CHAPTER X

CONCLUSION
The Vidisä district occupies an important place in India from the historical and cultural point of view. Archaeologically and historically Vidisä district is one of the richest regions of Madhya Pradesh. The archaeological wealth, scattered all over the district speaks about the ancient glory. The ancient town of Vidisä was situated on the confluence of two rivers: Beo and Betvä. This place was important not only in the Prehistoric period but also in subsequent history, where it has acquired the status of legend. From very early times to the period of the Paramära rule in Mälvä, Vidisä played a significant role in the development of the Indian culture.

Prehistoric Background: — The method of living and habits of the Prehistoric man seems to mainly based on the Geographic, climate and ecological factors, which are helpful to know something about the Primitive man. Discovery of the stone age tools in a similar context from Kothä, Kurwaï, Khajuri, Gamäkar, Condavasa, Teeli, Gyäraspur and a few other sites on Betvä valley, enable us to say that the part of Eastern Mälvä including Vidisä district was also inhabited during the stone age culture, and further, that Vidishä had witnessed the same climatic conditions as those existing on the Narmadä in the past. As known from the types of the palaeolithic tools including choppers, handaxes, cleavers, scrapers, bifaces, discs etc., the man
on the Narmada was perhaps not different from that on the Chambal and Betwa. The palaeolithic culture of Vidisha is related to this type of culture spread over in the parts of the country. Though there are regional variations owing to ecological, geographic and other factors. The remains of microlithic and Neolithic cultures have been noticed from the Rangai excavations, but the stratified material having a deposit of the settlements is yet to be confirmed by the further excavations at the site. The excavations at the adjacent protohistoric sites like Maheshwar-Navdātolī, Kāṭaṭa, Pipā-Lorkā and Kran have furnished ample light on the microlithic or Neolithic folk-alongwith the Chālcolithic material.

Protohistoric Period:- In the Proto-historic (Chālcolithic) times the present Mālwā, particularly its eastern and south-eastern parts made a more rapid development than the other parts of Madhya Pradesh. The chief reason of this seems to be that apart from enjoying a bracing climate, these parts of Mālwā including Vidisha-Besnagar were on the direct north-western route on which were located the developed town like Ahār, Kālitangan, Loṭhal, Roher and still further, Harappā, the chief centre of a great Chālcolithic civilisation.

From the chālcolithic phase at Besnagar and Rangai, a few objects of copper, microliths and the painted pottery,
etc. were recovered during the excavations from these sites. The other excavated sites adjacent to Vidišā district, i.e. Maheshwara-Nāvdaṭoli, Kāyāṭhā, Piplya-Lorkā, Bāna and a few others have furnished adequate chālcolithic material.

From Rangai-Besnagar excavations, conducted by Sri M. D. Khare (1963-65 and 1975-76), it was revealed that the earliest settlers of Vidišā region were the pre-pottery microlithic people. They were hunters and nomades. They used microliths as their weapons. A similar sequence was obtained even in the painted rock-shelters at Ahmādpur and Nāgar in the Vidišā district. The trial diggings at Kharwāl, and Bhimbetkā (dist. RAisen) have shown that before the advent of the chālcolithic people the region was inhabited by the Mesolithic hunters, whose main source of subsistence was food gathering. A large number of pre-pottery microliths, mostly of chalcedony, agate, quartz have been recovered from a deposit at Rangai resting over the natural soil. As many as 300 artefacts including the flakes and cores have been collected from a central pit measuring 1mx1m.

The sterile layer is overlain by about 200 cms. thick deposit, yielding chālcolithic remains, represented by archaic bull of terracotta, microliths and cores, paste beads, painted pottery and neolithic burnished red ware. From the uppermost levels of this deposit was also picked
up a polished stone-axe. The pottery of this site consist of three wares, viz. red, black-and-red and grey ware. Red ware carrying most of paintings in black, displaying horizontal or vertical bands, triangles, cheques, dots, horns of antilopes, bulls, etc. The grey ware which forms about 10 per cent of the total assemblage and is very often of thick section but fine fabric, is also painted in certain cases.

The entire pottery except the neolithic vases, which are turned on a slow wheel, has been made of fine clay on a very fast wheel. It is well and uniformly fired and treated with a very pleasing and luxuriant variety of painted designs on red ware.

The other components of the châlcolithic culture are a large number of micro-beads of paste and archaic bulls of terracotta showing a high workmanship. Copper is however, conspicuous by its absence.

The foregoing account shows that the châlcolithic people inhabited this area for several years, but long after the disappearance of pre-proto microlithic using people. The earliest Châlcolithic occupation is contemporaneous with Kâyaṭhâ-II, which has been dated to 19th-18th century B.C., while the latest, as revealed from the finds of 1963-65, with the painted grey ware using culture, assignable to the
beginning of the first millennium B.C. The use of fine grey-ware, with occasional paintings in brown pigment in one side and the contemporaneity of the painted Grey Ware with the last phase of this culture in another has added new dimensions to the central India chālcolithic complex.

End of the Chālcolithic Cultures:— The question arises that how these chālcolithic cultures came to an end? Nothing definite can be said on this, because of lack of sufficient evidence. It is held by some scholars like Prof. Bajpai, Dr. Nakankar, Prof. Singh, Dr. Pandey, Sri Khare and others, "that the iron using people, who entered with their weapons and implements, might have been responsible for destruction of the Central Indian Chālcolithic cultures in about C.800–700 B.C. At several sites including Basnagar–Rangai, iron was found along with the painted Grey Ware. This painted Grey Ware has been ascribed by B.B. Lal and others, to the Aryans. This shows that the Aryans in their expansion towards the south from the Gangetic Doāb, brought about the destruction of these chālcolithic cultures.

Prof. K.C. Jain concluded that "no one destroyed these chālcolithic cultures. But in the 6th century B.C. it gradually disappeared when iron, minted money, houses of bricks and towns came into existence. All these factors led to the foundation of new economy. It thus seems that
the disappearance of the châlcolithic cultures was natural". However, it can be said that 'the iron using community might be responsible for an advanced metalic culture called the "Iron Age", instead of châlcolithic cultures. The iron metallurgy was an off-shoot of copper metallurgy, which has evidently been proved from two different sites—Tâmakhân and Tâmiâ Pahâr, where extraction of copper was started during châlcolithic time and then switched to iron.

The Iron Age:— The early Iron Age which is bracketed between C. 1100 and 300 B.C. embraced two ceramic industries. Painted Grey ware and Northern Black Polished Ware. They were nurtured by two distinct areas in respect of the territorial establishments structured an expanded by the people which marked the formation of domains and rise of Empire. During the former period the use of iron mainly characterised for the defence and war purposes because of its need.

The excavations and explorations at the several places in Mâlwâ and central India have come across with the thick extraction of iron industry in pre-N.B.P. levels. The source of iron was the laterite deposit which covered the hilly plateau of Mukundarâ range and the foot hills where this deposit is more than 5 to 6 meters in thickness. The excavations conducted at Hâgâ, Eran, Dangâwâda and Rûnjâ etc. have thrown welcome light on the Iron industry in Mâlwâ.
A few sherds of Grey Ware, two of which belonging undoubtedly to the Painted Grey Ware assemblage, came from the upper levels of the chalcolithic deposit at BSN-4, thereby suggesting contemporaneity, at least in this region, of the early phase of the painted Grey Ware with the latest phase of the chalcolithic culture (C. 800 B.C.-700 B.C.). The occurrence of Painted Grey Ware followed by the iron slag recovered from the layers of Period-II-A (C. 800-600 BC). The excavations at Besnagar (1963-65) have yielded finds with the painted Grey Ware using culture. It can be dated to the beginning of the first millennium B.C. in comparison of the other adjacent excavated sites, i.e. Nagda, Eran, Dangwada and Runija etc. From the evidence of Dangwada and Runija, there is hardly a break between the chalcolithic and beginning of the Iron Age. At Eran too, some iron pieces have been reported from the end of the chalcolithic layers. After chalcolithic period the devastation brought by floods was tremendous in Malwa and it virtually became depopulated for a long time.

Thus the last date of chalcolithic phase in Malwa can be put in a time bracket beginning from C. 1300-1000 BC. and the lower date of such deposits yielding iron, glass and black-and-red ware can be assumed to C. 1000-800 B.C. The Grey Ware and painted Grey Ware would be dated to C. 800-600 B.C. and the N.B.P. to 500-300 B.C.
HISTORICAL PERIOD: In the Historical period that began with the epoch of Buddha, the centres of the Arya-jana settlements which had emerged with the emphasis on cultivation, initially were made encompents of the civil and military officials of the Mahajanapadas, but quickly these capitals grew into cities owing to the concentration of the slaves and to shape them the craftsmen, artisans and labourers moved in. The emergence of the towns synchronized with the beginning of the metallic currencies, the rise of markets, the collective enthusiasm of Srethiśa, the travels of the Sārthavāhas to the distant places, formation of guilds, the invention of new pottery-industry (N.B.P. Ware) in fine texture, the intensive and extensive use of iron, the surplus in production, the import of silver and export of iron implements and the greater role of the intermediaries. The Central India (Madhyadesa) attained gravitation. It was an age of the utilitarian development and multiplication in the productions. However, all these achieved in the course of formation and expansion of Magadhan empire.

Vidisha was counted among the well-known cities of ancient India. It was the capital of Dasarna or Akara, i.e. Eastern Mālwa. During the mythological and classical Age, we find a Purānic reference to Vidisā as a janapada. The other important reference is found in the pages of the Skanda Purāṇa, in which Vidishā appears as a holy place.
(tīrtha) like Ujjayinī. As per Aṅguttaraniyā, Vidiśā was included in the Avanti Janapada before the birth of Buddha. As per the Purānas and epics, the Haihayas dominated this area from early times. As per Kālidāsa's Raghavamsa, Satrughṇa, the youngest brother of Rāma, expelled the Yadvas from this region and placed his son 'Subham' at Vidiśā. In Banas Kadambāri, we find a king named Sūdraka, who ruled over Vidiśā on the bank of the Vetravati (Betwā).

In Brahmanical, Buddhist and Jaina literature, Vidiśā has been called by different names, viz. Vessanagar, Vaishvanagar, Visvanagar, Vaidisā, Vidiśā, Besnagar, etc. During the 6th century B.C., Vidiśā's place was very exalted in all respects. The economic prosperity was due to its advantageous position on the cross-roads of two important trade-routes. One of these ran from Pratisthāna (Paithan in the Godāvari region) to Māhismatī, Ujjayinī, Gonardda (Gunā), Vaidisā (Vidiśā) and Kausāmbī, while the other connected Bharukachcha (Baroach) and Sūrpāraka on the Arabian sea, to Mathurā via Ujjayinī. A branch of this route ran from Vidiśā to Kausāmbī through the valley of Betwā or Vetravati and then to Pātaliputra.

In the itinerary of Jīvaka (who was sent from Magadhan court of Ajātashatru to treat the king of Avanti, Chandra Praddya), Vidiśā, Gonardda, Ujjayinī and Māhismatī
are mentioned. Jivaka must have travelled by one of the trade-routes. Substantial merchandises used to be carried over on these routes, which gradually made Vidissā one of the richest cities of Ancient India. In fact the magnificent stūpa of Sānchi was built largely by the donations from the business community of Vidissā, though by general belief Asoka erected the grand cupola. The economic prosperity of this place was retained till the days of the Guptas, because in his Meghaduta, Kalidāsa has referred to Vidissā as a place where everybody gets wealth to his heart's contents.

In sanskrit literature Eastern Mālwa, including the Vidissā region was referred to as Ākar, that rose to be a great height of cultural superiority in the Buddhist and the subsequent period. The brightest era, of course, lasted from Asokas's region to the Imperial Guptas. Sānchi stood in symbolic relation to Buddhism. Equally interesting is the Elliptical Vaissāva temple and the Héliodoros pillar at Besnagar, which gives the evidence of Brahmanical influence co-existing with Buddhism in this area.

The Pradyota dynasty:- Chandra Pradyota was a contemporary of Buddha, and in his time Avanti became a powerful and flourishing centre, as is known from the early Buddhist literature. According to the Purānas this king ruled for twenty three years. His daughter Vāgavadattā was married
to king Udyanaka of Kausambī. The love-story and elopement of Vasavadatta is tastefully depicted in some of the terracottas found from Kausambī. There was in this period a brisk cultural movement. During the reign of the Pradyota dynasty, the ancient cities of Vidiśā, Kran Mahismati and Ujjayinī made great progress, with the extinction of the Pradyotas by the beginning of the 4th century B.C. Avanti lost the high prestige of an independent kingdom. It henceforth became only a part of the Viceroyalty of the succeeding Magadhan empire, first of the Nandas, and subsequently of the Mauryas.

Avanti continued its economic and cultural progress even after the rule of the Pradyota. According to the Mahā-bodhiyāna, the Śākyas took shelter at Vidiśā, being afraid of Vidūdabhā.

The Mauryas: The Maurya emperor, Asoka stayed at the city of Vidiśā while he was on his way to Ujjayinī to join the post of viceroy of Avanti. Asoka married with the sister's daughter, named Mahādevī of Vediśā. She gave birth to son Mahendra and Daughter Samghamitra. Both are famous in history as their father's religious ambassadors to Ceylon. They are known to have carried a twig of the original 'Bodhi tree' and led a Buddhist mission to that country.

The services rendered by Asoka to the cause and
spread of Buddhism need hardly be mentioned. He laid
foundations of great stūpa at Sānchī and raised a huge
monolithic pillar close to it with his usual edicts inscribed
thereon. It is said that before sailing for Ceylon Mahendra
came to visit his mother at Besnagar. The mother took her
son to a 'Chaityagiri' which, by popular belief, was none
other than the Sānchī stūpa.

The rich donors and other citizens of Vidisa
contributed munificent donations made to the Buddhist and
Vaishnava establishment located in the Vidisa district inclu-
ding Bharhut and Sānchī. A large number of votive inscriptions,
railings pillars, monuments proved this. These names include
not only the royal donors, but also represent the people
in general. Several Buddhist votive inscriptions have been
found at Sānchī, Besnagar, Bhojpur, Sonārī and Anūdhra, etc.

The Maurya Age initiated a new era of life-size
stone sculptures carved in the round. These figures gene-
rally represented the yaksas and the animal figures. The
robust art tradition continued during the Suṅga-sātavāhana
Age.

Vidisa as a City State:— The last of the Mauryan kings,
Bhishadatta was overthrown by his minister Pusyantra Suṅga
in 137 B.C. Sometime during the weak rule of the former,
Vidisha like Tripūrī, Eran Mahismatī and a few other contem-
porary towns, might have emerged as an independent city
state, temporarily. The proof of this lies in the discovery of a few copper coins with signs of three Brāhmī letters, read as 'Vedisa' or Veddasa' (Sanskrit Vidisa). The characters of similar to those of the inscriptions of Asoka. On the basis of the stratigraphy and palaeography the coin may be dated to the 3rd–2nd century B.C.

The name of the Vidisa in Sānci inscriptions usually occurs in the form of Vedisa. The janapada coins bear the name as Vedisa. On some coins the name occurs in a reverse form due to the defect in die. The coins bearing the town-name are mostly circular, but a few coins are rectangular in shape.

Independence of Eastern Malwa:— After the death of Asoka, the great Maurya Empire was disintegrated. The Eastern Malwa (including Vidisa region) became free from Maurya domination about 200 B.C. This is clearly borne out by the discovery of coins of the independent rulers like 'Śīvagupta' and 'Sakhdeva' (or Visakhdeva) from Vidisa and a copper coin of Dharmapāla and a lead circular die of 'rañño Indragutra'(of Indragupta) in Asokan Brahmī characters were discovered from Eran.

The Śuṅga-Satavahana Age:— During the Śuṅga regime Vidisa became the capital of Ākara or Eastern Malwa, and it was the most flourishing cities of India. Āgnimitra served as his father's viceroy from his headquarters at Vidisa. It
is significant to note though the capital of the Śuṅga kings was Pātaliputra, still Pusyamitra and Añgimitra were called the rulers of Vidiśā. The later Śuṅgas shifted their capital from Pātaliputra to Vidiśā. The next important Śuṅga ruler was Bhāgabhadra', who is known to have ruled from the capital at Vidiśā. He must have been a powerful monarch among the Indian rulers, to whom the Greek ruler Antialkidas sent an envoy, named 'Heliodorus' who maintained diplomatic relations with him. Apart of this information is inscribed on a lofty Garuda pillar, locally known as (Garudadhvaja) 'Khambāhā: It records the setting up of a Garudadhvaja in honour of Lord Viṣṇu (Vāsudeva). The discovery of an elliptical temple of Viṣṇu, just near the site supplies the earliest archaeological evidence of Vaiṣṇava cult. This temples is believed to have been existing in Vidiśā at least in the 3rd century B.C. Another inscription in early Brāhmī characters, dated in the 12th year of king Bhāgavata, has been discovered on a fragment of a stone pillar at Vidishā. It records the setting up of a flag staff in honour of lord Viṣṇu, in a temple at Vidiśā, by Gautamiputra deserves special mention. The other significant discovery are the Nakara capital, abacus, Kalpavrakṣa, palm-capital, railing pillars, with assembly hall etc., sculptures of Vaiṣṇava cult, sacrificial Kundas etc., were recovered from Besnagar excavations; huge sculptures of Kubera yakṣa and yakṣī,
Nāga-Nāgī etc. deserves special mention.

The Sunga rulers have largely contributed for the development of Vaiṣṇavism. The Suṅga-satavāhana age brought a congenial atmosphere for the development of fine arts. The two sites of Bharhut and Sānchī are well-known in Indian art-history. The great stūpas at Bharhut and Sānchī were decorated tastefully during this age with sculptures indicating high aesthetic merit. In chronology, the Bharhut Vedika comes first. It was followed by stūpa II at Sānchī and eventually stūpa no. I and III of Sānchī were constructed.

A few free-standing statues of yakṣa and yakṣī of the Suṅga period found at Besnagar, are massive in size. They are peculiarly Indian in their dress and ornamentation, and also in spirit and outlook. They reflect primitiveness in art, and indicate the earliest phase of the indigenous art of India. The artists of this period were successful in overcoming rigidity by a fine sense of grace.

The Bhakti movement during the Suṅga-satavāhana period brought an atmosphere for the growth of fine arts. It is noticed not only in the Vedic-Purāṇic religion, but also in Buddhism and Jainism. These religions found the medium of architecture and art very congenial for their development.
The rulers of the Suñga-Śatavahana dynasties were followers of the Vedic religion. But a spirit of tolerance prevailed during their regimes. Under their patronage, the great stupas at Bharhut and Sānci were renovated and were embellished with tastefully ornamented four gateways, one on each side. They made their distinct contribution to art and culture. Although, they followed the Vedic religion.

The Saka, Kusāna, Kshatrapa Rule over Vidiśā: Contacts with the western countries also gave a fillip to the growth of art in this region. The setting up of a pillar in front of the Viṣṇu temple at Besnagar indicates the practical and religious importance of Vidiśā. During the rule of the Kusānas and western Kshatrapas, contact between India and western countries increased.

The period between the 1st and 3rd centuries A.D. did not produce much by way of fine arts in the Vidiśā region. A few yaksa and yakṣī images of the period are known from this area. Some statues of Nāgas and Nāgis, both in the human and the serpent form, have also been found. Similarly, a few Buddhist relics have been discovered showing the popularity of Buddhism in this region after the Suñga-Śatavahana Age. The Saka-Kshatrapas continued to rule over western India and major parts of Mālwa till they were finally ousted by Chandragupta Vikramāditya at the close of the 4th cen. A.D.
During the Suṅga-Satavāhanas Age and the succeeding periods of the Saka-kshatrapa supremacy, central India had close contacts with Deccan and west India. The Satavāhanas and the Kshatrapas gave impetus to the cave-art in this part of the country. Under their patronage this art flourished right from the beginning of the 2nd century B.C. to the 7th century A.D. The affinities in the art of Bharhut, Sānchi, Vidishā and Pawāyā on one hand and Pītalkhonā, Bhāja, Kanheri, Pawānī etc. on the other clearly point out to the inter-relations between the art-styles of the two regions.

The Nāga Cult:— Vidishā and the region around was a centre of Nāga worship also. A dynasty of the Nāga kings ruled here after the Suṅga-Satavāhanas. It continued to rule over Vidishā-Sran area about the middle of the 4th century A.D. The names of the Nāga kings are known from the Purāṇas and from their coins found from Vidishā in a large numbers. These rulers were Śaivites and they also worshipped the Nāga deities. Statues of Nāga and Nāgis, both in the human and the serpent forms, have been found at Vidishā in a good number. These can be assigned between the 1st and the 3rd century A.D. It appears some temples of Nāgas at Vidishā like the temple of 'Dadhikarna' at Mathurā, were existed.

The literary evidence concerning the popularity of the Nāga cult is confined by the numerous representations
of the Nāgas in ancient Indian plastic and pictorial art.

In central India, particularly in the Vidishā-Sānchī, Bana, Tumāin, Pāraya (Padmāvatī), Kantipurī (Kāśī), and Mathurā, Nāga cult gained much fillip for quite a long time. The profuse relics of the yaksas and the Nāgas in this area bear testimony to this.

The Gupta Age: The Gupta period marked a new epoch in Indian art-history. In central India the number of art-centres increased during the Gupta period. The plastic art now attained a maturity, a balance and naturalness of expressions. It was the age of the culmination and perfection of earlier phases and forms of art. It was also connected with the evolution of the temple-architecture. The Gupta Age is richly called the formative and creative period in the sphere of art.

Both from the religious and secular points of view, the plastic art made strides during the Gupta Age. Architecture both of the rock-cut and structural types flourished here during the Gupta period.

In the time of Chandragupta II Vikramāditya, Vaiṣṇavism carved out its enviable place in the religious art of the country. This rule was responsible for the initiation of the classical style in plastic art. Several deities of the Brahmanical pantheon were represented through the media of stone and clay.
The art specimens of the early Gupta period are marked by toughness and round forms. This gradually gave place to softness and delicacy. The stone sculptures of the later Gupta period show more slender form of refinement.

The idea of all pervasiveness found its expression in the images of important deities of the Gupta Age. Vidishā made its own contribution to make Indian art exactly national during this Period. The Gupta art of central India made its mark on the art of other regions, particularly the Deccan and South India. Some of its traits became popular in South-East Asia.

The Jaina pantheon also developed in this region during the Gupta Age. The newly discovered Jaina Tīrthankara images installed during the time of the Gupta ruler Rāmgupta are rare acquisitions.

Like Mathurā, Vidishā became a centre of the composite Indian culture. Here the vedic-Purānic religion, Buddhism and Jainism for a long period found congenial atmosphere for their growth. The Brahmanical faith developed at Vidishā in its various forms. Another interesting feature of the Gupta art of central India is noticed in the life-size images of the Buddha, Visnu, Siva, Sūrya, Mātrikas and of a few other major deities. This is borne out by the contemporary literary, epigraphical and numismatic evidence.
The Gupta age was the period of all-round development. The prosperous economic condition of the period is attested to by the inscriptions and coins. The Gupta rulers mainly issued coins of gold and silver to cope with the developed business and trade of the period. Several stone inscriptions and copper-plate grants of the Gupta period are known.

The Paramāra Period: The Paramāra ruled over Mālwa in the later part of the early Medieval period. One of the rulers of this dynasty, Bhoja Paramāra, was a versatile genius. A work on art and architecture entitled 'Samarāṅgana Sūtradhāra' is attributed to this ruler. The work deals with architecture, painting and iconographic details of usual interest.

Examples of the Paramāra art and architecture can be seen at Udayapur, Vidishā, Ujjain, Dhāra, Badon-Patārī, Gyārapur, Bhojpur, Ashāpuri, and Hīṇglājjgarh, besides several other art-centres of this period.

The sculptures under this style is marked by the conventional norms and ornamental details. The features had become quite prominent of artistic upsurge. Iconography had by now assumed superiority over the aesthetic side of art.

The religious ideas and social practices, so well established during the Gupta Age also continued during the
early Medieval period. Image worship became very popular now and hence temples and images of different religions were made in large numbers.

There was a rapid growth of Saivism during the early Medieval Period. The Saiva temples built during the period from 7th to 13th century A.D. have been found at Sadoh, Gyāraspur, Udaipur and Kāgpur etc.

The cult of Viṣṇu was also prevalent during this period. The synchrotic images of the period found at several places clearly show that a spirit of toleration and goodwill among different religions and beliefs existed. The worship of 'Pañcādevatās' was most popular and common during this period.

The socio-religious life, fine-arts (paintings), language, classical music and dance, literature and the economic life of the Vidishā people was quite sound. Particularly, from C. 600 A.D. (Janapada period to the Paramāra period (about C. 1300 A.D.), the people of Vidishā had enjoyed the prosperous and cultural life for quite a long period, like Ujjayini, Mānismatī, Mathurā and Rausānī etc.

The chief art and cultural centres of Vidishā district, viz. Vidishā, Basnagar, Rangai, Udaigiri-Śāchāi, Gyāraspur, Sadoh-Pataṁ, Udaipur, Amer, Zāfarkhedi, Sonāri, Andher, Ahmadpur, Kāgpur, Māser, Sironj, Laterī, Kurwāi etc.
have largely contributed for the cultural development of Vidisha district from the Proto-historic times to the Paramara Period. This region thus represented one of the few areas in the country where religious and cultural integration was fructified.