PREFACE

The town is said to be the symbol of civilisation, the Latin root of both city and civilisation being the same. While this may be true of the towns of the Western countries the Indian towns hardly set the pace of civilisation in the country.

The Dravido-Aryan towns and villages of India were well planned on the basis of mystical geometrical figures representing the sacrificial altar. Each function was the monopoly of a caste and the caste group had its stipulated place within the limits of the settlements, depending on the location of the spirits and Devas, which in turn was conditioned by the cardinal directions. The ancient planners also took into consideration the requirements of the settlement and provided water in the form of Kunds, vavs and lakes, trees for the approach roads, gardens and also a wall for defence. The regional function of the settlement was carefully analysed and transport lines laid down to connect the settlement with the region to fulfill the function satisfactorily. Both village and town were identically planned and their functions were more or less the same except that a town was a seat of royalty, a religious place or a trade centre. All industries were common to both village and town and they seldom produced a surplus beyond the needs of the town or village people.
Arts and crafts flourished in the villages and the towns. Some towns however gained a fame for particular products because of the higher purchasing capacity of its people. The presence of nobility, a trading people or a famous temple encouraged the development of specialised products of high craftsmanship. This self sufficiency of town and village was necessary in the context of the cumbersome transport of the ancient and medieval period. The force of custom and tradition and the lack of a deep rooted industrial revolution in the history of India prevented any superimposition of a new urban culture as centuries passed. India is still a country where the pattern set during the Indus Valley civilisation has not radically changed except for certain badly assimilated western ideas in some of the cities. Indian towns therefore are unique and the methods used for urban analysis in the western countries are found to be inadequate for understanding its raison d'etre in the region.

The Indian town is classed in the 1881 censuses as a town only because it has a population above 5000. In the 1891 Censuses administration is taken into consideration and a town is a seat of a Municipality besides having a population of 5000 and more. By 1901 the British Cantonment and Civil Lines had become a common feature in
the Indian towns because of the military rule and a large number of towns developed this extra structure, generally away from the old town. Roads and railways often bypassed the old town and gave nodality to the new British Cantonment, locating the industries and commerce along the station road and approach roads from the old town to the station or the new British core. The 1901 censuses stated that a town must have also a Cantonment and Civil Lines to be categorised as a town. The British Cantonment hardly affected the normal life of the people, indeed it seldom touched even the neighbouring old town. In 1911 the Censuses stated that consideration like historical factors be respected and the capitals of princely states, towns of antiquity etc., also be classed as urban centres. In 1921 many old towns were falling back on agriculture for a living because of the decay of handicrafts and trade and large villages could not be distinguished from small towns by their functions. The Census of 1921 defined a town as a place of historical importance, a trade centre and a settlement with urban characteristics. No attempt was made to distinguish retail and wholesale trade. The identification of the urban character was left to the local data collectors so that many large villages were classed as towns. In 1931 a city was distinguished from the town and defined as a settlement of more than 100,000. The categorisation of other towns was also on the basis of
population. The 1941 Censuses had a fourfold classification based on population and a settlement of 5000 was categorised as urban. The 1951 and 1961 Censuses adopted a sixfold classification, although the latter stated that a town be defined as a place having a Municipality, with a population of 5000 and over, where 75% of its male population is dependent on non-agricultural pursuits. But in many small towns of Gujarat the agricultural population was found to be more than 50%. The 1971 Censuses have not deviated greatly from the 1961 Censuses except that Household Industries have been combined with Manufacturing Industries in the major group but distinguished as separate in the minor grouping.

A town in India therefore is only a nucleated settlement where, because of its large population, a sizeable retail trade and some industries have developed during the course of its growth. The British Cantonment and Civil Lines or in the case of the smaller administrative towns, the British railway station, school, rest house, cotton ginning and pressing factories etc. were gradually merged with the old town by a linear development along the roads connecting the old town with the new structures giving the morphology the uniqueness of a large body of a nucleated congested settlement throwing out tentacles along the major transport lines.
Urban Geography in India, particularly that of small towns, is therefore interesting and absorbing and Kapadwanj has been studied with the purpose of bringing out these unique factors in urban morphology, regional contacts, socio-economic structure and functions of the town.