Chapter I – Sacred Space with Monumental Remains

Certain areas on earth are more sacred than others, some on account of their situation, and others because of their sparkling waters, and others because of the association or habitation of saintly people.

*Mahābhārata Anuśāsana Parva* 108: 16-18

Throughout the ages many cultures have conceived of geographic space and expressed those conceptions in a variety of ways. One expression of these conceptions has been the establishment of sacred geographies.

Sacred space does not only constitute of sites with religious architecture, but contains other sites as well, such as mountains (Mt. Kailash), water bodies (Pushkar lake, river Ganga), sacred trees and forest groves (Bodhgaya), places of ancient mythological importance (Vrindavan, Dwarka) and natural springs to mention a few. Many such sites that do not necessarily have structures delineating the sacred space can be found mentioned in the religious texts under the category of *tīrthas*. The word *tīrtha* covers a wide range of places considered religious because of some importance or the other attached to them with the aid of mythology and stories involving either gods or ṛṣis. In the *Mahābhārata* it is mentioned that ablutions in the sacred *tīrthas* was a praiseworthy act (Mbh. II.CXCX94). The majority of the *tīrthas* mentioned in the *Mahābhārata* are rivers, but other places such as wells, tanks, lakes, trees, forests and mountains were also considered *tīrthas*. The total categories of *tīrthas* enumerated are eighteen and include also the resorts of the sages and gods, whether they are mountains or lands.

Sacred sites would also include lesser known areas where local deities are worshipped, but which do not have a monument dedicated to them. The study by
Jackson and Enthoven provides information regarding the representation of deities in forms different than that of images or in the anthropomorphic form.¹ According to them a common way of representing these minor deities was by drawing a trident in red lead and oil. These were painted on an upright slab of stone on a road, on the borders of a village, a hilltop, a mountain side, in an underground cellar or on the bank of a stream.² Also noticed during my field trip were small shrines at the side of the road with votive terracotta animal figurines. Close to the temple site of Kotesvara is one such shrine, where the ādivāśīs of the area offer horse shaped terracotta figurines at the successful completion of a job. At the temple site of Roda similar offerings were noticed close to one of the temples. Other similar shrines were noticed on the way to the Jaina shrines and Buddhist caves in the Taranga hills (fig 1.1a) and on the road connecting Ambaji and Kotesvara (fig 1.1 b). From this brief discussion it is evident that sacred space acquires many forms and meanings. This chapter shall concentrate on providing an overview of sacred sites with monumental remains in Gujarat within the time period under study.

First we shall have a look at the writings available and the opinions held by various historians and thereafter analyse the material available for the region. The general belief is that with the coming of the Mauryas the Indian subcontinent was integrated, and that under them there was a further expansion in trade and trading activities and this period saw the expansion of Buddhism. Consequently a decline in trade with the Roman world led to a decline of Buddhism, and granting of land to the brahmanas led ultimately to the construction of temples. According to R.S.Sharma, “A distinctive

¹ A.M.T. Jackson & R.E. Enthoven, Folklore of Gujarat, Vintage Books, Published in Haryana, Printed in Delhi, 1989
² A.M.T. Jackson & R.E. Enthoven, Folklore of Gujarat, Vintage Books, Published in Haryana, Printed in Delhi, 1989; p.1
Votive Terracotta Offerings

1.1 a) Taranga

1.1 b) Ambaji/Kotesvara
feature of pre Mauryan times is the development of urban economy. Like town life, trade revived on a considerable scale. Trade was facilitated by the advent of money economy, which was ushered in by the use of punch-marked coins. For the Mauryan period he opines that, “In the Mauryan times we witness an unprecedented expansion of the economic activities of the state... From the economic point of view the most important development of the period was the thriving trade between southern India and the Roman Empire.”

A similar argument can be noticed in the works of Romila Thapar. “The other source of revenue which was beginning to be tapped at the state level in the Mauryan period and which was to grow considerably in the post Mauryan period was trade.” It would seem that in her opinion as well it was trade and traders that led to an increased importance of Buddhism. “The prosperity of the merchant community is evident from their donations to religious institutions. Not surprisingly the religions supported by the merchants, pre eminently Buddhism and Jainism, saw their heyday during these centuries (c. 200 BC – AD 300).” In her opinion, “To the extent that Asoka patronized Buddhism it came to be established in some parts of the empire. But the more extensive spread and enhancement of Buddhism came from its new patrons in the mercantile community in the post Mauryan period.” Monasteries were constructed, as pointed out by her, close to towns or on a route frequented by merchants, caravans or pilgrims. A similar opinion is held by Heitzmann-

“Buddhist monastic sites grew up at these nodes (nodes of permanent settlement

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3 R.S.Sharma, *Perspectives in Social and Economic History of India*, Sundeep Prakashan, Delhi, 2003; p.124
4 Ibid; p.126
5 Ibid. ; p.128
6 Ibid.; p.143
7 Romila Thapar, *The Mauryas Revisited*; K.P Bagchi & Comp., Calcutta, 1987; p.11
8 Romila Thapar, *Early India- From the Origins to AD 1300*, Allen Lane, London, 2002; p.245
9 Ibid.; p.205
10 Ibid.; p. 270

36
connected by trade routes) and along the routes. The triad of political power and commerce centred in stable occupational sites, associated with Buddhism as a major religious component, and lasted into the Christian era. There is a strong case for the linking of early Buddhism to kings and traders in an urban setting.”

In Thapar’s opinion also, “Buddhism hovered in the background of most activities at this time, also supported by the rich and powerful.”

In the period between c. AD 300-700 Thapar points out that formal Buddhism was fading out in the post Gupta period. It was also a period when the centralized state ceased to exist and was being replaced by smaller kingdoms. Rulers of these smaller kingdoms preferred to patronize the brahmana community as compared to the Buddhists, which led to a decline in the support base of the Buddhists. “The innovation of this period in the use of agencies to establish power lay in the notion of rewarding the legitimitizers of kingship with grants of land. In choosing to be patrons of Puranic Hinduism and Vedic Brahmanism, these kings were seeking a different legitimacy from those who patronized Buddhism. It is from this point on that the grants of land became the outliners of the Puranic religions, forming networks of support for many new and obscure dynasties claiming ksatriya status.”

The beginnings of feudalism are traced by historians from the Gupta period onwards. It is believed that land was donated to brahmanas by the ruling class, “in return for support to the ruling authority”. For the period between 300 to 600 AD R.S.Sharma is of the opinion, “Foreign trade does not seem to have been as extensive as in the post Mauryan times. Indian economy in the Gupta times was largely based on self...

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11 James Heitzmann, Early Buddhism, Trade and Empire in KAR Kennedy & G.L. Possehl ed. Studies in the Archaeology and Palaeanthropology of South Asia, Oxford & IBH, 1984; p.121
12 Romila Thapar, Early India- From the Origins to AD 1300, Allen Lane, London, 2002; p.270
13 Romila Thapar, Early India- From the Origins to AD 1300, Allen Lane, London ,2002; p.319
14 Romila Thapar, Early India- From the Origins to AD 1300, Allen Lane, London ,2002; p.325
15 R.S.Sharma, Perspectives in Social and Economic History of India, Sundeep Prakashan, Delhi, 2003; p.147
sufficient units of production in villages and towns. The bond of state control which kept these units together in Mauryan times and that of copper currency which unified it in post Mauryan times no longer operated during this period.\(^{16}\) The early medieval period in Sharma’s opinion was one of urban decay which led to the migration of brahmanas to the countryside. According to him, “The western coast is naturally associated with sea borne commerce which generated urbanism. But it is significant that post Gupta epigraphs speak of a constant migration of brahmanas from towns in that area.\(^{17}\) The dispersal of brahmanas in the countryside raised the cultural level of the peasantry.”\(^{18}\) Not only did the brahmanas spread better agricultural techniques in these donated areas, but spread the Brahmanical religion as well.\(^{19}\)

Beginnings of feudalism, lack of a centralized state machinery, granting of land to brahmanas and decline in trade, it is opined, led to a consequent decline of Buddhism in the subcontinent and the rise of the Brahmanical religion.

The above mentioned studies tend to club various categories of Buddhist monks into one mould. As shown by Reginald Ray there were different categories of Buddhist monks, and these were Arhants, the Pratyekabuddhas, the Bodhisattvas of the forest and settled monks. The Arhants were forest saints and lived in places that were not accessible to the common people. The Pratyekabuddha was a solitary saint who also mostly dwelled in forests and was allowed, “eight requisites: three robes, a begging bowl, razor, needle, girdle and a water strainer” and begged for his food.\(^{20}\) Bodhisattvas were of three types- those of forest, city and monastery.\(^{21}\)

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\(^{16}\) R.S.Sharma, *Perspectives in Social and Economic History of India*, Sundeep Prakashan, Delhi, 2003; p.156

\(^{17}\) R.S.Sharma, *Urban Decay in India*, Manohar, Delhi, 1987; p.160

\(^{18}\) Ibid; p.161

\(^{19}\) Ibid; p.184


\(^{21}\) Ibid; p.251
or the decline of trading activities would seem to have had no effect on the survival of these Buddhist monks, as their dependence on the common folk was limited to the procurement of basic food and not material wealth. Neither were they dependent on any form of state patronage nor on urbanization since the village community could have provided them with the basic essentials they required. The Buddhist monasteries were a part of the larger Buddhist community of monks and these other categories of monks have been simply left out. Thus before making a correlation between trade, urbanization and Buddhism one has to take into consideration the various categories of monks that existed.

Studies on religious architecture have concentrated mainly on classifying them into one category or the other and dating the religious structures. These include works by Michael W. Meister, M.A. Dhaky and Krishna Deva,\(^{22}\) Kantilal F. Sompura\(^{23}\) and J.M. Nanavati\(^{24}\) whose works have been discussed in the introduction.

In addition to these specific writings on Maitraka temples are the general books on Hindu temples that might help further investigations on Maitraka temples. Kramirsch in her book\(^{25}\) while studying the architectural components of a temple tries to trace the origin in the past. She points out that the main portion of the temple, in its simplest form, can be traced to a dolmen. Her work demonstrates that the temple had its origins not only in Vedic, Puranic or other religious texts but also in earlier existing structures of a region. It would seem that with the passage of time these structures were modified and were given a more complicated form to make their appearance more beautiful and also to suit ritual requirements. Thus to trace the origins of the

\(^{23}\) Kantilal F. Sompura, *Structural Temples of Gujarat (upto 1600 AD)*, Gujarat University, Ahmedabad, 1968
basic temple forms it becomes necessary to go beyond texts and theories and look for building practices, in the pre temple construction period in a region. As has been pointed out, "The stone dolmen was a small chamber formed by one large slab of stone supported by three upright slabs set on their wedges with one side open to serve as an entrance. It could well have been the prototype of the early central Indian Gond temples and the flat roofed central Indian temples like the ageless varieties of village and wayside shrines with their cubical walls covered by a flat roof which can be seen even today."  

These studies concentrate only on the form and style of the religious structure. They fail to inform us how these defined the sacred space and whether they shared a sacred site, or whether a site had multiple affiliations. The communities involved and the surrounding environment or settlements have been completely neglected. These studies take only the structure into consideration and fail to incorporate the archaeological data available either at the sites or in their vicinity.

After a general discussion of the studies that have been carried out so far, and before proceeding to the first period under study, I would like to briefly discuss the political scenario and the settlement pattern of the region, to ascertain whether R.S.Sharma’s statement holds true for this region. It is generally believed that the Mauryas caused new settlements to be established since they required revenue to maintain the vast state machinery. According to R.S.Sharma, "The Mauryas made an important contribution to the development of rural economy by founding new settlements and rehabilitating the decaying ones by drafting surplus settlers from overpopulated areas."  

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26 R.Champakalakshmi & Usha Kris, *The Hindu Temple*, Roli Books, Delhi, 2001; p.17-18
In the study carried out by U.P. Shahi it can be noticed that the region was continuously settled from the Harappan to the post Harappan times with certain shifts in the region. A few sites in different districts of Gujarat belonging to the late Harappan period are as follows-Makwana timbo and Orio timbo Chrioda in Gadhada taluka of Bhavnagar district; Chavaneshvar and Telod in Broach taluka of Vadodara; Adeva in Matar taluka of Kaira; Malvan in Chaurasi taluka of Surat; Fatehpura, Nagwada, Visnagar and Rustamgadh in Dasada taluka of Surendarnagar; Thunda timbo in Banaskantha district; Godha, Godhana Timbo and Thumda in Mahesana district and Jagaroh and Patel Raniji ka Magsa in Anjar taluka of Kutch. Also found distributed in the region are chalcolithic sites as well. Some of them are- Padra in Kheda district; Jokha, Ashrva and Chichoda in district Surat; Makavana, Khanderio and Jivani in Bhavnagar district; Tarana and Ghadada in Jamnagar district; and Khakra Bela in Rajkot district, to mention a few. Material excavated from the site of Nagal helps, “bridge the gap between late and post Harappan chalcolithic sites in south Gujarat on one hand and early Historical sites yielding in their lowest level the Northern Black Polished Ware.”

Thus, as seen there seems to be a continuity of settlement in Gujarat from the post Harappan to the period prior to the Mauryas.

Politically, prior to the emergence of Mauryas, Gujarat was being ruled by various different janapadas, as inferred from various texts. The Matsya Purāṇa (CXIV) enumerates a number of janapadas which existed in Gujarat during the period which were the Bharukaccha, Samahiya, Sarasvata, Kachika, Anarta, Saurashtra and Surala janapadas. The areas covered by them were:

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28 IAR, 1961-62; p.11-12
1. Bharukaccha janapada has been identified as the Bharuch region. This coastal janapada was located north of the estuary of the Narmada and extended to the south of Mahi.

2. Samahiya janapada is associated with the Mahi river and appeared to have been contiguous to Bharukaccha including the whole basin of the Sabarmati situated north of the Mahi.

3. Sarasvata janapada coincided with the region drained by the river Sarasvati which falls into the Rann of Kutch. It consisted of Patan - Mahesana plain between the foothills of the Aravallis and the Kutch.

4. Kachika janapada was no doubt the Kutch region.

5. Anarta janapada occupied the northern half of the Kathiawar peninsula.

6. Saurashtra janapada occupied the southern half of Kathiawar peninsula.

7. Surala (Sirala, Murala) janapada coincided with lower Tapti basin but it still needs confirmation.  

He further points out that, “Though it is difficult to find out the names and locations of the capitals of all the above janapadas, their existence cannot be denied. It may be synthesized that Dväravati in Anarta, Girinagara (Junagadh) in Saurashtra and Bharukaccha (Bharuch) in Bharukaccha might have developed as local capitals of their respective janapadas.”  

Archaeological evidence points to the presence of settlements at these sites and Dwarka is one of the sites settled continuously over a long period of time.

Thus prior to the coming of the Mauryas in Gujarat, there seem to have been already janapadas existing that were ruling different parts of Gujarat. The presence of silver in huge quantities, utilized for coins by the Saurashtra janapada points to the efficiency

29 U.P. Shahi, Urbanisation in Gujarat; A Geographical Analysis, Institute for Rural Eco Development, Gorakhpur, 1989; p.27-28
30 Ibid.; p.28
of their resource mobilisation. The region was not at any point of time a blank slate, and it would hence be inappropriate to contribute the establishment of settlements in this region to the Mauryas. It would seem more as though the Mauryan rulers from their provincial capital at Junagadh exploited the revenue generated from the already diverse economic activities in Gujarat.

After discussing the backdrop I would now proceed to discuss the various sacred sites of the region, and analyse the changes the region was going through in the different periods selected for the study. With the aid of sub themes the chapter will attempt to answer the question as to whether selection of sacred sites, in both Buddhism and the Brahmanical religion, was limited to one ecological niche in all the three sub periods, or whether other niches were being selected as sacred sites. The core areas of concentration of sacred sites shall be identified and an analysis carried out whether this remained the same over a period of time. An attempt is also carried out to ascertain an increase or decrease in the number of sacred sites occupying the diverse landscapes of Gujarat.

**PERIOD I – circa Third century BC to circa First century BC/ AD**

This time bracket has been chosen as the first time bracket mainly because from this time onwards one comes across archaeological evidence pertaining to religious remains. In the period prior to this there may have been more sacred sites, but without substantial archaeological data it is difficult to carry out a study on those sacred sites that had existed.

**Ecological Niches Occupied**

For the Brahmanical religion evidence pertaining to two sites, namely Dwarka and Somanatha, (map 1.1) is literary, and the site of Padri is the only one with archaeological evidence. Found mentioned in the *Mahābhārata*, ‘There is also
Map 1.1 Period I: Sacred Sites with Religious Architecture

- Brahmanical Sites
- Buddhist Sites
Dvārāvatī which produces great merit and in which lives the slayer of Madhu'. (III, 88) One should go to Dwarka, as mentioned in the Mahābhārata, with regulated diet and vows and one who bathes in the Pindaraka obtains the merit of giving away much gold. (III, 82) The story associated with Prabhasa or Somanatha is that Soma married twenty seven daughters of Dakṣa and on account of his predilection for Rohini, the other wives complained to Dakṣa who cursed Soma so that he was affected by phthisis. In order to get rid of the disease, Soma on command of ṛṣi Dakṣa, proceeded to Sarasvati. He reached the greatest of tīrthas called Prabhasa belonging to Sarasvati. After bathing here he regained his effulgence and hence the place got its name Prabhasa. (IX, 35)

The only site with evidence of some form of a shrine is that of Padri. (map 1.1) Excavations carried out at this site revealed a three-fold sequence – pre Harappan, Padri culture, mature Harappan and early Historical. Vasant Shinde analyses a stone structure located almost in the central part of the habitation and calls it a temple dedicated to the goddess Lajjāgaurī. Found at this site were three Lajjāgaurī plaques as well as one image of Ganesa and one of Visnu, both in sandstone. The stone structure measured 17.06 feet (north-south) and 12.13 feet (east-west). It contained five postholes and the presence of these would suggest the existence of some superstructure over this patch of the floor. The north west part of this floor was a hard, circular (4.92 feet in diameter) mud platform. Also the absence of cooking and storage facilities suggests that it was a non-domestic structure. The images have been dated to 1st century BC-AD, and if this is truly a temple it is the earliest and only archaeological evidence of a temple in Gujarat in the first time period under study.

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31 Vasant Shinde, The Earliest Temple of Lajjāgaurī? The Recent Excavations at Padri in Gujarat, in East and West, Vol.44, Nos. 2-4, 1994; p.481
It is noticed that while the nature of evidence of these three sites may be different, the factor common to all is the location along the coastline of Saurashtra. In fact it is only from Saurashtra, and no other region within Gujarat, that evidence pertaining to the existence of Brahmanical sacred sites can be gathered. It is thus apparent that coastal areas were preferred by the Brahmanical religion for establishment of sacred sites, and areas close to either the hill or at the confluence of rivers in the interiors were not selected within this time period under study.

**Buddhism**

The location of Buddhist sacred sites in the region demonstrates a different trend. The few sites in this period are located more in the interiors and not as much along the coastal area. (map 1.1) Occupying different ecological niches, the Buddhist and the Brahmanical sites shared the commonality of being located within Saurashtra only.

The Bawa Pyara caves and its caityagrha are dated to the Mauryan period.\(^{32}\) (fig 1.2)

This site is located within the present city limits of Junagadh, and is carved out of a single separate rock. The caityagrha (fig 1.3) had four pillars supporting a flat roof, and the cave is 19.68 feet wide and 4.92 feet deep, and has a nearly semi circular apse on the west. The caityagrha has a verandah in front of it, from which two cells are entered, one on each side of the principal hall. (fig 1.4) There are six pillars in the verandah and each has simha brackets to the roof, the façade of which has very crude caitya window ornaments. At each end of the verandah are winged simhas carved in low relief on the walls.\(^{33}\)

While one site was located in the Gir hill range, another site dated to the Mauryan period is a vihāra located in the Barda hills at Ghumli.\(^{34}\) (map 1.1) The site is located

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\(^{32}\) Kantilal F. Sompura, *Buddhist Monuments and Sculptures in Gujarat- A Historical Survey*, Vishveshvaranand Institute, Hoshiarpur, 1965; p.32

\(^{33}\) Ibid.; p.7

\(^{34}\) *Annual Report of the Department of Archaeology, Government of Gujarat, 1972-73*; p.4
1.2 Bawa Pyara Caves
1.3 Bawa Pyara- Caitya Hall

Pillar within the Hall
1.4 Bawa Pyara- Hall & Verandah
in the interior region of Saurashtra, between the Vartu and Bhadar rivers among the Barda hills.

It is apparent that in the selection of sacred sites by the Buddhists natural hills and rocks, that could be carved out to create residences for the monks, played a vital role in selection of sites. The caves are plain and devoid of much sculptural remains and their simplicity suggest the main purpose of these was to accommodate the Buddhist monks during the retreat season. These caves lack evidence to suggest their existence as sites for ritual purposes or worship by the lay community. Thus Buddhist sacred sites during this period constituted mainly of living spaces for monks and did not incorporate space to accommodate ritualistic worship by the lay community.

**Demarcation of Sacred Space by the Royalty**

In addition to the above mentioned sites, the role of the royalty in creation of sacred space is seen in the presence of the Asokan Rock Edict.\(^{35}\) (fig 1.5) The site is located at a distance of 1.6 kms from the main city of Junagadh and 3.8 kms from the Gir forests. The rounded granite boulder with the edicts is situated at the entrance of the valley, about half a mile east of the town, near the edge of what was once the Sudarsana lake.\(^{36}\) The edict, now situated in a building to ensure its protection, is located between the path connecting the Sudarsana lake and the holy Mount Girnar at one end, and the city of Junagadh on the other. Those who entered the city via this path would have surely stopped to take notice of this boulder of stone, twelve feet high and seventy five feet in circumference, inscribed with the edicts of Asoka. In the opinion of Romila Thapar, “It is possible that in the Asokan period the city of Girnar was closer to the lake than is the present site of Junagadh, since it would have been

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\(^{35}\) *CII*, Vol. I & II

\(^{36}\) K. V. Soundara Rajan, *Junagadh*, ASI, Delhi, 1985, p. 12
1.5 Asokan Rock Edict
more practical to build the city as near the water supply as possible." The site probably would have marked the entry into the settlement sites, as is still the case. The selection of the site of Junagadh may have been due to varied causes. It would also seem as though the area was agriculturally important, as according to Romila Thapar one of the major agricultural regions, in the Mauryan period, was Saurashtra in the west. This is probably the reason why the dam at Sudarsana lake was constructed and later maintained by the succeeding rulers. Added to this was the presence of raw materials for the fabrication of beads in Kathiawar in the form of agates, carnelian, onyx and chalcedony besides chank shells.

The importance and antiquity of Junagadh is further attested by the find of the Saurashtra janapada coins. A total of three hoards at Junagadh adding to two thousand two hundred and fifty five coins have been recovered. From the surrounding area of the site one hoard with four hundred coins comes from Sherdi and another with fifty coins from Girnar, all of them being of silver. Thus in all probabilities Girnar or a site close to it was the capital of the Saurashtra janapada, which can probably account for the presence of the vast amount of accumulated wealth here as seen in the find of hoards with a large number of coins.

In the first period under study even though the evidence is limited, it still clearly points to the beginnings of demarcation of sacred space. While the sites of Somanatha and Dwarka continue, the evidence from Padri discontinues pointing to the continuity

37 Romila Thapar, *Asoka and the Decline of the Mauryas*, OUP, 1963; p. 231
of some and discontinuity of other sites. Also the Asokan Rock Edict marks the beginning of a series of inscriptions to be carved by ruling dynasties on this rock at Junagadh, continuing up to the Gupta period. Here the role of royalty is limited in nature, but in the succeeding period definite proof for the creation of sacred space by the royalty is provided by insessional data.

**Period II- First century BC/AD to Third century AD**

The second period under study witnesses not only an increase in the number of sacred sites (map 1.2) but a constantly expanding religious landscape, new forms of sacred sites and a concentration of Buddhist sites in the region as well. Occupation of sites in varied ecological niches by the Buddhism and the Brahmanical religion is noticed. In both the religions for the first time sacred sites are also found in eastern and southern region of Gujarat as well as in Kutch. For the first time, in this second period under study, creation of sacred space occurs outside the confines of Saurashtra.

**Brahmanical Religion**

While Saurashtra does continue to contain evidence of Brahmanical sacred sites, a shift in selection of sites to other parts of Gujarat is noticed. The new site of Karvan (map 1.2) is located in the coastal eastern region, a little towards the interior. An overlap in Buddhist and Brahmanical sacred sites is also noticed in this period at the site of Amreli. This overlapping of sacred space and coexistence of religions shall be taken up in chapter four of the thesis.

The first two sites to be located outside the confines of Saurashtra and hence indicators of an expansion of Brahmanical sacred space are the sites of Karvan and Nagara. The site of Karvan is located in the Vadodara district and excavations at the site revealed a brick structure the outer portion of which was plastered with lime (fig.1.6). Also seen were a number of brick walls running north-south and east-west
Map 1.2 Period II- Sacred Sites with Religious Architecture

• Brahmanical Sites
• Buddhist Sites
• Memorial Stones
1.6 Karvan-Brick Temple
cutting at right angles. A brick wall around a Siva linga was noticed at the site, and the size of the bricks was 16 inches x 9 1/2 inches x 3 1/2 inches and 16 inches x 10 inches x 3 inches, and according to Mehta this fact clearly indicates that temples of bricks existed in this part of the country from early Historic period II (0AD- 5th century AD)\(^4\). A number of Siva lingas were also found at the site, which further attests to the sanctity of the site.

The site of Nagara is located at the Gulf of Khambat (map 1.2), and even though it is not located in Saurashtra, it points to the continued preference of coastal areas as in the earlier period. The site of Nagara has antiquities which date the beginnings of the site to the early Historic period II (0-5th century AD)\(^5\). These include an uninscribed lead seal, copper plates, terracotta figure of a horse, mother goddess, chank bangles and a beautiful marble image of a flying Gandharva. Also found at the site are images of Brahma, Parvati and Visnu, and architectural pieces and pillars are strewn at various places like Sati ni Deri, Moti Parsiwada, Laxman Hall compound near a well to the east of Dada Tatoo no Mohollo, Asapuri Mata temple and Patwa Sheri\(^6\), suggesting the earlier existence of some temple at the site.

Another site that contained a temple in this period is at Goraj where excavations were carried out at the site of Mahādevapura. The remains found represented vestiges of a fairly large brick size temple which is evident from the fact that the platform plinth measured 114.8 feet east–west and 78.74 feet north–south and is an average between 4.65 feet and 4.92 feet in height and twenty nine courses were exposed in the plinth of

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the structure.47 A brick wall enclosing the temple on three sides was also excavated. The plinth was made of plain and moulded bricks of which some were decorated. The praṇāla seen in the temple was oriented north-south and discharged into a brick built kuṇḍa having thirty six brick courses. The temple’s construction has been dated to the Kshatrapa period (1st to 4th century AD). It was dedicated to Siva and was subsequently rebuilt as well.48

Even though the period witnesses spatial expansion, Saurashtra continues to contain evidence of Brahmanical sites. The site of Bhṛgukuṇḍa is located close to Ghumli (map 1.2) and found here were loose sculptures of Siva and Parvati, and a mandapa wall with three free standing and two pillars in the wall were noticed. On the opposite side of the kuṇḍa a matha was discovered. Of the brick structures found at the kuṇḍa, one is a platform made of bricks measuring 1.44 feet x .91 feet x .26 feet which is the common size of the Kshatrapa period.49 Hence the site may have contained a temple in this period, and later came to have a matha as well. The site also has a temple complex to its credit, and continues to be an important religious site in the later period as well.

While Saurashtra continues to contain Brahmanical sacred sites, this period witnesses a shift eastwards towards the Gulf of Khambat, extending further to the coastal eastern region with the presence of sacred architecture at Karvan. A beginning of the expansion of the Brahmanical sacred landscape, seen in this period, continues in the next period as well, and extends towards north. Creation of Brahmanical sacred space

49 Kuldeep K Bhan, Archaeology of Jamnagar District upto 1300 AD, Ph.D Thesis, MSU, Vadodara,1983; p.111
and its demarcation with the construction of temples immensely increase in the third period, when concentration of sites also becomes identifiable.

**Buddhism**

An increase in the number of Buddhist sites is noticed in this period, as also variations in the ecological niches occupied. A concentration of sites is identifiable in and around the site of Junagadh. First I shall discuss the sites that were emerging as sacred centres in different parts of the region.

While a number of sites do come up in the vicinity of Junagadh and Girnar, other areas contain evidence of Buddhist occupation as well. As for the niches settled, in addition to sites in hilly tracts, sacred space is created in the coastal areas as well as in the interior regions.

Continuity in preference of sites within Saurashtra, with its varied ecological niches, consisting of hilly tracts and the coastal area, is demonstrated by the selection of Khambalida, Talaja, Sana and the caves at Jhinjuri Jhar near Dhank (map 1.2) by the Buddhist community.

Khambalida and Jhinjuri Jhar are located well in the interior of Saurashtra. The caves at Khambalida consisting of five groups of caves were discovered at the site dating to 2nd -3rd century AD, which contained, besides vihāras, a caitya hall with a stūpa inside it. These are also the only caves belonging to this period that are carved on the exterior with life size figures of Bodhisattvas, Avalokiteśvara and Vajrapāni on either side of the entrance to the caitya hall. (fig 1.7) They are depicted as standing below the Bodhi tree and surrounded by attendants. ⁵⁰

At a distance of a few kilometres from Dhank is the Jhinjuri Jhar ravine which contains some caves. One of the caves has a verandah which leads into a cell through

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1.7 Khambalida
a door and two narrower openings measuring 1.14 feet in width. In the right hand wall of this chamber is a door which leads to a second room.\textsuperscript{51} A cave at Jhinjuri Jhar has two octagonal pillars with square bases and capitals. These pillars are connected to the pilasters by a low screen covered in the fashion of a Buddhist rail of large pattern.\textsuperscript{52}

The other sites in Saurashtra are located close to the sea, normally near a river in a hilly terrain. The site of Talaja (map 1.2) has forty caves excavated out of a single hill and the site is located about two miles from the confluence of river Shetrunji and the sea. The site has a rock cut caityagrha and contains a hemispherical free standing stūpa with the top capital like moulding decked with vedikā and caitya window ornament. Twenty eight vihāras found here were residential apartments and the largest of them, known as Ebhal Maṇḍapa, measures 73.81 x 68.89 x 18.04 feet and has four octagonal pillars. It also has pillars in front but none inside to support the roof. There is absence of any partition wall that would divide the structure into an outer verandah and an inner wall. The façade of the cave has remnants of a primitive form of caitya window ornament.

The site of Sana (map 1.2) is the other site located close to the sea with sixty two caves on three spurs of an elevated plateau which slopes down to the perennial stream of river Rupen on the west. The caves at different spurs are approached by rock cut stairs, and of these the northern arm is called Munda which has eighteen caves and forty seven cells, the eastern arm is called Ravto with fifteen caves and thirty cells, and the southern arm with ten caves and twenty two cells is known as Champagalo.\textsuperscript{53}

This site contains three caitya halls as well, but the caves are devoid of any

\textsuperscript{51} Ibid; p.12
\textsuperscript{52} Ibid; p.19
\textsuperscript{53} Le Thi Lien, \textit{Buddhist Monuments and Antiquities of Gujarat}, MA Dissertation, MSU Vadodara, 1992; p.53
ornamentation. Here too, in the Champagalo hill, the largest vihāra is known as Ebhal Maṇḍapa, which originally had six pillars in front, and as in the case of Talaja, no pillars inside. A number of tanks were noticed near the vihāras, indicating the site being settled by monks for a longer period and not on a temporary basis, as would also the sheer number of caves suggest.

Other sites in Saurashtra include the cave site at Alech Patan located in Jam Jodhpur taluka, and stūpa sites at Dhoraji (Rajkot) and Hadmatiya (Junagadh). At the stūpa site of Patanvav an inscription in the Brahmi script dating to the Kshatrapa period, which reads ‘Son of Dama…’ was also noticed. The site of Hadmatiya is located along the bank of river Sarasvati and the outer portion of the stūpa, dated to the beginning of the Christian era, was built of well burnt bricks and the inner portion was filled with undressed stone.

In this period Buddhist sites are noticed in other regions of Gujarat as well, including Kutch and south Gujarat. Rock cut caves were noticed along Rampura bank of river Majoom in the Kapadvanj taluka of Kheda district. In Nakhtrana taluka on the side of river Dharud two caves were noticed which have been architecturally dated to the 3rd-4th century AD. Cave number one was very simple with a hall measuring 10.33 x 9.35 feet and its ceiling is domical. The second cave is the larger of the two which is also simple, is east facing and divided into two parts, namely the main hall and the

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54 Debala Mitra, *Buddhist Monuments*, Munshiram Manoharlal, Delhi, 1980; p. 146
57 Annual Report- Gujarat Department of Archaeology, 1972-73; p. 3
58 Annual Report- Gujarat Department of Archaeology, 1975-76; p. 3
59 Annual Report- Gujarat Department of Archaeology, 1971-72; p. 11
60 Annual Report- Gujarat Department of Archaeology, 1975-76; p. 3
61 Annual Report- Gujarat Department of Archaeology, 1971-72; p. 11
62 Annual Report- Gujarat Department of Archaeology, 1974-74; p. 4
63 Annual Report- Gujarat Department of Archaeology, 1969-70; p. 3-4
adjoining room. The other group of caves existing outside Saurashtra are the caves at Kadia Dungar (map 1.2) (fig 1.8) dating to 300 AD. They are located in the Broach district in south Gujarat and contain a total of seven caves. Kadia Dungar is a small elongated hill lock between Jagadia and Netrang and the road between Ankleswar and Netrang is the only road linking it with other parts of Gujarat. An inscription found from cave number one informs us that these caves were carved out in the reign of the Kshatrapa ruler Viradamana. Of these cave number II has a bigger hall which is 31 feet long and on the outer side of the cave post holes for wooden railings are visible. These caves do not contain any cāitya hall or images of Buddha and may have thus belonged to the Hinayana Buddhist monks. This site stands in contrast to other Buddhist sites in Saurashtra as it is not located near any settlement or along any major trade route. This site seems to have been created mainly for monks to meditate and live in solitude, unlike the Buddhist sites in Saurashtra located at accessible points such as Talaja, Dhank, Khambalida and the sites of Khapara Kodia, Bawa Pyara and Mai Gadechi around Junagadh.

Though the site of Devnimori becomes a major Buddhist site in the succeeding period under study, its beginnings can be traced to this period under study. In this period the site had a large vihāra to its credit, which was later enlarged twice and repaired as

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64 Annual Report- Gujarat Department of Archaeology, 1969-70; p. 3-4
66 Yasmin Sindhi, Kadia Dungar- An Archaeological Site, MA Dissertation, MSU Vadodara, 1999; p. 3
67 Yasmin Sindhi, Kadia Dungar- An Archaeological Site, MA Dissertation, MSU Vadodara, 1999; p. 25
68 Yasmin Sindhi, Kadia Dungar- An Archaeological Site, MA Dissertation, MSU Vadodara, 1999; p. 17
69 K.V.Soundara Rajan, Junagadh, ASI, New Delhi, 1985
1.8 Kadia Dungar Caves
The stūpas, one main and four votive, were constructed in the next period close to this vihāra.

In the words of Kantilal F. Sompura, "Nearly all the caves, with the exception of the Khambalida caitya cave, are devoid of decoration at the façade." Even though meagre, the presence of some form of decoration in the caves is an indication of changes in their construction as compared to the earlier period. It would seem as though the stress here was in the construction of residential space for monks and not as much on the decorative element. The sheer numbers of caves that have been found within the region of Gujarat are an indication of occupation of these vihāras by a large Buddhist community. Thus in the second period under study it is noticed that Buddhist sacred architecture came to include space for worship and rituals in particular as is evidenced by the presence of the caitya halls. But the tradition of excavating shelters mainly for accommodation of monks dominates cave architecture in this period, exemplified by the site of Kadia Dungar. This is also the only site that testifies to the extension of the Buddhist sacred landscape towards the eastern part of Gujarat.

**Concentration of Buddhist Sites**

While on the one hand the spatial expanse of Buddhist sites was witnessing an increase, on the other hand a concentration of sites was occurring in and around Junagadh and the Gir hills. While the site of Bawa Pyara was the only evidence pertaining to the existence of Buddhism at Junagadh, in this period a number of new sites come up namely- Khapara Kodia, Uparkot, Boria stūpa and the brick built vihāra at Intwa, demonstrating a concentration of Buddhist sites here.

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The site of Khapara Kodia (fig 1.9) is located behind the hill with the Uparkot caves and at a little distance from the road entering the city. The chambers are cut in an east west longitudinal ridge of trap rock, in which the eastern part is somewhat narrow or constricted and serves to emphasise the two basic wings of rock excavations on either sides. The two prominent component wings of the caves comprise the more or less compact oblong western wing, provided with a grid pattern of water tanks within and a roughly ‘L’ shaped wing essentially fashioned to serve as habitational apartments. The site has large water tanks and a well developed system of water storage and utilization. (fig 1.10)

Located at a distance of about 3 kms each from Junagadh are the sites of Boria and Intwa. At the stūpa site of Boria a relic casket was recovered, which contained four reliquaries enclosed one within the other of terracotta, copper silver and gold. (fig 1.11). Pieces of stone railing, umbrella and other parts that crowned the stūpa were also found at the site. The vihāra at Intwa was a quadrangular monastery located three kilometres north of Girnar, and the site of Boria stūpa is 3 kms to the south of the foot of Girnar. The stūpa had a brick core which was about 29.52 feet in height, a central brick paved courtyard, a flanking verandah and ranges of cells made of large bricks in mud. Other quadrangular brick structures were noticed which were two on one flank and one on the other of this monastery and it was an impressive establishment. The Intwa vihāra and stūpa at Boria are the first pieces of architectural evidence pertaining to the use of bricks in the construction of Buddhist sacred sites.

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72 K.V. Soundara Rajan, *Junagadh, ASI, New Delhi, 1985; p.32
73 K.V. Soundara Rajan, *Junagadh, ASI, New Delhi, 1985; p.33
75 Debala Mitra, *Buddhist Monuments*, Munshiram Manoharlal, Delhi, 1980; p.141
1.9 Khapara Kodia
1.10 Khapara Kodia- Wells
Western Wing- Oblong
Hall with Water Tanks

View from the Top
1.11 Reliquaries found from Boria Stūpa
Thus it is clear that the maximum number of sites of Buddhist association were to be found in Junagadh and its immediate vicinity. This is the only area where one comes across a stūpa independent of a vihāra or any other Buddhist structure in its vicinity. The concentration of Buddhist sites at the Girnar hill and its surrounding area seems to have been economically viable to be able to support such a large number of monks living in and around modern day Junagadh. The establishment at Khapara Kodia was by no means small, and when taken together with the Bawa Pyara caves as well as the vihāra at Intwa, it is clear that this area had a strong Buddhist presence, not seen elsewhere in Gujarat.

The edict at Junagadh also stands testimony to the importance of this area, as in the Gupta period the royalty inscribes it yet again. This then brings us to the next issue, which is the presence of the royalty and the role played by it at sacred sites.

**Role of the Royalty in Creation of Sacred Space**

For this period under study there is only a single piece of evidence for the direct involvement and support of the royalty at any religious site. This is at the site of Intwa which is located on a hill about 3 kms to the north of Girnar. The vihāra at Intwa is known as the Rudrasena vihāra on the basis of baked clay sealing with a Brahmī legend recording that it belongs to the bhikṣu Sangha of the Maharaja Rudrasena monastery. Excavations here brought to light a rectangular brick flooring measuring 64.96 X 187.27 feet.76 This can be considered a major development in Buddhist architecture in this region as for the first time an attempt is made to construct a vihāra which is not carved out of a natural rock.

The site near the Sudarsana lake with the rock edict continues to hold importance in this period as well. The rock is engraved during the reign of both the Kshatrapas, in the time of Rudradamana, as well as by the viceroy during the Gupta period.

76 *EI*, Vol. XXVIII; p.174-175
The inscription of the time of Rudradamana mentions that when by the clouds pouring with rain the earth had been converted as it were into one ocean, by the excessively swollen floods of the Suvarnasikata, Palāsini and other streams of mount Urjayat the dam breached. It measured four hundred and twenty cubits long, just as many broad, and seventy-five cubits deep, all the water escaped. It also mentions that a dam was built under the rule of the Mauryas by the governor Tushaspha who was a yavana. When the dam broke again and the matter was brought forth to the Mahakshatrapa’s counsellors and executive officers, who though fully endowed with the qualifications, were averse to a task as they found it futile on account of the enormous extent of the breach. The construction work of the dam was finally carried out by the minister Suviśākha, the son of Kulaipa, a Pahlava, who for the benefit of the inhabitants of the towns and country had been appointed by the king in this government to rule the whole of Anarta and Saurashtra.77

Another inscription found from Junagadh, inscribed on a slab of stone belongs to the reign of Jivadamana and is dated to the 2nd century AD.78 The inscription seems to have been inscribed to commemorate some pious act or the erection of some building by the three brothers (Vastradatta, Vāstumandin and Vāstusarmmaka) mentioned in the inscription.79

Presence of the boulder of stone with inscriptions pertaining to major ruling dynasties indicates the importance of Junagadh, Mount Girnar and its environs for almost a century. Evidence for the constant presence of the royalty and its involvement in the construction of sacred architecture are the construction of the vihāra by Rudrasena and erection of a temple dedicated to Visnu by the viceroy Cakrapalita. The other inscription dating to the end of the 5th – beginning 6th century AD are the copper

77 EI, Vol. VIII: p.42
plates of the time of Toramana. The three inscriptions record grants to a temple built by the queen mother Viradhikya. These are the only pieces of direct evidence for the involvement of royalty in the creation of sacred space. But in the larger region of Gujarat this role can be said to have been limited in nature as no other sacred site, besides the above mentioned ones, contains any form of evidence of the role played by the royalty.

**Memorial Stones as Sacred Space**

A new type of sacred space emerges within this period under study, namely memorial stones. These are mostly dated to the Kshatrapa period in Gujarat and are spread over Kutch, Rajkot and Jamnagar districts. In Kutch they are to be found at Dolatpur (236 AD & 3rd – 4th centuries AD), at Vandh in Mandvi taluka (of the time of Rudrasimha) and at Andhau (Kshatrapa period). They are also noticed at Gunda and Mulvasar (of the time of Rudrasimha & Rudrasena) in Bhanwar taluka of Jamnagar district and at Gadhada (of the time of Rudrasena I) in Jasdan taluka of Rajkot district.

The five inscriptions found at Andhau were on a raised spot, the inscription at the vicinity of Mevasa in Rapar taluka of Kutch was noticed on a small hillock, and another inscription was seen lying on a mound half a mile south west of Khavda. The inscription found at Andhau records the erection of a yāṣṭi in memory of A...ka, son of Satrumśākā, a śrāmaṇera (novice monk) by his son Dhanadeva, and the

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81 V V Mirashi, Daulatpur Inscription of the Reign of Chashtana, in *JOI*, Vol.XXVIII; p.31-37
82 *EI*, Vol.XXXXVII; p.142
83 *EI*, Vol.XXXXVII; p.141
84 *IA*, Vol.X; p.157
85 *EI*, Vol.XVI; p.238

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inscription belongs to the time of Rudradamana I. Another inscription from the same site dating to 89 AD records the erection of a yaj̐ī in the eleventh year in the reign of Samōtik’s son. The stone inscription at Mulvasar, Okhamandal, mentions the erection of a memorial stone. Similarly the inscription from Vandh, in Prakrit language, records the erection of a memorial stone, as a funeral monument in memory of a woman who is described as the servant of the mother, as belonging to Atimutaka gotra and as an inhabitant of Kāśa desa, by a person named Ajamitra. The stones found in Kutch are memorial stones which record the year, the name of the ruler and of the deceased person, but those found in Saurashtra record the digging of wells. The presence of these in Kutch signifies the creations of a new type of sacred space associated not with deities, but sites created to commemorate heroic deeds and sites to venerate the dead.

On the other hand at some sites in Saurashtra, like at Gunda, Gadhada and Visavadar record the digging of wells. Of these the Gunda inscription, dating to 181 AD, mentions digging of a well for the welfare of society by Senāpati Bapaka’s son Rudrabhuti Abhira. Similarly the inscription at Gadhada, consisting of seven lines on the walls of a well, mentions the construction of a well. Thus while some wells may have been for agricultural purposes, others may have been religious or social in nature.

These memorial stones are unique to Saurashtra and Kutch, and are not found in any other region of Gujarat either within this period under study or the next. Probably these were introduced in this region by the Kshatrapas. The limited number of these stones suggests that these were being erected probably only by those who were

87 EI, Vol.XXVII; p.141
88 IA, Vol.X; p.157
89 EI, Vol.XXVII; p.142
90 IA, Vol.X; p.157
91 EI, Vol.XVI; p.238
influential and not as much by the common folk. Memorial stones are also an indicator of worship of ancestors since these stones would be a constant reminder of an important individual of the clan or family in whose honour the stone was erected. This period provides evidence of the creation of sacred space towards the southern part of Gujarat and Kutch. It is noticed that the core of Buddhist sites up to this period is located within Saurashtra. As for the Brahmanical religion a sudden increase in the number of temple sites is seen in the next period under study. This is also the only period when the creation of a different type of sacred space, namely memorial stones, is found. These are limited to this second period under study and seem to have started and ended in the ancient period with the Kshatrapa rule. The next period witnesses changes in selection of Buddhist sites, expansion into newer areas, as well as areas of concentration of Buddhist and Brahmanical sacred sites.

**Period III- Fourth century AD to Eighth century AD**

This period in a way may be considered as one of immense growth and development in architecture and sculpture of the region. Most of the monumental remains of this period are in the form of temples, and for Buddhism archaeological evidence from the site of Devnimori attests to the continued importance of this religion in Gujarat.

**Spatial Expansion**

**Brahmanical Religion**

While earlier sites of Karvan, Dwarka and Somanatha continue in this period as well, newer niches are also being occupied by Brahmanical sacred sites. Temple sites come up towards the interiors as in the case of Goraj and Chachlana. At the site of Goraj, (map 1.3) Vadodara district, a plinth of a brick built structure was unearthed.² The temple even though constructed in the earlier period under study, was used and rebuilt in the Gupta and the Maitraka period. This is seen in the different stages of repair of

² *IAR*. 1982-83: p.31
Map 1.3 Period III - Sacred Sites with Religious Architecture

- Brahmanical Sites
- Buddhist Sites
the plinth and the find of a coin of Kumaragupta and Maitraka sculpture at the site.\footnote{B.M. Pande & Narayan Vyas, An Early Temple in Gujarat- Excavations at Goraj, in \textit{Puratattva}, No.20, 1989-90; p.108}
The site of Chachlana is located in the Kalyanpura taluka of the Jamnagar district and revealed remains of the Kshatrapa period. Found at the site were Red Polished Ware, Black on Red Ware and terracotta and stone sculptures. The site seems to have been an urban centre and probably an administrative centre and a strategic defence location since it is fortified by its surroundings.\footnote{Atusha M Bharucha, \textit{The Archaeology of the Settlements of the Kshatrapa Period}, Ph.D Thesis, Deccan College, Pune, 1997; p.124} Found at the site is a sculpture of Kubera belonging to the 4\textsuperscript{th} century AD, and this along with the other architectural fragments from the site suggests the remains of a temple dating to the 4\textsuperscript{th} century AD.\footnote{Kuldeep K Bhan, \textit{Archaeology of Jamnagar District upto 1300 AD}, Ph.D Thesis, MSU Vadodara,1983; p.386}

While presence of Brahmanical sites in Saurashtra or coastal east Gujarat region continues from the earlier period, a shift in selection of sites to northern Gujarat is noticeable in this period. Some of the sites located in north Gujarat are Shamalaji, Than, Roda (map 1.3) Polo and Lakroda. The site of Shamalaji is located along the river Meshvo in the Sabarkantha district of Gujarat, and within the same district is located the site of Lakroda. Thus in this period a movement is seen towards the interiors of Gujarat. Goraj, Roda and Chachlana and sites chosen as sacred sites are located in the hilly and forested areas, such as Shamalaji and Lakroda, unlike earlier sites that were only in close proximity to the coast.

At the site of Lakroda the shrine and \textit{māṇḍapikā} have been dated to the last quarter of the 8\textsuperscript{th} century AD,\footnote{Michael W. Meister & M.A. Dhaky, ed., \textit{Encyclopedia of Indian Temple Architecture}, AIIS, Delhi, 1991; p. 357} and at the site of Roda is another complex. At Roda there are a total of seven temples\footnote{Kantilal F. Sompura, \textit{Structural Temples of Gujarat (upto 1600 AD)}, Gujarat University, Ahmedabad, 1968; p.86} of which four are located within the step well at the site.(fig 1.12) Close to the well at one end are another three temples, with elaborate sculptural
1.12 a) Roda- Temples within the Step Well
1.12 b) Roda - Temples within the Step Well
decoration (fig 1.13). Of these two continue to survive, while the base is all that exists of the third temple. Another temple site is located on the upper region of Saurashtra at the site of Than, where the temple dates to the first half of the 8\textsuperscript{th} century AD.\textsuperscript{98} The shrine is located outside the courtyard to the north of the Surya shrine. Even though the Surya temple dates to a later period, an old doorframe fixed into the entrance porch, an eroded image of Revanta and a mutilated image of Surya are indicators of the presence of a shrine belonging to an earlier period.\textsuperscript{99} At Polo one notices only doorframes of an earlier period in the Shamalaji and Roda style,\textsuperscript{100} pointing to a temple at the site in the 8\textsuperscript{th} century AD. Only the shrine walls survive and the blocks that are lying around point to the earlier existence of a mandapa as well. The temple seems to have been dedicated to Visnu in one of his manifestations and the seat in the back wall of the shrine shows that it was not a Saiva temple with a linga.\textsuperscript{101}

**Buddhism**

Even though limited in nature, evidence pertaining to Buddhism also demonstrates newer sites being occupied in newer niches. While for the Brahmanical religion we have architectural remains, for Buddhism the database consists mainly of inscriptions and sculptures.

In the earlier two periods there was a concentration of Buddhist sites in the region of Saurashtra, but in this period evidence points to the existence of the Buddhist community in the area of northern Gujarat, namely Taranga, and in Kutch as well. As

\textsuperscript{98} Kantilal F. Sompura, *Structural Temples of Gujarat (upto 1600 AD)*, Gujarat University, Ahmedabad, 1968; p.86


\textsuperscript{100} Michael W. Meister & M.A.Dhaky, ed., *Encyclopedia of Indian Temple Architecture*, AIIS, Delhi, 1991; p. 357

\textsuperscript{101} Henry Cousens, *Somanatha and Other Medieval Temples in Kathiawad*, Indological Book House, Delhi, 1986 (reprint); p.48
1.13 Roda - Temples near the Step Well
in the case of the Brahmanical religion, here too extension of sacred Buddhist sites is noticed mainly towards northern Gujarat.

The major site belonging to this period is the site of Devnimori (map 1.3) which is the only Buddhist site in the region that has to its credit an entire Buddhist complex. Excavations at the site brought to light a mahāstūpa, four votive stūpas (fig 1.14) a vihāra and what may have been an apsidal temple. A number of images of Buddha in dhyānamudrā (fig 1.15) and other decorative architectural pieces were also recovered during the excavations.102 This site is discussed in detail in chapter four of the thesis as it demonstrates co existence with the Brahmanical site of Shamalaji.

The other site in northern Gujarat, located at some distance from Devnimori is that of Taranga. An image of the Buddhist goddess Tārā103 is housed in a small shrine located by the side of a ravine at the foot of the Taranga hill. In the hills nearby are caves one of which contains three images, two of which have been identified as Avalokiteśavara images, one of them being Padmapānī.104

In the region of Kutch the Buddhist caves found at the site of Siot have been dated to between the 8th century AD and 11th century AD. Most of the caves were simple and small, and the main cave has a door and faces north. One of the chambers, chamber C, has a pradakṣiṇāpatha in the rear end, and in chamber A the entrance door facing west has a niche. Excavations at the site brought to light more than a thousand fragments of clay sealings. Of these fifty were intact, and on one fragment the upper remaining portion contains the figure of a spire of a temple.105

In the coastal east and southern area, after Kadia Dungar in the preceding period, the other Buddhist site is at Kampiya village in the Navasari taluka of south Gujarat.

102 R.N.Mehta & S.N. Chowdhary, Excavations at Devnimori, MSU Vadodara,1966
103 M.R. Majumdar ed., Historical and Cultural Chronology of Gujarat, MSU Vadodara,1960; p.278
104 Nirmala Kurup, Taranga- A Cultural Study, MA Dissertation, MSU Vadodara, 1994; p. 11-12
105 Le Thi Lien, Buddhist Monuments and Antiquities of Gujarat, MA Dissertation, MSU Vadodara, 1992; p.66
1.14 Devnimori Stūpa
1.15 Devnimori - Buddha Images
Found at the site was some earthen work and a small votive clay object, and this along with inscripational data points to the existence of a Buddhist community at the site. The copper plate grant of Rashtrakuta Dantivarmana, dating to Saka 789 records the donation of the village of Chokkhakuti to the vihāra at Kampilya, and mention of this vihāra is found in the inscription of King Dhruva dating to Saka 806. Though the site has not been excavated, inscripational data and remains at the site suggest, “the occupation of the site of the monastery.”

Concentration of Sites
In the preceding period evidence pertaining to concentration of sacred sites was available only for Buddhism. In this third period under study there is data available to locate zones of concentration for both Buddhism and the Brahmanical religion, but while for the latter architectural evidence exists, for the former one has to rely heavily on the inscripational data.

Brahmanical Religion

Even though a number of sites with Brahmanical structural remains are noticed in the interior parts of Gujarat, mainly in the northern areas, the vast majority of temples emerge along the coastline of Saurashtra date between the 6th century AD and the 8th century AD. A clear concentration of sites is noticeable between the sites of Dwarka and Somanatha, and majority of sites are located between the Vartu and Bhadar rivers (map 1.3). Even though they share the common factor of being located along the coast and these being dedicated mainly to Surya or Siva, a close survey of the temples reveals that each of these had a unique location.

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106 EI, Vol. VI.; p.268
107 EI, Vol.XXII; p.64
108 M.G.Dikshit, History of Buddhism in Gujarat, JGRS, Vol.VIII, Nos. 2&3, 1946; p.111
The temple of Gop is located on a hilly outcrop and has a good vantage point from its location. It seems to be looking down upon the surrounding area. The temple stands out in its surroundings and is clearly visible from a distance while on the road. This hilly outcrop is today surrounded by agricultural land, which is tilled by brahmanas. The temple site had to its advantage the availability of agricultural land as well as mineral resources. This could probably explain the choice of this site for the construction of a temple.

Khimesvara (map 1.3) is a temple complex located about four hundred feet away from the sea. (fig 1.16) Earlier it was probably closer to the sea but is more distant now because of the silting over the centuries. The site seems to have been religiously and architecturally an important site since it is a temple complex and contains within itself varied architectural styles. Interestingly it is the only site in Saurashtra where an example of the Valabhicchandaja style is to be found with the main temple being dedicated to Siva.

Another site that shows continuity of worship is Miyani (map 1.3). This site is located on a creek (fig 1.18) and temples are to be found on either side. Besides temples belonging to the period under study, also seen are two temples exquisitely done in the Calukyan style. The older temples are to be found on the slope treaded to reach the top of this hill and are located on either side of the path (fig 1.19). The choice of this site was probably because of the view one could get from the top. From one side the sea can be easily seen up to its horizon, and from the other side the settlement area is visible. The site must have been important because of its location at the creek, as well as the view it could afford on the surrounding area. This is the only site where six

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Michael W. Meister, M. A. Dhaky & Krishna Deva ed., *Encyclopedia of Indian Temple Architecture*, AIIS, Delhi, 1989; p. 194
1.16 Khimesvara - View of Sea from Temple Site

View of Temple Site from The Sea
1.17 Khimesvara- Valabhicchandaja
1.18 Miyani- View of the Creek and of the Land Behind the Hill
1.19 Miyani- Temple on Side of the Path Leading Uphill
temples, mostly in groups of two, covering different periods are found. The temples stand testimony to the continued importance of this site over a long period of time.

The site of Adodar (map 1.3) is located 3-4 kms inland from the shore and seems to have been continuously worshipped. This site too is a temple complex and is currently mainly a Saivite shrine, even though it was dedicated to Surya earlier.

A temple site that continues to be dedicated to Surya is Pata (map 1.3) (fig 1.20 & 1.21). Found here is also a newly built shrine dedicated to Navadurgas. Even though the small shrine is new, the images of the goddesses and that of Ganesa seem to be old. They are very plain and simple and do not have any finesse. The images of the goddesses are an interesting mix with some being represented in the motherly aspect and others in the warrior goddess aspect. Even though the site too is a temple complex it is not as widely worshipped as the above-discussed sites.

The site of Balej (map 1.3) is now an insignificant temple maintained by the villagers and the site has two temples. One of the temples is a square structure without any śikhara (fig 1.22). Next to this is the temple with a porch and a pradaksināpatha. It is the only one that has provision for seating in the attached manḍapa. (fig 1.23)

Slightly inward from here is the temple complex of Boricha (map 1.3) built around what is now called a Yajñakuruṇḍa, where all temples contain Siva lingas (fig 1.24). They seem to be architecturally Dravidian in style (fig 1.25) and of these only one contains a path for circumambulation. Scattered around the temple area are images of Nandi and also seen is an image of Ganesa. It is no longer under worship and is nestled in a village whose people practice agriculture. Found close to the temple is a well, but a natural one without any steps.

Beyond the site of Somanatha are another three temple sites, namely Kadvar, Sutrapada and Pasnavada (map 1.3). The temple at Kadvar (fig 1.26) is of Vaishnavite
1.20 Pata- Surya Temple

1.21 Image of Surya in Temple
1.22 Balej - Temple without Śikhara

1.23 Balej - Temple with Maṇḍapa
1.24 Boricha- Siva lingas in the Temples
1.25 Boricha - Temples
1.26 Kadvar Temple
affiliation where currently an original image of Varaha is under worship (fig 1.27), and those at Sutrapada (fig 1.28) and Pasnavada (fig 1.29) are dedicated to Surya. All of them are located at a short distance from the coast, and the temples at Sutrapada, Kadvar and Pasnavada are surrounded by agricultural land and located in the interior of these villages.

Thus even though all the temple sites are located along the coastline, some temples were erected at creeks, yet others at hill tops (Ghumli, Gop) and yet others were directly on the sea coast (Khimesvara). The location of these temples makes it apparent that within a given geographical area varied niches were being considered sacred for construction of temple sites.

**Buddhism**

In the earlier two periods a gradual concentration of Buddhist sites was noticed around Mount Ginar and Junagadh. For the third period under study it is noticed that evidence pertaining to existence of a large Buddhist community is provided by the Maitraka copper plate grants. A study of these reveals that a major concentration of Buddhist **vihāras** existed at Valabhi and its surrounding areas. Inscriptional data reveals the existence of fourteen such **vihāras**, all except two were under a **Vihāramandalas**. The main **Vihāramandalas** were the Duḍḍā **vihāramaṇḍala** and the Yakṣasūra **vihāramaṇḍala**. Under the Duḍḍā **vihāramaṇḍala** were the Duḍḍā **vihāra**, **vihārakuṭi** of Buddhadāsa, Yakkamāli **vihāra**, Gohaka **vihāra**, Skandabhaṭa **vihāra**, Vimalagupta **vihāra** and the ācārya Sthiramati **vihāra**. The Yakṣasūra **vihāramaṇḍala** contained the Yakṣasūra **vihāra**, Pūrṇabhattā **vihāra** and Ajita **vihāra**. In addition to the **vihāras** in the above two **vihāramaṇḍalas**, the other **vihāras** in Valabhi were the Bappādiya **vihāra** and the Abhyantarikā **vihāra**.

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1.27 Kadvar- Varaha Image
1.28 Sutrapada - Surya Temple
1.29 Pasnavada - Surya Temple
Taking this piece of evidence into account along with that of the earlier period, it becomes apparent that a concentration of Buddhist sites in both periods is found at the provincial capital (Junagadh) and then at the ruling capital of the Maitraka dynasty (Valabhi). While the data seems to suggest that these were the creation of the royalty, a careful analysis reveals that the rulers donated to already established vihāras. Besides the Duḍḍā vihāra no other vihāra was constructed by the ruling dynasty. The common factors at the site of Junagadh and Valabhi are the rich agricultural land in their surroundings, and the fact that they were well established towns where trading activities took place. Virji mentions that agriculture was the chief occupation, and besides agriculturists, in the country, also a rich class of traders and industrialists existed.\textsuperscript{111} Daṇḍin's \textit{Daśakumāra-carita} mentions, "there is a city named Valabhi in Saurashtra. In it there is an owner of ships (nāvikapati) named Grhagupta, who can vie with Kubera in riches... A merchant prince named Balabhadra from Madhumati (Mahuva) comes to Valabhi."\textsuperscript{112} Both the sites had major rivers flowing nearby and while Bhadar is still the major river in Junagadh district, the river Ghelo is important in Bhanvagar district. The Buddhist monasteries then seem to have been concentrated at economically viable sites where both trade and agriculture were carried out. The two sites demonstrate a trend wherein these sites were important even prior to them being established as ruling capitals. At Junagadh the first evidence of prosperity are the Saurashtra janapada coins, which are then followed by the earliest caves and the Rock Edicts of Asoka. In the case of Valabhi donation of land to already established monasteries hints at the site being selected by the Buddhists prior to it's becoming the ruling capital of the Maitraka dynasty.

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\item[111] K. Virji. \textit{Ancient History of Saurashtra}, Konkan Institute of Arts and Sciences, Bombay, 1952; p.219
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Role of the Royalty in Creation of Sacred Space

Direct reference to the erection of a temple by the royalty in the region, and probably the only one so far, is the inscription pertaining to the Gupta period inscribed on the same boulder of rock that contains inscriptions of the Mauryan and Kshatrapa period. The inscription pertaining to the Gupta period, besides mentioning the repair of the dam, clearly points to the construction of a temple by the royalty in the vicinity of the dam. This is the only other piece of evidence of the direct involvement of the royalty in erection of a temple in the region. It mentions that in due course of time, there came the season of clouds, bursting asunder with its clouds the season of heat, when much water rained down unceasingly for a long time; by reason of which the lake Sudarsana suddenly burst -making the calculation in the reckoning of the Guptas, in a century of years, increased by thirty and also six more, at night, on the sixth day of (the month) Prauṣṭhapada. And these other rivers which take their source from the mountain Raivataka, and also this Palāsini, beautiful with its sandy stretches,-all of them the mistresses of the ocean,-having dwelt so long in captivity, went again, in due accordance with the scriptures, to their lord the sea. And having noticed the great bewilderment, caused by the excess of rain, Urjayat, desirous of appropriating the wives of the mighty ocean, stretched forth as it were a hand.

Then, Cakrapalita, the governor, having sacrificed to the gods with oblations of clarified butter and with obeisance; and having gratified the twice-born with presents of riches; and having paid respect to the citizens with such honours as they deserved, and to such of (his) servants as were worthy of notice, and to (his) friends with presents, in the first fortnight of the month . . . . . belonging to the hot season, on the first day, he, having practiced all the above respectful observances for two months, made an immeasurable expenditure of wealth, and, [built an embankment] a hundred
cubits in all in length, and sixty and eight in breadth, and seven (?) men's height in elevation, ............. of two hundred cubits.

The second part of the inscription mentions that the viceroy also built a temple. It states that Cakrapalita, who is endowed with his own good qualities, (and) whose life is devoted to (the worship of) the feet of (the god) Govinda, .................. -by him, with a great expenditure of wealth and time [there was built a temple] of that famous (god Visnu) who carries the discus, ............. enemies, (and) who became (incarnate and) human by the exercise of his own free will. (Thus) by Cakrapalita, who is of a straightforward mind, there has been caused to be built a temple of (the god) Cakrabhrit, in a century of years, together with the thirty-eighth (year) ... the time of the Guptas.113

While a number of temples are erected in different parts of Gujarat in this third period under study, none contain any evidence of the involvement of the royalty in their construction. This is the only inscripational evidence in Gujarat to prove the role of the royalty in the erection of a temple.

**Conclusion**

The chapter demonstrates a constantly expanding sacred landscape of the Buddhist and the Brahmanical religion. While Jainism does also exist in the region, it has been excluded since the data pertaining to Jainism is mainly sculptural and hence it is discussed in the succeeding chapters. A discussion of sites with architectural remains, inscriptional data and the aid of maps, clearly points to a continuous expansion in the sites occupied by both the religions.

The earliest evidence, for both Buddhism and the Brahmanical religion, is found in Saurashtra (map 1.1). It is noticed that even though sites continue to come up within

113 *CII- Inscriptions of the Early Guptas- Vol.III*, 1888; p. 61-65
Saurashtra, other regions within Gujarat gradually are incorporated into the sacred landscape which is continuously being demarcated with the aid of monumental architecture. Interestingly in both the religions the earliest spread outside the Saurashtra region occurs towards eastern Gujarat. While in the case of the Brahmanical religion the sites in east Gujarat are those of Karvan and Nagara, the Buddhist site in eastern Gujarat is Kadia Dungar.

For the first time a concentration of sites is noticed in the second period under study. A clear concentration of sites could be identified in and around the site of Junagadh. (map 1.2) In the third period under study the focus shifts from Junagadh to Valabhi as inscriptive evidence informs us of the existence of numerous monasteries at Valabhi and in its vicinity. On the other hand in the case of the Brahmanical religion, a concentration of temple sites occurs not in the second period under study, but in the third period. The maximum number of temple sites is seen along the coastline of Saurashtra, with a maximum concentration between the Vartu and Bhadar rivers. A study of sites within Gujarat presents us with a picture of an ever evolving sacred landscape which is not static at any given point in time. Even though the focus of Buddhism shifts from Junagadh to Valabhi, the continued importance of the region is evident in the construction of a vast number of temples along the coast and in its interior regions as well. Thus while the focus of Buddhist sacred sites shifts towards the outer areas of Saurashtra; in the case of the Brahmanical religion Saurashtra becomes the main focus of temple construction activities.

While in the second period a limited expansion in the niches and sites occupied in different parts (map 1.3) is noticed, in the third period the sites come to occupy almost all regions within Gujarat. The second period under study witnesses’ demarcation of sacred sites in eastern part of Gujarat, and by the third period Brahmanical and
Buddhist sites spread to north Gujarat and Kutch. The niches occupied by Buddhism include sites in northern Gujarat, and extend to the outer limits of Gujarat towards Kutch and the area around Surat. As for the Brahmanical religion, while concentration of sites occurs in coastal Saurashtra, sites also emerge in northern Gujarat, south Gujarat and within Saurashtra and extension northwards is evident in the erection of temples at Than and Methan. Thus by the third period under study occupation of almost all niches in Gujarat is complete, and many of the sites in the medieval period emerge around these already established temple sites. Some of the sites that demonstrate this are Than, Shamalaji, Ghumli and Karvan. The three periods under study thus demonstrate the gradual occupation of different areas within Gujarat and an expansion from within Saurashtra towards eastern and northern areas of Gujarat.

The importance of Saurashtra, as far as architectural remains is concerned, continues in all three periods. The existence of memorial stones further proves this, as these are found only within Saurashtra and Kutch. With mainland Gujarat on one side and Kutch on the other, Saurashtra would have been an important area linking these two regions of Gujarat. The presence of memorial stones in only Kutch and Saurashtra brings out the uniqueness of religious developments and sacred space within different regions of Gujarat. Diversity and continuous growth were inherent features of religious developments in the region.

This chapter took into consideration only a part of the data base comprising of architectural remains. The region also has to its credit a vast number of sculptures scattered at different sites. While temple sites were the domain of coastal Saurashtra, sites with sculptural remains were found to be located mostly in northern Gujarat. An analysis of these sculptural remains shall be undertaken to further demonstrate diversity in types of sacred sites, existence of various sacred sites not available in the
archaeological records and diversity in deities worshipped within different areas of Gujarat. Jainism shall also be discussed in the chapter pertaining to sculptural remains since as yet no structure has been clearly identified as Jaina in any of the three periods under study, even though the sculptural remains point to a strong Jaina presence in the region.

The next chapter shall attempt to locate the sacred sites within context of settlements and identify the resource base that enabled the construction and maintenance of these sacred sites. The settlement pattern will be looked at with the aid of archaeological and inscriptive data, to determine whether trade, agriculture or craft and manufacturing activities were being carried out at a site, or whether a combination of two or more existed at a site. Also in looking for the support base of the religious sites it must be taken into consideration that Gujarat was economically viable and the support came, in all probabilities, from various social groups rather than the royalty. This will be analysed in the next chapter, where sacred and residential space will be studied, which will be able to help us determine the social support base of the sacred sites, as well as their resource base.