society is an indicator of multi-

ethnic groups living together with mutual interaction. Each object also represents the technical attainment, thereby indicating the existence of specialized skilled artisans. Some of the items also indicate their economic status. The economic diversity within a society suggests the existence of varied productive forces. From the production centres to consumption points, different productive forces played their constructive role such as control of raw material, industries, skilled labour, marketing, etc. All these are indicators of urbanization.

### Tools, implements and weapons

The tools and implements represent the various stages of technological advancement attained in the fields of industry and craftsmanship. It also gives an idea about the different processes and technologies of the industrial artisans in the manufacturing of various objects by carpenters, masons and blacksmiths<sup>30</sup>. These tools and implements were mostly used in day-to-day works that led to the surplus of economic produce, whether it was an agro-based or trade-based society. According to Dhavalikar<sup>5</sup>, 'the most important facts which led to the growth of agriculture were plough cultivation and iron plough became common during the northern black polished ware period'. This along with a variety of tools like axes, adze, sickles, picks, spades, hoe and scraper increased the agricultural produce and led to surplus production. This economic surplus led to the rise in export and facilitated distribution of food resources to non-agricultural communities and were specialized in other occupations. Further, as far as weapons are concerned, it clearly shows that there was some sort of threat to the urbanized people for which they had to pay either in cash or kind to the central authority, who in-turn maintained a standing army to guard his subjects. This specialized occupation is one of the indications of urbanization.

### Inscriptions

The early historic Gujarat has revealed inscribed evidences on stone, terracotta, steatite, metal, ivory and pot shreds. The earliest decipherable written records available are the Girnar or the Junagadh Rock Edicts of Asoka. Majority of the stone inscriptions belong to the Kshatrapa-Kardamakas. As they ruled over western India, they were called Western Kshatrapas – though it was not a dynastic name, because Kshatrapa or Maha Kshatrapa is a title. All the inscriptions, except the Junagadh inscription of Rudradaman I, were raised not in the memory of the dead, but also for others for their service to the society. However, there is uniformity in the inscriptions regarding mentioning the names of rulers right from the founder, down to the reigning ruler or the founder and the reigning ruler along with the name and gotra

of the person who is mentioned in the inscriptions, almost dated in the year of Kardamaka rulers, i.e. the Saka era.

It is interesting to note that there is no evidence of donations made by the Kardamaka rulers to the monastic sects. Yet there are a number of Buddhist and Jain caves around Junagadh, Kachchh and Bharuch, along with structural stupas at Boria, Vajra-pannat, Devnimori, Kadia Dungar and monasteries at Intwa, Amreli, Vadnagar, etc. There is no direct evidence of royal patronage to monastic sects, except a terracotta seal, found from the Intwa monastery mentioning 'this seal is of the *Bhiksu Samaghasya* of *Vihara* of Maharaja Rudrasena', which can be taken as a subtle indication of Buddhist affiliation of the Kardamakas.

Apart from the above, hundreds of seals and sealing of individuals, signet ring of authorities, dated pot shreds associated with rituals, all clearly show evidence of a literate society having written records. Further, a slate with scribbling of Brahmi that was noticed from the Vihara of Devnimori shows teaching and practising of the alphabet. A stylus made of bone was also reported from Bet Dwaraka<sup>31</sup>. All these show the definite character of urbanization.

### Coin and currency

Coin and currency are always considered as one of the main parameters for urbanization, because they directly deal with the central authority and are used on a large scale in exchange for goods, both locally and in foreign transactions. The early historic Gujarat has revealed the janpada coins of its own, indicating some sort of authority or developed state, issuing coins of its own, before the advent of the punch-marked coins of the Mauryas in Gujarat. Under the Kshatrapas, the defined denominations and the weight-standard were maintained. The use of date in Saka era and of patronymic became a regular practice of this dynasty, which was followed by others. The foreign coins found also indicate trade and commerce that flourished. Further, the excavations at Hathab<sup>32</sup> have revealed an inscribed coin mould of soapstone, probably used in the minting of coins. All these indicate the strong central authority ruling over a larger area with defined coinage of its own. This exchange system of coins clearly shows that the society was urbanized, which minted and used coins for transactions.

### Trade and commerce

Trade and commerce during the early historic period was in a favourable condition throughout the world. The selection of Bharuch as the neutral port for the cheaper, faster and safer channel of trade to Egypt than the overland silk routes connecting Central Asia and Gandhara-Bactaria with the east of Mediterranean gained momentum.

Though the sailing conditions in the early historic Gujarat in three physical divisions were not favourable to the sailors, they overcame this problem through the native fisherman to guide and pilot the ships to the safer places. Gujarat's strategic importance in connecting internally and externally with most of the places led to faster movement of goods at the earliest. This directly and indirectly poured in wealth into the state coffers and led to further development in all spheres of life. Though the central authority might not have engaged in direct trade, the traders were given the authority to stamp their goods. This clearly indicates the economic and social status enjoyed by them. The growth of internal and external trade led to faster development of port towns, trade centres, capital cities, etc.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, it is to be emphasized that the above evidences from the early historic Gujarat undoubtedly prove the political stability, economic prosperity, social hierarchy and religious harmony of a literate society with monumental architecture, internal and external trade contacts that culminated in second urbanization and lasted for about 1000 years, i.e. from the 6th century BCE to the 4th century CE.

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