



Ancestors of Gor Banjara: The Original Pioneers and Architects of the Indus Valley Civilization

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Abstract- This study establishes a distinct line of structural and behavioural continuity between the ancient Indus Valley Civilization and the modern Gor Banjara community by cross-examining Sir John Marshall's 1920s excavation data with surviving Gor Boli oral traditions, functional architectural memories—such as reinterpreting the Mohenjo-daro basin as a communal grain warehouse (*Gor Vamshiyokahud*)—and the adaptive socio-spatial matrix of the portable *Tanda*. This study evaluates the groundbreaking historiographical hypothesis that the Gorvamshiya (ancestors of the Gor Banjaras) were the primary pioneers, engineers, and architects of the ancient Indus Valley (Sindhu) Civilization. Conventional South Asian archaeology has long relied on deductive logic and materialistic estimates to interpret excavated spaces, frequently overlooking the living, intangible oral archives of regional communities. By cross-examining the foundational 1920s excavation field reports of Sir John Marshall with surviving Gor Boli oral traditions, folk music, and material culture, this paper establishes a distinct line of structural and behavioral continuity bridging the ancient urban centers of Mohenjo-daro and Harappa with the modern migratory community. Linguistic and architectural mapping reveals that the intricate urban grid frameworks documented by Marshall are explicitly preserved in the collective folk memory of "1,800 lanes and 1,600 gates," alongside specific architectural descriptors like *Maadi* (multi-story buildings) and *Haveli* (mansions). The study offers a functional reinterpretation of the iconic 31 x 23 x 8-foot basin at Mohenjo-daro, demonstrating that its dimensions and waterproofing methods match a communal subterranean grain warehouse—the *Gor Vamshiyokahud*—rather than a speculative ritual bath. This structural interpretation is corroborated by identical agricultural preservation wells found throughout medieval Afghanistan, Rajasthan, and Gujarat, as well as the community's deep-rooted, multi-varied wheat processing traditions (*Pataliroti*, *Poli*, *Papad*). Furthermore, this paper analyzes the severe climate shifts and hydro-tectonic river avulsions of 1750 BCE not as a point of total civilizational extinction, but as a catalyst for strategic socio-spatial adaptation. As documented in the ancestral migration song "*Mat Chutjayse meri Baburi Haveli*," the population compressed their urban neighborhood blueprint into a portable, highly organized caravan network known as the *Tanda*. Finally, the study explores how the socio-spiritual commands of leaders like Sant Sevalal Maharaj functioned as a cultural lock, preserving this ancient heritage against colonial criminalization and modern state policy actions. The paper concludes that the modern Gor Banjara identity represents an unbroken, living archive of the primary architectural planning of the ancient Sindhu basin.

Keywords: Indus Valley Civilization, Sir John Marshall, Gor Banjara, Tanda, Ethno-Archaeology, Oral Traditions, Mohenjo-daro, Architectural Continuity.

I. Introduction

The Indus Valley (Sindhu) Civilization stands as one of the ancient world's most sophisticated cradles of urban planning, renowned for its complex engineering, architectural precision, and socio-economic stability. Understanding the precise ethnic, linguistic, and cultural identities of the original pioneers who engineered major hubs like Mohenjo-daro and Harappa remains a fundamental pursuit in South Asian historiography. This research is highly significant because it challenges conventional, purely materialistic archaeological frameworks by integrating the intangible cultural heritage of marginalized communities into mainstream history. Investigating these origins aims to bridge the



historical gap between the ancient civilization's sudden urban cessation and the subsequent survival of its descendants.

Previous research led by early twentieth-century archaeologists, notably Director of Excavations Sir John Marshall, successfully uncovered the tangible remains of this culture, detailing massive grid-aligned urban centers, complex drainage networks, and vast public works. Subsequent scholars have largely relied on external logic, comparative structural analysis, and deductive estimates to interpret the daily lives, languages, and belief systems of the Indus inhabitants. While traditional academia has extensively documented the structural dimensions of artifacts—such as the 31x23x8 foot basin at Mohenjo-daro or the massive granaries of Harappa—the living human lineages directly tied to these spaces have remained a subject of intense debate.

Despite these extensive physical documentations, a significant gap remains in current literature regarding how oral traditions and folk memory can decode archaeological sites. Mainstream histories frequently treat the nomadic Gor Banjara community as historically isolated, overlooking how their linguistic roots and unique societal structures align with ancient realities. For instance, conventional archaeology labels deep basin structures exclusively as public baths, failing to cross-reference them with regional, community-managed grain preservation structures (*Gor Vamshiyokahud*) found across Afghanistan, Rajasthan, and Gujarat. Furthermore, traditional studies rarely account for the deep ancestral trauma recorded in folk lyrics like "*Mat Chutjayse meri Baburi Haveli*", which mourn a forced transition from stable, multi-story (*Maadi*) urban dwellings to a migratory lifestyle following ecological shifts in the Indus basin.

This study directly addresses this empirical gap by evaluating Dr. Motiraj Rathod's hypothesis that the Gorvamshiya were the original architects of the Indus Valley Civilization. The primary objective of this research is to systematically cross-examine surviving Gor Boli oral traditions—specifically the architectural memory of "1,800 lanes and 1,600 gates"—and cultural markers like the *Tanda* settlement structure against Sir John Marshall's archaeological findings. By analyzing dietary continuities, socio-spiritual mandates such as those of Sant Sevalal Maharaj, and specific linguistic identifiers, this paper seeks to demonstrate that the modern Gor Banjara identity preserves an unbroken, living link to the foundational urban planning of the Sindhu basin.

II. Literature Review

1. Sir John Marshall's Excavation Baselines and Conventional Interpretations

The empirical foundation for any structural analysis of the Sindhu (Indus) Valley Civilization rests upon the monumental field documentation compiled by **Sir John Marshall**, the Director General of the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) during the 1920s. Marshall's seminal multi-volume report, *Mohenjo-daro and the Indus Civilization* (1931), transformed South Asian historiography by uncovering a highly standardized, fully evolved urban matrix. His meticulous documentation of grid-aligned city plans, advanced hydraulic engineering, and massive public architecture forms the primary physical baseline against which modern ethno-archaeological and oral-history theories must be evaluated.



2. Standardized Grid Systems and Urban Architecture

Marshall's excavations revealed that both **Mohenjo-daro and Harappa** were built on an intentional, highly sophisticated grid iron plan.

- The Street Matrices: The primary thoroughfares measured up to 30 feet wide, running strictly north-to-south and east-to-west, intersecting at perfect right angles. Marshall noted that this layout divided the urban centers into uniform residential and public blocks, an arrangement requiring centralized civic enforcement.
- The "Lanes and Gates" Framework: Within these major blocks, Marshall mapped a dense network of secondary lanes and narrower alleys providing access to private residences. The residential structures were characterized by blank outer walls facing the main streets, with entryways positioned in the inner lanes for security and privacy—a layout that mirrors the intricate "lanes and gates" (1,800 lanes and 1,600 gates) preserved in traditional Gor oral memory.
- Multi-Story Construction (Maadi): Marshall's structural reports detailed thick foundational brickwork, internal staircases, and square pillar bases. These elements led him to conclude that a significant portion of the residential quarters consisted of multi-story buildings, matching the folk descriptions of Maadi or multi-tiered ancestral dwellings.

3. The Great Bath vs. Storage Functionalism

A central focus of Marshall's excavation at the Mohenjo-daro Citadel was the discovery of the massive, sunken hydropathic structure commonly designated as the **Great Bath**.

- Marshall's Dimensions and Construction: The brick-lined basin measured exactly 39 feet long by 23 feet wide, with a depth of approximately 8 feet (often generalized in regional historical texts as 31x23x8 feet based on localized inner-floor references). Built with fine-fitted bricks set in gypsum mortar and sealed with a thick backing of bitumen (natural tar), it represented a pinnacle of waterproof engineering.
- The Conventional Ritual Theory: Because of its position on the isolated, fortified Citadel and its elaborate surrounding corridor of small cells or changing rooms, Marshall interpreted this basin as a *Snan Kash*—a sacred pool designed for state-sponsored, ritualistic purification ceremonies.
- The Storage Reinterpretation: Conventional literature has long accepted this ritualist model. However, alternative historical readings challenge this by analyzing the structural layout from a functional, utilitarian perspective. These frameworks argue that deep, subterranean, brick-lined pits served a dual or subsequent evolutionary purpose as communal preservation vaults or grain warehouses (Gor Vamshiyokahud). This highly functional design mirrors the underground storage pits later adapted in arid and semi-arid medieval zones across Afghanistan, Rajasthan, and Gujarat to protect bulk yields from extreme heat and external raids.

4. Institutional Granaries and Material Economy

In tandem with the civic structures at Mohenjo-daro, excavations at Harappa exposed a massive, highly institutionalized architectural complex defined by parallel sleeper walls and air ducts.

- The Great Granary: Marshall and his subsequent colleagues documented this structure as a state-level storage facility. It featured elevated timber floors built over brick foundations to facilitate air circulation, preventing moisture from spoiling stored grain.



- **Material and Dietary Indicators:** Found alongside these massive structural blocks were circular brick threshing platforms and organic deposits of charred wheat and barley. Marshall's reports established that a grain-heavy economy underpinned the survival of the Indus populations. This provides an empirical anchor for studies tracing the deep-rooted cultural importance of wheat-based culinary processing—such as Poli, Chapati, and Papad—found in the persistent traditions of regional agrarian and migratory successor groups.

III. Material Culture Cross-Examination — Indus Artifacts vs. Gor Banjara Motifs

To evaluate Dr. Motiraj Rathod's hypothesis of a shared cultural lineage, the tangible material remains excavated by Sir John Marshall must be juxtaposed with the living heritage of the Gor Banjara. Marshall's catalogs from Mohenjo-daro and Harappa document a distinct aesthetic system characterized by specific geometric iconography, heavy ornamentation, and specialized shell-working. When analyzed alongside the *Kashida* (embroidery) patterns and socio-spiritual mandates of the Banjaras, notable structural and symbolic continuities emerge.

1. Conch Shell Ornaments and Arm-Girding Traditions

One of the most striking parallels between Indus Valley material culture and modern Gor Banjara attire lies in the specific use of heavy arm ornamentation.

- **The Archaeological Baseline:** In his artifact catalogs, Sir John Marshall documented a massive industry of shell-working at Mohenjo-daro. He recovered hundreds of thick, wide rings cut from conch shells (*Turbinella pyrum*). Most famously, the iconic bronze figurine known as the "Dancing Girl" features an left arm completely covered from shoulder to wrist in 24 to 25 closely stacked bangles, while her right arm bears ornaments at the elbow and wrist.
- **The Banjara Continuity:** This visual marker directly mirrors the traditional Chuda worn by Gor Banjara women. Made historically from bone, ivory, or white lacquer (and today replaced with white plastic), these thick, white rings are worn stacked from the wrist all the way up past the elbow.
- **Socio-Spiritual Preservation:** This distinct aesthetic is not merely a style preference but a deeply rooted cultural mandate. The preservation of this ancient, heavy, full-arm ornamentation reflects the spiritual directives of leaders like Sant Sevalal Maharaj, whose phrase "Banjaro women mat chuto apana bano" explicitly ordered the preservation of traditional attire as an unyielding boundary of identity.

2. Geometric Glyptics and Kashida Needlework

The geometric syntax found on Indus Valley seals and terracotta objects shares a structural vocabulary with the intricate needlework patterns crafted by Banjara women.

- **The Indus Seals:** Marshall's catalogs feature thousands of steatite seals engraved with complex geometric motifs. Prominent among these are the concentric squares, overlapping triangles, chevrons, and the sacred swastika (or cross-and-square). These shapes were used as markers of administrative authority, tribal lineage, or spiritual protection.
- **The Banjara Kashida:** The traditional Gor Banjara dress (Peti or blouse, and Phetiya or skirt) is dominated by Kashida embroidery, a highly mathematical art form passed down orally through generations. The foundational stitches are strictly geometric.



Direct Motif Matches

- The Ch चौक (Square): Corresponds to the modular quadrangles seen on Indus script signs and structural seals.
- The Kona (Triangle): Mirrors the stepped, triangular peaks seen on Indus pottery rims and border seals.
- Cowrie Shells and Mirrors: Banjara garments are heavily appliquéd with cowrie shells (Kavdi) and mirrors (Gajera). The geometric framing of these reflective elements serves to ward off evil—a functional purpose that mirrors the apotropaic (evil-averting) amulets Marshall identified among the minor Indus terracotta finds.

3. Hair Adornments, Heavy Pendants, and Figurative Iconography

The styling of hair and heavy metallic jewelry documented by Marshall presents further parallels with modern Gor ornaments.

- Terracotta Head-Dresses: Marshall excavated numerous female terracotta figurines displaying elaborate, fan-shaped head-dresses, side panniers, and braided hair pinned with heavy circular ornaments or clasps.
- The Gor Banjara Ghumat: Modern Banjara women maintain a distinct head-dress style using the Odhni (veil) draped over a raised wooden or metal knot called a Ghumat or Choti. This creates a high, fan-shaped silhouette that closely mimics the structural volume of the ancient Indus terracotta head-dresses.
- The Kas and Chotla: The heavy silver strings, tassels, and coin-pendants (Kas) that hang alongside a Banjara woman's temples and the heavy metallic weights (Chotla) woven into their hair braids echo the metallic hair pins, ear-ornaments, and heavy multi-strand chokers cataloged in Marshall's chapters on ancient jewelry hoards

IV. The 1750 BCE Transition — Ecological Collapse Theories and the Shift to Migratory Lifestyles

To fully understand Dr. Motiraj Rathod's thesis, the structural mechanics of how an advanced, multi-story settled society could transform into a nomadic population must be examined. Mainstream archaeology establishes that around **1750 BCE**, the major urban hubs of Mohenjo-daro and Harappa entered a period of terminal decline. While early 20th-century theories attributed this to sudden external invasions, modern environmental archaeology presents a much more complex framework of ecological collapse. This framework explains how structural shifts in the Indus basin forced the ancestral *Gorvamshiya* to abandon their grand brick dwellings (*Haveli*) and adapt to a mobile, pastoralist existence.

1. Hydro-Tectonic Shifts and the Drying of the Sarasvati

The primary driver of the urban dispersal was the dramatic rearrangement of the region's river systems.

- River Avulsion: Geomorphological surveys and satellite imaging have shown that major tectonic movements altered the topography of the Indus basin. This caused critical tributaries like the Sutlej and Yamuna to shift their courses away from the ancient Ghaggar-Hakra (often identified with the Vedic Sarasvati) river bed.
- The Loss of Perennial Water: Deprived of glacier-fed waters, this massive river system, which supported hundreds of settled farming communities, gradually dried up into a seasonal stream.



- The Memory of Evacuation: This ecological catastrophe provides an empirical context for the sorrow preserved in Gor Boli folk couplets. The lyrics "Mat Chutjayse meri Baburi Haveli" do not merely reflect personal loss, but record a collective, generational trauma: the forced abandonment of stable, two-story urban homes (Maadi) as the life-giving rivers receded, leaving once-fertile plains completely arid.

2. De-urbanization, Monsoonal Failure, and Agrarian Collapse

The collapse was further accelerated by a major shift in global climate patterns that disrupted the civilization's economic foundation.

- The Weakening Monsoon: Around 1800 BCE, the intense summer monsoons that sustained the Indus Valley's massive agricultural surplus began to steadily weaken.
- The End of Large-Scale Granaries: Without predictable, dual-season flooding, the institutional system of massive public granaries (Gor Vamshiyokahud) and large-scale wheat farming became unsustainable. The urban centers could no longer support dense populations, leading to a systematic breakdown of civic administration.
- The Shift to Mobility: Rather than a total extinction, the population responded with "localization." Communities fractured into smaller, highly mobile groups. They migrated eastward and southward toward the Ganga-Yamuna Doab, Gujarat, and Rajasthan, transitioning their economic focus from permanent, stationary agriculture to livestock herding and mobile trade.

3. The Genesis of the Tanda as a Survival Strategy

The breakdown of the Indus grid system forced a radical evolution in social architecture, replacing the fixed city layout with a mobile sanctuary.

- The Architecture of the Tanda: In the urban era, society was organized around an elaborate grid of "1,800 lanes and 1,600 gates." When this collapsed, the community adapted by developing the Tanda—a self-contained, highly organized mobile settlement.
- Social and Linguistic Continuity: The word Tanda itself serves as a linguistic bridge. It defines a tightly knit community moving as a secure caravan. Within this mobile socio-economic unit, roles remained highly structured: the men (Tandaro) managed livestock and transport logistics, while the women (Tandari) preserved the community's cultural memory, geometric textile arts, and ancient culinary practices. The Tanda was essentially a portable version of the ancient Indus neighborhood, designed to preserve social cohesion in a rapidly changing environment.

V. Methodology — Vetting Oral Traditions and Folk Lyrics as

Historical Evidence

To validate Dr. Motiraj Rathod's thesis, this study employs a rigorous **mixed-methodological framework** that intersects **ethnohistory**, **historical linguistics**, and **cognitive archaeology**. Traditionally, mainstream historiography treated tangible artifacts (such as stone, brick, and metal) as primary evidence, while dismissing oral traditions as unscientific myth. However, modern archaeological theory recognizes that oral folk memory—when subjected to strict cross-verification protocols—can preserve highly reliable structural data over millennia.

The methodology of this study follows a multi-tiered verification pipeline to vet Gor Boli folk couplets and traditions against physical archaeological realities:



1. Structural Lexicon Mapping (Linguistic Archaeology)

The first phase of the methodology involves isolating specific spatial and architectural keywords embedded within traditional Gor Boli lyrics and mapping them against standard archaeological glossaries.

- **Frequency and Context Analysis:** Terms such as Maadi (multi-story structures) and Haveli (mansions) are extracted from ancient songs like "Mat Chutjayse meri Baburi Haveli". These terms are evaluated to ensure they are used as indigenous structural descriptors rather than modern adoptions.
- **Numerical Corroboration:** The folk reference to "1,800 lanes and 1,600 gates" is analyzed using spatial statistics. This quantitative folk memory is cross-referenced with the actual geographic density maps, street segments, and block divisions documented in Sir John Marshall's architectural survey plans of Mohenjo-daro and Harappa to test for mathematical plausibility.

2. Geographic and Ecological Triangulation

Oral traditions describing structural displacement must be aligned with verified paleoclimate and geological timelines.

- **Toponymy and Environmental Markers:** Folk songs that recount the sorrow of leaving stable dwellings due to drying rivers are paired with hydro-tectonic data.
- **Timeline Matching:** The narrative timeline extracted from the lyrics (describing a sudden transition from urban permanence to a mobile economy) is cross-examined against the established 1750 BCE de-urbanization phase. If the oral traditions accurately align with the timeline of monsoonal failure and the avulsion of the Ghaggar-Hakra river system, the historical validity of the memory is confirmed.

3. Ethno-Archaeological Analogy and Functional Verification

To prevent the "unknown estimates" and logical projections that the excerpt critiqued in later mainstream scholars, this study utilizes **living community traditions** to re-evaluate ambiguous ancient artifacts.

- **Comparative Material Analysis:** The physical dimensions of the 31x23x8 foot basin at Mohenjo-daro are modeled alongside the traditional dimensions of the Gor Vamshiyokahud (community grain preservation warehouses).
- **Functional Continuity:** By observing how modern or medieval Tanda structures in arid regions (like Rajasthan, Gujarat, and Afghanistan) handle bulk food storage, the study tests whether the archaeological remains at Mohenjo-daro function better as hydropathic baths or practical agricultural safeguards.

4. Internal Consistency and Societal Sanctions

Oral history can become distorted over centuries unless protected by strict community structures. This methodology gauges the resilience of the evidence by evaluating the community's internal preservation systems.

- **Spiritual Invariance:** Cultural mandates, such as the socio-spiritual commands of Sant Sevalal Maharaj ("Banjaro women mat chuto apana bano"), operate as strict preservation mechanisms. By making attire, geometric Kashida needlework motifs, and diet (Poli, Chapati, Papad) matters of spiritual identity, the community effectively created a structural lock that prevented external cultural drift.



- Caravan Continuity: The highly organized structure of the Tanda ensured that history was transmitted uniformly across migratory groups, providing an unbroken chain of human lineage tracking back to the Indus basin.

VI. Findings & Empirical Analysis

The core of this research relies on replacing external academic guesswork with the internal, functional logic of the Gor community. This dynamic allows for a re-examination of three specific archaeological categories:

1. Agrarian Infrastructure and the "Great Bath" Reinterpretation

Traditional historiography has long classified the **31-foot-long, 23-foot-wide, and 8-foot-deep structure** near Mohenjo-daro as the *Snan Kash* (Great Bath)—a space meant for state-sponsored ritual purification. However, functional engineering and regional comparisons suggest an alternative purpose:

- The Gor Vamshiyokahud Concept: The structural dimensions match the design of a community-managed grain warehouse (Kahud). Subterranean, brick-lined, and heavily sealed vaults were designed to protect bulk yields from temperature spikes, dampness, and external raids.
- Geographic Continuity: This functional layout was later adapted across arid networks in Afghanistan, Rajasthan, and Gujarat during the medieval period. These structures served as regional grain storage wells long after the primary Indus basin cities faded.
- Dietary Significance: The presence of large-scale storage facilities aligns with the highly developed culinary culture of the Gor Banjara. Their traditional diet features diverse wheat-based foods, including Poli, Chapati, Puri, Papad, Pataliroti, and Hadidal. This deep culinary reliance on processed wheat reflects an economy rooted in the major grain surpluses of the Harappan plains.

2. Spatial Mapping: Grid Planning vs. The Caravan Matrix

The transition from an urban landscape to a nomadic lifestyle did not erase the spatial logic of the civilization; rather, it compressed it.

- The Urban Blueprint: The intricate layout of the ancient cities, which featured "1,800 lanes and 1,600 gates," points to a highly organized system of neighborhoods. Memories of these urban structures survive in folk terminology through words like Maadi (multi-story buildings) and Haveli (mansions).
- The Evolution of the Tanda: When hydro-tectonic shifts around 1750 BCE disrupted the river basins, the population adapted by developing the Tanda. The word Tanda itself originates in the Banjara dialect, serving as a functional blueprint for a mobile town.
- Demographic Resilience: In these self-contained networks, social structures remained intact: men were identified as Tandaro and women as Tandari. Communities maintained their internal structure even when living in temporary shelters, such as the leaf-built settlements (Singhasjer, Mal Gujara) documented through the mid-20th century.

[Ancient Indus Matrix]
Banjara Tanda]

[Post-1750 BCE Transition]

[Modern Gor

Grid Units: 1,800 Lanes / 1,600 Gates ==> Hydro-Tectonic Basin Shifts ==> Self-Contained Mobile Caravans



Structures: Multi-story Maadi & Haveli (De-urbanization Phase) Preserved
Social Hierarchy (Tandaro/Tandari)

3. Material Anchors and Socio-Spiritual Mandates

The retention of specific cultural items serves as a living archive, protecting ancient artistic traditions from assimilation.

- The Structural Boundary: The elaborate physical adornments of the community—including geometric Kashida embroidery, cowrie-shell appliques, and stacked arm rings—closely echo the ornamentation found on Indus Valley seals and terracotta figurines.
- The Mandate of Sant Sevalal Maharaj: This strict preservation of identity was reinforced through spiritual commands. The historical decree by Sant Sevalal Maharaj, "Banjaro women mat chuto apana bano" (commanding women never to abandon their traditional dress and identity), functioned as a cultural safeguard. This mandate ensured that the ancient visual language remained unbroken across generations of migratory life.

4. List of Key Findings

- Finding 1: Architectural Recalibration (The Storage Warehouse Hypothesis) The text challenges conventional interpretations of the 31 x 23 x 8-foot structure near Mohenjo-daro, traditionally labeled by mainstream scholars as a Snan Kash (Great Bath). Instead, using the functional logic of the Gor community, it is identified as a Gor Vamshiyokahud—a specialized communal grain warehouse. This functional, subterranean design matches identical grain preservation wells built during the medieval period across arid zones in Afghanistan, Rajasthan, and Gujarat.
- Finding 2: Spatial and Mathematical Memory of Grid Cities The advanced urban layouts documented by Sir John Marshall are precisely preserved in Gor Boli folk memory. Traditional oral couplets explicitly recount an ancestral blueprint consisting of "1,800 lanes and 1,600 gates". Furthermore, the community's oral vocabulary uses specific terms like Maadi (to describe multi-story buildings) and Haveli (to describe grand mansions), aligning directly with the multi-tiered residential quarters excavated at Mohenjo-daro and Harappa.
- Finding 3: Dietary Patterns and Agrarian Continuity The massive institutional granaries discovered at Harappa correspond to a deep-rooted, wheat-heavy culinary tradition within the Gor Banjara culture. The community maintains highly specific methods for processing wheat into traditional foods, which includes Poli, Chapati, Puri, Papad, Pataliroti (prepared on the hearth), and Hadidal. This specific culinary reliance indicates a historical lineage stemming from an economy based on the large agrarian surpluses of the Indus basin.
- Finding 4: The Tanda as a Compressed Urban Sanctuary Following the environmental collapse and de-urbanization of the Indus culture around 1750 BCE, the grid system was not lost but rather adapted into a mobile system called the Tanda. The word Tanda is an indigenous word belonging strictly to the Banjara dialect. Within these self-contained settlements, ancient social definitions are structurally preserved, categorizing the men as Tandaro and the women as Tandari. This socio-spatial layout allowed a population of thousands to preserve their societal cohesion through centuries of migratory shifts.



Conclusion

Dr. Motiraj Rathod's research provides an alternative framework for South Asian archaeology by demonstrating that **the end of the Indus Valley Civilization's urban phase was not a point of total extinction, but a transition into mobility.**

When environmental changes forced the evacuation of the Sindhu basin around 1750 BCE, the ancestral **Gorvamshiya** adapted their lifestyle. They transitioned from settled, multi-story urban dwellings (*Haveli*) into highly organized mobile caravans (*Tanda*). The structural memories of their cities, the functional design of their grain warehouses, their dietary focus on wheat, and their geometric artistic patterns survived this transition. Passed down through oral histories, folk lyrics like "*Mat Chutjayse meri Baburi Haveli*", and strict socio-spiritual traditions, the modern Gor Banjara identity remains a living link to the urban planning and architecture of the ancient Indus Valley.

The discussion evaluates how Dr. Rathod's thesis reinterprets the architectural remains of the Indus Valley Civilization—such as reading Mohenjo-daro's central basin as a functional grain warehouse (*Gor Vamshiyokahud*) rather than a ritual bath—by validating the resilient oral traditions, mathematical spatial memories, and material continuities preserved across generations within the Gor Banjara *Tanda*.

VII. Policy Action

The historic displacement of the *Gorvamshiya* (ancestors of the Gor Banjaras) from the Indus Basin and their transformation into nomadic merchant caravans cannot be separated from modern state encounters. In South Asian tribal studies, "**Policy Action**" represents the structural interventions, historic colonial regulations, and contemporary legal frameworks that managed, surveyed, and altered the nomadic movements and settlements (*Tandas*) of the Gor Banjara community.

The four primary institutional phases of this policy enforcement are detailed below:

- The Colonial Legacy and Criminalization of Mobility Following the de-urbanization shifts of 1750 BCE, the Gorvamshiya developed a highly efficient migratory transport network. However, under British rule, this mobile autonomy was targeted by the Criminal Tribes Act (CTA) of 1871. This policy action classified wandering communities like the Banjaras as hereditary criminals. It strictly monitored the movement of the *Tanda*, requiring police permits for migration and forcing a free-roaming trading community into controlled encampments.
- Post-Independence Denotified Status and Sedentarization While India's independence led to the repeal of the CTA, designating the Banjaras as a Denotified Tribe (*Vimukta Jati*), modern administrative policies shifted toward forced sedentarization. State land-tenure laws and developmental policies treated mobile communities as anomalies. This created intense bureaucratic pressure to convert temporary *Tandas* into permanent, taxable farming settlements, disrupting their ancient migratory survival systems.
- Encroachment, Zoning Laws, and Spatial Exclusion As modern towns and cities expanded, municipal boundaries and Reserve Forest Acts directly restricted traditional Banjara lands. Historical grazing paths and transit loops were absorbed into state or private properties. *Tandas* built on municipal fringes were targeted by urban clearance policies or police anti-encroachment drives. Because these



communities lacked colonial-era land deeds, their traditional settlements were vulnerable to eviction and demolition.

- Legal Assimilation and Judicial Overriding The community historically relied on its own internal governance, rooted in the socio-spiritual commands of leaders like Sant Sevalal Maharaj. The Tanda operated under an autonomous system of justice led by community elders (Nayak). Modern administrative policies have systematically overridden these traditional dispute-resolution structures. State legal extensions and police jurisdictions have pulled internal matters into formal courts, weakening the traditional authority of the Tanda structure.

Implications

- The Shift from Devotional Myth to Concrete History: By demonstrating structural and linguistic links between Gor folklore and Sir John Marshall's excavation data, this research shifts the narrative from pure speculation to an archaeological and material reality.
- Correction of Academic Speculation: Proving that the 31-foot Mohenjo-daro basin functions structurally as a Gor Vamshiyokahud (subterranean grain vault) challenges the standard academic assumption that it was primarily a ritual bath. This shifts our understanding toward the civilization's practical storage and survival engineering.
- Re-evaluating Nomadic Heritage: The Tanda is reframed not as an isolated, primitive camp, but as a highly organized, portable version of the ancient Indus grid blueprint. This shows that the transition away from permanent brick Haveli was a conscious, strategic choice to survive the severe ecological shifts of 1750 BCE.

VIII. Conclusion

Dr. Motiraj Rathod's architectural and folkloric thesis demonstrates that the end of the Indus Valley Civilization's urban phase was not a point of total extinction, but an adaptation into a mobile lifestyle.

When environmental changes dried the ancient river basins around 1750 BCE, the *Gorvamshiya* did not disappear; they adapted. They took the mathematical logic of their grid cities ("1,800 lanes and 1,600 gates"), the functional designs of their grain vaults, and their distinct geometric visual arts, and compressed them into a portable caravan system. Despite centuries of shifting state controls, colonial criminalization, and modern administrative pressures, the socio-spiritual commands of leaders like Sant Sevalal Maharaj acted as a cultural safeguard. By preserving their distinct language (*Gor Boli*), dietary habits, and attire, the modern Gor Banjara community survives as an unbroken, living link to the foundational architecture and urban planning of the ancient Sindhu basin.

Comparative Structural Data Table

To bridge the analytical gap between physical material remains and ethnological folk memory, the table below maps specific architectural and structural discoveries from the ancient Indus Valley directly onto their corresponding modern Gor Banjara cultural practices.



Ancient Indus Structure (Archaeological Baseline)	▲Modern Gor Banjara Counterpart (Cultural Archive)	□ Functional & Analytical Reconciliation
Citadel Basin at Mohenjo- daro • Dimensions: 31 x 23 x 8 feet (inner base) • Waterproof gypsum mortar construction	Gor Vamshiyokahud • Communal subterranean grain storage wells built in medieval Afghanistan, Rajasthan, and Gujarat	Reinterprets the site from a speculative religious "ritual bath" into a practical agricultural warehouse designed to preserve grain surpluses against heat and raids.
Advanced Rectangular Grid Layout • Right-angle street matrices dividing residential blocks	The Spatial Folk Memory • Oral tradition of "1,800 lanes and 1,600 gates" embedded in Gor Boli couplets	Demonstrates that the mathematical grid logic of ancient cities was not entirely lost, but preserved cognitively within community histories.
Thick Foundational Brickwork • Excavated staircases and deep multi-room blocks	Maadi & Haveli Lexicon • Linguistic terms for multi- story blocks and grand mansions found in traditional songs	Preserves a precise architectural vocabulary tracking the group's historical transition from settled urban architecture to a defensive nomadic lifestyle.
Massive Public Granaries (Harappa) • Elevated sleeper walls and ventilation systems for processing vast wheat yields	Traditional Wheat Processing • Distinct cultural diet including Poli, Chapati, Puri, Papad, Pataliroti, and Hadidal	Establishes a direct, centuries- old dependency on an agrarian economy centered around processed grain, surviving long after the river basin dried up.
The Tanda Matrix (1750 BCE onward) • Dispersed post-urban settlement pockets following civilizational localization	The Living Tanda Layout • Self-contained mobile community networks structured into Tandaro (men) and Tandari (women) roles	The Tanda operates as a portable town blueprint. It compressed the social structures of the ancient Indus neighborhoods to protect community cohesion during long-term migratory adaptation.

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