INTRODUCTION

A study of ancient and medieval regional cultures is an indispensable pre-condition for a comprehensive understanding of Ancient Indian Culture as a whole. In this thesis I have undertaken to study the culture of Gujarat during the medieval times.

It is well-known that arts, particularly architecture, sculpture and painting are regarded as very important sources for the study of culture of any particular area in a particular age. These being representative arts reflect the life of a people in a variety of ways. I have undertaken to study the culture of the Hindu period, through the source of its sculpture at five chosen centres viz. Pāṭan, Modherā, Tārāṅgā, Kumbhārīa and Ābu* which form a sort of geographical and historical unity.

With a view to understand, explain and interpret these sculptures, I visited these centres and carefully studied them either by myself alone or with help of an experienced scholar who could guide me in the observation of these sculptures during the earlier part of my work. For example, my first visit to Modherā and Pāṭan was in company with Dr. Hariprasad C. Shastri M.A., Ph.D. who almost initiated me in the work of the study of sculptures to glean out cultural

* - Wherever Ābu may be placed by the Government in the reorganized States, it has undoubted historical and cultural relationship with Gujarat.
data. On other occasions, when I visited alone, I made notes, sketches, and took photographs of the sculptures of the centres wherever it was possible and considered useful. Each time, I submitted my diary and report to my guiding teacher Prin. R.C. Parikh, who approved it and the same is attached to the thesis as an appendix.

These materials of study i.e. notes of observation, photographs, rough sketches, etc. were carefully studied either personally by myself or with the help of my guide. I also referred to literary works which were likely to throw light on many topics suggested by the sculptures. The result of this study in the form of observation on spot as also study of recorded data understood and interpreted with the aid of literary sources forms the major part of this thesis.

Though the centres are different in name, they present to us, as said before, a compact unity. All of these centres are situated well within a radius of about fifty miles from Anhillavāda the capital of the Solanki kings of those days. Not only this, that they present to us a geographical unity, but also they present a political as well as a cultural unit. The builders of the temples at Ābu and Kuṃbhāriā were Ministers and Governors of the Kings of Anhillavāda. The Ajitanātha temple at Tāraṅgā is attributed to the Solanki king Kumārapāla himself. The ruins of Pāṭan, wherever the builder is identified, show
the patronage of the king and his circle. Regarding the Sun Temple at Modhera, there is no authentic source of information for ascertaining the builder or builders of this temple. Probably it was built by the local Sangha of the town of Modhera. But on stylistic grounds, it has been definitely assigned to about the first quarter of the eleventh century, on the basis of the marked resemblance of its style with that of the Vimala Vasahi at Delavada. Thus the monuments chosen for study are connected with the history and historical personages of the medieval Hindu Period in Gujarat. In the first section of the thesis, I have tried to give a brief sketch of the history of Anhillavadā kings and the building activities during their times. Incidentally, I have shown that the existing monuments are only a few of the many which were continuously being built during that period.

In Part II of the thesis, I have attempted to give significant data about the monuments existing at the centres chosen for study. My aim has been to give, as far as possible, complete data regarding the sources of the cultural data that has been gleaned out. A set of photographs is also appended at the end. A comparison of what I have given with the Archaeological Survey report and other similar works will, confirm my humble opinion that no one has before attempted to give sufficient material so as to facilitate the study of -
culture as in the present thesis or to promote further investigation on these or similar lines. I have added new material and also put the same in a connected form as to be sufficient data for cultural interpretation.

Regarding Part III, it may be stated that during the time when monuments were erected, Āśīpa Sastra was considered a dharma Sastra, with its own code, practice and precedents. The chief among these tenets was that the chief architect should attempt a representation of the 'loka lilā' or the four-fold puruṣārthas of the people through a delineation of the various Rasas. Thus the monuments abound in representations of divine as well as human life which would serve as a never failing source of inspiration for the proper understanding of the culture of Gujarat, of which the tangible representations are found on the walls, pillars, ceilings and brackets of these temples.

The third part is devoted to the collection of and recording the data from a study of these sculptures. The data is organised under several heads which naturally fall under two sub-heads as goods and arts but as the whole section deals with the interpretation part of the thesis no sub-divisions are considered necessary.

Pure description of the data as viewed would be a much too incomplete cultural study without a reference
to the fact of culture in its contemporary set up. And therefore, wherever possible, and considered useful, a reference is made to the most relevant works of Sanskrit literature which might serve as complementary to the study of the sculptures, their identification and nomenclature.

Thus, for example, the "Abhidhānacintāmanīh" of Śrī Hemacandra, being a contemporary lexicon has been treated as almost a source book for Sanskrit terms and their meanings, mainly due to the fact that Hemacandra was an eyewitness of the cultural phenomena we are trying to understand. Similarly, for all matters in connection with the temple and temple worship, the "Kumāravihārasatāka" of poet Rāmacandra, a disciple of Hemacandra is considered authoritative because the poet composed his Sataka by observing the Kumāravihāra temple for himself which, during his time, must have been a centre of cultural life of the community. At several places complementary cultural data is also referred to from paintings in the Jain manuscripts, and for this purpose, the excellent work of Dr. Moticandra, "Jain Miniature paintings of Western India" has been treated as a source book.

But the efforts on the lines indicated in the previous paragraphs are more in nature of further and more detailed study of individual topics discussed in this thesis rather than to make an exhaustive study here by a complete process of co-ordination of sculpture, painting and Sanskrit literature. My