CHAPTER 4
BHARUKACHCHHA

Bharuch / Broach (22°44'; 72°50'), the headquarters of the district of the same name, ancient “Bharukachchha” or Bhrugukaccha and Barygaza of the classical geographers is situated on the northern bank of river Narmada. It is a town of hoary antiquity noted in the Buddhist, Hindu and Jain literature. The antiquity of its settlement goes back to the chalcolithic period. Ceramics and other antiquities unearthed from the local Law College site (which is near the Jayendrapuri Arts College and Lallubhai Chakla) are showing affinities to the chalcolithic cultures of Western India.

The plain of Lata region developed by river Narmada is significant in many respects, being much smaller in extent and being a coastal plain open to direct sea contact. This has helped to make it as a centre of trade and agriculture. It is quite possible that there may have been a certain degree of continuity of settlement, i.e., right from Harappan Urbanism to that of Iron Age.

According to the tradition preserved in Ávasyakacurni, Bharukachcha was included in the kingdom of Ujjain which was ruled by king Chanda Pradyot (c.528 BC). By inclusion in the Mauryan empire and by the development of India’s Mediterranean trade Bharukaccha attained a new stage of economic prosperity and became a port par excellence. Its immediate hinterland was fertile by producing wheat, rice, cotton and also its connection was stretched to Ujjain in Central India and Pratishthana in Deccan, by touching the arterial routes of Inner India. The evidence of
Priplus is most explicit and gives an elaborate list of imports and exports through this port. However, it did not cater only to the Mediterranean trade, but in some Jatakas it is said to have had connections with Srilanka and South East Asia.

The maritime activity through Bharukachchha has been vividly narrated in the Bharu-Jataka, Supparaka Jataka and Sussonate Jataka. These Jatakas have preserved memories of voyages of daring Indian merchants voyaging from the great western seaports to Srilanka, Burma, Malaya Penninsula (Southeast Asian countries) and several Mediterranean countries. The author of the Periplus also speaks of later Indo-Greek rulers such as Appollodotus and Menander whose coins were in use in his time at Barygaza or Bharukachchha.

Since the bulk of goods supplied to Rome was precious forest products and specially the trade in raw forest products which fetched the highest prices was concentrated along the west coast with Bharuch as the main port, it was necessary for the Satvahana economy to gain control over Bharuch. Since Bharuch lay in a strategic location as far as trade routes are concerned, it controlled the trade of goods coming from northern India via Bharuch which was very lucrative. It provided an outlet for the settlement of the Deccan and South India also. Therefore by controlling Bharuch the Satavahanas could control almost the entire incoming and outgoing trade of India. This is why the Satavahanas invaded Bharukaccha, killed Nahapana and coveted the nucleus of trading emporium.
The early reference of Bharuch we have as an international trading emporium and the most prominent port is from the Periplus of the Erythrean Sea and Ptolemy's Geography. Both the aforesaid sources state that this town was one of the chief seats of trade between India and the markets of Western Asia. Barygaza was more easily approachable straight by river Narmada and "by a better passage through the left" (sec 43). In the book of Periplus, it is said that five district trade routes seem to have converged at Barygaza at which two were by sea and three were by land.

The Nasik cave inscription of the time of Nahapana records donations made by his son in law Usavdatt at Bhrgutirtha (Bharakaccha). Several Pauranic accounts also describe it as Tirtha and holy place.

The area around Bharuch was an agricultural land as well as manufacturing and trade centre. The tribals of this area during early historic period were considered as people beyond the social pole in aryan society but they were called the main spokes in this type of trade. Large amounts of beads of semi precious stones were manufactured in Bharuch. Ratanpura, Zagadia and Rajpipla hills area is rich in different types of agate. The author of the Periplus of Erythrean sea observed that agate and other type of gems were extremely popular in Rome. Moreover the tribals provided medicinal substances, wild animals, birds, honey kher etc.

During the regime of King Dadda Bahusahaya(c.677AD), Bharukaccha was elevated as the capital city of the Gurjaras. The Chinese pilgrim Hiuen -T-Sang (640-41AD) referred Bharukaccha as Po-Iu-kie-che-po. This port town was 20li in size. There were some ten sanghārāmās with
about 300 believers of Mahayan sect and ten Dev temples. During the regime of the Gurjaras and the Rashtrakutas it enjoyed the position of a capital city. The Sakunika Vihar (a Jain shrine) at Bharukaccha was built during Solanki period.

Large scale excavations at Bharuch were not possible owing to the fact that the modern city lies over the older settlement. The city is made up of more or less deltaic and alluvial sediments in the north, south west and west. The configuration of the land is more or less flat with gentle slope towards the sea, i.e., towards the west. The Narmada river provides a perennial source of water for agriculture (i.e., wheat, rice, cotton). Therefore it was an agricultural area as well as a manufacturing trade centre.

Excavation (IAR 1958-59) by K.V.Sundararajan of the Archaeological Survey of India has revealed deposits of several periods. Period-I (Chalcolithic)- Chalcolithic pottery and antiquities not found in the main excavation but obtained through salvage archaeology from Jayendrapuri Arts College and Lallubhai chakla at Bharuch. Period II (Later half of the first millenium BC). The lowest strata from the town site have yielded the Black and Red ware, NBP ware and many plain types. Ring wells in clusters of five have been found in one of the cuttings on the inner fringe of the mud rampart, beads and shell bangles. Period III (c.7th to c.5th cen.AD). The period is characterised by Red polished ware, Kshatrap coins and a miniature Śiva linga. Period IV (Late Historical and medieval c.6thAD-13th cent AD). This period yielded Maitraka coins, medieval pottery sculptural and architectural fragments. Thus archaeological excavations revealed that this metropolis as well as nucleus of maritime activities of
Western India was protected by mud rampart and fortifications in different periods. The mud rampart associated with moat possibly dates from c.3rd cent.BC (IAR 1959-60, p.19). During Kshatrap-Gupta period the mud rampart appears to have been provided with heavy brick revertment. Being a capital it was a well fortified place for its ramparts are referred to in a Grant of Dadda II. Again a ribbon form fort was built (4500'-00') average in length east-west and 600'-0' average breadth north-south) during medieval period.

The salvage archaeological study conducted by R.N.Mehta has pushed back the antiquity of Bharuch to Harappan period. Interestingly ancient Bharukachcha and Nagal on the south bank of river Narmada opposite Broach were involved in maritime activity right from c.800BC. The archaeological materials of Harappan period indicate that Broach was not only a major chalcolithic settlement but perhaps a settlement in formative 1st urbanisation. Thus, Broach had a continuity of settlement right from c.3rd millenium BC onwards. The salvage archaeological observation reveals that right from its earliest settlement during 1st urbanisation the growth of the city has extended along the river front on its east and west side. This indicates the linear pattern of its growth. Interestingly it has maintained this the city growth maintaining its traditional linear pattern even upto this date.

TOPOGRAPHY

The town Bharuch developed on a high cliff on the right bank of river Narmada. The land area contain black cotton soil. The cliff runs parallel to the river from east to west. The southern side of town is protected by large river in natural topography while the northern eastern and western sides are
protected by a moat, which is developed due to natural features like rain gullies. The town can be divided into low lands and high prominences. The main highland area of Bharuch is marked in Soneri Mahal and tower areas. Soneri Mahal area starts from north eastern corner of the Indus mahalla and ends at western border of Hanuman tehra. The begum wadi and hospital area is developed on the high mound sloping towards the east and south west of Bharuch. Area like Lallubhai chakla, lalbazar, Kothi mahalla are comparatively on high lands. The eastward part of the town fall toward Narmada river where rain gullies of that areas made some place into low lands. The outskirts and suburbs of Bharuch are comprised of comparatively low lands. Outside of the fortification the area between Ratan talav and Fata talav is cut by erosion and is not suitable for habitation. The name of the town Bharukachchha (Bharuch) means "a cliff near the coast" is an example of a name based on geographic placement. It grew in size and was restricted on one side of river Narmada and developed into ribbon type plan.

The Malbari darwaja was a gate through which commercial goods were channeled. The explanation of the name is based on the tradition that merchant vessels from Malabar anchord here and thereby the name gate of Malabar darwaja was Haji pir Kirman darwaja(?). Bharuch was centre of international trade and commerce. Many foreigners were settled at Bharuch. Muslim saint who came from Kirman and settled here. Hence this gate was named after him. Soneri Mahal darwaja was named after golden coloured building where main administrator of town was living. Zadeswari darwaja was named after a place zadeswar in which direction the gate opened. Malbari darwaja and Hurja darwaja functioned as the importing and exporting centers. The embracation(?) for and other tolls were collected
from out goers. It is also entry point from the sea. The place names are influenced by historical, social, geographical, trade and commerce and language. Soneri Mahal Brugumuni temple, Kanchi plinth etc. are historical name. Somnath–no-tekro, Nanimoti dungri, Fata talav, Jagasheth tekro, pholigui no tekro are geographical name. Bhatwad, multhani vad, Vaniya vad, Bhorvad, Hanuman sheri, Reasi Faliya, Patidar Khadki, Lallubhai chakla, Narandev-ni-Khadki are social name. Lalbazar, Haji Khan Nagar, Gandhi Bazar, Vansfod Mohalla Kumbhahar vad are suggesting commercial place name. Ganuman sheri, Limdichok, Piplichock, Bava chakla, Kunjari vad etc. are place name. Every names of town indicates various activities of various areas.

TOWN PLANNING (Fig: 34)

An extensive exploration was undertaken by the investigator, in and around the town in order to map out the archaeological and architectural antiquities and show their proper relationship within townscape. Presume the ancient town-planning as present town has developed over the ancient site, however the medieval fort with nine gates and its topographical and toponomical study provide some information regard to its townscape.

The town was fortified and was provided with nine gates. They were Furja or Makka Darwaja, Malbari darwaja, Hajipor Kirmani Darwaja, Navachok darwaja, Bhangkot darwaja, Undai darwaja, Zadeswar darwaja, Soneri mahal darwaja, Katapor darwaja. From first to sixth gate were on southern fort wall facing river Narmada. Zadesvari gate was on east side wall while Soneri Mahal and Katapor gates were on northern side. All gates
bear the strategic foresightness of the builder. We have to presume ancient town on existing fortline which reveals topographical features natural protection on opposite side on north outside fort 20 meter deep valley existed. Right from earlier period due to topographical character it was a natural port. Due to maritime trade, Bharukachcha attained a new stage of prosperity. Moreover, its immediate hinterland was fertile, production of Wheat, rice and cotton were in quantities. Its connection starts Ujjain in central India, Pratisthānana in Deccan area thus connecting Mahāpathās (Highways) of inner India. Moreover it only had well establish merchantile relation with Śrilanka and south east Asia. This factor made Bharukachha as nucleus of maritime activity of western India. Zadeswara gate was main entry gate from land routes while Furja gate was entry gate through water routes. Furja gate and Malabari gate were functioned as the exporting and importing centre.

Regarding fortification to Bharukaccha following facts are noteworthy.

Fort I : A mud rampart associated with a moat was constructed possibly dates from 3rd Cent. BC (IAR 1959-60, p.19).

Fort II : In Kashatrap-Gupta period the mud rampart appears to have been provided with heavy brick revertment.

Fort III: During the regime of King Dada II, Bharuch was capital city of Gurjaras and it was well fortified town mentioned in grant of Dada II (c.677AD).
Fort IV: In Solanki period of King Siddhraj Jaisinha (1094AD to 1134 AD) strong fort was constructed around Bharuch.

Area around Bharuch was fertile crescent and with river water facilities, the bulk quantities of agricultural production (i.e., rice, wheat and cotton) created more surplus economy. Bharuch had granaries (Kasak) of agricultural products, being a trade centre surplus products were reported. Growth of best quality of cotton of this area provided raw material for textile industries. Strong and rough cotton cloth manufactured to hoist a sail for ships, vessels and armors. Best quality of fine cloth of cotton and silk were manufactured for garments and exported ware-houses were established near by gates and bazars founded on the main roads. Evidently the same tradition were continued and existed. Many warehouses existed near Furja, Malbari and Zadeswari gates. Fine thread, ropes, string and cord were manufactured in Bharuch.

Large quantities of forest products, herbal products, birds, animals and timber were brought to Bharuch from inner part of the countries and Malbar region. Around Bharuch wood craft industry was also dominant. Large size armors, war ships, vessels, cargo, ferry ships and boats were manufactured at this place and exported also. Availability of quality woods, cords, ropes and cloth to hoist a sail brought the name of ship manufacturing at international level of that period. Warship named 'Gurāb' was famous. Sultan Mahmud III of Gujarat had placed order for Gujarat warships at Bharuch, Surat and Cambay.¹⁹
Precious stone jewellery manufacturing and exporting was also a prominent business and trade of Bharuch. Large quantities of precious, semiprecious stones and agates were brought from inner land area like Rajpipla hills, Ratanpura and Zagadia.

Survival of few families concerned with above industries and community areas in town planning is quite significant regarding heritage of Bharukachcha. The principle road pattern found systematic though the land area is uneven. Main roads of town from south to north and road from east to west were dividing the town into irregular sectors of areas, streets and narrow lanes. From Adeswar gate to Furja gate, east west principle road was historical road which connected ancient land route and water route which had establish Bharukachcha as an international port town of Western India. Principle roads from riverside gates, from south to north and were meeting the main east west road in the town. Bazars were existed on such roads. Inner part of the sectors were used for community habitation. In north eastern corner of the town, the area called “Kasak” (granary) is found, which was one of the agricultural divisions on the outskirt of the town. To the north, the areas called Dangarwada. Dangars were those people who used a wooden instrument with iron teeth to husk rice. Fuza gate was also known as Makka gate, through which muslim pilgrims used to visit. Makka, road through Katapor and Soneri mahal gates of north fort wall lead towards suburbs indicate lower class service people and labourer community areas. Jal bazar, Juna bazar, Hajikhan bazar and Gheekodia are market places and evenly distributed out side the fort town.
This international port and nucleus of maritime activity of western India was approachable by two ways, i.e., by land routes as well as by water routes through river or sea. Hence this type of port town has been described as “Dronamukha”. Moreover due to its linear pattern development as per Visvakarma Vastusastra\textsuperscript{20}, Aparajtapruccha and Rajvallabha texts has been described as “Dandaka Nagar”.

\textsuperscript{20} Visvakarma Vastusastra is an ancient Indian treatise on architecture and urban planning.
REFERENCES

10. M.C.CrideJ.W. 1927, Ancient India as described by ptolemy, Calcutta.