CHAPTER - I
INTRODUCTION

The Problem:-

Though Indian Archaeology, is not in its infancy now and has attained considerable maturity, many areas are not well served. After the third decade of the present century, particularly after the Yale—Cambridge expedition in the Himalayas and the Shiwaliks, considerable work has been put up by the various learned institutions working in the field, the government departments of archaeology, and the individuals interested in the field of archaeological researches. As a result of these efforts, many new facts hitherto unknown, have been brought to light. Needless to say that, all these discoveries have filled up many a lacuna that existed then and a continuous story of man, in general, has been aptly prepared. Sir Mortimer Wheeler has rightly observed that, "The cause of archaeology is no where better served than in India." ¹

It is well-known that most of the discoveries made during the span of last 35 years, were mainly due to vertical excavations carried out on selected sites in the different parts of the country, and through various explorations carried out by the various enthusiastic workers in the field as well. As a result of these combined efforts, a skeleton of the
chronology of cultures has emerged. But it should be admitted without any reservation that this prepared skeleton has to be filled up by putting up flesh and blood, which could be done by carrying out extensive explorations of the areas not covered so far and by horizontal excavations at the important selected sites. We should try to know the 'total culture' of a given site by horizontal excavations.

As it has been said before, we have been able to uncover very fruitful data, through explorations and excavations as a result of which "regional time tables" have been prepared. But many lacunae still exist in these 'time tables'. To fill up these lacunae in the regional time tables, district-wise archaeological survey is a great desideratum. It is, now essential that, a small unit or area may be taken up for investigation and intensive work may be carried out and each and every evidence with which we come across during the work may be thoroughly checked, accounted and studied. If all the districts in the different States are thus surveyed and studied archaeologically it would provide us with ample and useful data, for the study of human history in this sub-continent. Work in this direction—district-wise archaeological survey, was started by the Archaeological Survey of India in the year 1956. Village to village survey in the selected districts in the country was undertaken. As a result of these efforts, many new habitation sites and
antiquities of great importance were brought to light.

A few universities in India have also taken a lead in the field of archaeological researches in the country. Particularly the work done in Baroda, Poona, Allhabad, Sagar is outstanding. The Department of Archaeology of the M.S. University of Baroda, has given a serious thought to this problem—namely district-wise archaeological survey; and steps in the direction of uncovering the archaeology of a small area are being taken. Prof. R. N. Mehta of the M.S. University of Baroda, may be considered pioneer in this regard, because he opened a new avenue by carrying out his famous explorations in the districts of Broach, Baroda and Surat of the Gujarat State. Because of these efforts, good deal of data has been brought to light which has added quite substantially to the historical personalities of these three districts. Three of my fellow students in the Department of Ancient Indian History, Culture and Archaeology, M.S. University of Baroda are also carrying out their field investigations in the Ahmedabad, Kheda and Panchmahals districts of the Gujarat State and many important discoveries have been made by them.

The district of Banaskantha of North Gujarat was 'terra incognita' from the viewpoint of archaeology. No data with regard to the early human cultures was forthcoming, although it is well known that the region played very significant role in the development of cultures in the mediaeval and late-
mediaeval periods of Indian history. Surprisingly enough, we do not even get scattered references with regard to the history of the area in any literary records. At the same time, one cannot say that the area did not have history. It is equally true that no serious effort had been made by archaeologists to build up the chronology of human cultures in the district with the help of the material remains, and thus assess its contribution towards the development of culture in the sub-continent.

While the policy of carrying out the village to village survey was being implemented by the Archaeological Survey of India, Shri S. Ranganath Rao, the then Superintendent, Archaeological Survey of India, Western Circle, Baroda, suggested to the author to take up the district of Banaskantha, North Gujarat, for intensive archaeological research work. He (Shri Rao) had, then, recently discovered Lothal, a well known Harappan site near the village Saragwala in the Dholka taluka of the Ahmedabad district. He had carried out excavations for four seasons and proved that, Lothal was almost contemporary to Mohenjodaro in Sind. Shri Rao wanted to throw light on the problem of the migration of Harappans in the Saurashtra peninsula, Kutch and in the main land of Gujarat. He, therefore, carried out a series of explorations in the above areas and on the Narmada and the Tapti estuaries. As a result of these explorations, number of sites betraying the influence of the Harappan culture were located. Among
them may be mentioned Desalpar in Kutch, Bhagata Rao near Surat, and Kana Sutaria near Patan.

Shri Rao, while suggesting to carry out explorations in the Banaskantha district, was very confidently suspecting that Banaskantha district, being very near to the Indus valley, and because of the caravan route joining Sind and Gujarat passing through the district, might yield the evidences of the Harappan culture. He also believed that Harappan influences in Rajasthan and Gujarat might have travelled through the river Banas. He was also of the opinion, even after carrying out the field work, that if no data throwing light on the Harappan culture was forthcoming, even the negative evidences would prove that Harappan influences did not penetrate into the area.

It is well known that geographical position of Gujarat has played significant role in the diffusion and development of various cultures. Because of the close proximity to the sea and because of the grand trunk routes passing through the State, there was good deal of 'give and take' so far as the influences of the cultures were concerned. It was more so on the area situated on the borders. It may be mentioned that, although, these border areas of Gujarat were influenced by the cultures of the neighbouring regions, they still maintained their individuality.

Banaskantha district of north Gujarat forms frontier with Rajasthan on the north and has also the honour of having the international boundary on its western border and thus
occupies a very strategic position from the defense point of view. Presently also north, north-western and north-eastern parts of the Banaskantha district are highly influenced by the culture of Rajasthan. While the areas on the western border are highly influenced by the Kutch culture on one hand and Sind culture on the other. Probably north-Gujarat culture might have influenced both these regions too (i.e. Sind and Kutch). But that we can know only by carrying out research in the field. The tradition of regional influences are there since time immemorial. But at the same time the district maintained its own individuality in many aspects, such as sculptural art etc. It was, therefore, thought necessary to investigate into the cultures that prevailed in the area and to study them with a view to preparing the personality of the district.

Keeping the above situation in view, the district of Banaskantha was taken up for intensive archaeological research work under the auspices of the Archaeological Survey of India to implement its policy of village to village investigation in the chosen areas. The work was started in the month of August 1958, and carried out up to October 1959. During the above period, the field work was confined to the areas situated in the east, north and south-east of Palanpur, the district headquarters, and to some extent, to the west in the Deesa taluka of the district. As a result of these explorations, number of sites belonging to the late stone age, early historic, historic, mediaeval and late mediaeval periods were located. In addition
to the above, remarkable sculptures belonging to the early mediaeval period were also discovered. Of all the sculptures thus discovered, a fine set of Saptamatrikas including Ganesa and Bhairava and Vinadhari Siva, stylistically belonging to the late 7th century A.D. and which are taken up as first pieces carved out in marble, attracted good deal of attention of the art critics in India and abroad. Also, during the above field work, the copper coins belonging to the mediaeval dynasties, which were in powers were also discovered. In addition to these, the temples belonging to the mediaeval period were also located. It may be noted that, during the field work, no site yielding Harappan influences was discovered.

Soon after this, the author was appointed as a lecturer in the Department of Museology, M.S. University of Baroda. As the author wanted to carry out further research work in the district, he showed the material to Prof. R.N. Mehta, and acquainted him with the archaeological potential of the district, from the research point of view. Dr. R.N. Mehta was convinced and advised the author to take up the district for his Ph.D. work, and to carry out further intensive research work, with a view to building up the history of the human cultures that prevailed there from time to time.

Dr. R.N. Mehta, after studying the geographical situation of the area advised the candidate to confine his attention to the areas situated to the west of the river Banas, as those areas had not so far been tapped, from the research point of view. He was of the opinion, that, those areas being very near
to the Indus Valley, might yield the remains of the great Harappan culture. The importance of the westerly areas of the Banaskantha district, was much enhanced from the point of view of research in the chalcolithic cultures, after the discovery of number of sites in Kutch, showing the influences of the mature and late Harappan cultures. That inspired the author to conduct the area once for all, to decide whether the region came under the influence of the Harappan culture or not.

Aims of Study:

Although good number of sites belonging to the different periods of History were discovered in the Banaskantha district during the period from August 1957 and important antiquities were brought to light, a connected picture of cultures in the area was still wanting. It was, therefore, felt that more intensive and planned work was required, so as to prepare sequence of cultures from the prehistoric period upto 1500 A.D., and to show how the area was influenced by the cultures of other neighbouring areas and its role in the progress. With this aim in view the present study was undertaken.

The Method of work:

While, as per the resolution of the Central Advisory Board of Archaeology, the policy of village to village survey in the selected districts of different circles, was being implemented by the Archaeological Survey of India, Western Circle, Baroda, it was thought proper that, keeping in mind the possible diffusion of cultures, areas around the river Banas, should be
surveyed very critically and in the beginning talukas situated to the east and south-east of the district headquarter Palanpur, may be taken up for research. Accordingly, the talukas of Palanpur, Danta and Vadgam were taken up for village to village survey. All the topographical sheets of the Survey of India, were very critically studied from various angles. Ancient place-names of the existing villages were found out and put on the map, with the help of the available literature e.g. Bombay Gazetteer, old village maps, local maps, legends and traditions prevailing among the people were also scrutinized. That is how it was discovered that Palanpur was known as Pralhadapur, and Tharad was known as Thirupur.

During the explorations, a particular taluka was taken up and practically all the villages, coming under its jurisdiction were personally explored. During the visit to a village, first of all a local primary teacher was consulted, and since in many cases, he was the only available educated person in the village, relevent information was collected by putting him pertinent questions, regarding the availability of antiquities, throwing light on the human history. Many times, the above approach was found very fruitful. Teachers thus consulted not only provided the author, extremely helpful and valuable information regarding the material remains, but also accompanied the author during the visits to the habitational sites. The author, particularly cannot forget the help rendered by the teachers of the villages of Tharad, Deesa, Sabarda, Benap, Radhanpur, Amirdad, Chadotar,
and such other places. The teachers of these villages not only provided valuable information regarding the antiquities, but also actually participated in the exploration and collected antiquities of great value.

Many a times it so happened that, some village teachers did not know about the material remains lying in the vicinity of the villages. In those circumstances, they were requested to take the author to some knowledgeable persons, who could throw light on the ancient remains lying in the area. Although, sometimes information provided by the villagers was highly exaggerated, but many a times the author could collect very useful data. It also happened that, at times inhabitants of the villages, including teachers were reluctant to reveal the information, at that time independent efforts were made by the author to look for the evidences. Because of these independent efforts, sites like Bhoral, in the Tharad taluka of the district were discovered.

After having collected required data, from the above noted sources, relics were examined by the author very critically, if required plotted on the map, necessary notes were taken in the field, drawings whenever necessary were prepared, photographs were taken and nothing was left to chance. During the explorations, whenever any ancient habitation site was visited, all the surface evidences were very carefully collected, the exposed sections were examined, the rain gullies were examined, and necessary photographs were taken and finally the site was plotted on the map.
While the talukas situated to the west of the river Banas, namely Tharad, Vav, Deodar, Dhanera, Radhanpur, Santalpur were taken up for investigation, it was rightly realized that village to village survey in the six talukas was not feasible as it might take considerable time in the absence of required facilities for transport. But considering the possible spread of the Harappan culture, villages situated on the extreme western border line had to be visited. Therefore, villages situated on the western-most end of the district, from where the small desert starts, were very carefully surveyed. But, in the interior, only selected sites were explored and required data was collected.

All the river systems in the district were very carefully surveyed and both the banks of each river were examined with a view to collecting data for throwing light on the pre-historic archaeology of the district.

Chronology of Cultures:

All the river systems in the Banaskantha district—the Banas, the Saraswati, the Balaram—were explored and all the gravelly and other deposits of the river sections were carefully examined in order to find out the material remains of the Early Stone Age and the Middle Stone Age man. Explorations have not brought to light any evidences of the Early Stone Age. With regard to the Middle Stone Age, it may be stated that a large scraper on pebble on chert has been discovered from the loose gravels lying in the river bed at Dantiwada (Dhanera taluka).
But no stratigraphic evidences of the above period of human history could be noticed. It was, therefore, felt that the area was sparsely occupied by the man belonging to the Middle Stone Age. But further work is essential in this direction.

**Late Stone Age Culture**

The earliest culture which has revealed many evidences in the Banaskantha district belongs to the Late Stone Age. All the rivers were explored but only the Banas river has revealed the presence of Microliths.

A chain of microlithic sites have been found out on both the banks of the river Banas, right from Avai (taluka Palanpur, from where the river Banas enters the Banaskantha district) up to Juna Deesa and Vadaval. These microlithic stone tools have been discovered from the top of the river sections and from the loessic deposits. It may be mentioned that the microlithic stone tools have also been discovered from some sites in the Radhanpur and the Santalpur talukas of the district by Shri Jagatpati Joshi. But we do not have any clear picture of the material discovered by Shri Joshi.

At Amirgadh (taluka Palanpur) a rock shelter has been discovered, which was used by the Late Stone Age Man for his various activities. Number of Late Stone tools have been collected from the area around the Rock Shelter.

Typologically speaking, the microlithic stone-tools, discovered from the Banas Valley and the tools collected from the area around the Rock Shelter, are non-geometric in nature and are not in association with any pottery. They have much
affinity with the material found from many of the river systems in northern and southern Gujarat and in Saurashtra, particularly from the river Bhadar at Rangpur. The Rangpur microlithic culture has been dated by Shri S.R.Rao to C.3000 B.C. The microlithic culture discovered in the Banaskantha district, may also be dated to 3000 B.C., on the bases of the chronology provided by Rangpur in Saurashtra. It seems that these cultures get linked up with the Chalcolithic one at least in 2nd or 3rd millenium B.C. and hence they could reasonably be dated to a period beginning from this age. Their stratigraphic position on the black clay in South Gujarat seem to point to the fact that their earlier limit will not go to the age of more than 12,000 years, because this period is that of the processes that are operating for the formation of this soil.

Chalcolithic Culture:

The next culture which followed was the Chalcolithic-protohistoric culture. A very rich and important site—Amasari-no-Tekro—has been located at Zekada in the Santalpur taluka of the Banaskantha district. The site of Zekada has yielded almost all pottery types belonging to the great Harappan culture. In addition to it, the site has yielded the late stone age tools and the Reserved Slip ware, which pushes the antiquity of the site to a considerable extent. The site has also yielded the evidences of the post-Harappan culture represented by the lustrous red ware. In addition to the above, black-and-red ware both white painted and plain, showing the influence of the
south-eastern Rajasthan, has also been found. Considering the above evidences, the site could be dated from 2300 B.C. to 1200 B.C. on the bases of the dates provided by Lothal, Surkotada and Rangpur.

Evidences of the Chalcolithic culture have also been found at Bhoral in the Tharad taluka of the Banaskantha district. It is now ascertained that the Banaskantha district had come under the influence of the Chalcolithic culture.

**Early Historic Culture**

The culture which succeeded the Chalcolithic culture in the district was the Early Historic culture. Evidences belonging to the Early Historic culture, consist of the ceramic industry and the punch-marked coins. The ceramic industry ceramic of the Early Historic period is characterised by the pottery with black designs on the red slipped surface. Similar wares are found at Vasai, Lakhabawal II and Amra II also. This pottery is termed as the Vasai ware, which is a variant of the Rangmahal ware. Another type of pottery the black-on-red ware which has affinity with the type of pottery found at Vadnagar in the early historic levels has also been found. On one hand we can, therefore, link up the early historic sites discovered in the Banaskantha, with the sites found in Saurashtra and on the other hand with the site of Vadnagar in the North Gujarat.

A hoard of 101 Punch-marked coins distributed to various museums have been reported by Shri P.L. Gupta. As it is not available for the study, nor any details of the place of deposition are available, one can only ascertain the existence
of this coin type in Banaskantha district.

The sculptures belonging to the closing years of this period have also been found in the Banaskantha district.

**Early Mediaeval Period**:

The early historic culture in the district was succeeded by the early Mediaeval culture. The Mediaeval culture in the Banaskantha district is characterised by the sculptures stylistically belonging to the 'School of Ancient West' started by Sringadhara and referred to by Taranath, a Tibetan historian of the 16th century A.D. Some of the sculptures discovered from the Banaskantha district, have been acknowledged as the masterpieces of Indian Art. This period may be dated from 600 A.D. to 950 A.D.

**Mediaeval Period II**:

This is very important period of history in the Banaskantha district. This period saw the emergence, growth, culmination and the downfall of one of the important dynasties that ruled Gujarat—the Solanki dynasty (942 A.D. to 1298 A.D.). Alround development took place in the field of temple Architecture, Sculptural Art and Painting. Glazed ware was introduced during this period. Besides the glazed ware, the sites belonging to this period have also yielded the coarse black ware, the coarse red ware and the coarse grey ware, in different shapes.

**Sources of Study**:

It may be stated that practically no work was carried out in the district to reveal the different cultures that existed
and, therefore, no data throwing light on different human activities was forthcoming. Also, we do not find any reference about the area in any early literature till we come to the mediaeval period. Buddhist literature also does not give any reference about any of the places now covered up by the Banaskantha district. The well-known Chinese traveller of the 7th century A.D. Huen Tsi-ang (or Yuvan Chwang) might have passed through the district when he visited Srimal in Rajasthan but does not mention anything about the area under study. The only work which was carried out in the district was by Burgess and Cousens.11 These two scholars carried out their field work with a view to studying the architectural antiquities of the area. Because of these efforts, study of the temples such as Triple shrine at Kasara12 (Kankaria taluka) and Bawan Dhavaja temple at Sarotra13 (Palanpur taluka) was made. Except this, no other archaeological sources are available, which might help us in studying the cultures that existed in the district.

In the absence of literature and historical data, however, various publications dealing with the study of antiquities and history made in the neighbouring areas have been utilized with a view to studying the archaeological potential of the Banaskantha district.

History of India', by Rapson, 'History of Gujarat' by Commis-
sariate, 'Rumbhariyaji Tirth' by Munisri Visalvijayaji, 'Bhailadijaji Parsvanathji Tirth' by Munisri Visalvijayaji, 'Radhanpur Pratimah lekh Sandoh' by Munisri Visalvijayaji, and many other publications were extensively consulted for building up the history of the region.

For the study of Geography, Geology, People, Housing, Fauna and Flora, Communication, Hydrology etc. many of the above publications were consulted. In addition to the above, 'Gujarat Through Maps', 'Banaskantha district census Handbook', 'Studies in Geography of Ancient and Mediaeval India', 'Studies in Historical and Cultural Geography and Ethnography of Gujarat' were thoroughly studied and consulted.

For the study of Pre-historic Cultures, 'Archaeology of Gujarat' and 'Pre and Protohistory of India and Pakistan', by H.D. Sankalia, 'Personality of India by B.Subbarao', 'Radio Carbon and Indian Archaeology' edited by D.P.Agrawal and A. Ghosh, 'Excavation at Jokha' by R.N.Mehta, 'Excavation at Devnimori' by R.N.Mehta and S.N.Chowdhary, 'Excavation at Rangpur and other Explorations in Gujarat' by S.R.Rao, 'Lothal and the Indus Civilization' by S.R.Rao, 'Exploration in Kutch and Excavations at Surkotada and new light on Harappan Migration', by J.P.Joshi, and also the issues of Indian Archaeology—a review, published by the Archaeological Survey of India, were the principal sources of study.

For the study of Chalcolithic culture in the Banaskantha district, 'Explorations in Kutch and Excavations at Surkotada

In order to study Early Historic Culture in the district, 'Excavation at Somnath, 1956' by J.M. Nanavati, R.N. Mehta, and Chowdhary S.N., 'Excavation at Dwarka' by Z.A. Ansari and C.R. Chopra, 'Excavation at Vadnagar' by B. Subbarao, and R.N. Mehta, 'Baroda Through the Ages' and 'Personality of India' by B. Subbarao, 'Explorations in Higth' and 'Excavation at Surkotada' and 'New Light on Harappan Migrations,' by J.P. Joshi, 'Excavation at Timberva' by R.N. Mehta, 'Excavation at Samajali' by R.N. Mehta and A.J. Patel, 'Excavation at Devinimori' by R.N. Mehta and S.N. Chowdhary, and such other publications were consulted.

For the study of Mediaeval Culture, 'Excavation at Vadnagar' by B. Subbarao, 'Excavation at Somnath, 1956' by J.M. Nanavati, R.N. Mehta and S.N. Chowdhary, 'Baroda Through the Ages' by B. Subbarao, and 'Excavation at Nagar' by R.N. Mehta and D.R. Shah, and such other publications were consulted.

With a view to studying the sculptural art in the district, my principal sources were 'Sculptures from Samalaji and Road.'
by U.P. Shah, 'Chronology of Gujarat' by M.R. Majmudar, 'Some Mediaeval Sculptures from Gujarat and Rajasthan' by U.P. Shah, 'Akota Bronzes' by U.P. Shah, various issues of the Journal of Oriental Institute, M.S. University of Baroda, numerous articles by R.C. Agrawal on the Sculptures discovered by him from Rajasthan and published in the various issues of Lalit Kala and other scholarly journals, 'Gupta Art' by V.S. Agrawal, 'Art' discussed by S.K. Saraswati, in the Classical Age, 'The Gupta Temple at Deogadh' by M.S. Vats, various issues of the Bulletin of the Baroda Museum and Picture Gallery, various issues of the journal of Indian Museums and many such other publications were consulted.

For the study of 'Temple architecture in the district', 'Hindu Temple' by Stella Kramrisch, 'Chronology of Solanki Temples in Gujarat' by M.A. Dhaky, 'Chronology of Gujarat' by M.R. Majmudar, 'Archaeology of Gujarat by H.D. Sankalia, Archaeological Antiquities of North Gujarat' by Burgess and Cousens, were the main sources.

Study of Iconography of images is based on 'Elements of Hindu Iconography' by T. Gopinath Rao, 'The Indian Buddhist Iconography' by Bhattacharya, 'Jain Art' by U.P. Shah, and 'Handbook of the Collections' of the Baroda Museum and Picture Gallery.

Short Summary of the results:

Explorations in the Banaskantha district of the Gujarat State were undertaken with a view to revealing the archaeological
personality of the area, and to assess its contribution in the various fields of human activity. Needless to say that efforts put in have added many new sites and the author has been able to build up a sequence of cultures right from the Late Stone Age up to the Mediaeval period.

As a result of the field work carried out in the district, 175 sites ranging from the late stone age period up to the mediaeval period have been discovered. They include the habitation sites, temples, ruins of temples, sculptures, inscriptions, coins, memorial stones and minor antiquities. The following period-wise classification of sites indicates their chronological horizons.

(i) Late stone age sites  
   Rock shelters  - 17
(ii) Chalcolithic  - 2
(iii) Early historic  - 4
(iv) Mediaeval Period I  - 5
(v) Mediaeval Period II  - 148

It may be mentioned that no site yielding the evidences of the Early Stone Age has been discovered in the district. With regard to the Middle Stone Age, it may be stated that a large scraper on pebble on chert has been discovered from loose river gravels lying in the river bed of Banas at Dantiwada (Dhanera taluka). No stratigraphic evidence of the period has been found. It is, therefore, felt that the evidence is scanty to prove the occupation of the area by the Middle Stone Age man. Further work might enrich the scanty
The district has yielded remarkable evidences focusing on the late stone age culture. Number of late stone age sites have been discovered, on both the banks of the river Banas, in the down stream, right from where it enters the district upto Juna-Deesa and Vadavali. Beyond that, no evidences of the period have been found. Microlithic stone tools discovered from the Banas Valley consist of fluted cores, cores, flakes, blades, scrapers on flakes and hollow scrapers. These tools are made on semi-precious raw material like chert, chalcedony, agate, jasper, quartz etc.

One of the most important discoveries that has been made in the district is the location of the Rock Shelter at Amirgadh in the Palanpur taluka of the district. The entire rock shelter is a granitic outcrop. The studies at the site have indicated that the rock shelter was in use, in one way or the other, right from the late stone age period upto the late mediaeval period, as we find inscription written in red ochre, palaeographically belonging to the mediaeval period. Rock shelter might have been used by the late stone age man for his various activities. Number of late tools have been collected from the area, underneath the rock shelter and around it. Incidentally it may be noted that such rock shelters are used upto the present in different parts of our country by religious mendicants.

Typologically speaking, microlithic stone tools discovered from the loessic deposits lying on the river bank of the Banas Valley and the tools collected from underneath the rock shelter
and in the vicinity, are non-geometric in nature and are not associated with pottery. Microlithic stone tools are similar to those found from various river systems in Gujarat, Saurashtra and Kutch. Fluted cores showing the chested guiding ridge technique have also been found. It seems that these cultures get linked up with the chalcolithic one at least in 2nd or 3rd millennium B.C. and hence they could be dated to a period beginning from this age. Their stratigraphic position on the black clay in South Gujarat, seem to point to the fact that their earlier limit will not go to the age of more than 12000 B.P. because this period is that of the processes operating for the formation of this soil.

Explorations in the Banaskantha district have brought to light for the first time evidences of the Chalcolithic-proto-historic culture. A rich and extensive Harappan site, Jmari-no-Tekro, has been located at Zekada, a village in the Santalpur taluka of the Banaskantha district. Evidences found at Zekada throw flood light on the Harappan, the late-Harappan and the post-Harappan cultures of Gujarat. The cultural assemblage at Zekada consists of typical pottery both painted and unpainted, terracotta cakes and parallel sided blades.

Study of the material explored at Zekada focuses on the movement of the Harappans towards the south-east. The discovery of the Harappan site in the Banaskantha district, has proved, beyond doubt, that the Harappan culture did not confine itself to Kutch and Saurashtra but it also crossed the small run of
Kutch and penetrated into the north-Gujarat. From there, it is likely that it has gone further into the interior towards Patan, in the Mehsana district.

The discovery of the lustrous red ware culture at Zekada further throws light on the cultural contacts of the region with Saurashtra. It may be mentioned that white painted black-and-red ware akin to that of Ahar culture of Rajasthan has also been discovered at Zekada. This ware has also been found at Surkotada in Kutch. It is quite possible that the white painted black-and-red ware culture, might have entered Kutch from South-Eastern Rajasthan through Zekada. Zekada, therefore, seems to be the meeting place of three cultural elements—the Harappan, the lustrous red ware and the black-and-red ware which might have come from Sindi either directly or through Kutch, Saurashtra and South-Eastern Rajasthan respectively.

The occurrence of the 'Reserved slip ware' at Zekada pushes back the antiquity of the site to a considerable extent.

The discovery of the Harappan site across the desert of Kutch, in the east in the Banaskantha district, has further extended the horizon of the Harappan culture in Western India. The material evidences found at Zekada, undoubtedly pushes back the early history of the Banaskantha district, which was hitherto shrouded in legends and traditions.

Field work carried out in the district has brought to light evidences belonging to the Early historic culture. Evidences belonging to the early historic culture consist of the ceramic
industry. The early historic culture in the district is characterised by two types of pottery. One of the types consists of a pottery with black designs on a red slipped surface. Similar ware also occurs at Vasai, Lakhbawal and Amra in Saurashtra. This pottery has been named as Vasai ware. This Vasai ware is the variant of the Rangmahal ware. While the other ware is black-on-red ware. This ware has much affinity with the pottery found at Vadnagar in North Gujarat, in the levels yielding evidences of the early historic culture. We can, therefore, link up the sites yielding the early historic evidences, discovered in the Banaskantha district, on the one hand with Saurashtra and on the other with Vadnagar in North Gujarat.

Besides the above, a hoard of 101 punch-marked coins has been discovered from the Banaskantha district. The coins now are distributed among various museums in the country. Neither they are available for study, nor we have knowledge about their provenance. There is a good latitude for work on these antiquities, so that further light could be thrown on the Early historic cultures of this area.

In addition to the above, important sculptures throwing light on the Classical Gupta age and belonging to the closing year of this period, have been found in the Banaskantha district.

Explorations in the district have also brought to light remarkable sculptures throwing light on the early Mediaeval period (Mediaeval Period I) sculptural art. The discovery of these sculptures has given a distinct personality to the region.
Three sets of saptamatrikas have been discovered, each from Koteshwar (taluka Danta), Vadaval (taluka Deesa), and Yedencha (taluka Palanpur). Of the three sets, the last two (Vadaval and Yedencha) are carved out of white marble, while the first (Koteswar) is carved out of green schist. The matrika sculptures and the sculptures belonging to the group discovered at Vadaval might be the first pieces carved out of marble in Gujarat, and therefore, the artists practicing in Vadaval may be considered as pioneers for the introduction of new material in the field of sculptural art in Gujarat. Besides these, a few more pieces belonging to the same period have also been found during the field work.

The discovery of these remarkable sculptures has extended the horizon of the 'School of Ancient West', started by Srin-gadhar and referred to by Taranath, a Tibetan historian of the 16th century A.D. Discovery of the sculptures at Vadaval has proved that besides Dungarpur, Samalaji and Idar areas, there were other centres where sculptors were working under master artists. Thus Vadaval has the honour of being one of such centres. The matrika sculptures discovered from Koteshwar stylistically belong to 6th century A.D. while the matrikas and other sculptures from Vadaval and Yedencha may stylistically belong to the late 7th century or early 8th century A.D.

Dr. U.P. Shah has paid a handsome tribute to the images discovered from Vadaval. He observes, "The female forms of Gujarat and Rajasthan dating from 10th century A.D. have been derived
from the excellent forms of the preceding three centuries, typical specimens of which are available in the set of matrikas of Vadvat of late 7th century A.D.\textsuperscript{77}

The emergence of provincial powers, after the downfall of the mighty Gujara-pratihara power, had a good impact on the cultural development of this region. Art and architecture in Gujarat and Rajasthan started getting a new treatment. The Solankis (9th to 13th century A.D.) emerged as very powerful patrons of art. Temples belonging to this period have been discovered at various places in the district. Besides this, ruins of temples have also been discovered during the field work.

Field work has also brought to light quite a large number of sculptures belonging to the Solanki period.

Banaskatnah district has yielded remarkable metal sculptures, important from the viewpoint of art. These metal sculptures have been discovered from Tharad (taluka Tharad) Bhoral (taluka Tharad), Khimot (taluka Dhanera) and Asara (taluka Vav). All the metal sculptures discovered belong to Jainism.

Of all the centres of Jainism in the district, the town Tharad, ancient Tharapadra, has yielded the largest number of metal sculptures, about one hundred and fifty in total. Many of the images are dated and these dates vary from Samvat 1217 i.e. A.D. 1160 to Samvat 1514 i.e. A.D. 1457. Besides the above hoard of sculptures a lotus-shaped bronze and a
remarkable image of Parsvanath in solid silver, have also been found. The silver image has a dedicatory inscription dated in V.S. 1220 (1163 A.D.) and the installation ceremony of the image was performed by Hemchandrasuri, the greatest Jain monk and scholiast of the age.

Besides the above antiquities the mediaeval glazed ware has also been found from many sites in the district. The district has also yielded the coarse black ware, the coarse red ware and the coarse grey ware in different shapes, typologically belonging to the mediaeval period.