CHAPTER X

CONCLUSION

The archaeological and literary evidence indicates that the region of our study has been the cradle of civilization and culture throughout history. Physical conditions of the southern part of the Allahabad district suited to the prehistoric men. This is proved by the extant remains of culture of early cave men. These have been discovered in the region from Banda to Mirzapur. The vestiges of the Early, Middle and Late stone Age cultures in this area are preserved to this day in the form of rock shelters, stone tools and a few megaliths in the river valleys of Belan, Seoti and Tundiary (1) of the Allahabad district. It seems that the Jamunapur tract of the district had cultural contacts with the Copper age people of the Rewa district of Madhya Pradesh, from where copper implements had been discovered in the past (2). Stray copper celts have also been found at the historical site of Kausambi (3). Pondi, a village in Teonthar tehsil of Rewa district (M.P.), from where 47 rings and five celts were discovered is only 40 miles south of Allahabad (4). This shows that the southern part of the Allahabad district must have formed a part of the field of activity of the Prehistoric man as well as the
Copper Age people of the region.

With the march of Culture, the area of human activity also expanded.

From the available literary and archaeological material it can be gathered that the region watered by the two great rivers Ganga and Yamuna, and their tributaries had been the base of human activity during the historic period. Kausambi, Prayagraj and Pratishthana were three chief centres of political, religious and cultural activities of the people of this region right from the Vedic times to at least the advent of Muslims in this part of the country.

The first ever indication of the existence of Prayagraj is hinted in the following Rgvedic hymn.

वर्ण मे गंगे यमुने सरस्वति हर्षपद स्तोत्रं सक्ता परम्या पदक्षेपा
हर्षद्रुप विकास्यार्थी वे शुभे\nष्ट्रोमया दुष्कर्मावः

कम नो को रुकु तद्विक्षणं धर्मं

"O, Ganga, Yamuna, Saraswati, Sutudri (Satlej), Parusni (Ravi), Asikni (Chenab) along with the Marudvridha (a tributary named Maruvardana, between the Chenab and Jhelam to the west of Chenab), Vitasta (Jhelam), Susoma (Sohan) and Arjikiya, thou share my prayer and listen to it."

A more explicit reference of the confluence (Sangama) of these two rivers is given in the following Rgvedic Khila-
Where the fair and dark rivers commingle, bathing there people mount unto heaven, and those wise persons who cast off their body there attain to immortality. This is the earliest reference of the holy Sangama of the two rivers at Prayāga.

The Satapatha Brāhmaṇa records the performance of Yajñas and offerings of ablutions by the kings of Bharat lineage at the junction of the two rivers, suggesting that the place had emerged as the centre of the Vedic religion during the later Vedic period.

The Rāmāyana, the Mahābhārata, the Purāṇas, classical literature and the foreign accounts confirm the facts stated above.

The rich and varied sculptural wealth the terracottas, epigraphic records, coins, seals and sealings representing different periods of history beginning from 3rd century B.C. to C. 1200 A.D. discovered from various parts of the district furnish a concrete proof of a rich cultural heritage of this region.

Kausām Ś enjoyed a significant position in the 6th century B.C. It had been the capital of the famous Yatsa.
Kingdom of Udayana and a place of subsequent visits of Gautama Buddha. It was an important business centre and stood on the main commercial route joining South West with East India. It had been a centre of Buddhism up to the time of the visit of Hwen-Thsang. Bhita is considered to have enjoyed an important strategic location from 3rd century B.C. to 5th century A.D. It was also a business centre.

The ancient mound of Jhūśī is believed to represent the ancient Pratisthāna, has yielded antiquities from 3rd cent. B.C. to the 12th century A.D. All these finds are from surface collections. If the site is thoroughly excavated it may bring to light important material bearing on the ancient history of the region. Lachchhāgir, another ancient mound has yielded antiquities from 3rd century B.C. to 12th century A.D. It has remained unheeded by the archaeologists. Now, more than half of the mound is washed away by the river Ganga. Had it been timely excavated it could have offered some solution to the controversy about the Lākshāgriha of Mahābhārata.

There are several other sites like Jhūśī, Lachchhāgir Gridhakoot, Sringverapur, Mahnaiyādīh in the district of Allahabad waiting for the spade of the archaeologist.

In the sixth century B.C. the Vatsa Kingdom with its capital at Kaśāmbi was amongst the sixteen Mahājanapadas. It enjoyed an outstanding status among the neighbouring
kingdoms of Kosala, Magadha and Avanti. Udayana, the legendary king of Vatsa, was the contemporary of the Buddha. He was a great king and made some conquests and contracted matrimonial alliances with Avanti, Anga and Magadha in order to safeguard his extensive territory. His career was meteoric. After him the importance of the Vatsa kingdom was lost to oblivion.

The mention of Kausambi as a centre of administration is next found in the Kausambi edict of Asoka addressed to his Mahamatras of the place to root out the schism from the Buddhist order. The other order engraved on the pillar is called the Queen's Edict, which was issued by him to his authorities at Kausambi to see that the gifts made by his queen Kāruvāki were properly utilised by those to whom they were gifted. It shows that Kausambi enjoyed an important status during the Mauryan period.

The famous eulogy of Samudragupta by his court poet Harisena is also inscribed on the same pillar set up by Asoka. Whether it then stood at Prayaga or at Kausambi is a moot point. It indicates that the region was considered an important place and, therefore, for the sake of wide publicity of the achievements of the emperor the epigraph was got engraved in a central place.

After the end of the Mauryan rule in the second century B.C. till the conquest of Samudragupta seems a central
authority veiling permanent influence over this region was conspicuous by its absence since then local rulers like Vagaghoṣa, Ásvaghosa, Śuṅgavarmā, Parvata, Sudeva, Indradeva, Brihaspatimitra, Agnimitra, Jethamitra etc. ruled the region upto 2nd century A.D. Thereafter the Magha dynasty of Bandhogarh came to power and upto the beginning of the Gupta empire the Maghas appear to have occupied the Vatsa region. Trans-Gangā region was under the sovereignty of the Ayodhya rulers Dhanadeva, Āryamitra, Vāyudeva, Viśakadeva, Satyamitra etc.

Some scholars hold the view that from the later part of the 1st century A.D. upto the rise of the Maghas in the second century A.D. Kauśāmbī and the neighbouring region was occupied by the imperial Kuśāṇas. Altekar is also of the opinion that these rulers extended their sway even upto Bihar. There are other who hold the opposite view and think that the Kuśāṇa suzerainty did not extend to the Vatsa region.

The people of Vatsa kingdom were fond of arts and crafts. It is fully reflected in the objects such as sculptures, terracottas, bowls and animal shaped amulets discovered from the capital city of Kauśāmbī. Kauśāmbī is not credited for having a distinct school of sculptures like Sārnāth but its influence is apparent on a number of Buddha and Bodhisattva figures, presently displayed in the Allahabad University Museum. Sārnāth was not far away from Kauśāmbī and it is possible that sculptures were imported to this city from Sārnāth, where possibly there was a workshop of sculptures.
like Mathura.

The Vatsa kingdom had a flourishing terracotta industry. They range in date from the 2nd century B.C. to the 8th century A.D. The range of subjects used by the potter artists is baffling. Mathura, Ahichchhatra and Kausambi were three important centres of terracotta industry in north India. Each of the centres evolved its own style. There appears to be a brisk trade of terracottas during the Sunga period at Kausambi. Hundreds of terracottas of the Sunga period offering an interesting panorama of the contemporary society have been found at Kausambi. The plaque showing abduction of Vasavadatta by Vatsaraj Udayana, demon carrying a woman in arms and the woman having a scorpion on her arm are some of the examples the parallels of which are not available in Indian art.

The miniature animal and bird shaped beads cut in a variety of stones are not only pleasing; they bear testimony to the high artistic sense of the contemporary stone cutters or jewellers. Articles of ivory, copper and bone have also been found at Kausambi. They show the craftsmen working in different mediums lived in the city.

Undoubtedly the Kausambi artists had attained perfection in the execution of the objects of their day to day use justifying the remark of Hwen-Thsang that the people of Vatsa 'were enterprising, fond of arts and cultivators of religious merit' (5).
Kausāmbī enjoyed the status of a district as late as the twelfth century A.D. An inscription in Nāgari of the V.E. 1245 (1188 A.D.) engraved during the reign of king Jayachamira and exhumed from the vicinity of the ruins of Kausāmbī mentions 'Kosamba-pattalavam' (in the district of Kausāmbī) (6). Another Nāgari inscription from Karā of the reign of king Yashapala of the V.E. 1063 (1036 A.D.) also refers to Kosamba Nājila (7).

The last mention of Jhūsi as Pratisabhā is found in the copper plate inscription of Trilochanapala of the V.E. 1084 (1087 A.D.) in which his eulogy and a gift to Brāhmanas of that place is recorded (8).

The material finds described in this thesis bear testimony to the fact that the entire area now comprised in the Allahabad district had witnessed a hectic political, social and cultural life since times immemorial and that it contributed substantially to the many facets of India's great culture and History.

FOOT NOTE

3- Allahabad Museum M.O.R.No. 23.
5- Watters, Xuan-Chwang, I.P. 366.
