PREFACE

The present work is a review of the earlier archaeological researches and own study based on short field investigations in Mathurā and its surroundings. The period it followed, though not well defined the 'Age of the Kushānas', in the available scholarly world. Assumably, it was the period which witnessed the rule of the Kushāna dynasty. Here, we have humbly attempted to delineate systematically all the available archaeological sources including the distribution of sites/mounds/occurrences and analysis of artefacts. In this process of reviewing the archaeological data, we have tried to show possible distribution patterns of settlement clusters, cultural materials and the secular and religious components in the study area. Although, we have strictly confined to the study of the period of the Kushānas within the geographical limits of Mathurā and its surroundings, in some cases we were unable to restrict our research in the boundaries of both time and space.

Mathurā as a large historical settlement always attracts us while studying different aspects of Indian archaeology. The work carried out so far and the major sources of information about this settlement always inspired us to undertake a detailed study of the emergence of Mathurā as a centre of activities in the contexts of different cultural components. Unfortunately, there is no excavation report containing detail information of excavated trenches/layers stratigraphy, structural evidences and analysis of artefacts at Mathurā, since the excavations were carried out under the supervisions of B.Saran and M. Venkataramyya and later by M.C.Joshi and his associates of the Archaeological Survey of India. The work also intends to investigate different source materials related to the settlement history of the Mathurā region during the time of the Kushānas with special reference to the excavated and explored materials. Archaeologically, there are several aspects remain unexplained so far as
published works are concerned. The issues associated with the nucleus occurrences of settlements and the proliferation of life style during the time of the Kushānas besides the problem relating to the stratigraphical sequences of structural components and their religious and secular characters have not yet been justly focused. The present work is an attempt to highlight the status of recorded evidences and their functional aspects and it is divided into following eight chapters:

The introductory chapter deals with a short history of the Kushānas, physiography of the Mathurā region, relevance of Mathurā’s trading networks as well as scope, methodology and limitations of the present work.

The second chapter is concerned with the history of research and the nature of sources considered for the present study.

The third chapter contains the archaeological survey in our study area with a brief discussion about the nature of archaeological sites/mounds/occurrences associated with the Kushāna period. Besides reported data we have been able to gather more information during our field investigation.

The fourth chapter attempts to give a brief summary of available epigraphic and numismatic sources as corroborative evidence linking between archaeology and history of the Kushāna period.

The fifth chapter proposes to make an overview of the major architectural and sculptural remains of the Kushāna tradition as reported from the Mathurā region. The study follows a general framework maintaining the typological classifications of secular and religious structures and sculptural remains.

The sixth chapter proposes a brief survey of ceramic industry of the Kushāna period found during excavations/explorations in and around Mathurā region.
The *seventh* chapter contains a brief analysis of terracotta, metal, stone and other miscellaneous objects/artefacts in form of their morphological character and functional aspects.

The *eighth*, chapter comprises summary of the material remains discussed in the above chapters. Hence, it includes our tentative observation and suggestive notes on various aspects of the settlement archaeology of the Mathurā region during the period of the Kushānas.

We have also included a ‘Select Bibliography’ related to our study. Maps, illustrations and plates are to be found in Volume II of our work.

Regarding the System of Transliteration, diacritical markings have been used to a minimum. We have assumed that modern names of towns and cities in Central Asia and the Indian sub-continent are in sufficiently current usage and do not, therefore, require any diacritical definition.

I express my deep sense of gratitude and reverence to my teacher and supervisor Dr Rupendra Kumar Chattopadhyay for his kind help, supervision and constant inspiration. It is because of his esteemed guidance that the present thesis could be completed.

I am grateful to Dr Mallar Mitra, Dr Asok Datta, Dr Durga Basu and Dr Bishnupriya Basak of the Department of Archaeology, University of Calcutta for their co-operation and valuable suggestions.

I am equally beholden to Dr Swati Ray of the Department of AIHC, University of Calcutta for her constant encouragement, support and advice. I express my special thanks to Shri Dilip Malik, formerly of the Archaeological Survey of India (Excavation Branch II) for guiding me in my documentation works.

I am thankful to the Archaeological Survey of India for giving me permission to work on the Mathura collection, kept in the Reserved Collection of the A.S.I., Purana Qila, New Delhi.
I would like to convey my thanks to various personnel of the Archaeological Survey of India, New Delhi, including Late M.C. Joshi, Shri A.K. Sinha, Shri K.C. Nauriyal, Dr R.S. Fonia, Shri Dharamveer Sharma, Shri S.B. Ota, Shri Nayan Anand Chakraborty, Smt. Sangita Chakraborty and Shri Shovan Chatterjee.

My thanks are also due to the librarians and staff members of the Archaeological Survey of India Library, New Delhi; The Asiatic Society, Kolkata; National Library, Kolkata; Centre for Archaeological Studies and Training, Eastern India, Kolkata; Indian Museum, Kolkata; Mathura Museum, Mathura; National Museum, New Delhi and others.

I also like to thanks Shri Vinay Gupta and his family of Mathura for kind help and hospitality during my fieldworks.

I am grateful to the Indian Council of Historical Research, New Delhi for awarding me Junior Research Fellowship, without which the present work could not be completed.

I am also thankful to Subha Majumder, Sriman Chakraborty and Sumona Halder for their help and co-operation.

For technical assistance, I am thankful to Shri Subhendu Mukherjee for preparing few photographs related to my work.

Last but not the least, I express my heartfelt gratitude to my late father, my mother, relatives and friends for inspiring me to complete this work.