



# The City and the Country in Early India: A Study of Malwa

*P Basant*

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## **The City and the Country in Early India: A Study of Malwa P Basant**

The City and the Country in Early India: A Study of Malwa is about the emergence of urban centres in the sixth century bce, and analyses the processes and spatiality of urbanization, taking Malwa as its case study. Earlier research on urbanism has focussed on either literary or archaeological sources. While literary sources tend to locate the agency for change exclusively in preachers and rulers, in archaeology, the forces of change become nameless and faceless. The study of inscriptions from Malwa helps in restoring agency to common people. The beginnings of urbanism are to be found in the pre-literate past, and, therefore, require an analysis of archaeological data. Using insights from anthropology and studies of early states, in the first half of the book an attempt has been made to look for new ways to account for urbanization. The second half of the book tries to understand the process of urbanization by examining epigraphic and literary sources. The process of the emergence of urban centres created new forms of division of space: urban centres were surrounded by villages which in turn were surrounded by wilderness. This book tries to recover the histories of their complex interrelations. Since caste and kinship are considered central to the world of Indian sociology, an attempt has also been made to understand the relationships between caste, kinship and urbanism. Changes in the attitude of the literati towards the city and the country have also been examined.

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