CHAPTER 12
CONCLUSION

This thesis encompasses the studies of some ancient towns of Gujarat based on historical and archaeological perspective, architecture and components of its townscape. The growth of ancient towns located in different sub-regions of Gujarat assumed various forms and shapes due to topographical and politico-economic reasons. These different types of townscape are compared and identified according to the Puranivesa (Puravidhana), vividly given in the various texts on Vāstuśāstra. Of these, Aparājīta-pracchā, Samarānganasaūtradhar, Viśvakarmā Vāstuśāstra and Rajavallabha by Sūtradhar Mandana a resident of Patan etc. are extensively used in this thesis as they contain the tradition of architecture and town planning prevailed in the region of Gujarat. The whole region of Gujarat showed the growth of the towns during 1st urbanization (Harappan period c. 2500 BC to 1500 BC), 2nd urbanization and medieval period. During early historic period the region of Gujarat was ruled by the Mauryas (4th cen. BC to 2nd cent. BC), the Western Kshatrapas (c. AD 100–400), Guptas, Maitrakas (c. AD 500–800) while South Gujarat (Lātadesa) was simultaneously ruled by the Gurjaras, Chalukyas of Badami and the Rastrakūtas of Mānyakheta with their provincial capital at Navsārikā. Almost the whole of Gujarat remained under the domination of the Solanki of Anhilpur Patan (AD 10th–14th), until Gujarat fell into the hands of the Muslim invaders (c. AD 14th–16th cen.)
Evidently the roots of the 1st urbanization seems to be in the western borderland of the Indus region in Baluchistan. Its growth and further easterward spread in the rich alluvial plains of two greater perennial rivers i.e. Indus-Saraswati and its tributaries, developed several urban centres which lasted for over two thousand years. However major Harappan cities i.e. Mohenjo-daro, Harappa, Rakhigadhi, Banawali, Kalibangan, Dholavira, Lothal and several others are all situated on rich alluvial soils within the Indus-Saraswati shade area which showed good agriculture, trade, resources for arts-crafts script and use of copper. Interestingly these urban centres of Chalcolithic period represented much in common then those cities and towns emerged during IIrd urbanization.

Harappan urban centres revealed some similarity in their townscape; usually these towns are found built on high earthen platforms with rampart having two units: Upper town and Lower town. The upper township had either rectangular or rhombus shape citadel, Bath, Granary, community pillared hall, ware-houses other public and residential buildings. Its other unit, Lower town yielded relatively smaller houses, shops and areas of arts and crafts, bathing structures, well funerary structures and grid-iron road pattern with effective drainage system. Of these urban centres, Dholavira (Kachchh) interestingly displayed three principal divisions: they are citadel, a middle town and a lower town which temptingly sound analogous respectively to three interesting terms in the Rgveda viz. Parama, madhyana and avama (indicative of three different zones, region even settlements). Dholavira, Surkotada (Kachchh) and Lothal (Saurashtra) were at the lower limit of this great Indus-Saraswati civilization (2500BC –1500C)
The above mentioned two unit features of the Harappan townscape were carried forward even during post-urban / post-Harappan larger sites such as Surkotada, Shikarpur, Pithad etc. of Kaccha and Saurashtra. Evidently its further southward spread are reported to have been found from Somnath Prabhas Patan, Dwarka Hathab and Bharukaccha. It is interesting to note that all these sites of Gujarat have yielded archaeological evidence of 1st urbanization and emerged as important urban centres and continued to be port towns even during 2nd Urbanization as well. This period is characterized by the use of iron, fortified towns, Punch-marked coins, Brāhmī script ring-wells, terracottas, Late Black and Red ware, NBP, RPW ceramic traditions and structures of stone, timber and burnt bricks. These settlements and towns have been located in a wide range of different regions and environments. All have one factor in common: They were regions with fertile soil and a high agricultural potential. And a long distance trade (Sea - borne as well as hinterland) gave a speed to the development of more and more towns. In this, those settlements which were located on the banks of the rivers/seacoast and on strategic positions such as i.e. linked to national highways got a great push and developed into towns and significant port-towns.

The aforesaid features of 2nd Urbanization, topographical set-up of the site, communication routes, various resources for the industries in its environs, nucleus of the governing authority, increase in the population and their occupation according to castes and sub-castes played important role in shaping various types of townscape such as linear pattern, semi-circular (crescent), square, rectangular etc.
The study of several early historic towns situated in different sub-regions of Gujarat viz. Saurashtra, north and central Gujarat and Latadesa (South Gujarat) revealed linear growth along the river. Interestingly, these towns (Amreli, Valabhipur, Khetaka, Saṅgam-Khetaka, Ankoṭaka, Kamrej, Kayāvarohan etc.) were ideally located on an island formed by river and a stream (rivulet or nullah). Such location was selected as it provided natural defence and perhaps the spot of confluence (Saṅgamsthana) was regarded sacred traditionally. Thus, river-front towns displaying ribbon development are referred to as ‘Daṇḍaka nagara’in the traditional scriptures. Further, as these towns were approachable by both land-routes as well as water-routes (also by sea). They are also recognised as “Dronamukha” category. Dwarka (Dvārāvatī), Prabhas Patan, Hathab, Valabhipur, Bharukaccha, Nagaraka (Cambay), Kamrej and Suryapur (Surat) can be regarded as Dronamukha nagar.

The region of South Gujarat has wider alluvium plains; slower flowing perennial rivers, which provided not only abundant agriculture but also sheltered estuarine harbours, viz. Bharukaccha, Cambay (Nagark) and Surat (ancient Sūryapur).

The location of Bharukaccha on the right bank of river Narmada—one of the largest perennial rivers of Gujarat—at the confluence of the gulf of Cambay, topographically developed on a very high and a long cliff area which was parallel to the river, surrounded by several natural resources for the development of various industries (agate beads, textile, forest products, cotton and paddy, ship-buildings and related industries) and an elaborate imports-exports through its arterial routes of inner Indian and its mercantile
contacts with Mediterranean, Śrī-Laṅkā and South-East Asian countries made it a nucleus and the most significant port-town of the whole of Western India. Here it may be added that topographical location of Bharukaccha with river Narmada on its right hand side and a very long and deep ravine on its northern side compelled its settlement to grow lengthwise, following linear pattern. Even its medieval fort (size 4500’ x 600’ broad average) with five of the eight gates on river-front reveals its Dandaka (long staff) townscape. Interestingly, the modern growth of Bharuch has still maintained its traditional form.

Two more ‘Dronamukha’, port-towns which grew up on the western coast in Lāta region (South Gujarat) are significant from the view point of townscape studies. Of these, early historic Nagaraka (c.400 BC-c.AD 8th cent.) township shifted due to the silting of the sea-channel, to the mouth of river Mahi (Sangama-confluence) to continue their maritime activities. However, as it grew on a high squarish cliff of river it grew into square shaped townscape. This spot of confluence was traditionally known as Stambhatirtha. Such squarish form of town-planning is identified as ‘Sarvatobhadra nagar’ in the traditional texts on Vāstuśāstra.

Another such Sarvatobhadra townscape developed at Vaṭāpadraka (Vadodara). Interestingly early historic settlements which grew on four mounds (referred to in the Baroda copper-plate grant of the Rashtrakuta king Karkasuvarnavarsa), subsequently merged and developed into squarish form. During medieval period this settlement also shifted eastward to the modern fort area. However it continued to follow its square townscape within the square fort. It may be noted that principal roads of both these squarish towns
i.e. Cambay (Stambhatirtha) and Vatapadraka follow gridiron road-pattern. In this the trunk roads cross each other at right angles, from east to west and north to south.

Surat (ancient Sūryapura) was another significant port-town which grew from early historic settlement at Kāntāgrama on the bank of Tapi another great perennial river of Gujarat. Due to its prominent trade activities through land routes and seafaring, Suryapur (Surat) attained a new stage of economic prosperity. Nanavat area emerged as the nucleus of business activities. Here, roads from all the directions used to open at this market place. Further, the growth of the settlement was on the curvature of the meander which gave a crescentic form to the townscape. Viśvakarma Vāstuśāstra describes such crescentic form of town-plannings with radiating road-pattern as Kārmuka form of townscape.

Ahmedabad (ancient Karṇāvati) was a medieval township which also assumed 'Kārmuka' form of townscape due to its growth around royal enclosure (Bhadra) situated on river Sabarmati. Inspired by the townscape of Anhilpur Patan the Solanki authority developed Karnavati on radiating road-pattern which subsequently grew into crescentic form. It may be pointed out that its medieval fort (c.15th cent. AD) also followed the curvature form. Outside the fort various satellite hamlets developed, around the fort line maintaining its crescentic townscape.

The contemporary medieval Jaina works indicates that the townscape of Anhilpur Patan (North Gujarat) was perhaps planned near the business settlement called Lākhārām situated on the river Saraswati. According to this
literary tradition, Anhilpur Patan had “Swastika” form of townscape. During the course of its growth (AD 8th cent.-14th cent.) circular Rajgadhi, Forts, Palaces, Temples, Jaina Viharas, Raninivav, Sahasralinga tank, Kirtistambha were built. Interestingly curvature townscape of Patan had radiating road-pattern. Here it may be added that the 18th century map of Gujarat which contained the medieval tradition, exhibits Anhilpur Patan having a circular townscape with twelve-gates and the same number of main roads, all leading towards circular Rajgadhi. The medieval texts on Vāstuśāstra mention such circular townscape as ‘Swastika’ and ‘Padmaka’ types of townships. Anhilpur Patan was a medieval metropolis and ‘the seat of the royal throne’ during the regime of the Chaulukyas. Thus due to the seat of the royal throne Anhilpur Patan the capital town can be called as Rajadhani nagar as well.

The tradition of Parvatiyanagar referred in the ancient scriptures such as Mahābhārata, (Sabha Parva ch. 21, v.2-30) Kautilya’s Arthasastra to Brhatsaṁhitā (ch: Prasadalaksanam and others) and its traditions in the form of architecture and town planning at Girivraja-‘enclosure of hills’ (c. 6th–3rd cent. BC. Rajgir until superseded by Pataliputra) is indicative of great civic art. During subsequent centuries this tradition of hilly township further travelled along with the extension of the Mauryan empire to their westernmost province of Gujarat. The ancient settlement at Mt. Urjayant (Girnar) which was naturally protected by hills, rivers and jungle was elevated to the position of Mauryan metropolis. It was strengthened with fortification. The rock-edict at Girnar reveals the construction of ‘Sudarsan Setu’ at the periphery of Girinagar during the regime of the Mauryas (c. 3rd cent. BC) and twice its bursting and repairing during the rule of Rudradaman I (2nd cent. AD) and Skanda Gupta (c. 5th cent. AD) respectively. It may be
noted that Girinagar enjoyed the status of a provincial capital right from the
time of the Mauryas to the end of the Gupta rule over Gujarat.

Almost similar situation prevailed at Ghumali (Bhutambilika, western
Saurashtra) which was also well protected by a ridge of Barda hills, water
streams and jungle. Perhaps, picturesque location and natural protection and
well connected with various nearby ports i.e. Chhaya, Pindara, Dwarka etc.)
by inland roads developed the small early historic settlement amidst the
beautiful valley into sizable township. Ghumali became the seat of the royal
line during the regime of the Saindhavas. Alongwith the growth of the
Saindhava township (c. 8th / 9th cent. AD) on the different parts of hilly
terrain viz., Bhrugukunda, Abhapur hill and the table-land of Sonkansari
area, several temples of Brahmanical divinities were also constructed. These
ancient temples are now known as the group ‘Sonkansari temples’. During
subsequent centuries, the growth of the population in the open fan-shape
valley was fortified by the Jethavas (c.10th-14th cent. AD) with four gates,
deep moat and several bastions. There was a royal enclosure ‘acropolis’ on
Abhapar hill and Navalakha temple at the foot hill as the nucleus of this
medieval town. Its radiating road pattern leading towards the nucleus point
is noteworthy. Here it may be noted that such a naturally protected hilly
town enjoyed survival for many centuries. Like Girinagar, Ghumali also
continued to be the capital town for a longer period (c.8th cent. to 14th cent.
AD). Interestingly, such a mountaneous town with temples of the divinities
at the peak of the hills is described in the texts on Vāstuśāstra as ‘Divya’
sub-type of Parvatiya nagar. Here the location of Royal enclosure located on
one of the hills i.e. Abhapar overlooking the entire town also can be
considered as ‘symbol of divinity’; Considering the existence of several
divine entities on this hilly township justifies its identification as 'Divya' type of Parvatiya nagar.

Yet another hilly township naturally protected by hills jungle and streams is located at Pavagadh (ancient Pavakdúrga) in eastern Gujarat. The early hilly settlement (c.4th cent. -7th cent.) subsequently grew into township due to its location on the highway running to Malwa and Pavakdúrga being great pilgrimage centre of Sakti (Kali Pitha) and the Jains. Here it may be noted that, legendary Brahmarsi Viśvāmitra, Saivāchāryyas, the Tantriks, the Sākta-Sādhakas and the Jaina Siddhas are said to have performed hard austerities in this 'Siddhakśetra'. Further, the construction of Parmar style Lakulisa Pasupata temple just below the peak of the Kāli temple (c. 10th-11th cent. AD) fits well as the Bhairava of Kāli-Pitha as referred to in the cult literature and Gangadāśpratāpvilas nātaka- a late medieval drama.

Champa Sresthin -the minister of Vanraja Chavda (c. AD 840-846) named this hilly settlement of Pavagadh as Champaner. From c. 11th cent AD to 14th cent. Champaner remained under the sway of the Solanki dynasty of Anhilpur Patan. During Solanki regime several Jaina temples were erected on Pāvakdūrga. Evidently the medieval ruins of the Jaina temples and the strong uninterrupted Jain tradition still survive here. Thus, Sakti-pitha and the Siddhakśetra of the Brahmanical and the Jains might have given great push to the growth of the medieval township at Pāvakdūrga (Champaner). The inscription and medieval drama furnish about occupation, fortification and the genealogy of the Chauhans of Khichiwada (Rajasthan) at Pāvakdūrga / Champaner. The Chauhan rulers constructed very strong forts as per the hilly terraces at different levels with gates placed one above
the other in one alignment providing watching-tower view overlooking the beautiful green valley towards the traditional ‘Malwa-mahāpatha’. There were settlements on three table lands viz. Mauliya (just below Kāli-peak around Dudhiya and Chhasia tanks and the main road) Bhadrakālī area (royal enclosure) and Manchika (Manchi) and encircling the foothill. A long row of some eighty-one catapult-structures (makara-yantra) built along the Atak-gate are significant defence architecture of this period.

Following the injunctions of the medieval texts on Vāstusāstra and Dūrgavidhāna, several tanks, wells, granaries, public and residential buildings were built. And the goddess of the Pāvakadurga had her temple in the fortress at the peak of the hill. Thus, Pavakadurga like Ghumali in Western Saurashtra, was occupied by several divine entities viz., Kālī (the presiding goddess of the Sakti-pitha), Lakulisa temple (being Bhairava of Kālī-pitha) Bhadrakālī and the royal seat of the Chauhan line (also regarded as symbol of divinity). Therefore, Pāvakadūrga (Pavagadha) hilly township is also identified as ‘Divya’ – sub-type of the Parvatiyānagar.

Thus, naturally protected hilly towns amidst hills, streams and jungle had a very long tradition (since c. 6th cent. BC or earlier) in our country. And hilly townscape was regarded ideal for the development of capital towns as such naturally protected fortified towns had a long survival.

Different types of topographical features such as growth of town between a river and a stream (or nullah), river meander, river-front situated on a high cliff (square/rectangular), and on a sea-coast, arterial main routes linking the towns, sea routes, ‘Throne of Royal Seat’ and ‘Nanavat’- (centre
SOME MEDIEVAL FEATURES OF TOWN
of money transaction) oriented growth played a vital role in giving different form to the towns. However, due to the increase in the population complexities of caste and sub-caste, specialisation in arts-crafts, various industries and related cottage industries developed further evolution and complexities in the medieval townscape of Gujarat. Irrespective of different shapes and forms of towns, almost all the medieval towns represented fortification, sub-sectors assuming the form of Pratolīṣ (प्रतोली - पठोली- पोल) with gates, public wells, ring-wells, Chabutaras, chat-stones and Havada for animals and Chhindis (service-lanes for collecting waste garbage). The periphery of the towns of Patan, Ahmedabad Khambhat and Vatapadraka showed erection of stepwells for potable water.