

Chapter-1

Introduction

Study of Urbanization a Review of Theories and a review of urbanization in pre-colonial India:

I

The first and immediate problem that arises in the study of towns is that of their definition, which varies from country to country and from one census to another.¹ How can one best approach the study of so complex a phenomenon, at once so familiar and yet so difficult to understand? In the very first place, how best can we define it? Strange though it may seem, the city defies universal definition which would be acceptable to everyone. Whether is it a physical conglomeration of streets and houses, or is it a centre of exchange and commerce? Or is it a kind of society, or even a frame of mind? Has it a certain size, a specific density? The difficulties involved in the definition are countless, and there is very little unanimity: it seems to be all things to all men.²

A town or city is bigger than village community, and if we are dealing with very large settlements there is often little doubt. But at the lower end of the scale, if the size is the criterion, who is to say what the size of a town is? ³ In Greenland, for example, a place with 300 or more inhabitants is called a town, while in the Republic of Korea, an area must have at least 40,000 inhabitants to be called a town.⁴ A place with thousand can qualify for township in Canada and 2,500 in the U. S.⁵ In Denmark a settlement of 200 people constitute a town, as it does in Sweden and Finland. In Greece a settlement must have over 10,000 inhabitants before it can be called a town. Between these there is a great variety of figures. But there must be 5,000 people to make a town in Ghana. Clearly 'numbers' alone mean very little. There are circumstances in which a numerically small settlement may have urban characteristics- like density, markets, and administrative functions.⁶ For example, in India, a town must not only have more than 5,000 inhabitants but some other condition also to be met. These conditions are: at least 75% of people must be engaged in non-agricultural functions; it must be incorporated in a municipality for urban governance and it must meet certain infrastructure standards.⁷ Thus the

primary consideration for deciding whether a particular place is a town or not is the administrative set-up, not the size of its population.⁸ The United Nation, for international comparability, has suggested a population of 20,000 as the cut off point for a settlement to qualify for township.⁹ In fact the simple numerical index can be used on a world scale if enough allowance is made to clear possible contradictions among small settlements. Above 5,000 people there is less doubt that we are dealing with something urban, above 10,000 hardly any doubt at all. The recommendation of the U.N. on grading agglomerations by size is acceptable where the population is above 5,000. The difficulties arise at the point where a village is almost a town, or a nearly indistinguishable from a village. At the point it is better to accept the local explanation. A settlement is what is implied by the local people when they call a locality a town.¹⁰

Therefore, there are many countries that used the administrative function as the sole criterion to define the town. This is so in Turkey, Czechoslovakia, the Dominican Republic, and the United Arab Republic. Many more define their towns by giving them a certain kind of government, as in Algeria, Japan, Tunisia and, most familiar, the United Kingdom. This really means that the city or town is so by definition- a town is what the state is prepared to call a town. This does not help us very much. It is even more frustrating when a solipsism is introduced as in Rumania, where a town is a settlement having urban characteristics.¹¹ Urban sociologists would treat towns as field of social power i.e. towns as social realization of power, stressing the community of social stratification between town and country.¹² Power and the pattern of domination have been the main concerns in the discussion of towns by Weber, Braudel and even Sjoberg, who see the town internally and externally as an institutional expression of power.¹³ So defining town whether in demographic or economic terms or merely by taking into account of administrative function it does not take us very much further towards understanding the nature and pattern of town. It just suggests some of the criteria without telling us which are universal or which are important. Is there a common factor, and if so, does it lie in the form of a city, or in its function, or in its society? There are almost as many answers to these questions as there students interested in cities.¹⁴

II

As there is no universally acceptable definition of town, so also there is no unanimously acceptable theory of urbanization. Urbanization is characterized by movements of people from small communities concerned chiefly or solely with agriculture to other group of people, usually larger, whose activities are primarily centered in government, trade, manufacture or similar interests.¹⁵ J. Clyde Mitchell refers to urbanization as the process of becoming urban, moving to cities, changing from agriculture to other pursuits frequent to cities, corresponding changing of behaviour patterns. He prefers to use the word urbanization to describe the development of modes and standards of behavior peculiar to urban areas.¹⁶ According to Anderson (1953:11), urbanization is not a one-way process but it is a two-way process. It also involves not only movement from villages to cities and change from agricultural occupation to business, trade, service and profession, but it also involves change in the migrants' attitudes, beliefs, values and behaviour patterns. He has given five uniqueness of urbanization: money economy, civil administration, cultural changes, written records and innovations.¹⁷

According to American sociologist Louis Wirth 'urbanization includes three necessary factors: physical structure, social organization, and collective behavior. By "physical structure" Wirth meant population, technology, and the ecological (or geographical) environment. By 'social organization' he meant the institutions and the status and the power groups within the community. By 'collective behavior' he meant the group attitudes and ideologies that confronted one another within the communal environment. A more recent generation of scholars-principally the human ecologists-have rearranged and expanded Wirth's scheme into what they call the POET framework. That is, they have argued for a study of the processes of urbanization based upon the variables of population, social organization, the physical environment, and technology. This theoretical construction assumes that the urban structure results from a societal process that alters the balance between population and environment in ways mediated by technological innovation and changing social organization.¹⁸ Prof. Houser and Duncan use 'Urbanization just in this sense when they characterized urbanization as a "change in the pattern of population distribution. It involves as an increase in the relative size of the urban population, a growth in number and size of urban settlements, a place and an increase concentration of the

population in such places".¹⁹ Hope Tisdale Eldridge also put forward more or less same theory when he argued that there can be no meaning of urbanization but a process of population concentration which involves two elements; multiplication of points of concentration and the increase in the size of individual concentrations.²⁰

It seems more meaningful to regard urbanization as involving a process of movement and change; its essence is that it creates the possibility of discontinuity with some pre-existing set of condition. It follows also that urbanization cannot be treated as a one-dimensional phenomenon; it has demographic, social structural, and cultural aspects, each of which poses separate analytical problems, but which also have to be studied in their interrelations.²¹

First, let us consider the demographic theory of urbanization which has been labeled 'the demographic transition'.²² Three main population types may be designated; the 'pre-industrial type' characterized by high birth rates, high crude death, and infant mortality rates, led to a relatively stable, young and small population. Industrialization and urbanization introduced a second phase labeled by Petersen as the 'early Western population type' because when mortality was reduced and the birth rate remained high, the population increases rapidly, and the 'Modern Western Society', was characterized by relatively low birth rates, very low infant mortality rates and low mortality rates, leading to a relatively stable, older and longer population. But it is important to consider what variables are said to be influencing the process of demographic transition. The two most important independent variables are: (i) the technologies of birth and death control, and (ii) the socio-cultural system of the society or societies undergoing transition. Another demographic theory of urbanization is put forward by Ashish Bose in his book "Studies in India's Urbanization: 1901-1971. He argued that, urbanization, in the demographic sense, is an increase in the proportion of the urban population (U) to the total population (T) over a phase of time. As long as U/T enlarges there is urbanization. Nevertheless, theoretically it is possible that this proportion remains constant over time in a situation where there is absolutely no rural to urban migration and both the rural and urban population grow at the similar rate. In such a case, there will be urban development without urbanization. But in so far as the absolute urban inhabitant will increase in such a situation, there will be problems of urbanization regardless of the fact that the rate of urbanization is zero. We shall use the expression "process of

urbanization” in a comprehensive sense and not in the statistical sense of an increase in U/T. Viewed thus, the process of urbanization is a continuing process which is not merely a concomitant of industrialization but a concomitant of the whole gamut of factors underlying the process of economic growth and social change.²³

To sociological point of view as described by Leonard Reissman “urbanization is social change on a vast scale. It means deep and irrevocable changes that alter all segments of society. In our own history the shift from an agricultural to an industrial society has altered every aspect of social life. The family shrank the boundaries of its allegiance and refashioned its relationship. The economy was drastically altered in style, purpose, and demands. Education was revised to fit urban and industrial needs. Politics occupied a different arena than before, with new participants, new rules, and new objectives. The impetus of urbanization upon society is such that society gives way to urban institutions, urban values, and urban demands.²⁴ Thus urbanization is a complete societal process.

Another group of theories concerned with putting forward a model of economic growth was based upon the analysis of the urbanization process in the West. For these theories the history of economic growth in the developed, capitalist world had shown economic development to be associated with two broad processes: (i) a structural changes in occupations occurred whereby the agricultural labour force shifted to manufacturing concurrent with the Industrial Revolution. With continuing economic development, this phase led to a majority of the population being engaged in service or tertiary occupations: and (ii) a shift of population from rural to urban sector. It was natural, therefore, that the economic growth analysis in the developed countries should associate economic development with urbanization.²⁵ Sjoberg also echoes similar opinions when he says: ‘economic development, it seems clear, demands expansion of the urban sector’,²⁶ Berry echoes Sjoberg when he claims ‘that increase specialization and continued urban growth go hand in hand’.²⁷ Houser too has analyzed urbanization in relation to economic development and social change. He argues that industrialization and urbanization produced not only a changed physical environment and new forms of economic organization, but also profoundly affected the social order and men’s conduct and thought. Urbanization fashioned not only the city as a physical and economic structure, but also urbanism as a way of life.²⁸

Historically-or, rather, prehistorically- the crux of the problem of the origin of urbanization lies in the question: when does a village become a town? Many have equated this change with the origin of civilization-as we have seen-because the words 'city' and 'civilized' have the same root-and for some archaeologists the symbol of civilization is writing. This connotation avoids the vagueness which attaches to the word 'city'. But in whatever way it is defined, it is agreed that this great change in the life of mankind first took place in food-producing communities in the Near East. The magnitude of the change was expressed by V. Gordon Childe when he called it 'the urban revolution'. This gives it the same order of magnitude as the preceding Neolithic revolution and the much later Industrial revolution. The urban revolution could only have been based on the Neolithic revolution, i.e., the change from food-gathering and hunting to food-producing. This was the necessary condition of the rise of towns which followed it.²⁹ Historians like Mumford have seen urbanization in the perspective of the whole history of men. The city for them is essentially same environment continuously modified through time. There are two arguments against that view; both concern the strategy of a scientific theory. First accepting the total historical spread as a basis necessarily means discounting a good many specific differences between cities. Second argument is that this evolutionary view of cities gets in the way not only of a comprehensive urban theory but also hampers a closer analysis of cities today, of the forces that have produced them, and where they are likely to go in the future.³⁰ The Geographers and Physical planners dealt comparatively less important aspect of urbanization. Their main concerns are the area and boundary of the urban places. Outgrowth, agglomeration and inclusion of new urban places are considered as manifestation of urbanization by them.³¹ "Actually the hardest problem is not that of determining the 'floor' of the urban category but of ascertaining the boundary of places that are clearly urban by any definition. How far east is the boundary of Loss Angeles? Where along the Hoogly River does Calcutta leave off and the countryside begin".³²

Urban development is therefore, a complex process defying any simple and isolationist explanation. As it is the epitome of a society advancing towards more civilized way of life, it can be studied and viewed properly in total societal framework. Any explanation of this emerging pattern becomes lopsided if one or the other aspect of its growth is over emphasized at the cost of other equally relevant

factors. Indeed urbanization is a process by which men transform their agriculture based rural habitat into essentially non-agricultural urban functions and places and change of their homogeneous habitat into heterogeneous mass.³³

III

Cities have always been the centre of civilizations. Histories of great civilization are histories of cities.³⁴ The causative factors behind the growth of cities varied from time to time. In the prehistoric period, the growth of the cities was synonymous with the origin and rise of civilization itself, thus manifesting itself essentially as a cultural process. In the historical periods, from about the 5th century BC to the 18th century AD, urbanization in India inextricably related to the rise and fall of kingdom, dynasties, and empires, and thus in effect urbanization during this period was essentially a political process. Pataliputra, Kaunaj, Gour/Lakhnauti, Vijayanagar, Delhi, Bijapur, Golconda, Madurai and Kancheepuram are all examples of cities that flourished, decayed, and sometimes revived in response to changes in the political scene.³⁵ The arrival of the Turks helped in the process of political integration by breaking down localism, and they helped in opening overland commerce between India, Central Asia, and West Asia. These were important factors in the process of the growth of towns in India in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.³⁶ The political factors behind urbanization in India became more prominent in Mughal time than before. During the Mughal period, there was more widespread use of money, and roads were built which helped to make power effective over longer distances. All this permitted the principal cities of Mughal India to increase their population growth and, therefore, further urbanization. But when the Power of the ruler weakened and outlying provinces of an empire broke away, the capital city began to decline. The mechanism was perceived long ago by Ibn Khaladun who describes cycles in the expansion and contraction of empires of a period of one or two centuries, with corresponding fluctuations in the luxury and population of the cities which the imperial territory nourished.³⁷ Looked at this angles, urbanization in historical periods is essentially a political process. It was not only the political factor which determined the process of urbanization during the historical period from 5th century to 18th century. There was other factor which is equally important behind the urbanization process during that time, such as economic factor. As far as economic factor is concerned we can perceive that during the time

of Mouryas, many towns grew up due to the prosperous condition of trade, commerce and industries. The Buddhist texts give a typology of cities of this period. The more important categories of towns were: *Rajadhaniya nagara*, *Sthaniya Nagara*, *Kharvata*, *Kheta*, *Putabhedana*, *Nigama*, *Pattana* and *Dranamukha*. The last four types refer to commercial cities. Of these, the *Putabhedana* was a large commercial center specializing in wholesale trade. The *Nigama* was an ordinary market center (the term itself refers to an organization of merchants). The *Pattana* was a coastal trading town, while the *Dronamukha* was located at the mouth of a river and served as a port city.³⁸

Apart from all these factors, transport and communication systems also played an important role in the process of urban development during the medieval period. Contemporary accounts bear-out ample evidence that, since the accession of the Lodi Sultans, roads buildings, construction and maintenance of sarais, digging of wells and plantation of shady trees on either side of the highways became one of the chief concerns of the rulers. Among them Sher-Sha-Suri and Akbar made tremendous contribution in this respects and helped the country to have better communication facilities. The communication facilities provided with rest-house (sarais), wells for drinking water and measure undertaken by the rulers for securing the roads of trade etc, all these together certainly created a favorable situation for promoting urban growth during the Mughal period.³⁹ The Mughal emperor had introduced an effective administrative machinery and established peace throughout the empire and consequent growth of commerce and manufacture, the period had been conceived of a 'veritable golden age of urbanization'. Of course, the process of urbanization was not same in different parts of the country. There was a considerable variation in the urbanization process. For instance, Western Uttar Pradesh and Eastern Punjab was the most rapidly developing region till the end of the 17th century. While the process of urbanization in Eastern Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Bengal has been slow as compared to the above mentioned sites.⁴⁰ In many case, geographical situation and religious places also acted as the key factor for the origin and development of towns. Particularly, in ancient India, the priority is given to the proper selection of the site suitable for a town. A town should have good geographical situation. A town is to have invariably a strong natural frontier-water, forest, hill or desert which could deserve as the defense of the town. It is presumed

that in hilly areas cities were invariably situated in a valley because the hills or mountains provided natural defense. But on the plain cities are mostly situated on the bank of rivers. There were two-fold advantages of rivers. First they might solve the problem of drinking water and irrigation and secondly serve as a means of transport and thus facilitate trade.⁴¹ Religious places also formed the nucleus of the urban settlement, and gradually towns grew around them. These places not only served the purpose of worship but also become seats of learning. They ministered to the needs of the poor and orphans. A large number of pilgrims from outside used to visit these places and several buildings were built for their stay. Markets and shops also cropped up to meet the needs of these people. In this way towns slowly sprang up around the religious edifices of the holy places.⁴² A different kind of township grew up centering educational institution, which comprises students and teachers, called university town. A classic example of university town, as the center of Buddhist learning and educational activities was Nalanda, which was developed during the period of Harsha. Along with political and commercial factors education also played a key role in the urbanization process of Taxila.

The beginning of urbanization in the Indian subcontinent can be traced back to 2500 B.C.⁴³ when a number of urban communities were flourishing in the Indus valley. Like the valleys of the Tigris-Euphrates and the Nile, the fertile Indus valley witnessed early urbanization associated with the first agricultural revolution in the world based upon invention of plough and irrigation.⁴⁴ The cities of this period flourished over a period of more than one thousand years up to about 1700 B.C.⁴⁵ The urban character of this phase is recognizable in a hierarchy of settlement sites, in the planned cities, in the urban infrastructure, their design, monumental architecture and orientation, apart from other significant archaeological evidence.⁴⁶ But the urban culture of this period was, however, confined to the Indus region, but practically remained unaffected the major part of the Indian subcontinent. This was followed by a prolonged period of over a thousand years in which we have no evidence of urban development.⁴⁷ The second phase of urbanization, the beginnings of which have been dated around the six century BC, coincided with the gradual maturity of the iron age.⁴⁸ This phase has been described by several scholars as the 'second urbanization in India'. The factors responsible for the origin and development of towns and cities of this period were surplus agriculture production, prosperous trade and industries

and political stability. From this period we again come across towns and cities associated with the two major, but closely related, cultural streams of India, namely the Aryan civilization of the North and the Dravidian civilization of the South.⁴⁹ This phase of urbanization reveals stages of internal growth and horizontal expansion. The factor adding substantially to the internal growth process was an enormous expansion of trade network in the period when India's early contact with Central Asia and the Roman was reached its peak.⁵⁰ The Mouryas had done much for the growth of towns and cities by bringing the greater part of the country under "one political umbrella", by establishing a uniform system of administration. It was only the Mouryan rulers, who built up vast empire throughout the country and established peace and order, which led to the expansion of agriculture, development of trade and commerce, that towns and cities become more numerous and the degree of urbanization rose higher. At this time there was a great increase of human habitation and a marked growth of population because the full potentialities to support the towns were realized. In course of time, the towns become big in size consisting of several buildings, markets and streets. Pataliputra, Taxila, Ujjini, Kausambi and possibly Pundranagara were the principal towns of this time.⁵¹ As far Kushana period is concerned, Dr. R.S. Sharma is of the view that the material remains ascribable to the Kushana phase exhibit urbanization at its height⁵² For peninsular India, this phase represents the first urbanization, which is better understood through regional and sub-regional studies, although commonalities may exist across regions.⁵³

Nothing special is notable about the process of urbanization till we reach the Gupta period (4th and 5th centuries A.D.) which is known as the golden age of Indian history.⁵⁴ With the increased security of life and property, there was an all round development in agriculture, industry and trade.⁵⁵ The prosperity of the country dependent more on industrial advancement, and there was a large scale trade with areas falling under the Roman Empire. As such, the industrial centers and port towns were the most flourishing.⁵⁶ Under the Guptas the Hinduism experienced a revival, and several new urban places grew around Hindu temples.⁵⁷ Thus urbanization signified a higher level of industrial production, increased trade, and emergence of new religious places.⁵⁸

But the nature of urbanization during early medieval period is subject of controversy among the scholars. Regarding the nature of urbanization of this period,

historian holds a different theoretical position. They suggest classification of urban centers in terms of the feudal mode of production. The historian involved in this debate are R.S. Sharma,⁵⁹ D.N.Jha,⁶⁰ V.S.N. Yadav,⁶¹ Harbans Mukhia,⁶² etc. B.D.Chattopadhyaya⁶³ and R.Champakalazmi⁶⁴ have enriched the debate. R.S. Sharma holds the view that urban centers during the time of second urbanization in India prove the existence of State feudalism. Sharma borrowed the argument of Henry Pirenne. D.D. Koshambi nomenclature this type of feudalism as feudalism from above⁶⁵ Sharma is of the view that, the decline of second urbanization is explained by the decline of State feudalism.⁶⁶ After a close examination of the destiny of the towns of northern India, principally on the basis of archaeological evidence, Prof. Sharma suggests that a large number of them were uninhabited, abandoned or even destroyed in the Gupta and Post-Gupta period phases, though some of them continued to exist in a poor state. The decline of foreign trade after the breakdown of the Kushana empire, the paucity of precious metals, the Huna incursion (only to a limited extent), and deforestation of the hinterland in the post-Gupta period, leading to scarcity of rainfall, have been regarded by Sharma as the main factors responsible, in varying degrees, for this state of affairs.⁶⁷ Prof. Sharma further mentioned that, the surplus production in general increases when the peasants have a superior right over the land. In pre-feudal times, the peasants were able to retain most of the surplus production and the state share was only a little. By and large the settled part of the country had independent peasants units of production and was also blessed with some amount of market economy. But after the Guptas, the authority of the peasants over these units suffered erosion because of the appearance of landed beneficiaries supplemented by large disappearance of trade.⁶⁸ The decline of trade led to the decay of urban center. Towns flourished in west and north India under the Satavahanas and Kushanas. A few cities continued to thrive in Gupta times. But the post-Gupta times witnessed the downfall of many old commercial cities in north India. Excavation show that several towns in Haryana and east Punjab, Purana Qila (Delhi), Mathura, Hastinapura (Meerut district), Sravasti (Uttar Pradesh), Kausambi (near Allahabad), Rajghat (Varanasi), Chirand (Saran district), Vaisali and Pataliputra began to decline in the Gupta period, and mostly disappeared in the post-Gupta times. The Chinese pilgrim Hsuan Tsang visited several towns considered sacred on account of their association with the Budha but found them almost deserted or dilapidated.⁶⁹ V.N.S. Yadav also echoes similar opinions. On the basis of the accounts of the Kali Age in

the *Mahabharata*, the Hindu Purana, the accounts of the Hieun Tsang and other contemporary sources, Prof. Yadav holds the view that by the seventh century, as a result of all-round decline in the rhythm of economic life, the towns of North India began to decline. Many towns of post-Gupta period may have been reduced in area and population. For instance, Kanouj, the premier city of post-Gupta period appears to have been smaller than *Pataliputra*. The causes of these are not specially given in the accounts. However, the context suggests that the circumstances responsible for them were mainly economic, but to some extent political also.⁷⁰

At any rate, even in terms of historical evidence, D.C. Sircar⁷¹ and B.D. Chattopadhyaya⁷² have questioned the extent of the decline of trade and urbanization in the period concerned. B.D. Chattopadhyaya suggests that after the decline of second urbanization, a third phase of urbanization took place in the early medieval India on account of the growth of the local trading communities and trade centers. "The majority of urban centers of this period were primarily nodal point in local exchange network, the numerical strength of settlements and a growth in the number of locality elites tended to result in the proliferation of urban centers of relatively modest dimensions." Prthudaka, Tattanandapura (identified with Ahar in Bulandshahar), Siyadoni (near Lalitpur in Jhansi district), and Gopagiri, (Gwalior) are useful examples of the continuity of inland trade and of urbanization associated with it in the early medieval period. Apart from these most important representative of the old urban centers is Ahicchatra in Bareilly district, which reveals an unbroken sequence in the early medieval context. Atranjikhhera in Etah district has remains of Gupta and post-Gupta times. It is argued by Prof. B.D. Chattopadhyaya that, if foreign trade did not play a crucial role in the birth of early urban center, a reduced volume of such trade may hardly be held responsible for their decay in the post-Kushana or post-Gupta period.⁷³ The more orthodox historical data against Sharma's hypothesis that the material remains in the form of structure, etc. in the excavated levels of the period are not at all impressive and that this suggests 'decay' have been carefully summarized by Sheena Puja (1990) on the basis of B.D. Chattopadhyaya's⁷⁴ researches:

"From epigraphic evidence it is clear that sites existed which show certain 'urban' traits and that there were distinct differences between these and 'rural' settlement. Sites like Tattanandapura (identified with Ahar in Bulandshahar),

Siyadoni (near Lalitpur in Jhansi district), and Gopagiri, (Gwalior), among others, testified through epigraphic evidence, seem to exhibit evidence for the existence of guilds, merchants, traders involved in overland and inland trade, large settlements, well-planned roads and houses, and dense population. Apart from the new sites, certain earlier sites like Varanasi and Ahichchhatra survived right up to the medieval times. Epigraphic evidence further shows that term for different settlements, i.e. *grama*, *pura*, *nagara* that existed in early historical times continued during this period. There is evidence of foreign trade in inscriptions and literary texts, so the complete cessation of trade cannot be adhered to totally. There is no doubt that certain sites declined or were deserted after the early historical period, but there were others which emerged".⁷⁵

According R. Champakalakshimi, the theory of de-urbanization, as propounded by Prof. R.S. Sharm and V.N.S. Yadav, in the post-third century A.D. in Northern India has no relevance to South Indian urbanization to the period concerned. For South India, it is not even clearly attested by both archaeological records as well as literary evidences. On the contrary, the post-Sangam literature works such as the epics *Silappadikaram*, and *Manimekalai*, point to a continuity of trade activities in at least the major center of the early historical period like *Kanci*, *Vanci* and *Madurai*. More significant, it was a period of re-urbanization for some of the early historical urban centers like *Kancipuram*.⁷⁶ Discussing the factor of urbanization, Prof. Champakalakshimi argued that there was a combined force in medieval South India such as politico-religious and administrative, which helped the growth of urban centers, although primacy must be assigned to economic factors.⁷⁷ In the period between 6th to the 13th century A.D., there were several merchant and trade guilds in south India, which were known by several names as Ayyavole, Manigramam, Anjuvannam, Nanadesi, Valanjiyar etc. The records of the south Indian kingdom of this period reveal that due to the activities of the merchant guilds many towns grew up and these towns became centres of urban culture of south India. On the basis of archaeological excavation Prof. V.K. Thakur highlighted that, at least four urban centres in Bengal remained in occupation even after the post –Gupta period. Khana-Mihirer-Dhipi at Chandraketurah (district 24-Pargana), a fortified township whose period ranged possibly from pre-Mouryas to post-Gupta period, Goswamikhanda (Burdwan District), Rajabadidanga (district Murshidabad), dating

from the Mouryas to the “early medieval” times, and Bangarh (district Dinajpur) are important example of the continuity of urbanization in early medieval Bengal. At last he concluded that, even in a feudal milieu urban center having no commercial or mercantile association can thrive more so in the case of early medieval Bengal.⁷⁸ Thus third urbanization with some characteristic features is explained by them as the product of decentralized feudal. Koshambi⁷⁹ classified them as products of feudalism from below.

So after a long period of stagnation, the re-activation of the urbanization process had to wait till about 1000 A.D. when several Rajput kingdoms took form, especially in western India.⁸⁰ The period of the seven or eight century A.D. may be regarded as an epoch making period in the history of Rajputs. It is for the first time, the courses of Indian history are noticed shifting from other parts to the region of Rajasthan. The period from tenth to twelfth century A.D. may be considered as the Golden Age in the history of Rajputs. The princes of the Rajput clans such as the Chouhanas, the Paramaras and the Yadavas, founded their separate small principalities with their capitals. They built fort at strategic point, which in course of time, assumed the shape of towns. From that time, due to the Muslim invasion and their religious persecutions, the Hindu masses of the neighboring Provinces took shelter under these heroic Rajputs. As a result of this mobilization of population, new towns were founded, and those, which were originally villages, were transformed into towns. The vigorous religious activities of this period also led to an increase in the number of holy places. Peace and security acquired by their efficient administration brought prosperity, which gave an impetus to the socio-economic development and urbanization. Bhinmal, Vasantnagarh, Mandor, Nagda, Chitor, Khandela, Nadol, Kheda, Ajmer, Baroda etc are the important urban center which developed during the Rajput supremacy.⁸¹

The supremacy of Rajputs declined with the coming of the Muslim Sultans in power at Delhi in 1206. It was marked by many new developments that made distinct impact upon the process and kind of urbanization.⁸² During the early part of their rule, the innumerable invasions conducted by them within the country were aimed at widening their territorial power. But once subjugated, the towns and cities were never pillaged again, not at least by the victor, and left undisturbed to prosper.⁸³ Whatever other factor might have been incorporated in their programme of

consolidation, urbanization was one of the major items on the agenda. The vast territories could properly be governed through the deputies appointed by the Caliphs in a series of well dispersed towns located at strategically appropriate points. Thus foundation of new towns or resusciation of the older ones was undertaken primarily under the political necessity. But by introducing this new element of multiplication of urban centers the Muslim conquerors had shifted the focal point from rural communities to urban agglomerations. Each successive Sultan whoever had the luck to grace any throne in India, strictly and invariably adhered to urbanization. In conformity with the pattern set by preceding Sultan they undertook measures best calculated to promote urbanization. Given continuity in policy, for the common citizen of the town the name and dynasty wielding power at the center become unimportant. As a result of this approach, the appearance of new towns becomes almost a routine matter in the Muslim Empire. The performance of the Muslim rulers in this particular respect was so eminently successful that no external force could, as long as they retained vigour, shake it.⁸⁴

The extent of urbanization in India during the seventeenth century was much higher than what it was in British India at the beginning of the century.⁸⁵ Because the century attained a high level of political stability and economic prosperity under the Mughals over a period of about 300 years—a period long enough to establish cities on a sound footing. The Mughals established several new cities in addition to that of the revival of existing cities, almost every part of their territory. Apart from the capital and administrative towns, the smaller towns received support from a class of feudal chiefs to whom the Mughal emperors gave large land grants. It does appear that, at least to some extent, the Mughal emperors were of the yawning cultural gap between the rural masses and the city rulers. In order to bring about closer contact, the intermediate functionaries were dispersed into different parts of the empire. These petty feudal lords helped in the process of land resettlement and the building of small towns.⁸⁶ It has been plausibly postulated that, at least for northern India, four distinct types of urban centres can be identified.⁸⁷ First, there were those cities whose prime function was administrative where other roles, such as manufacturing or religion were of secondary importance. There were cities such as Agra, Delhi, Lahore as well as many provincial capitals. Later, Poona, Faizabad, Hayderabad emerged as important centres of administration. Secondly, there were cities which had a

predominantly commercial and manufacturing character to which may be attached some administrative functions. Both Patna and Ahmadabad in the Mughal period fall into this category.⁸⁸ Thirdly, there was the case of pilgrimage centers where trade and craft activities were drawn to where there was already a concentration of both predominantly settle and transient population, as in the case of Benares or Mathura. Finally, there were those centers which developed and flourished because of some distinct manufacturing technique, craft skill or local commodity which ensured their ongoing prosperity. Bayana owed its prosperity to the indigo grown in the surrounding countryside. Khairabad and Daryabad in Awadh were famous for their textiles.⁸⁹

IV

During the medieval period, a number of major cities grew up in the Deccan. Of these Golconda (now in ruins near Hyderabad), Bijapur, Ahamadnagar, Gulbarga, Badami, Kothapur, Pune, Hampi (now in ruins), and Hayderabad are notable examples. These cities were built on a grand scale, with monumental structures in the center in the form of mosques or palaces. A number of these cities continue to occupy position of great importance even today.⁹⁰

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