Origin and Growth of Towns

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Abstract

The origin of towns came into being as early as 6000-5000 B.C. but these were mostly based on Neolithic agrarian culture. Later on with the inventions of plough, wheel –cart, boat, metallic implements, etc., and also system of watering fields ushered development and valleys of Nile, Tigris, Euphrates, and Indus started surplus food-grains production. Consequently, there evolved a s social organization in which certain strata comprising religious, administrative, trading and artisans' communities could appropriate for themselves part of the produce grown by the cultivators. Such groups settled in towns to perform non - agricultural activities. In the river valleys, thus began a culture of certain groups who were having skill for writing, accountancy as well as knowledge of solar calendar and bureaucracy. There in the real sense town cult began around 3000 B.C. After this up to nearly 2000 years, the ancient urban process ceased. Early cities went into eclipse.

Keywords: Urban, Environment, City, Growth, Origin, Urbanization, Town, Urban Environment, Geographical Bases.

1. Introduction

World's population touched a billion marks by the 19th century and more so it was 3 billion in 1968. At present it is estimated that the global population might crossed the limit of six billion. Out of this tremendous increase in numbers, cities contain nearly 50 percent people, and as per the United Nations report (1969) the urban world would definitely cross this limit of half and half. The phenomenal increase by the 19th and also during the 20th century is generally said to be associated with migration factor. But now it is coupled with the wildly spreading phenomenon of industrialization, and cities got boom of factory laborers from neighboring countryside. This has given rise to lame settlements known as shanty in almost all metropolises, and people unwontedly squatted in and around heaps of garbage to make slums of unhygienic unhealthy environment. Three fourths of the population in metropolitan cities is huddled uncomfortably and living inhumanly where their density per square kilometer surpasses nearly seventy five thousand figure. In the late 20th century what was happening in Kolkata may make the fact clear about the pressures and values arising from the process of urbanization and industrialization.

The congestion of buildings within the city becomes heaviest at the banks of the Hooghly River, particularly at each end of the Howrah Bridge. The wharf-roofs and the factories stretch like a broad, dirty ribbon for miles up and downstream from the heart of the metropolis. According to an official estimate two or third percentages of the people live in Kutcha buildings. More than 57 percent of the multi-members families have one room to live in. for more than half of the families cramped into one room quarters there is only thirty quarters feet or less per family member."

One study showed that the indigent in the Bustees share a single water tap among 25.6 to 30.1 persons and a single latrine among 21.1 to 23.

An urban area is the region surrounding a city. Most inhabitants of urban areas have nonagricultural jobs. Urban areas are very developed, meaning there is a density of human structures such as houses, commercial buildings, roads, bridges, and railways. "Urban area" can refer to towns, cities, and suburbs.

2. Objective of urban studies

To summarize, the study of cities should invariably be associated with environment comprising the very life of the people living there and also the involved activities performed by them. Two main themes of study of towns include their distribution in area and the towns itself as area. But the orientation of urban studies must not escape the overall environment formed by the town fobric. There are certain aspects which actually are enveloped by environment and these should form the major objectives of urban geography. As outlined by Harold M. Mayer, these are:

1- A real association of activities within urban places;
2- Economic base of cities;
3- The areas which cities serve in one way or another;
4- Patterns of distribution of cities; and
5- Morphology of cities – planned or unplanned.

Dickinson too has stated that the objective of urban studies is:

a- To determine the characteristics of site and situation of urban settlement:
b- The historical development of a town; and
c- Its limits which it has currently attained.

Harold E. Murphy while analyzing the scope of urban geography has aptly stressed on spatial aspects of urban development as one of the major objectives of urban studies. This includes all areas that are sufficiently city like in housing density and land use characteristics. Murphy has pointed out that urban geographer Is concerned with cities as entities – their locations, characters, growth, relations to the countryside and each other. He has further stressed about the interior patterns of the city- land use, social and cultural patterns, pattern of circulation and patterns of the natural environment all as they exist in international and interaction in the urban area.

The changing character and the role of the city in consequence of growth of urbanization are of prime significance as objectives of the urban studies. Recent growth of urbanization in the developing countries has given rise to a giant urban area where the great majority of people depend on urban jobs and urban services. This radical change has brought about the change in urban environment, the impact of which, in terms of measurements like commuter zones, service areas and the exchange of goods and information, expands to involve each part of the city area in a complex series of interactions with other parts. The objective is not only to study attitudes to the city which are common within the prevailing culture, but also and at the same time, the new trends and fashions manifest themselves. Urban geographic phenomena are not static, but changing over time being dynamic.

Into the process of change, of course, the slow crystallization of urban geography into a clearly structured systematic study, came the quantitative revolution. Harold carter has stated that out of theory came building of models to be tested in the real world. That testing involved statistical analyses of data, hence the quantitative revolution. In the light of this development Johnston effectively summarized the objectives of urban studies as:

a- Quantitative approach to description;

b- Behavioral approach, and

c- Radical or structuralism approach stressing the constraints that society as a whole impose on the behavior of individuals.

3. Urban Environment in India

During the first half of the 20th century, city environment in India was simple and manageable where in one could about one's normal activities with the least amount of strains and stress. By the end of the century, urban life ad city's physical environment became adjustable because of growth of urban population, unlimited demands and ambitions of urban dwellers, congestion and crowd in residential buildings, transport hazards and unsafe movement within the city. Above all, unhygienic conditions, poor drainage, heaps of garbage, population of air, water, food and erosion of social values have made the city life in India intolerable and miserable.

The result is that conditions in Kolkata, Mumbai, Chennai, Hyderabad, Ahmedabad and Kanpur to mention only a few cases are indescribable and intolerable. Even in this age of technical boom thousands are without any home or shelter and have to live in open spaces or sleep on pavements in most of the metropolitan cities of India, Lewis Mumford has opined that industrial pollution has vitiated beyond imagination the civilization and culture of the orient. The pleasure of being a city dweller has now disappeared because of deteriorated urban conditions and unhealthy environment. There has now been developed a wide gulf between the standard of life upper and lower class of people living in cities, unequal distribution of wealth and its confinement into the hands of a few. Materialism has overshadowed urban amenities and eroded services institution of cities, ultimately to create ecological instability of urban base.

4. Concept of urban environment

City environment is the composite effect of city terrain, drainage including water bodies, modes of transport and movement within the city as well as from and to the city. Population of the residential areas, density of building, industries and commercial areas, alignment of roads and streets, workplaces and institutions of economy, health and education, and also cultural, all what is that form urban infrastructure give rise to the concept of urban environment.

5. Positive organs of city environment

Urban environment has a dual facet role to play. Various institutions providing services to the residents of a city are positive organs of urban functions. These institutions, and also centers of production provide some of the essential services, concerning health, education, marketing in consumers' products as well as facilities for residence, light, water and movement form one place to another within the city. Safety of one's life by seeking help of administrative institutions, police stations, courts of justice and law too form part of instruments of healthy, smooth and comfortable city life.

6. Origin and growth of Towns

1.6 Ancient early beginning

The origin of towns came into being as early as 6000-5000 B.C. but these were mostly based on Neolithic agrarian culture. Later on with the inventions of plough, wheel –cart, boat, metallic implements, etc., and also system of watering fields ushered development and valleys of Nile, Tigris, Euphrates, and Indus started surplus food-grains production. Consequently, there evolved a s social organization in which certain strata comprising religious, administrative, trading and artisans' communities could appropriate for themselves part of the produce grown by the cultivators. Such groups settled in towns to perform non - agricultural activities. In the river valleys, thus began a culture of certain groups who were having

skill for writing, accountancy as well as knowledge of solar calendar and bureaucracy. There in the real sense town cult began around 3000 B.C.

After this up to nearly 2000 years, the ancient urban process ceased. Early cities went into eclipse.

7. River Valley Urbanization

Towns of river valley civilization were small affairs- Babylon being walled only in 3.2 square miles area, while Ur with its canals, harbors, and temples occupied some 220 acres.

Similarly, Erich's walls encompassed an area of just two square miles.

Urban culture of the Indus-valley according to wheeler flourished during 2500-1500 with its prime center Mohenjo-Daro, where presence of copper and bronze affected the way of life. Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa were two metro cities of the Indus Empire. Both seem to have conformed with certain distinctive and evolved principle of urban planning.

Egypt had earlier beginning and was the crossroad of ancient world civilization. The Nile Valley as well as the copper belt of Sinai peninsula gave impetus to the contemporary urban revolution.

The valley becomes the center of art, architecture, philosophy, religion and science. Hieronkonpolis, Thebes, Giza, Aphroditopolis, Memphis, Karnack were some of the known cities.

Mesopotamia forms the Doab of Tigris and Euphrates rivers where a fertile belt, also known as Fertile Crescent gave rise to empires known as Sumerian, Babylonian, Asoyrian and Childian. Mumford described the Doab as magnetic container where water from all directions inflow to enrich it. Urban centers like Ur, Erich, Lagash, Susa, Babylon, Kish, Agade, Assure, Niroveh, Nippur, Khurasabad came into being to give rise to commerce, industry, irrigation and civic-administration.

8. New world

The first Urban revolution touched even the new world where it spread in the central America, Mexico and Peru where Mayan civilization had its sway in about 1000 B.C. it was based on the cultivation of maize with Mexico as the capital city. Towards southward in and around Andes, the mountainous country of Incas grew. The replicas of their strongholds, palaces, and temples provide enough evidences of the empire. Yucatan peninsula was the center of Mayan civilization where Mayapen, Uxmal, Chichen were the principle new towns that grew to ease the pressure on cultivated land.

9. Bases for Ancient urban Growth

The origin of ancient towns in the river valleys and everywhere including China and Central America has common attributes as under:

a- Their bases exclusively had agrarian cult with intensive farming, irrigation for surplus food production so that favorable conditions could be generated for non- agricultural activities like trade, commerce, and also art and culture.

b- Under the conditions of surplus food production there developed opportunities for mutual economic affairs and also means of transport for contacts around urban centers.

c- Ancient urban development is not a matter of chance and accident. It is actually the product of community living. Of course, the centers of community life were not well organized, but, they had their origin based on social positive understanding and cooperation.

d- Establishment of trade and growth of centers for organization and administration of exchange, storage and redistribution of goods were some of the attributes giving impetus to the then urban scene.

e- Above all, it should be understand that ancient urban growth was not purely an economic phenomenon, but must have been pre-eminently a social process.

f- Religious activity was an important force of change. The rise of temples played a significant role in the change.

g- Ancient towns characteristically were symbols of civilizations known as their cradles.

Towards Mediterranean Coast and south –East Asia

The first urban revolution made its headway from the cradles of river valleys to the sea coasts of Mediterranean Sea and in the A.D. reached as far as south-east Asian countries and islands.

10. Greek Towns

Between 3000-1000 B.C., the eastern Mediterranean becomes the theatre of urban growth. On the Greek mainland on Asia minor, towns flourished. They were of course small, having high agricultural population percentage. Knossos, Troy and Mycenae were important trade centers dealing in high value goods. Several islands were nurseries for sailors and there were artisan population around Aegean Sea having skilled craftsmen.

To the Greeks town life was a manner of living a political community. Several Greek city – states were developed during 800-700 B.C. According to Aristotle, the city (or polis) must have a population which is self- sufficient for the purpose of living the good life after the manner of a political community. But Thucydides expressed that even in the 5th century B.C., the majority of Athenian lived in the country. Only a few cities were having a population which was convenient for a self-sufficient life. Actually Greek towns were parasites and dependent on the surrounding rural population. The Greek city – states had three attributes in their origin:

1- They were capitals for example Athens.

2- They were federal capitals for example megalopolis.

3- They were cities which developed as instruments of colonization, such as Ephesus and Miletus, and in the new colonies of Sicily and Italy, such as Selinus and Naples. Some of the salient qualities of the Greek Towns may be summarized as::

1- They had their origin as political communities.

2- Each city was independent politically having autonomy and a source of municipal administration.

3- Ancient Greek cities were symbols of rural – urban symbiosis. Cities had olive gardens and were surrounded by stone or wooden walls.

4- City states in Greece were responsible for changing the kinship into citizenship. This consequently gave rise to brotherhood, cooperation and community life. Tribal organization now had been changed into patriotic state administrated units under an elected leader's control of the state.

5- Wealthy group of people in the city – state had extraordinary privileges and the right to collect taxes in wartimes and in the event of emergency. But later on the relations between the rich and poor or serfs with their masters became strained. Gradually, this became one of causes of the downfall of the Greek city states.

By 500 B.C., urban life shifted to the Ganges of India and to the south-east Asian coasts and islands. Urban growth in Hellenistic and Roman Empire was due to improved community captions and weapons.

11. Roman Towns

Roman towns and cities were not only the means of good life and trade –they were a mini – world in themselves and were actually like the state having all essential functions like administration, culture, religion and trade. Roman cities had a network of roads and were effectively integrated into the foolproof system to define the empire. The alluvial Po Basin had as many as eighty garrison towns, while the peninsular Italy had a network of some 350 towns in the Augustan period. The Iberian Peninsula had also urban centers where Roman life and culture made its sway. Tarragona, Sagunto, Merida and Coimbra were some of the monumental examples. The Romans, to stabilize their empire, developed a system of urban hierarchy ranging from a Castrum (the simple military camp), through the small market centers around a local forum on the highway, to the great regional capitals or Civitates. Rome, Turin, Nimes, Lyons, Treres and Autun were capitals of varying size but having a close network by the roads.

12. Towns in the Gangetic plain

Around 1000 B.C. in the Gangetic plains Aryans settlements spread from Kurukshetra to Patliputra and use of iron opened up new horizons by replacing copper tools. Several capitals of the various kingdoms came in to being and important among those were Hastinapur, Indraprastha, Ahichhatra, (Northern Panchala), Mathura, Ayodhya, Kashi and Kosambi. During 1500-500 B.C., there appeared, Janapads and according to Atareya and Taitareya Upnishads, the Aryan country Aryavarta was divided into eight Janapads or tribal territories.

The cities of the post –vedic period were few and far between. Their emergence is to be attributed to economic forces. The Aryans were essentially Iron Age people, the use of which set the stage for urbanization.

13. Early south Indian Towns

In general, south India shows continuity in urban development from the 5th century B.C. because of the absence of the absence of foreign invasions. The classical literature Sangam in Tamil language provide ample evidence of an independent urban civilization in the south. The major Tomil cities were Madurai Vanji, Urayur, puhar and Korkai. Magasthenes's account of travels mentions about the southern cities of Madurai and Kanchipuram in the Mauryan court. Kautilya's Artbasastra too refers about the trade between the Mauryas and the cities of Madurai and Kanchipuram in the 3rd century B.C. The southern cities had trade contacts with the Arabs, and later on with Greeks and Romans too, around 1000 B.C.

14. South-East Asian Towns

Urban development in south –East Asian remained a slow process as compared to the western world. It has because of the fact that there was diffusion of political and religious organizations. The tribal cells adopted political organization based on Brahmanic and Buddhist beliefs. But later on, around 2nd century A.D. economic base

Gained strength. Traders from the west as well as from India made their headway for various islands. By the end of the 2nd century three prominent areas came into being where urban centers appeared, viz,:

a-   Lower Mekong and its delta under kingdoms of Funans;

b-   The Champa empire in the neighborhood of modern Hue'; and

c-   The empire of Longkasuka on the Kra Isthmus having its ties with the opposite side of the Malaya Peninsula.

These areas were economically rich because of their favorable geographical position on the trade route between China and India. Vyadhpura grew as the capital of the Funan Empire and was an important center of foreign merchants. Nakorn Pat'om was another important coastal port of Dwaravati in the Valley of the Chao Phraya in Thailand. Srivijaya State in

Sumatra was a trade based empire on the river Palembang. Akor-thom was the capital of Khmer empire and Pagan was a flourishing center in the Upper Burma region.

The south-east Asian trade centers were representing a civilization of wealthy priests and artisans who were specialists in non –food production. Diversification of economic activity was the rule of the trade centers which were capitals also. In other words, they represented an universe with all sorts of material facilities and were properly guarded by the place, Temple, Wall and Ditch. Cities habitations were having an hierarchical pattern ranging from administrative and wealthy trading communities and priestly citizens attached to the palace to a common artisans and foreign traders. Backward classes were having their quarters outside the city wall.

15. Attributes of Towns in the middle Ages

On the continent of Europe, during the Dark Ages, it was only in Italy that any semblance of urban life was visible. In the 9th and 10th centuries, the urban revival was centered on the church and defense needs. There were some 286 bishopric towns and 32 defense settlements survived in Italy and France respectively. In Scotland also royal burghs were there to provide military control over the region. In Britain military garrisons as well as trading towns developed. In many parts of Europe including Flemish and Saxon coasts, and in central and Eastern Europe and some in Russia, there were nuclei around which military burgs and trade centers could develop. Defense was an important base in 12 century in the creation of towns. But the local rivalries of Lands attached to these castella' or Garrison –center, accounts for the spread of many bastides. Bastides were towns to which autonomy was granted by Charters. These charters of demands by peasantry were introduced in France, Germany, England, Ireland and Scotland during the 14th century. Hundreds of bastides originated around church and fortress to assure a guarantee of protection to an agricultural population including increased production. The charter made the peasantry free of clutches of landlords. Farming population was granted land ownership and also the minimum –tax facility on cultivated lands. They were also freed of the bonded labor and serfdom. In France between Guyenne and Languedoc out of 50 towns at least 20 were bastides. These bastides besides being market towns were also centers of Christianity.

Between 1500- 1800 A.D., the bases of town's origin were both simultaneously with defense and trade considerations. Military needs later on became redundant to give place to the process of economic competition. Between 1450- and 1710 On the continent, the tributary areas of the royal burghs became punctuated with the market towns. Throughout the Middle Ages town-country relations were close enough to sustain trade.

Medieval towns had a typical plan known as baroque planning in the 17th and 18th centuries. Madrid, Munich, Vienna, Budapest, Warsaw, St. Petersburg and Copenhagen, and many others in Scotland, England, and France represented the spirit of this age in their formal layout, public squares, ornamental gardens and the uniformity of design. Mumford has stated, "town plans changed from medieval diversity to baroque uniformity, from medieval localism to baroque centralism and form the absolutism of god and the catholic church to the absolutism of the temporal sovereign and the national state " 13th baroque towns were having stylish late renaissance architecture.

On the continent, great cities could grow in regions where agricultural productivity was high and where trade routes met, such as the Po Basin, the Netherlands and Belgium and loess bet of central Germany. During the 17th century, urban consolidation was a phenomenon of great commercial activities which multiplied the gains of capital cities at the expense of smaller towns. For example, growth of Paris in France was a matter of the decline of Nancy, Besancon and Toulouse. Nationalism played an important role in the growth of the capital cities. Nationalism itself was being strengthened by the communicational integration of nation states plus foreign trade and manufacturing. Retailers and handicraftsmen abandoned country towns and resort to London because not only the court but also that the provision of things most fit for

it might easily be fetched from thence. London at the close of 17th century was having one-quarter of the total urban population of England.

In India too, conditions responsible for urban growth were not very different from that of Europe. Al-Beruni (1017 A. D) and Ibn- Batuta (1333 A.D) came to India and wrote about the geography of the country. Ibn- Batuta spoke eloquently about the grandeur of Delhi and considered it one the greatest cities in the world.

Almost up to the 14th century in India, the urban development after the regions of Chandra Gupta and Harshavardhan became sick because of the diffusion of the central power. It was only under the muslim rulers that urban life in the areas such as Sutlej-Yamuna Divide and Yamuna-Ghaggar area was governed by handicrafts, trade, art and architecture and agro-industries. Some of the towns like Multan, Lahore, Bhatinda, Kasi, etc, were having good business and activities. In the south, the town life was confined to sea coasts and near the ports and harbors. Dwarika, Smnath, Puri, Tamralpta having trade with outside world and were prosperous business centers. Most of the urban centers were sensitive areas being historically significant nodes of chieftains.

16. Salient characteristics of Medieval India Towns

1. Medieval period in India was a transitional time and it was not possible under the unstable political conditions for the planned and systematic urban growth. Only fortress towns under the patronage of chieftains and petty rulers could grow.
2. Towns along the main routes of travel, and by the river-side had trade in food grains, cloth, swords, carpets, perfumes and several other handicraft articles.
3. Small urban centers were the rule and only capitals were having busy life; Jaunpur was the capital city under the rule of Firozshah.
4. Medieval towns, whether in India or anywhere else, were walled, encircled by an outside moat. The town resembled and island when its gates were locked at sundown.
5. Urban centers of the medieval times were surrounded by agricultural land, and farmers and laborers commonly were having their dwellings near or outside the town limit. The areas within the walls of a town near its bound were occupied by artisan castes engaged in handicrafts. Wealthy merchants were having their mansions around the market place in the central area, while the administrative officials and high- ranked army personals residences were around the palace or castle, church, abbey and the place of worship. The entire structure of a town was divided into socially hierarchical classes controlled by the chieftain or bishop.

17. Geographical bases of Origin and Growth of Modern Towns

Modern towns have their roots in the industrial revolution which began on the continent of Europe at the end of the 18th century. In 1800, the population of Europe was about 175 million, of which 1.6 per cent lived in 20 cities of over one lakh population. The phenomenal increase due to industrial impact was felt during the 19th century and number of cities in Europe between 1800 and 1890 with one lakh inhabitants increased from 20 to 120 cities. The great increase was change from the economic spatial relation between towns from trade to manufacturing industries, related to the introduction of steam power and its utilization in the factories. The colonial activities of the European nations exploited the countries of third world by the useful raw materials brought to Europe in their factories for manufacturing products of daily use. However, the impact, of course a bit late, too influenced towns of the countries outside the continent. But the positive and maximum advantage of the industrial revolution turned the cities of Europe into big urban nodes. McGee expressed aptly the aptly that the majority of the third world countries have inherited their modern economic structure rom an area of colonialism.

In Europe, three important factors are responsible in the general growth of towns, and the disproportionate expansion of the giant cities. These are:

1- The spread of railway plexus across Europe,
2- The development of the coalfields,
3- The continued increase of the capital cities.

In the mid-19th century eight cities of over one lakh population were located on the coalfields and 16 were ports in western Europe. But the handicaps of costly inland transport and slow movement on canals and natural waterways were removed by the railways. The combination of the form of transport plus the added factor of point production made possible by the steam engine caused the disproportionate growth of industrial centers. In England also the development of railway gave impetus to the industrial conurbations of the woolen and cotton towns.

Growth of modern towns made it possible to increase the number of service centers where increased population engaged in tertiary activities was taking shape because of the decreased artisans engaged in handicrafts.

One other factor came into prominence in the case of Great Britain where due to excessive industrial growth and pollution people south to relieve their pains by migrating from the smoky 'Black country' to sea-side. The spread of railway too played the role and several sea-resorts came into being. Smailes observed the phenomenon of the growing holiday resorts and expressed.

A concomitant of intense industrialization of Great Britain, an Island country with stretches of sea-side now within easy reach of all major concentrations of population, has been the development of resorts on a scale unmatched in any other country. As a class of towns, resorts are here both more numerous and more highly specialized in function.

Growth of seaside towns spread all along the coast of the Mediterranean sea in Spain, France, Italy, Yugoslavia, etc. Urban expansion in Europe due to holiday and health resorts was tremendous during 1801, being 254 per cent, followed by the manufacturing towns with 224 per cent, mining and metallurgical towns 217, seaports 195 London 146 and the country towns 122 per cent.

By the mid- 20th century, in Europe, there were some 300 cities with over one lakh inhabitants. This represents the greatest urban growth in the world because the total number of such cities was 700; Asia had 215 and the Americas 155 cities. Development of conurbation is another spectacular phenomenon of urban growth in Europe. In Britain, by the end of the 19th century, out of 40 towns with over one lakh population, 27 were on coalfields to form conurbations. The census of 1951 in England shows six conurbations having 41 per cent of the total urban population. In the north western part of Germany the Ruhr Coal region had some forty coal-towns welded into conurbation spreading from Duselberg to Hern and between Dusseldorf to Hagen.

Throughout Europe in the 20th century there has been a common factor of the supremacy of a national capital or commercial city in each country. As aptly observed by Houston, the national feeling was a tremendous force or a general tidal advance when compared to all other population movements which were merely ripples. In India, urban modernism truly began with the advent of the British rule. In 1872, India's first census of population was carried out. This showed that in 1872 there were only 16 cities of one lakh population and all of them were trading centers situated either on sea coasts or on river banks. Kolkata was a premier city grown due to its trading activities through its rich mineral- bearing hinterland. At that time England had evolved as a major industrial node of the world as a result of the industrial revolution and India became its main market for British goods. Moreover, the economic policies of the European colonial powers proved

detrimental and raw-materials from India fed the factories of Europe. It resulted into both decline as well as growth of some of the Indian urban centers. Kolkata, Chennai, Mumbai, Patna, Surat, Varanasi and Delhi showed a growth nearly 10 per cent in their population when compared to 1800 A.D Kolkata was having eight lakh populations in 1872. On the contrary to this fact, old ancient and medieval towns like Agra, Lucknow, Srinagar, Ahmedabad, Gaya, Baroda, Indore and Tanjore lost their former importance due to negative approach to the colonial powers towards the traditional industries, especially handicrafts and cotton textiles of India.

Another factor is the network of railways which contributed to the urban growth in India, Inland towns, and even cities of large size which were on the railways, developed. The railways had their profound impact since 1931 and the census of 1941 showed that there were 49 one lakh cities, and in all, around 2,500 towns were on railway lines. The 19th century also witnessed in India the emergence of a new class of towns in the hill areas, particularly for the British to enjoy a cool temperate climate to get relief from the agonies of the summer heat. By 1870, there were over 80 hill stations in India to cater the needs of four clientele areas,

The major railway heads, hill stations and centers of manufacturing peculiarly had the British ethos. Modern developments in towns of India indicate a striking contrast between their indigenous sector and other Anglicized part. It is because of the modification of the urban landscape of the existing capital towns with the introduction of civil line, cantonments, railway colony, and establishment of townships and also with the addition of amenities like clubs, administrative and educational and hospital campuses as well as the central commercial areas flanked by the massive building of Roman styles.

In the post-independence period, urban growth in India has entered a new phase. Cities having one lakh and even more population grew rapidly. Some new cities also came into being because of the partition of the country. The displaced people began to settle in and around Delhi, and there was a phenomenal rise in the population of towns in northern India. This was followed by industrial development which was responsible for three to four-fold increases in the urban population. Rise in commerce, trade and communication and also new administrative set-up gave rise to urban development.

In India, bases of origin or urban centers were not different from that of the western world. Towns primarily originated and developed in the areas which were fertile agriculturally. Most of the towns have village origin, and small towns have a substantial part of their work-force engaged in agriculture. Market towns also appeared in and around agriculturally fertile areas to collect and dispose food grains.

Religion also played an important force for the origin of towns. Varansi, Allahabad, Haridwar, Rameshwaram, etc. have come into being predominantly because of religious sanctity at the point of their site.

Another significant base of origin in India has been political. Princely states had their capital cities originated, grew and even deserted with the beginning, rise and fall of kingdoms during the course of history. Patliputra, Vijayanagar, Aurangabad, Bijapur, Golcoda, etc are some of the examples representing their political origin. After independence also, the new state capitals like Chandigarh, Gandhinagar, Bhubaneshwar, Dispur etc. came into origin because of the political need.

18. Conclusion

Concluding the trend of origin and growth of urban centers around the world, this may be conveniently established that the underlying reasons are multifarious ranging from economic to cultural, social and political. The economic forces either generated by the ancient river valleys or by Greek's voyages around the Mediterranean played significant role. Roman political organization and the Aryan states in the Gangetic plain or later on the colonial activities of the European powers too made their marks in the origin and development of towns. Industrial revolution during the 19th century coupled with production and vast labour forces generated the creation of entirely new urban agglomeration in great contrast to the earlier urban development. Urban gravitation is being encouraged by the development of modern transportation and communication. In the entire world, the capital cities, especially in Europe and India, as well as, strong point towns of state rulers and emperors have given a fillip for origin of urban centers.

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