Indian chronology consists in several systems about the calculation of days, months, years, eras etc. Certain systems are in vogue in Gujarat since long. The systems that are current at present have a long history behind them. But while studying the dates of early period, it is found that some of the present systems are comparatively of later origin, while some of the systems that were in vogue in early times have ceased to exist in course of time. Different eras came into use in different periods. The systems of years and months, too, altered in course of time. A detailed study of the available dates collected from the epigraphic and literary records of the successive periods reveals not only an interesting history of the modifications in the chronological systems but also some landmarks for ascertaining particular systems for the dates pertaining to the respective periods.

In this work I have tried to collect all the published dates from the epigraphic and literary records of Gujarat from early times upto 1300 A.C. I have then classified the collected dates according to the different periods of the History of Gujarat. The
dates apply to some era or other since the beginning of the Ksatrapa period. In early times the names of the eras were generally left unspecified. In that case the identification of the unspecified era is discussed along with an outline survey of the different views proposed previously. The problem also involves a discussion of the epoch and origin of the different eras concerned. Then follows an investigation into the systems of years and months therein. In early times only a few dates accord adequate data for determining these systems. But the common occurrence of the week-day in the dates of the Solanki period throws ample light on them.

The key-dates are examined variously in relation to the different modes and systems of years, systems of months and the probable Siddhānta followed. The historical account of the different systems of the successive periods reveals a gradual and ultimate transition to the common use of the Brahma Siddhānta, the Vikrama era, the expired Kārtikādi year and the Amanta month.

To the best of my knowledge, the dates given in the old epigraphic and literary records of Gujarat were not examined before so minutely and critically.
In this study I have generally relied on dates given in the contemporary records of the different periods, published in works, journals and collections. The sources of information are indicated either along with the dates or in the foot-notes. Necessary particulars about the sources are enumerated in the Bibliography.

The following points deserve special consideration as many of them embody results of my original contribution:

(i) The improbability of the year 344 read on an inscribed pot-sherd unearthed at Amreli is established and a probable correction in the reading is suggested (vide Appendix, pp. 51-53).

(ii) The problem of the Kathika era is discussed at length with special reference to the diverse views expressed on it (pp. 64 ff.) and a further surmise is suggested in support of its probable association with the Buddhist Sangha. (p. 69)

(iii) The Saka dates of the Maitraka period are collected and examined critically (pp. 151 ff.). Herein I have also tried to account for the occurrence of the Saka era in these dates (pp. 155 f.).
(iv) The traditional dates about the Cāvaṭa dynasty are examined critically and their unreliability is corroborated (pp. 190 ff.).

(v) The Saka dates of the post-Maitraka period are examined critically and it is established that they followed the system of Amānta months (pp. 205 ff.).

(vi) The Sāvatsaras or Jovian years mentioned in the Saka dates of this period are examined critically and the particular system followed therein is suggested (pp. 208 ff.).

(vii) The Vikrama dates of the post-Maitraka period are examined critically (pp. 217 ff.).

(viii) The traditional dates about the Solanki dynasty are examined critically and their salient features are deduced (p. 223, f.n. 4).

(ix) The numerous Vikrama dates of the Solanki period are collected from various contemporary records, classified territorially and chronologically and examined critically (pp. 231-573). The key-dates number as many as 474, Christian dates equivalent to the given date are mentioned according to the different systems of years and months and the real system is
inferred, as far as possible, from the verification of
the week-day, (eclipse, intercalation etc.)

Wherever no exact equivalent date is
traceable and the proximate date falls on the succeeding
day, the given tithi is ascribed to the previous
week-day on which it commenced, with special reference
to the moment of its commencement. In regular dates i.e.
in dates verified in regular course, the ending moment
of the given tithi is given.

In other cases of irregular dates some
correction is suggested, as a probability, in the
published date. As facsimiles or photographs of the
original records are not available, it is hardly possible
to ascertain the actual nature of the error and decide
whether the error lay in recording or reading the date.

In case the given tithi does not
tally with the given week-day with the discrepancy of a
few hours or some minutes and/or seconds according
to the Tables based on mean sunrise and the Sūrya
Siddhānta, the ending moment is here recalculated, the
true local sunrise is calculated and the ending moment
of the tithi is examined in relation to it. In many
cases especially in cases of suppressed tithis, the
ending moment of the given tithi and the true local
sunrise are calculated according to the Brahma Siddhánta. The new results often prove to be helpful in solving the problem.

(x) The occurrence of the different systems of years and months discerned in the examined key-dates of the Solanki period is examined statistically territory-wise and the results are surveyed comparatively and collectively. The results arrived at indicate a preponderance of the mode of expired years, the system of Kartikeya years and the system of Amanta months (pp. 574-76).

(xi) The Samvatsaras given in the Vikrama dates are examined critically and it is established that they reflect the Northern cycle of Samvatsaras (pp. 577-78).

(xii) The Vikrama dates of the Solanki period are further examined with respect to intercalation of months and the probable system of intercalation is suggested (pp. 578-82).

(xiii) The problem of the Simha era is discussed in detail. The dates mis-ascribed to the Simha era are indicated. An investigation is made into the probable system of its years and months. Different
views about the origin of the Simha era are examined critically and a suggestion is made for the use of the era being confined to Sorath (pp. 583-602).

(xiv) The available data about the Siddha-Hema-Kumāra era are examined critically and a new suggestion is made about the epoch and origin of the era (pp. 603-607).

(xv) The Saka dates of the Solanki period are examined with respect to the systems of years and months. The Samvatsaras mentioned therein are also examined and it is established that the system followed therein is contrary to that noticed in the Vikrama dates of this period (pp. 608-612).

(xvi) At the end of the thesis I have made a general survey of the results arrived at from the compilation and examination of the known dates pertaining to Gujarat from the Mauryan Period to the Solanki Period and pointed out the outstanding characteristics and ultimate predilections discerned in the different chronological systems in Gujarat.

In presenting the results of my Research I have endeavoured to acknowledge and allude to
the previous views known to me and humbly attempted
to examine the original data critically and put forth
some original suggestions wherever possible.

6-6-1968                                Bhanu Thakar