PREFACE

An endeavour has been made in the present study to analyse the scope, necessity and importance of *Manusyālayavāstu* or Residential Architecture in the light of *Samarāṅgaṇaśūradhāra* of famous medieval king Bhoja, which is a very elaborate, complete, and authoritative manual of *Vāstuśāstra*. This celebrated work of Rājā Bhoja fascinated me so much during my post graduation days at Poona University in later 90’s that I decided to concentrate my research on such a technical subject which has much relevance to-day.

During my study I realized that *Vāstuśāstra* is a broader subject which not only deals with land, house, temple, iconography etc. but also unifies science, art, astronomy, astrology, environment and geography. It is the science of directions that combines all the five elements of nature and balances them with the man and the material. Housing design involves the form, dimensions, orientation, natural lighting, ventilation and spatial organization of dwellings. There is no readymade solution for housing design. *Vāstuśāstra* is creating a congenial setting or a place to live in or work in a most scientific way taking advantage of the benefits bestowed by the five elements called *Pancabhuta*-s of nature, thereby paving the way for enhanced health, wealth, prosperity and happiness in
an enlightened environment. It is a refined combination of ancient Hindu traditions developed as an art, analyzed as a science, which can lead to healthy living.

India is very rich because of its culture and tradition. The guiding principles are embodied in the ancient tradition known as Vāstuśāstra. It teaches us to select a land suitable for a house that will receive magnetic energy from elemental forces like the sun, the earth, the sky, the air and the water and to understand how and where we should position ourselves in order to receive the sun’s unseen benefits. We all wish to live a life as peacefully and comfortably as we can and a simple knowledge of the positive elemental influences can help us achieve what we all hope for. It enables us to learn the importance of laying out our house in a manner that will ensure a harmonious balance between us and nature. The objective is to become open to positive elemental influences and at the same time become protected from unseen malevolence. Positive vibrations can bring happiness through excellence in health and business dealings while the negative vibrations can bring grief and losses. There is a purpose in each location and positioning. What we do as dwellers in a house designed as per Vāstuśāstra can be aptly guided by the way our rooms are positioned. Vāstuśāstra is a vast field and it may take more than this
acquire specialization. Some basic knowledge on what are favorable and unfavorable will help us to develop our own instincts to select a suitable land, a correct alignment, and an ideal location. The scientific reasons behind Vāstu will help us to appreciate the logic of ancient traditions which may go a long way towards achieving what has been elusive for so long: happiness, contentment and inner peace.

The present study consists of seven chapters. While Chapter-I provides an introduction, origin and development of Vāstuśāstra, place of Samarāṅgaṇa Sutradhāra in residential architecture, scope and methodology, Chapter-II deals with the meaning of Vāstu, historical survey of Vāstu literature, birth of Vāstu Puruṣa and Vāstu Puruṣa Manḍala. Chapter-III consists of preliminaries of constructions, units of measurement, Sthapati Lakṣaṇa and building materials. Chapter-IV deals with Classification of Śāla houses, dik nirnaya and lay out of house. Chapter-V consists of amenities in different types of houses. Chapter-VI defects of houses and case study and Chapter-VII Sums up with the scientific ideas of vāstu with concluding observations.

An effort has been made to collect data pertaining to the subject both from primary as well as secondary sources. Primary sources like the Samarāṅgaṇa Sutradhāra of Bhoja, Mayamatam of Maya,
Visvakarmā Prakāsa of Visvakarmā, and other related books have been consulted. Secondary source materials have been collected from published books, Journals, Magazines, and Periodicals etc. For the present study I have consulted materials related to Residential Architecture, both from primary as well as secondary sources. Primary source materials related to residential architecture from Samarāṅgaṇaśūtradhāra, Mayamatam, Viśvakarmā prakāsa, Manusyālaya Candrikā, Maṭsyā Purāṇa, Aparājitapṛctchā of Bhuvanadeva, Mānasāra, Bṛhat Samhitā of Varāhamihira, and Arthaśāstra of Kautilya as well as secondary source materials from books, periodicals, and selected articles from learned journals, several e-books and internet sites have been collected. It is important to note here that for the purpose of a comparative study I propose to compare house designing of Samarāṅgaṇaśūtradhāra with these primary architectural works.

The present research undertaking is entirely based on materials available in various public libraries in India. In this connection I have made a number of visits to the libraries in India such as DAV College Library, Titilagarh, Rajendra college Library, Balangir, Odisha State Museum, Bhubaneswar, Jayakar Library Poona University, Pune, National Library, Kolkata, Madras University Library, Chennai, SCSVMV Library, Kanchipuram, Sri Samkarāchārya University Library, Kalady.

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