PREFACE

Fascinated by the Harrapan Civilization taught to me in school. I developed interest in ancient Indian History. Lack of guidance shattered my dreams with false experimentation. It was only at the post-graduate level. I saw new hopes when I first met my Professor, Dr. Pratima Kamat who always appreciated the smallest thing I did. Under her guidance, I was able to take up M.Phil in Archaeology at Deccan College, Pune. Here,

I gained expertise in all scientific and interdisciplinary techniques and methods that could be used to reconstruct the past such as epigraphy, numismatics, archaeobotany, archaeozoology, paleontology, archaeochemistry etc. Explorations and Excavations to the pre-historic, proto-historic and historic sites gave practical training in the field of archaeology.

With background of history and archaeology. I made my first attempt through my M.Phil dissertation based on pre-Portuguese History of Goa titled “Maritime History on the West Coast with special reference to the Port-City of Gopakapattana” under the guidance of Dr. V.D. Gogte. In the above dissertation, I tried to find out trade contacts through XRD analysis of ancient pottery found at the site. Later I realized that there was a lot that had to be explored on the area.

Discussion with my guide helped me to select the topic of the present research. I knew it would be a challenging topic for me to handle with lack of resources and expertise in Goa. On the other hand I felt that this would be a novel contribution to fill gaps of our pre-Portuguese history of Goa.

I was also discouraged on several occasions for selecting such a topic where there was no material available but only bits and pieces scattered in Goa and surrounding regions. At this instance, I remembered one of my professors at Deccan College who said ‘Archaeologists is like a detective agent who searches for clues to reconstruct his story".

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Words of encouragement and support from my guide were enough to overcome all barriers which came my way. Taking it as a challenge I visited museums, libraries, institutions, organizations in Goa, Pune, Mumbai and Dharwad, had discussions with scholars in different fields and conducted extensive field work to gather and interpret information in an analytical manner.

I hope the efforts that have gone in preparing the thesis will definitely contribute to the history of pre-Portuguese Goa.

The present study, therefore, proposes to concentrate on the ancient urban maritime history of the ports of Chandrapura and Gopakapattana, situated on the banks of the river Zuari, and Ella, situated on the banks of the river Mandovi, which provided good anchorage for large sea-going vessels.

The present study is an attempt to deal with the following aspects of the research problem:

- To reconstruct the ancient urban maritime history of Goa that has been largely neglected to date.
- To highlight the role of the ports of Chandrapur, Gopakapattana and Ella in the history of the ancient and medieval ports of Goa and western India.
- To study in depth the politico-administrative changes that these port-capitals experienced through the ages.
- To analyse the social systems and cultural forms that existed in Chandrapur, Gopakapattana and Ella
- To delineate the trade patterns that emerged at these ports.
- To trace the beginning of urbanisation in Goa during the ancient period and understand the extent to which urbanisation took place.
In order to achieve the above objectives various archaeological sources such as inscriptions, coins, monuments, sculpture and other antiquities have been documented and systematically analysed. Besides, literary sources both sacred and secular literature and travel accounts have been referred to in order get insights and references to various topics on the present study. Oral sources in the form of oral traditions and personal interviews have provided valuable information for the present study.

The present thesis has used the triple methodology of integrating literary, archaeological and oral evidences in order to acquire an analytical inquiry into our multi-faceted past which is indeed a desideratum.

The thesis consists of the following chapters.

The first chapter provides a general introduction to the present research. The basic key terms like ‘maritime’, ‘urban’, ‘urbanisation’, ‘urbanism’, ‘urban centre’ and other related concepts, theories and requirements are herein defined and specified. The study is placed in a theoretical perspective.

The second chapter contains the Statement of the Research Problem and Methodology: Here an extensive documentation of the sources: archaeological, literary and oral, methods and techniques required to undertake such study has been provided for future researchers in this field. During the course of exploration, new sources for the present study have been brought to light in the form of inscriptions, coins, sculptures and monuments.

The third chapter on Geo-Physical Setting provides answers to questions like how the geo-physical setting of Goa was conducive for the growth and development of urban centers and maritime trade and later responsible for its decline. Where did urban centres grow? What are the determinant factors that influence location of ports and growth of port cities? What climatic and
geological conditions are conducive for the patterns of trade? How the fertility of soil led to agrarian expansion?

The fourth chapter on Politico-Administrative Aspects provides answers to questions like how did the political environment contribute to the development of an urban centre and maritime trade in terms of its social, economic and commercial stability? What was the nature of the state? Was it centralized, hierarchical, segmentary, hereditary and feudal? What efforts were made to extend agricultural activities so as to accommodate more and more people on the available land? What was the layout of port-cities? Was there feudalism in Goa if yes, during which period of Goa’s history? What was the role played by local administrative bodies namely the gaunkari system of Goa?

The fifth chapter, Urban Economy and Maritime Trade deals with important questions like how the economy of the region contributed to trade and urban development? What was the nature of economy? How did the urban population sustain itself? What relationship existed between the city and its hinterland? Who provided resources for sustaining the non-agrarian population? What inventions took place during the period of study which led to progress? Who contributed to the cultivation of fallow land, increased craft production, improved agricultural techniques, development of market centres as a result of large scale surplus production for the purpose of distribution?

What facilities were provided to encourage trade contacts? How was rural expansion accelerated through land grants, creation of agrahara and emergence of temple centres? Emergence of heterogeneous population due to migration of traders and merchants. Trade routes, shipping and navigation skills undertaken, What role did they play in the development of maritime trade? What are the reasons for their decline?
The sixth chapter is on Socio-Cultural Dynamics examines questions related to assimilation, acculturation, sanskritisation and segmentation as a result of urbanisation, maritime activity at the ports of Goa.

Various questions like were there any changes in the role of social institutions like family, marriages, position of women? What changes can be seen in the social life of people in terms of its traditional patterns, the changes in lifestyle of people in terms of food, dress, jewellery, education, entertainment and art and architecture? What was the role of religion in this new set up? What led to a gradual transformation from the Little Tradition to the Great Tradition?

Last but not the least, the findings of the study are incorporated in the concluding chapter and necessary suggestions for future research have been proposed for in-depth thinking by future researchers and archaeologists.