CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.0.0. Background

The rise of Islam, one of the chief and flourishing religions of the world, in the beginning of the seventh century A.D. (610 A.D.), ushered a brilliant era in the world's history. Within a century it spread over three continents - Asia, Africa and Europe - with an amazing rapidity. It touched the region as far as India in the East and Morocco and Spain in the West.

From the very beginning, the Islamic culture was urbanised. Medinat-un-Nabi or the city of the Prophet, was the earliest religious as well as cultural centre of the newly-born religion where the Muslims settled and were accustomed to lead a urban culture. When greater parts of the Eastern Byzantine Empire and the Sassanian Empire came under the banner of Islam, they imported their cultural and artistic heritage to Islam. So, the early Muslim towns and their art and architecture which grew up under the patronage of the Umayyad and Abbasid dynasties reflect the fusion of these cultures.
The Arabs had their relation with India even before the rise of Islam and when Baghdad was established as the capital city of the Islamic Empire in 612 A.D. it brought the Arabs directly in contact with the merchants and scholars of the East. The Arab merchants who had come for trade and commerce in India, required their own housing and place for performing religious prayers. The inscriptions indicate their presence and also the suitable donations, protection and patronisation of the then local rulers. These phenomena led to the growth of the Muslim secular and religious architecture in Indian towns. This trend of cultural spread existed in Gujarat up to the end of the thirteenth century A.D.

The conquest of Gujarat by the Islamic Turks at the end of thirteenth century A.D. resulted in the destruction of man power and damage of the towns on the one hand and construction of Islamic habitations near the older towns on the other. As a result of all these activities towns and cities of Gujarat were brought under well planned schemes of beautification not only by architectural activities, but by horticultural planning as well. The residential quarters, mosques, mausoleums, etc., sprang up in various cities of Gujarat. There are two main reasons for this beautiful and typical type of architecture. One, it owed the assiduous patronage and building ambitions of the rulers of the Musaffarshahi dynasty and other it adopted the artistic tradition of the local talents.
The powerful potentates, desirous of surrounding themselves with material evidences of their might, and in a spirit of emulation to impress others with their sumptuous architectural environment, undertook well planned schemes. It was, therefore, not their aesthetic spirit that produced such structural achievement but the egotism of a forceful and prosperous regime that found expression in magnificent monuments which also included the contribution of local talents. When Musaffarshahi dynasty was replaced by the Sambird dynasty, the Islamic architecture of Gujarat began to deteriorate as it lost its importance vis-à-vis Delhi, Agra and Fatehpur Sikri which were given more attention as their centres. A number of these architectural antiquities were in a dilapidated condition, and were neither properly explored nor recorded. This condition suggested to the present researcher to carry out a detailed exploration of the Muslim monuments and analyse them within their urban framework.

Under the above circumstances the present study was undertaken with a view of detailed and scientific analysis of the various aspects of the monuments in relation to townscape.

1.1.0. Rationale of the Study

The archaeology of the Muslim towns of Gujarat reflects a continuous story of cultural activities, specially in the sphere of art and architecture throughout the Muslim rule over
Gujarat (1297 A.D. to 1757 A.D.). Most of these artistic contributions of the Muslims to the Indian culture are still not completely known due to lack of systematic exploration and proper study.

Burgess and Cousins carried out a study on the selected monuments located in different towns of Gujarat. Though this was a good study, it was not based on town planning nor was it comprehensive. It was, therefore, necessary to fill up this lacuna by detailed study of monuments in their proper townscapes.

Prof. Mehta in his study of 'Medieval Archaeology' suggested that "a more detailed understanding of the activities of the medieval period, a coordinated effort on the basis of both the primary and literary sources and archaeological investigation is very necessary. Such a study will add new dimensions to the understanding of the medieval history and culture".

From the review of the related literature it is also found that greater emphasis is given on the urban development and their architecture. From the archaeological point of view the significance of the town planning of the medieval period can hardly be over estimated. But it is a pity that despite the greater importance of the town planning along with its
architecture it failed to attract the previous researchers to carry out specific study on the archaeology of the Muslim towns of Gujarat with special reference to their monuments. Hence, this study is an humble attempt to throw some light on the human civilization of selected towns as reflected through their monuments based on their archaeological potential. The coverage of the study is concentrated within the topography, archaeology and toponomy of the towns. Considering the significance of the Muslim monuments in Gujarat in the sphere of art and architecture, urgency for a coordinate efforts to understand the medieval history and culture and necessity of a specific study in this field, the present study, viz., "Archaeology of the Muslim towns of Gujarat with special reference to their monuments" is planned.

1.2.8. Review of related Literature :

The review of related literature implies that a host of survey work has already been accomplished on the architectural antiquities of the Muslim towns of Gujarat during the period 1866 to 1980 A.D. A summary of important studies related to this field of study are reviewed below.

Hope carried on a survey work of the architecture of Ahmedabad. He focused the architectural aspects of the monuments in a comprehensive way without any detailed analysis of monuments.
Burgess’s made an important study of the Muhammadan Architecture of Khandwa, Cambay, Lhokka, Champaner and Ahmadabad. He studied about ten monuments in this work from the architectural point of view without any emphasis on town planning and its various aspects.

Burgess in his another study on the Muhammadan architecture of Ahmadabad, highlighted the architectural and decorative features of the monuments during the Muslim period. He mentioned the impact of local influence on the Islamic architecture of Ahmadabad. Burgess’s study on the architectural antiquities of Northern Gujarat reflects a comprehensive description of few Muslim monuments of Patan. It was also limited within the architectural antiquities. All of the aforesaid studies undertaken by Burgess were only survey work. He did not put any emphasis on the monuments in relation to townscape. Even all the monuments were not epigraphically dated and supported.

The present study tries to overcome such shortcomings and hence efforts have been made to cover the major archaeological aspects of the selected monuments in relation to their architectural history and chronological development.

Chaghtai’s in his study of Muslim monuments of Ahmadabad through their inscriptions focused on the epigraphic sides of the monuments without throwing light on the architectural and decorative aspects of the monuments.
Brown in his study of Indian architecture (Islamic period) merely summarised the data relating to the monuments taken from Burgess' publications. Town planning with their architecture, topography and toponomy were not covered in this study.

Goetz in his study brought out some architectural monuments of the city of Champaner. This work resembles Burgess work to a great extent.

A pioneering study on Mediaeval archaeology was undertaken by Prof. Mehta. He suggested that a careful study of these materials throws light on many facts of the life in the mediaeval period. Prof. Mehta carried out another significant study on "Muslim Towns and Architecture in Western India" where he emphasised the requirement of search and study of these mediaeval cultures by modern archaeological methods.

An endeavour was made by Satish to find out the architectural antiquities of India in his study "The Architecture of India (Islamic)". His study is merely a comprehensive discussion of the architectural aspects and no light is thrown on the plans and their directions.
1.3.0. Specification of the problem:

The title of the present study reads as "Archaeology of the Muslim towns of Gujarat with special reference to their monuments".

In order to clarify the problem, it is necessary to define important terms used in the statement of the problem.

Archaeology of the Muslim towns of Gujarat includes topographic features of the towns, their cultural activities specially in the sphere of art and architecture and the toponomy during the period 1297 A.D. to 1757 A.D.

The term 'Monuments' includes the secular and religious buildings like royal palaces, inns, residential houses, mosques, minars, idgahs, mausoleums, qabarstanas, arch-gateways, tanks and reservoirs, walls, fortifications, city walls, streets and lanes, ditches and moats etc., of the specific period.

Although, political and cultural boundaries of Gujarat were different than what they are at present, it is considered proper to confine this study to modern political boundaries of the state of Gujarat.
The scope and objectives of the Study:

The major scope and objectives of the present study are to describe, analyse, interpret, and evaluate the problem of archaeology of the Muslim towns of Gujarat in context of the practical field work like exploration and excavation. The following are the major objectives:

1. To analyse the dynamics responsible for the urban pattern of the selected towns.
2. To assess and explain the main topographic features of the towns in relation to their development and planning.
3. To explore and record the distinguishing architectural antiquities during the specific period i.e. 1297 A.D. to 1757 A.D., covering the following major aspects -
   (a) historical background of the monuments.
   (b) Original plan of the monuments.
   (c) Architectural features along with decorative schemes.
   (d) Impact of local art and architectural tradition on the monuments.
4. To find out the toponomy of the town and its impact on the growth and development of the urban pattern.
5. To analyse, interpret, and evaluate the selected monuments with the help of maps, plans, drawings and photographs wherever necessary.
1.5.0. Methodology:

The present study is a cast in the sphere of Archaeology of the Muslim towns of Gujarat with special reference to their monuments. The approach adopted is basically descriptive, analytical and interpretative in nature. Before deciding about the broad approach or methods of the analysis for the present study, literature on research methodology and research studies on the archaeology of the Muslim towns of Gujarat were reviewed. This review brought to light the similar studies carried on by Burgess and Prof. Mehta. On the basis of this review and objectives of the study, the researcher had decided to employ archaeological methods like explorations and excavations to describe, analyse and investigate the empirical data on Archaeology of the Muslim towns of Gujarat with special reference to their monuments. Hence, co-ordination of literary data, explored information and excavated materials is brought under one project.

The present study is based on the diverse archaeological data available from the archaeological source like (a) archaeological remains (b) epigraphic records and (c) literary sources. No doubt, literary sources will be considered as a secondary source of the study.
The analytical and descriptive approach is followed because of the fact that it seeks to explore the archaeological monuments of the Muslim towns of Gujarat which covers the period from 1297 A.D. to 1757 A.D. Such an approach was highly popularised by Prof. Mehta in his manifold studies on the Medieval Archaeology, Urban Surat, Khambhat's (Cambay) topographical, Archaeological and toponymical perspectives and Muslim towns of Western India and their architecture.

The exploration was accomplished in two ways - firstly, the researcher visited the site to gain the experience about the field situation and study the conditions of the monuments primarily on the basis of written records, place names and topographic features. The method was very useful for discovering new monuments and sites. Secondly, exploration was done on the basis of primary sources to find out the original plan of the selected monuments and note the chief architectural and decorative features along with photography of the monuments.

The standing monuments like mosques, mausoleums, Idgahs, forts, and residential structures etc., were further studied in the light of available archaeological evidences like structural remains in relation to habitational level of different phases of construction. These ultimately are related to the general development of the town as a whole.
Hence, training in field work at Rajagadhi fort at Amshilvad Patan had helped the present writer to have a real scientific perspective of the problem as a whole.

1.9.1. Selection of the Sample

For the purpose of analysis, the various aspects of the archaeological monuments of the medieval period, a set of seven towns has been purposely selected.

The selection of the town is on the basis of political, religious, military as well as commercial importance. The sample has a broad spectrum of urban archaeology. Towns included in the sample are as follows:

(i) Ahmedabad
(ii) Baroda
(iii) Bharuch
(iv) Cambay
(v) Champaner
(vi) Patan and
(vii) Surat.

The selected towns spread over different parts of Gujarat and hence the proper analysis of the regional variation could be undertaken. The archaeology of these towns have greater importance in the field of the archaeology of the Muslim towns of Gujarat. The monuments explored were on the basis of their artistic values and importance. The
researcher had a plan to chalkout a representative samples of the towns and its monuments but due to manifold problems such as collecting the data, limitation of time and specific objectives of the study the same, could not be undertaken.

1.5.2. Collection of Data

The study is based primarily on the analysis and interpretation of data contained in the published reports of the Archaeological Survey of India, published literature and researches as reviewed earlier. There is clear dearth of published data on the archaeology of the Muslim towns of Gujarat as scanty attention has been paid to it. Records had to be taken for other methods for collecting the necessary data. The data used in the present study are mainly of two types:

1. Primary data.
2. Secondary data.

The primary data consists of the inscriptions and records, publications of the Archaeological Survey of India and other concerned institutes. Other relevant primary data relating to the various aspects of the monuments which are not available in the published reports and documents were collected from the field work using a separate questionnaire covering the major objectives of the study. The investigator prepared the questionnaire on the lines suggested by the
expert in the archaeological methodology. The questionnaire included the topography, archaeology and toponomy of the selected towns along with their monuments. These three areas constitute the problem studied in the investigation.

It may be mentioned here that due to technical terms used in the questionnaire, at its early trials revealed that the people could not fill it properly. Hence, it was thought that major aspects of the questionnaire be filled by the investigator at the time of exploration when monuments were mapped out in the survey sheet.

Data were also collected from the excavations conducted by the Department of Archaeology and Ancient History, M.S. University of Baroda, under the guidance of Prof. Mehta, at Patan,15 Ahmadabad,16 Champaner 17 and Baroda.18

The secondary data relating to the aforesaid aspects of the towns and their monuments were also collected from the published books, literature and research papers or monographs.

1.5.3 Techniques of Analysis:

The analysis of the topography, archaeology and toponomy of the town has been done on the basis of explorations, excavations, spot study, questionnaire study and other related data (as mentioned earlier). The analysis is mainly qualitative
in nature, based on the archaeological terms and concepts. Efforts have been made to go into details as far as possible in describing and interpreting the various aspects of the towns along with their monuments. In absence of available documentary evidences, more emphasis has been given on the spot study.

In the present study major findings have been discussed and interpreted in the light of the objectives formulated for the study. To make the findings meaningful comparative discussion and interpretation were made in the light of findings of the previous researchers and existing related literature.

1.6.0. The limitation of the study:

The present research is limited to study the archaeology of the Muslim towns of Gujarat, relating to topography, archaeology and toponomy. The study covers the period from 1297 A.D. to 1757 A.D. except its historical background. The historical background of the study is covered with a comprehensive discussion of a period of five thousand years, emphasising on the pre and protohistoric commercial relation between India and West Asia, based on archaeological discoveries in different countries like Arabia, Egypt, Palestine, Syria, Iraq, Iran, Pakistan and India.
The present study is limited to describe, analyse and interpret the urban Muslim archaeology of Gujarat specially its town planning, its monuments, their characteristics and impact of local influence on them. Cross verification of the date of construction of the monuments has also been made through the literary sources and the available inscriptions in the monuments.

Detailed analysis of the epigraphy, numismatic, minor antiquities like terracotta, stone objects and metal objects, even all the monuments of the selected towns have not been focused because of certain problems like shortage of time and lack of availability of data.

Analysis of the study is also limited by the availability of data. In absence of published documents relating to towns and monuments more, reliance is given on field work, questionnaire study and personal observation of the monuments in the sites. The findings of the present study are to be evaluated in the light of the specific limitation as mentioned above.

1.7.0. The Scheme of the Study

The thesis has been divided into twelve chapters. Chapter 1 is an introductory chapter giving details such as the background of the study, rationale of the study, review of related literature, specification of the problem, scope and
objectives of the study, methodology—selection of the sample, collection of data, techniques of analysis, limitation of the study and scheme of the chapters.

The Second Chapter deals with the historical background of the study covering a period of five thousand years, to establish a chronological relationship of India with West Asia, through exposed data from different excavations.

The Third chapter is devoted to the growth and development of the Muslim towns of Gujarat. This chapter is initiated with a background of the growth and development of the Muslim towns outside India.

Chapters Four to Ten include description, analysis and interpretation of the data related to Archaeology of the Muslim towns—Ahmedabad, Baroda, Bharuch, Cambay, Champaner, Patan and Surat of Gujarat with special reference to their monuments showing the distribution of the monuments in relation with the townscape.

Chapter Eleven adhered to the comparative discussion and interpretation of the findings in the light of the objectives, related literature and researches.

Chapter Twelve enumerates the summary of the findings, conclusions and suggestions for further research.
1.8.3. Parview of Methodology:

The study is mainly designed to incorporate various aspects like topography, archaeology and topometry of the town planning in relation to its monuments through the analysis and interpretation of various data collected from literary sources, publications, research papers, inscriptions, explorations, excavations, personal observations and questionnaires. In absence of specific study on the Muslim towns of Gujarat with special reference to their monuments the investigator had to face greater difficulty in reviewing the literature, selection of methodology, collecting the data, analysis and interpretations of the data, discussions of major findings and also for policy implication. So, the findings of the present study would be strictly limited to the selected towns and their monuments. Greater efforts have been made as far as possible for indepth analysis of the monuments but practical limitations like non-availability of data, absence of proper records, shortage of time and finance, delimited the scope of the present study.
REFERENCES


12. Seta, op.cit.

13. Ibid., p. 41.


18. B. Sukumaran, Baroda king in the emper, Baroda, 1953.