

## HISTORICAL EVOLUTION OF URBAN CENTRES IN HADOTI PLATEAU IN RAJASTHAN

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Hadoti region of south eastern Rajasthan has its own identity in field of evolution and growth of urban centres that can be traced through historical sites, located in various parts of the region. The Hadoti region is experienced with the long history of growth of towns and their evolution. It has sufficient evidences, material about the origination, cities and towns particular in Rajasthan especially in Hadoti plateau. Urbanization, which are actually made a great revolutionary changes in the whole pattern of social and economic life of the people. In history, it was brought about both by physical and cultural factors. There were also other factors responsible for the growth of town at this time. This paper deals with to study responsible factors and forces to growth of new urban centres in Hadoti region.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Hadoti region has its own identity in field of evolution and growth of urban centres that can be traced through historical sites, located in various parts of the region. Geographers, archeologist, and historian have attempted to write about the Hadoti region dealing with his princes heroic exploits, plots and intrigues, moves and manures their politics, administrative pattern etc. but this is only one side of picture. Now history is not considered to be more record of kings, conquerors, it has to deal with mankind, its culture and civilization as a whole.

Early phase of settlement or traces of pre-historic man have been found in the central Bundi range and along bank of river Chambal and its tributaries. It seems that during fourth inter-glacial period, there was continuous human settlement. Although, early history of the region is shrouded in the darkness of time and little is known about the earlier times but for the fact that the Malav people, who were uprooted during the invasion of

Alexander the Great in 327 B.C. came and settled down in southern part of the Hadoti plateau, and northern part of Malwa. Cunningham on the basis of the several specimens of old cast copper coins and a few pieces of silver has determined the age of colonization of this region between 500 to 100 B.C. Jains were also having their strong holds in this part of the country. Chandravati on the bank of river Chandrabhaga, Keshoraipatan on the bank of river Chambal and Lakheri too, seem to have been the places of considerable antiquity.

During medieval period 'Hadoti' was controlled administratively by local chiefs. The name 'Hadoti' was known after the Hadas, the ruling clan of the principality of Bundi. The history of settlement of this part of the country during medieval times more or less is the story of the friendly or unfriendly relations with the central authority and latter on with the British rulers. In the later period of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, perhaps in 1872 A.D. a new principality of Jhalawar came into being as a separate state.

In fact, the Hadoti region is experienced with the long history of growth of towns and their evolution. It has sufficient evidences, material about the origination, cities and towns particular in Rajasthan especially in Hadoti plateau. The material may be classified under two broad categories –

- (1) Archeological evidences
- (2) Literature

### (1) Archeological

- (a) Inscription
- (b) Coins
- (c) Monuments

**Inscriptions:** Inscription form an important source of towns. Besides this it contains, their ancient names, which assumed different forms with the gradual growth of the language. Inscriptions have proved a source of highest value for the reconstruction political history of old towns. The minor rock edicts of Ashoka of the third century B.C. discovered at Bairat, indicates his territorial jurisdiction. Local history is important as the history of the province. These ancient towns were ruled by separate dynasties, the history of which constitutes the history of the provinces.

Some inscription contains the genealogy of dynasties and the achievements of the rules. A Buddhist sanskrit inscription from Shergarh dated V.S. 847 (790 A.D.) give us the genealogy of the Naga rulers. The Gangdhar

inscription of V.S. 480 (423 A.D.) gives information about Aulikara Dynasty ruling from Dasapura and also activities of Visvavarman at Gandhar.

The inscription on a tablet found at Shergarh is a public register of several donations given mainly to the temple of Somanatha in the eleventh and twelfth centuries A.D. The Bijaulia rock inscription dated V.S. 1226 records the construction of the Jain temples at Baghera, Toda Raisingh, Naraina by the ancestors of Lolaka.

From several inscriptions, it is also known that these town were committed for the management of the temples. In addition to political history there epigraphical records have also proved to be of great value in tracing the religious, social and economic conditions of the towns. They enlighten us about the various religious and sects prevalent in different towns. They record the construction of temples, installation of images, donations and charities.

**Coins:** Coins are also an important source of information. The earliest coins of India are known to be the punch-marked coins, which probably started from the sixth century B.C. These early coins found at Pushkara, Bairat, Nagara, Nagori, Sambhar and Jhalrapatan may prove that these were old sites. The coins of the different period found in the excavations at Rairh, Naliasar, Bairat, Rang Mahal etc. help us in fixing the date of the structures and sculptures discovered along with them. The coins found at Nagari tell us that the old name of this place was Madhyamika and it was the capital of the Sibi republic in second century B.C.

**Monuments:** In addition to coins and inscriptions, we have discovered other remains of antiquarian interest such as temples, forts, buildings, statues, sculptures, terracotta's and pottery in old towns. They are of great importance in tracing the history of evolution of Indian art. The old temples of Saivism, Vaishnavism and Jainism of the sixth or seventh century A.D. are found at Jhalrapatan. There are several buildings of the medieval period found generally in early towns.

A large number of archeological sites of different periods have been explored and at some places, excavations were also conducted. They inform us how urban life emerged through different stages.

## EMERGENCE OF URBAN LIFE

The progress from savages to urban life was a slow and gradual process. Man first settled on the bank of rivers, and for a considerable time, he remained in a hunting and food gathering stage. He invented gradually various types of new stone tools to meet the needs of time. The production of food by agriculture and

domestication of animal was the next important stages toward civilization. The advent of metal revolutionized the society and various agricultural and village communities came into existence. Gradually people started to build houses and building to live in. The next important step in the process of civilization was writing. All these factors led to the organized social life, which resulted in the establishment of cities.

## **GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF URBAN LIFE**

Urbanization, which are actually a great revolutionary changes in the whole pattern of social and economic life of the people. In history, it was brought about both by physical and cultural factors. Its first appearance is noticed on the bank of the rivers Sarasvati and Drishadvati. At this time, the process of urbanization was very slow. Only a few towns were in existence and their size and population was small. It was only after the seventh century A.D. when the Rajput dynasties built up vast empires and established peace and order for the development of trade and commerce that the number of towns and cities become more numerous and the degree of urbanization grew greater.

A large number of ancient cities and towns came into existence from the earliest times to the twelfth century A.D. some of them have existed continuously on the sites of their origin. However, there are sites upon which several cities have been successively built and destroyed as old cultures died giving place to new.

## **URBANIZATION IN EARLY HISTORIC PERIOD**

The period from the 5<sup>th</sup> century B.C. onward is very important in terms of origination of urban centres in Hadoti region. Several small republican and monarchical states came into existence and from time to time they fought gallantly against the foreign invaders. People gave up nomadic habits and began to settle permanently.

There were also other factors responsible for the growth of town at this time. The discovery of iron brought a revolution in the economic sphere. Different kind of tools, implements and weapons were made of iron and they all increased agricultural production and facilitated transport and communication. Another noteworthy feature of this period was the introduction of coinage, which stimulated trade and commerce. Some towns developed as mint centres. Jhalrapatan and Gangdhar prospered as they were planted on the banks of the rivers.

### **(i) JHALRAPATAN**

The ancient name of Jhalrapatan is said to be Chandravati, which was situated on the bank of Chandrabhaga, a small stream flowing south-west to north-east and falling into the Kali Sindh. It is a place

of great antiquity because several specimens of punch-marked and other old coins have been discovered. Jhalrapatan was ruled by the Maurya rulers. The inscription of the seventh or eighth century A.D. records the name of Sankaragan.

Jhalrapatan is especially famous for its artistic creations. It is said that at one time, there were one hundred and eight shrines. The famous temple is temple of Sitalasvara Mahadeva. It has been demolished crudely and rebuilt. Another temple is dedicated to the Varaha Avatara or Baar incarnation of Vishnu.

Jhalrapatan was a great centre of different religions, namely Saivism, Vaishnavism and Jainism. This place continued to be visited by the pilgrims even in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. A.D. Jhalrapatan was also a holy place of the Jainas. There was a famous old temple of Santinath, which was built by Saha Pipa in 1046 A.D.

## (ii) GANGADHAR

Gangdhar is now a small village about eighty four kms. South-west of Jhalrapatan and is situated on the bank of a river known as Kali Sindh, which in the 5th Century was called Gargara. This town was known as Gargarata after the name of the river in the fifth century A.D. It was ruled by the Aulikara, dynasty with its capital Dasapura, modern Mandsaur.

Gangdhar appears to be flourishing city in the fifth century A.D. Mayurakshaka, the minister of Visvavarman, built the temple of Vishnu and the Divine mother in 423 A.D.

The inscription of 1251 A.D. contains the name of Rava Kelhana, who seems to be a chief of Gangdhar which is called Gargarata in this inscription. The inscription also proves that the ancient name Gargarata of this place was retained upto the thirteenth century A.D.

## URBANISATION IN THE POST-GUPTA PERIOD

The Huna and the Abhira invasions brought about the destruction of the early cities, but still the period from the 7<sup>th</sup> century onwards is remarkable in the history of Rajasthan. New Rajput clans such as the Pratiharas, the Paramaras, the Chauhanas, the Guhils and the Chalukyas came into existence and they found their kingdom with new capitals. The emergence of the new mercantile community is important in the social and economic history of Rajasthan. The establishment of several urban centres in the arid region of Rajasthan is a remarkable feature of this period.

Some towns became the capital of the ruling chiefs and there must have been some special consideration in the selection of these places as capitals.

Religious buildings and markets formed the nucleus of the settlement and gradually towns grew around them. Market situated on the cross-ways and on the banks of the rivers became flourishing town. Shergarh whose ancient name was Kosavardhana (the increase of treasury) became an important thriving centre of trade, industry and agriculture.

**(i) DHAMNAR**

Dhamnar, a small village on the border of the Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh is situated about 80 kms, to the south-west of Jhalrapatan. This name of the town seems to be a corruption of the 'Saivite epithet Dharmanatha' which was the name of the 'linga' set up in the Vaishnava temple during the medieval period. The rock cut caves found at Dhamnar, Bhima Bazar and Badi Kachari are the most interesting.

**(ii) SHERGARH**

Shergarh, now a deserted town, standing on crest of the river Parwan, is about one hundred forty five kms to the south-west of Kota. According to local tradition, Shergarh of the Suri Dynasty gave the present name of the town to it after its capture. The ancient name of this town was Kosavardhama "the increaser of the treasury". Since, it was an important thriving centre of trade, industry and agriculture, which must have contributed a good deal to the royal treasury. It was also an important military contonment. The present dilapidated township itself was considered to be one of the impregnable forts in the Hindu period, as is evident from its strong walls.

Shergarh was ruled by different ruling dynasties from early times. An inscription found here refers to Samantha Devadatta ruling in 790 A.D. As the names of the three ancestors namely Bindunaga, Padmanaga and Sarvanaga end in Naga.

## **URBANIZATION IN MEDIEVAL PERIOD**

The great town building era started in early medieval period, and as a consequence, overwhelming majority of towns grew up around forts, religious edifices and markets. Some of them became capital cities. As this was the period of opening new land and new routes, towns period of opening new land and new routes, town sprang up at convenient route places. The enclosed wall became the essential feature of town-planing at this time.

The organisation of crafts and industries in different guilds became the noteworthy features of economic life of the town.

A number of capital town were founded at this time because new Kingdom came into existence. These towns become administrative centres. The period between the 10<sup>th</sup> century A.D. may be considered as the Golden age in the history of study region.

The following factors are responsible for the growth of urban centres:

- (i) This was the period of construction of numerous temples, which attract the peoples. Some of these were destroyed and banded to decay.
- (ii) There were trade, commerce and industry which had flourished earlier.
- (iii) This was the period making the development of various Rajput clans in north-western India.
- (iv) Geographically, landscape of the region which had hinter to remained wildness and only sporadically settled and least effected by human activity and civilization became more systematically organised during this period.

**(i) KESORAYAPATTANA**

Kesorayapattana located at a distance of 15<sup>th</sup> Km in the NE of Kota on the bank of Chambal, was a famous Brahmanical and Jaina holy place. Its early names were Asramanagara, Asramapattana and Pattana. In early name Asramanagara suggest that originally it was a hermitage of holy saints. It is a spot of natural beauty. In 1601 A.D., Satrushala constructed the temple of Vishu non as Kesoraya, and in course of time, this town became well known after the name of deity. In the eleventh century A.D. Kesorayapattana was ruled by the Paramaras of Malwa.

Kesorayapattana remained a famous place of pilgrimage in early times. The temple of Mrityunjaya Mahadeva of this place was well known. It was also known as Jambupathasarthavahi and Jambumarga. Kesorayapattana was the holy place of Jainas.

**(ii) RAMGARH**

The old name of Ramgarh, situated about sixty seven km to the east of Kota near a thick forest, was Srinagara or the town of wealth. From the ninth or tenth century A.D., this town was ruled by the Meda dynasty. This dynasty originated from Meda or Meva, an aboriginal tribe, the people of which are

still found in large number of this area. Under the patronage of the rulers of the Meda dynasty, art and architecture received a great encouragement at Ramgarh. The beautiful Hindu and Jain temple were constructed.

The general early medieval style seems to have matured to a finer accent at Ramgarh than at Chandravati near Jhalrapatan.

Under the rulers of the Meda dynasty Jainism flourished at Ramgarh. There is Jaina a cave of the 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> century A.D., situated at a distance of 5 km. from Ramgarh.

### (iii) KRISHNAVILLASA

Krishnavillasa is standing in the heart of the Jungle 18 Km north-east of Baran in Baran district on the bank of the river Vilasi. In early times, it was famous simply by the name of Vilasa. It is an old place with the relics of many temples and old fort, which probably belong to the 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> century.

### (iv) ATRU

Atru abounds in ruins of ancient temples. The most prominent of them all is known by the name of Gadgach-ka-Mandir, on the side of a large tank called Budhasagar. This temple is built in the 10<sup>th</sup> century. The gentle image of Siva from Atru is cognate of the Baroli technique of carvings.

### (v) BAROLI

At Baroli about 5 kms north-east of Bhainsrorgarha and about forth eight kms in the south-west of Kota, there is a group of Brahmanical temples on the bank of the Chambal river.

Baroli is famous only for our temples. The principal temple dedicated to Ghateswara, stands in a walled enclosure, which is full of other interesting building.

## TOWNS OF MODERN PERIOD

The modern period can be analysed as the stage of rapid urban growth after the independence in Hadoti region of eastern Rajasthan. Although some historical towns came into existence in medieval period like Bundi, Jhalrapatan, Jhalawar and Kota. Here an attempt has been made to describe all the factors, which can be considered for origination of urban centres.

- (i) **Historical Factors:** History always plays vital role in evolution of human habitats, particularly development of urban centres. Kota city was the part of Tonk states and joints Rajasthan in March 1948 and integrated into the United States of Rajasthan in 1949. Including former Jhalawar state visualize Kirpapur and Tonk state namely Chippabarod and Sirong. Other areas like Kota state visualize Asnawar, Aklera, Thanpur, Manohar Thana were dedicated to form part of new Jhalawar district. Then in case of Bundi district some historical town emerged in medieval edge known as Bundi town. It was headquarter of princely state by Hadas.

Bundi town is located in a narrow valley called Bundri-ka-naal and it said to have been named Bunda, a Meena chieftain. Other areas and town Hindoli, Nainwa are also included in this district.

On the other hand, Jhalawar district has also had some historical evidence in support of urban growth. The word Jhalawar has been designated as land of Jhalas. The latter had been the name of ruling clam of former state. According to Abdul Fazal, Jhalawar was including in the Subah of Malwa and Ragavdev Jhala receiving as early age 1420 A.D. This Pargana was transfer from the Jagir of Mandu and Jhalawar was largely the story appendage of the Kingdom of Malwa.

So far the Kota district is concern there are some place which historical impact in growth of urban centres. The Kota city was founded by of Bhils Koteah have clan and finally named as Kolab. Now-a-days it is known as Kota city.

Another version is that Jait Singh capture Akelgarh in Vikrant Savant 1321 (1264 A.D.) occupied Kota. Subsequently used as Pargana attached to the Jagir of Bundi.

Other major towns came into existence after independence like Itawa, Pipalda, Barad, Mangrol, Digad, Anta, Baran, Kishanganj, Shahbad, Cheachat, Ramganj Mandi, Kanwas, Sangod, Atru, Chippabarod and Chhabra.

- (ii) **Development of Transport and Communication:**

**Kota city:** Kota city is connected with Delhi and Mumbai, Jaipur via Sawai Madhopur, Bharatpur and Agra. This city has become a major railway junction of Rajasthan. It has become as gateway of eastern Rajasthan from Central India. The city is known as major Industrial City of Rajasthan.

**Jhalawar:** Jhalawar is known commercial malt of Upper Malwa. Their state highways which provided transport facility to Kota, Jhalrapatan cities and have linked with the Delhi, Bhopal, Indore, Mumbai and other major cities of India.

**Bundi:** Geographically, Bundi district doesn't fit for transport network development and it is lacking from transport communication facilities. Road transport has made rapid progress over the year.

**Baran:** The Baran town is situated on Kota-Shivpuri state highway No.17 and having the railway transport facility through Kota-Bina broad-gauge line. The entire major towns are well connected by the road transport.

- (iii) **Industrial Development** : Hadoti plateau has made the notable progress after independence in the field of industrial development. Consequent upon the installation of money power of houses, resulting in the availability of electricity at cheaper rates, due to the development of multipurpose project of Chambal during the last decade of country. The number of large and medium class industries came up in the industries.

Among these important once are premier paper, board mills, multi-metals, cement industries etc. Consequently, several industries took place along with the Chambal River, following factors are responsible for industrilization –

1. Availability of water from Chambal river
2. Sufficient power supply from RAPP and other power houses
3. Railway transport network development
4. Availability of cheap labour and skilled labour
5. Central location of market areas, government policies and financial support from the various agencies

- (iv) **Tourism Development:** Tourism is the main indicator which provides interaction between tourists and local societies in terms of culture, ideology. There are the numerous places of religious, historical and tourist interest in the Baran, Bundi, Kota and Jhalawar districts.

**Baran district:**

- (a) **Anta** : The people of Anant Bhagwan and Goverdhannath are located at the place whereas some ancient temples also found here.

- (b) *Atru* : This place has a ancient temples. This is also an Idgah at Atru besides the fort of Shergarh which is a protect movement.
- (c) *Shahbad* : It desired its name after the emperor Shahajahan who founded it. It has an ancient fort, a mosque and a temple of Saje Balmiki at Sitabari with a cluster of Kunds.

***Bundi district:***

- (a) *Indergarh* : The place is famous for three religious fair namely Mahadeo, Gopreshwar Mahadeo and Mataji are held here annually.
- (b) *Bundi city* : Bundi is one of the most picturesque town of the state and is well known for its scenic beauty and landscape. In Bundi, these are several places of historical and archaeological importance. For example Bundi Ka Mahal, Taragarh Fort, Rameshwaram.

***Kota district:***

- (a) *Darah Games Sanctuary* : From Kota city, it is 50 kms away in the Mukandara range of hills. It is rich in wild fauna and is visited by the people from different parts of the country.
- (b) *Kota city* : There are a number of north-seeing places in the city. These include the fort, Dad Devi temple, Kansuwa temple and Shiva temple. In Kota city on Dusehera, a big fair is held.

***Jhalawar district:***

In Jhalawar district, there are several places of historical and archaeological interest. The important places are Aklera, Asnawar, Awar, Bakani, Bhawani Mandi etc. There are also many caves and shipas. For example Kolvi caves, Binaika, Chandrawali, Dag, Jhalrapatan (City of bells), Chaumahala, Gangdhar etc.

Hence, these factor support to urban centres in this particular study region. Other factors tourism development, trade & commerce, agriculture production, socio-culture set-up, development of social amenities and various schemes which created at suitable environment or situations for expansion of urban centres.

**CONCLUSION**

The presented work has covered geographical, historical factors in light of evolution in growth of urban centres in Hadoti plateau.

History provided time scale for urban growth and geography gave them place with full of geographic environment and finally such situation is created environment of urban habitation.

The growths of urban centres are determined through their geographical sites through their locations. A geographical interpretation about the area includes its topographical characteristics, which provide base for human habitation especially in field of urban habitation in their origin and expansion. Basically the region is extended on the peripheral zone of deccan plateau. In other words it is the margin of the northern boundary of Deccan Plateau, which has impact on topography. The plateau is drained by the tributaries of Chambal, Kalisindh, Parvati etc. On the other hand the Chambal River makes its valley in the central part of study region. All these physical characteristics support in origination of towns. In this way the major towns like Kota, Jhalawar, Keshoraipatan are located in river basins. Urban centre are the creation of the main skill that men has used water streams for their drinking purpose, as well as irrigation through creation of dams. Major towns are located along with the Chambal and its tributaries.

The whole region presents a unique example of growth of towns in different part of the region in different dimensions.

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