CHAPTER I

Geographical Background - Vatsa and its extent

As the entire area of the Allahabad district comes within the purview of this thesis it is necessary to give an idea of the geographical position of the region. Archaeology unfolds the past history and culture of a region or country, the geographical factors contribute to the shaping of its history and culture.

LOCATION.

The district of Allahabad is located between the lat. 24° 47' and 25° 47' n. and long. 81° 9' and 82° 21'E. Its longest stretch from the east to west is about 74 miles while the extreme length from north to south is only 64 miles. The area of the district is 2847 square miles(1).

BOUNDARIES.

To the north of the Allahabad district lie the districts of Rae Bareli, Pratapgarh and Jaunpur, to the east and south-east, the districts of Varanasi and Mirzapur, to the south and south-west, the districts of Rewa (M.P.) and Banda and to the west, the district of Fatehpur.

TOPOGRAPHY

The two rivers, the Ganga and the Yamuna divide the district into three clear cut divisions. Each one of these have varying physical features. In ancient times the tract
lying between the two rivers was known as 'Antarvēdi'. Even to-day it is called ' Antarvēda'. Its second popular name is doab. The region across the Gaṅgā is named 'Gaṅgāpāra' and that to the south of river Yamunā 'Yamunāpāra'. There are three tehsils Chail, Sirāthū and Manjhanpūr in the doab.

The trans Gaṅgā or Gaṅgāpāra tract has Soraon, Phūlpur and Handiā Tehsils. The Jamunāpār region has Karchanā and Mejā Tehsils.

THE DOAB

The doab, in the shape of a triangular tract, roughly covers an area of 816.73 square miles. The river Gaṅgā forms its northern boundary. This tract of land is rich in alluvial soil and is an affluent crop growing area. The doab is indeed a rich and fertile tract. This fact has been corroborated by the Chinese pilgrim Huen-İ-Sang who visited the region in the 7th century A.D. He records "...The land is famous for its productiveness; the increase is very wonderful. Rice and sugarcane are plentiful (2)." Water's rendering of the pilgrim's record further states.....' It was a fertile country with a hot climate, it yielded much upland rice and sugarcane (3). There are only scattered patches of forests in this area. The Pabhosā hill is the only hill lying in this tract. The biggest lake, which spread over to an area of five square miles, lies at Alvārā in Parganā atharvāna.
THE GĀNGĀPĀR.

This is the north-eastern part of the district across the river Gāṅgā. Its southern edge runs along the course of river Gāṅgā and contains several patches of kachhār land. Due to erosion the high bank of the Gāṅgā looks like an irregular wall of sandy blocks. The surplus water of this region falls in river Sāi in the north through its tributaries and the river Gāṅgā in the south, through Mānsēṭā, Bārnā and other minor rivulets. This region is fertile and contains a large number of ponds. The total area of this tract is about 853.42 square miles.

THE JAMUNĀPĀR

The Jamunāpār tract covers the major portion of the district. Its total area is 1187 square miles. Its geographical features resemble those noticeable in Bundelkhand and Mirzāpur regions. The low ranges of the Vindhyas run from the Mirzāpur border past Mānu, Mejā and Kohārār to the western most boundary of the district. The soil of this tract is unproductive. It is a sparsely populated area. Farming usually depends on rains. The opening of the Belan Canal has, however, given some relief to the inhabitants of this area.

THE RIVERS

Almost all the rivers of the district are part of the
main system of the Ganga which forms the northern fringe of the Sirathu and Ghail Tansils. Its total length in this district is 78 miles.

The second important river of the district is Yamuna which after a course of over 63 miles joins Ganga at Allahabad.

The third important river of the district is lons (ancient Tamasa), which emerges out of Rewa hills. It joins the Ganga near Sirsa. Its total length in the district is 40 miles.

The fourth river is Belan. It rises in the high lands of the Bijaigurh and Barbar Parganas of the Mirzapur district. It joins river lons near Khiri.

THE HILLS

There is a chain of low hill ranges in the Khaairagarh and the Bura Parganas of the Jamnapur region. There are also rocky mounds near Bhita, Sevari, and Bankuwar villages falling in the Pargana of Arais. The only hillock in the goat tract in the Pabhoosa hill near Kausambi.

VATSAS AND THE CITY

The term Vatsa denotes an ancient tribe as well as the land or kingdom ruled by it. Kausambi was the capital of Vatsa, the land or kingdom of the Vatsas. Its present
name is Kosam, which is situated about 40 miles south-west of the Allēhābād city. In ancient literature the people living in this region were known as Vatsas, Vamsas, Vachchhas and Vasan. Vasa is the name of a tribe mentioned in the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa. They were people of Maṅdhyaśa mentioned along with the Kurus, the Pāṇchālas and the Usinaras (4). They were also connected with the Matsyas according to the Kauśitaki upaniṣadha (ka-vasa- Matsyasya) (5). The Vasa and the Usinara are spoken of as united in the Gopatha brāhmaṇa (6). The names seem to indicate that the Vasa and the Usinara were connected with each other (7). The aṅguttara Nikāya (8) states that the land of Vamsa was one of the sixteen Mahājanapadas existing in the 6th century B.C. The Mahābhārata mentions that Bhīmasena conquered the Vatsabhūmi.

वसा पृथ्वी व कर्नेश्वर विष्णुस्य कल्याणू कहानुः ।
वस्त्रांक श्रवण विष्णुविष्णुपरिश्रव तथा ॥ (स्मार्क-२०३०, २०-२१)

' The mighty son of Kuntī (i.e. Bhīmasena) conquered by force the Vatsa country and the lord of the Bhargas and then the chieftain of the Niśadas.

The Vana Parva refers to the conquest of Vatsa country by Karna (9). The anuvātana Parva refers to the conquest of the Vatsa country by the Hāihayas of Chedi after they had eliminated Haryāśva (10). The
Bhīṣma Parva says that the Vatsas fought against the Kauravas in the Mahābhārata war (11). The Arthasastra mentions Vatsa as one of the countries which produced cotton fabrics of high quality (12).

The Vatsa country is mentioned in the Śīgha Nikāya along with Kāśi, Kośala, Vaijji, Malla, Cheti, Kuru and Pāñchala countries (13).

All these references point to the fact that the Vatsa people formed an important class in ancient India. The Harivamśa Purāṇa states that Vatsa and Bhrigu were two sons of king Pratardana of Kāśi. Vatsa is said to have founded the Vatsabhūmi and Bhrigu, the Bhrigubhūmi.

Prajñāpati प्रज्ञापति कौशले वायुर्वाक्यः
वातस्य वस्मुर्गिनिस्त्र पुष्पमिनिस्त्र नामिनवात् ॥ २६ - ३०

In Pāli literature the Vatsa is mentioned as Vaṁsa and Bhargavas are called Bhaggas. They founded their kingdoms side by side. The capital of the Vatsa kingdom was Kauśāmbī, while the capital of the Bhaggas was Sumsumārāgirī at the time of the Buddha. The Bhagga (Bharga) state of Sumsumārāgirī was a dependency of Vatsa. The Bhonsākha mentions that Prince Boddhi son of Udayana, the king of the Vatsas, dwelt in Sumsumārāgirī and built a palace called Ankanād (14). Nāhula Sāṅkīrtityayāna identifies the present Mirzapur district with the old Bharga country and its capital Sumsumārāgirī with
present Chunār (15) hill. N.N. Ghosh also holds the same view (16). Rāhula indicates the probable location of the Bharga country in a foot note of Hindi translation of the Majjhima Nikāya, published by the Mahābohi Sabha, Sārnāth (P.61) as follows:

वरो वासकर निष्ठागुर दी का गंगा हो दशिणी माग धार कुदु धार पास का प्रस्ताव है। इसकी धीमा गंगा, टाँग, कर्माष्ठा नदियां एवं विष्ट्य पर्वत का कुदु माग रहा होगा। पूरे हैं।

In the introduction of the same work (17), Rāhula again indicates the location of the Vatsa kingdom in the following passage:

"वस्त्रश्राण्य- पूर्त धार वस्त्रिणां में इसके माय धार कुदु की धारियां थीं। वस्त्र के विशिष्टत्र माय धार ढोली में पान का कुदु माग इसके धारियां था। इसके परिसरमें दशिणां धारियां थीं, जो सम्पत्ति वस्त्र के धारी की धारियां थी। पंजाब को वस्त्र के धारी माता के पार, परिसरमें इसके दो होटे पहाड़ी राजा पिलार्स हिल हैं। इस ती धुलक का राजा माधुर कुदु की धार - जो उद्यम की रानी वासकर या विष्ट्यानार की माता की धारिया का कुदु तथा प्रांरोध का पौर्व है। सम्भवतः यह माधुर राजा में प्रांरोध के प्राणे के क्षेत्र का माता का धारिया था। कुदु के तम वस्त्र में धुलक का राजा की धारियां थीं, जो सम्पत्ति वस्त्र के क्षेत्र का माता का होटे पहाड़ी पिलार्स हिल था। यह कीस्थ कोई धुलक की धारिया का धारिया रहा होता फिर कंडा का ही प्राणे पुरुष का सम्पत्ति वस्त्र का क्षेत्र का होता हो तो कोई कार्य कोई नही।
RAY CHAUDHURY says: Vaṣṣa or Vatsu was the country south of the Ganges of which Kausāmbi, modern Kosam on the left bank of the Jamunā, near Allahabād, was the capital (18). According to the Vālmiki Rāmāyana Śrī Rāma, during his journey to the forest, halted at Śṛṅga vera pura (modern Singraur) on the left bank of the Gaṅgā. Then the Śṛṅga vera pura was under the control of Gunāraja Niśāda. After crossing the Gaṅgā there, Śrī Rāma entered the Vatsu country (19). It is probable that during the time when the Rāmāyana was composed the whole of modern Jagāpur of the Allahabād district formed part either of the kingdom of Ayodhyā or that of the Niśādas who entertained cordial relations with the former. The whole of the Doab region of the district was a part of the Vatsu territory. It is said that Kausāmbi, capital of the Vatsu country, lay in the centre of that kingdom. Therefore, it could be surmised that the Vatsu kingdom extended up to the frontiers of the present Fatehpur district.

In the 6th century B.C. there were five important kingdoms in north India—Avanti, Vatsu, Kosala, Kāśi and Magadha. These states were always anxious to extend
their respective territories and hence were on frequent quarrels with one another. The boundaries of Vatsa extended up to the frontiers of Avanti kingdom in the south including some part of the present Madhya Pradesh. Thus the whole of the modern Jamunapar region of the Allahabad district also formed a part of the Vatsa kingdom. Eastern and south-eastern boundaries of the Vatsa kingdom touched the confines of Kasi and Chedi kingdoms. The whole of the Bhagga country, (present Mirzapur district) was included in the Vatsa country. The Brihat Samhita of Varahamihira places it in the middle of Northern India, the Madhyadesa of Manusmriti. It is said that Avanti, Kosala and Vatsa retained their independence for about a century after the Buddha's demise. They lost their power during the reign of the Nandas. This is supported by the fact that when Asoka ascended the throne of Magadh, the three ancient kingdoms Kosala, Vatsa and Avanti were included in the Maurya empire. Asoka put Kausambi under a Mahamatra (Governor). The stupa of Bharhat was also erected within the boundaries of the Vatsa country in the 2nd century (202 B.C. The history of Vatsa or the country of Kausambi as a political unit ended with the rule of Yasahpala of Kanauj in the 11th century A.D. In an inscription, found at Kara dated samvat 1093 (1036 A.D.), there occurs a phrase 'Kosamba Mandala'(21). Another Nagari inscription found at Mahavad or Meohar, 7 miles away from Kausambi,
dated Samvat 1245 (1189 A.D.) mentions, the construction of the temple of Siddhesvara at that village in the 'Kosamba pattana' (22), or the district of Kausambi.

This will make it clear that the present doab and the Jamunapar tracts of the Allahabad District, along with the whole of the Mirzapur District, were within the territory of the ancient Vatika.
1. ONẾTIEIR OF ALLAHABAD DISTRICT - A Vol. Page 1, 1928
4. ALTARVA BRĀHMA - VIII, 14-3.
5. KauśītaKi UPANiṣA-DA - IV, I.
7. VEDIC INDEX OF NAMAS AND SUIJ CT- P. 273, VOL. II.
10. IBID. ANUŚA-NA PARVA - Chapt. 30.
11. IBID. BHĪMA PARVA - Chapt. 50.
12. ARDHASTRA - ŚaMA ŚAŚTRI, Tr. P. 94.
14. JUHANSAKHA JĀTAKA - No. 353.
15. RAHULA SĀNKRITYĀYANA - BUDDHA CHARYA, P. 75, 175.
17. RAHULA SĀNKRITYĀYANA - MAJjhima NIKĀYA - MAHAVADHI SABHA 1933. INTRODUCTION. P. JHA!
22. ANNUAL REPORT 1921-22, PAGE 120. SIX INScriptions recovered by D.K. SAVHNI FROM THE VICINITY OF KAUSĀMBI.